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# HOW TO WRITE WINNING WHITE PAPERS



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Effective Marketing Communications With  
Method M

Use this document to keep focused when preparing white papers for your company.

# How to Write Winning White Papers

## EFFECTIVE MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS WITH METHOD M

### *Goals for the White Paper*

A white paper should show off the advantages of a product or technology.

- Show that the company understands customer challenges;
- Describe the company's product/solution; and
- Explain why the company's product/solution is the customer's best choice

### *Organization of a White Paper*

Readers expect a predictable organization. Adherence to the expected organization helps get your message across.

- What is the problem (by what symptoms does it manifest itself)?
- What kinds of solutions/technologies are available?
- Which solution is best, and why?
- How is the company uniquely qualified to deliver this solution?
  - Which of the company's products/services solves the problem and to what extent?
  - How does the solution and how is it optimized to solve particular problems?

Related information (such as prerequisite resources or how the solution is implemented) can often be left to separate documents, such as product data sheets.

### *Writing Effectively – How to Focus the White Paper Reader*

- Put "the bottom line" at the top. Attention is greatest at the beginning – that's where you should put a summary, including the conclusions.
- Use headlines and paragraph summaries to hold reader interest.
- Build trust by supporting factual claims. Provide track records of the companies or people involved. Provide supporting details to all claims.



- Be specific; avoid generalities. Generalities or descriptions of common knowledge drive intelligent readers away.
- Differentiate your solution. Describe why the company's solution best solves a problem.
- Cite credible, objective third-party evidence to substantiate claims by self-interested parties. Providing evidence buys credibility.
- Avoid hidden assumptions. Avoid acronyms and jargon. Use simple language.
- Use pictures to reinforce your written message. Use pictures to help readers with the names of objects and the relations between those objects.

### ***Writing Effectively – Gain Credibility and Keep Your User***

Not too technical and not overly marketing. Use plain English where possible. The objective is to educate and convince.

### ***Outline***

#### ***Abstract***

One paragraph description of the purpose of the white paper. Do not state the conclusion in the abstract. Customers frequently read only the abstract and conclusion of white papers.

#### ***The Challenge***

Two-to-three paragraphs describing the challenge. (If needed, include background.)

#### ***Understanding the Product's Design***

Explain how the product works in general. Provide just enough information so that in the next section the reader will be able to understand how the product is able to solve the challenge.

#### ***How the Product Meets the Challenge***

Explain how and provide evidence that the product meets the challenge. Explain why the product is the best available solution.

#### ***Conclusion***

One-paragraph summary of why the product is the best solution to the challenge.

