

Our best tips for writing thought leadership white papers

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8 December 2021



What is a white paper?



A **white paper** is an authoritative report or guide that informs readers concisely about a complex issue and presents the issuing body's philosophy on the matter. It is meant to help readers understand an issue, solve a problem, or make a decision.

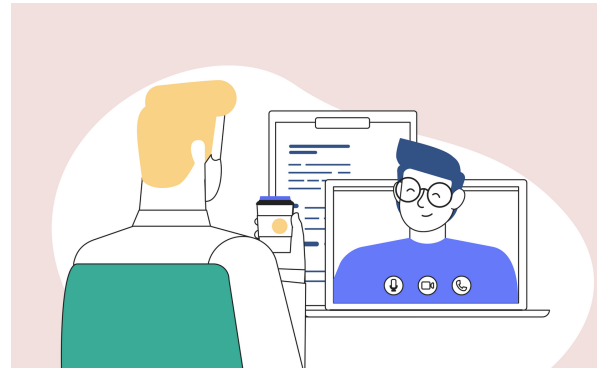
- **Wikipedia** (yeah, I sourced from Wikipedia. Deal with it)





Inform

Helps readers understand their problems or solve them. Offers genuine value for the reader. Can position a product or service in a helpful context.



Connect

Often deployed behind a form on a landing page or as part of a sales conversation so that it opens a channel for communication.



Inspire

Demonstrates expertise, authority and insight. Inspires action, ideally the next step in the buyer's journey.



Awareness

Experiencing a problem or perceiving an opportunity.

Signs your old ... isn't working

10 ways to improve ...

The ultimate guide to...

Benchmark report on ...

Consideration

Defining and naming the problem or opportunity

How to solve...

10 reasons you need...

How to build a business case for...

Decision

Deciding on their approach to a solution.

Buyer's guide to...

How to choose ...

Getting started with ...





Characteristics of a good white paper

Helpful and informative

Well-sourced for credibility

Aware of alternatives

Gives context



White papers

Written for the reader to help them understand their situation or make a decision.

- Don't disguise publisher
- Build a strong argument
- But aim for some objectivity
- Top or middle of funnel
- <20% client or product content

Always be helping

Sales collateral

Written to communicate features and benefits of a particular offering.

- Product details
- No context
- No consideration of alternatives
- Bottom of the funnel
- Product-specific

Always be closing



Pick the right format



Tour d'horizon

- Answers the question 'what's going on'
- Creates a context for a decision ('security threats are increasing')
- Positions client / product in this context ('Symantec is a trusted expert in this field')



Inverted pyramid

(See The Pyramid Principle by Barbara Minto. Also SCIPAB format.)

- Situation – describe what is the current situation
- Complication– describe the tension / issue in the situation
- Question – describe the question in response to the issue / tension
- Answer – suggest answer to ease out or mitigate the issue / tension

Digital transformation is a double-edged sword. Full of potential and promise, it's an overhaul that can see you disrupt whole industries, break into new markets and streamline your business.

No wonder that three-quarters of businesses will be digital, or have digital business transformations underway by 2020, according to analysts at [Gartner](#).

But like all good things, it comes at a price. Gartner also reckons that 60 percent of digital businesses will suffer major service failures due to the inability of IT security teams to manage digital risk.

New business models, exponentially increasing data sets and new technologies all come with security risks. And security failures bring with them fines, reputational damage and even the power to destroy a business.

The message is clear: if you want build tall digital businesses, you had better make sure the foundations are strong.



Problem, Recommendation, Solution

- Use objective evidence to highlight a problem
- Explore possible solutions and best practices
- Make recommendations
- Then explain how the solution is the best way to implement them



Productivity: 18 must-have tools for marketing agencies

To misquote Mark Twain (that famous marketing guru) 'For ambitious marketing agencies the right technology is like the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.' That's why we've put together this guide to 18 tools and technologies that can electrify, empower, engage and enhance your business:

1. **Time-efficient timesheets.** Nobody loves timesheets except accountants. But, if you want a profitable agency, tracking and billing time accurately is essential. Make it less of a chore with user-friendly online tools like [Harvest](#), [Paprika](#), [Toggl](#) or [WorkflowMax](#).



2. **Productive project management.** You've got to know where you are before you can work out where you're going. Project management apps like [Basecamp](#) help you coordinate your team and share project management information with clients.



Listicle

Easy to write

Easy to digest

High perceived value



Listicle sandwich

- Open with a mini tour d'horizon or problem statement (e.g. Excel is slow if you have huge spreadsheets)
- Give other examples and tips (e.g. ways to get more out of Excel)
- Close by positioning the product in this context (e.g. ACE)



Benchmark yourself

- Some objective yardsticks (if possible)
- Run a survey or gather data on your website
- 20% of companies do this, do you? e.g. Xx% of Fast 50 companies use Google Apps

Google Fast 50 research

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Introduction

The [Deloitte Fast 50](#) recognises 50 of the fastest-growing technology companies in the UK. The ranking is based on revenue growth over the preceding five years.

In 2011, 22 percent used Google Apps. By 2013, this had risen to 36 percent. The rise and the over-representation of Google Apps users in this list compared with the SMB population as a whole sparked Google's interest.

This research project looks at what made these companies successful and tries to understand the role of technology in that success.

We hypothesised that answers might lie in the following areas:

- Attitude to technology
- Working practices
- Company culture
- Innovation
- Marketing

As we interviewed people, we quickly added recruitment as an additional topic as this came up regularly in discussion.

What we did

We approached nearly all the 2013 Fast 50 finalists and all the Google Apps users from the previous two years' lists. Fourteen companies took part in phone interviews with Articulate Marketing. We spoke to senior executives – in most cases founders, owners, managing directors or chief technology officers. See Appendix 1 and 2 for more details.



Proofreading checklist

Checklist

- High value (e.g. 'cloud migration checklist')
- Highlights issues to review or questions to ask
- Positions products or services in a relevant context



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Templates and playbooks

- High value
- Demonstrates expertise



Top tips



Assumptions

- You've done your research, including personas
- You have a distinctive tone of voice
- ... and positioning
- ... and messaging
- You chose the right format



Make the structure visible

Make copy scannable

- Standfirst / executive summary
- Subtitles
- Supertitles
- Sidebars
- Pull quotes

The road to deployment

Risk #1: undetected incompatibilities that hit user productivity and generate additional IT support work.

As with any big system overhaul, there are a series of steps every business needs to take, and the two most important are planning and training.

Planning

Eisenhower said it best: 'Plans are nothing. Planning is everything.' Deploying a new operating system is a big project and big projects require plenty of forethought. Most importantly you need to consider compatibility with existing applications and hardware.

Windows 10 is compatible with most PC hardware and devices running Windows 7, Windows 8 and Windows 8.1, but there are a [number of other requirements](#) you should be aware of.



Use tables

Communicates relationships and categories in a visible way

- What we do - How it helps - Why it matters
- Common problem - What we do

This picture breaks down into three main areas:

B2E: Business to employee	B2C: Business to customer	B2D: Business to data
<p>This refers to the way teams collaborate, the way the business is structured and the way people do their job on a day-to-day basis.</p> <p>Analysis by McKinsey has shown that digital leaders place a premium on internal collaboration, creating processes and teams that integrate various functions across the business and developing incentives for sharing.</p> <p>Certainly breaking down silos and artificial internal competition is central to digital transformation.</p>	<p>Whether you are a B2C or B2B company, you have customers. And the way you interact with them, the way you deliver your service or product and the way they interact with your business are all in scope for transformation.</p> <p><i>Digital transformation represents the quest to understand how disruptive technology affects the customer experience. – Digital Transformation Report by Altimeter</i></p> <p>An external digital identity</p>	<p>With the increase in internet-connected devices, data proliferation has skyrocketed. With so many types of data available from so many sources both internally and externally, data itself <u>has to</u> be treated as a stakeholder in any identity and access management platform.</p> <p><i>By 2018, enterprises with digital transformation strategies will expand external data sources by at least three- to five-fold and delivery of data to the market by 100-fold or more. –</i></p>



Use appropriate images

Diagrams and charts are hard but highly valuable

Screenshots

Icons

Structural illustrations (e.g. section numbers)

Microsoft Power BI

[Microsoft Power BI](#) is a powerful tool, allowing you to create impressive, interactive visualisations and share them with your colleagues.

It's easy to create dashboards and reports and Power BI uses natural language queries to create data reports without you having to learn a new software language. You can also import data to create these reports from Excel and CSV files. You can then publish your reports direct to an Office 365 Power BI site visible on any device



Make it look like a 'real' document

- Cover
- Table of content
- Page numbers
- Next steps
- Company information



5 Reasons for Financial Services to Switch to R for Predictive Analytics

It's the competitive advantage you've been looking for.

5 reasons to switch to R for predictive analytics

1. You'll have every statistical technique, tool and algorithm at your disposal.

Like other languages, such as MATLAB, R's core capabilities support matrix arithmetic. Its data structures include matrices, arrays, data frames and more. Furthermore, its extensible object system supports regression and time-series models, among many others.

R is very much a language for statisticians, for statisticians - and its structure, syntax and core capabilities reflect this. This fact on its own is a compelling reason to switch to R for predictive analytics, but there's another reason: flexibility.

You can extend the core capabilities of R through user-generated packages, which enable you to use specialised statistical techniques, reporting tools, graphical tools and more. [R](#)

When it comes to analytics, R is a powerhouse programming language. But R isn't just a language; it's a computing environment that includes the biggest range of statistical, predictive modelling and graphical techniques (and machine learning methods) of any other software.

As an [integrative suite of software](#) products and tools, R includes:

- A vast, coherent collection of advanced (and intermediate) tools for **data analysis**
- **Graphical tools** for the creation of high quality charts and data visualisations
- A proficient **data storage and processing** facility
- A comprehensive suite of **operators** for calculations

Put simply, R is the lingua franca of data science. It's been popular among data scientists and financial analysts [for a long time](#). And though its popularity among experts is reason enough, there are some additional reasons as to why your firm should switch to R for predictive analytics.

In this white paper, we'll explain how switching to R for predictive analytics will let you:

- **Improve analysis and analytics** through access to a wide range of statistical techniques, tool and algorithms
- **Have an edge over your competitors**
- **Make a positive impact on your bottom line**
- **Leverage big data** and create compelling visualisations
- **Make better use of your existing tools and platforms**

MANGOSOLUTIONS
data analysis that delivers



And finally...





Let's talk

Video and slides appearing soon on articulatemarketing.com

Email me with questions at matthew@articulatemarketing.com

Book a call with me: www.articulatemarketing.com/meet

