



Copy Style Guide

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OVERVIEW

This guide is a living document for copy guidelines on all internal and Member-facing print and digital communication including, but not limited to:

- Advertisements
- Banner stands
- Brochures
- Copart.com (incl. banners)
- Copart-affiliated sites
- CopartTV
- Email
- Flyers
- Location signs
- Posters
- Press releases
- Social media and blogs

Consistency is a major part of communicating with the public about our brand. The Copart Copy Style Guide sets a standard for writing across the organization to garner trust with our Members through reliable, consistent content.

Included in This Guide

This guide includes best practices for using the Copart brand voice, how to adjust that voice for different Copart audiences, commonly misspelled/misused words in our industry, and general style guidelines for consistent usage and grammar.

Copart adheres to the guidelines of The Associated Press Stylebook (commonly referred to as "AP style"). Some of the style and capitalization guidelines are Copart-specific while others are referenced by The AP Stylebook. For questions not addressed in this guide, reference the most recent edition of The AP Stylebook.

Who Should Use This Guide?

This style guide should be used by anyone who creates print or digital content that represents the Copart brand in a Member- or employee-facing manner, from the smallest one-on-one interaction to brand-wide content.

MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

Copart's mission, vision and values are key messages that encompass the guiding principles of Copart and should always be considered when creating or editing copy.

Company Mission

To create value and opportunity through vehicle auctions and exchange

Company Vision

To provide an unmatched experience...every day and everywhere...driven by our people, process and technology

Company Values

- Act with integrity
- Be an owner
- Challenge the norm
- Get results
- Celebrate our people

BRAND VOICE

Copart's brand voice is what sets us apart from the competition. It is our standard way of writing and expressing our ideals, our product and our impact. Remaining consistent in our tone, across print and digital communication, is important for strengthening our brand's identity and clearly expressing our values as a world-leader in auction and exchange.

Our brand voice helps unify content that is published in print or online. The Copart brand voice is made up of three Cs: concise, courteous and customer focused.

We Are Concise

Members need a short and concise message that doesn't bury important information.

Guideline	Instead of Saying:	We Say:
Place most important words and ideas at the beginning of the statement.	Whether you're buying to increase your inventory or are purchasing a car for personal use, we have over 5,000 clean title vehicles for sale.	Find exactly what you need in our inventory of over 5,000 clean title vehicles!
Don't use big words or long sentences when small words or short sentences work.	We've outlined a series of steps to help our Buyers navigate through the online auction process here at Copart.	Follow these steps to start bidding and buying at Copart.

We Are Courteous

Interaction with our Members should reflect our company's vision, and courteous customer service is an important part of providing an "unmatched experience" to customers.

If a Member contacts you with a complaint, acknowledge their feelings. Whether or not he or she has a "real" claim in their argument is less important than making the person feel heard.

If a customer is upset, staying calm de-escalates the situation faster and more graciously than responding in a defensive tone. Remember: you don't know what kind of day the person has had.

Instead of Saying:	We Say:
Well, I've never heard anyone complain about that before. What do you expect us to do about it?	I apologize for your inconvenience; I can assure you that we'll look into the situation.

We Are Customer-focused

Always put our Members and their needs first when writing content. Think of your target audience and put the benefit(s) to that person or group of people first in your content. Remember: our Members are primarily focused on speed, volume of inventory, ease of use and saving time.

As you're creating content, ask yourself these questions:

- Who are we talking to? (Even at a large company, there is a decision-maker.)
 - Put yourself in that person's shoes: "What's in it for me?"
- How are we simplifying the person's job or life overall?
- What benefit do we offer someone purchasing or selling through Copart?
- Why should a person bid on this particular vehicle?

Guideline	Instead of Saying:	We Say:
Speak directly to the target audience of your content and use "you" statements.	Businesses use Copart because it is convenient.	You won't believe how convenient it is to gain new inventory through Copart's online auctions!
Avoid "talking up" the company or being too generic; focus on how we help the end-user.	People use Copart because it's the best auto auction website! <i>[Not a good enough reason and self-serving]</i>	Looking for a large selection of inventory and easy online experience? Copart has you covered with over 125,000 vehicles up for auction daily!
	Copart offers an app that's revolutionizing online auctions. <i>[How? Why should they care?]</i>	Buy cars whenever, wherever with our new Copart Mobile App.

COPY BEST PRACTICES

Know Your Audience

We've discussed speaking directly to Members, but Copart has more than one audience: shareholders, employees, Sellers, Brokers and tow companies—and each has a unique perspective on how Copart helps them. Connect your writing to your audience's needs.

Ask yourself:

- Who is my audience?
- What is the purpose of this text?
- So what? Why should the audience care about what you're saying?
- How will your writing help the reader solve a problem he or she is having?

Keep It Simple, Positive and Action-Focused

Following the idea of helping to save time, keep your writing simple and easy to read. Additionally, almost all your content needs a call-to-action (something you're asking a reader to do). Maintaining an active voice drives home a sense of urgency to your call-to-action.

Guideline	Avoid:	Say This Instead:
Use simple words to help readers focus on and remember the point of your message.	Flashy words like cognizant, component, expedite, facilitate, etc.	Simple words like aware, part, speed up, help, etc.
Omit needless words to keep your content short and quick to read (therefore easier to understand).	You may not be aware that Copart purchases cars as well, in addition to selling cars via auction.	Did you know that Copart <i>buys</i> cars too?
Use active voice to encourage a sense of urgency in the reader (the subject of the sentence does the action); should be used in all promotional Member-facing material.	Our inventory of over 125,000 vehicles is ready to be browsed! [Passive voice is usually marked by "was," "by," "will be"]	Browse our inventory of over 125,000 vehicles now!
Exception: Use passive voice for error messages or responding to a complaint, to de-personalize the issue.	You did not enter your information correctly.	Your information was entered incorrectly.
Avoid absolutes and do not make promises, in order to set realistic expectations.	This vehicle is Run and Drive so you can drive it right off the lot today!	This vehicle is Run and Drive Verified and available for auction Tuesday!
Use positive language instead of negative language.	You can't register for free if you don't click the button below.	To register for free, simply click the button below.

Break Up Text

While some people read every word you write, others may find large blocks of text to be daunting and simply skim the content instead. Help your audience read and understand your content easier by breaking up the text.

- Use bulleted lists where possible.
- Use descriptive headers and subheaders.
- Break large blocks of text into smaller paragraphs by grouping related ideas together.

COPART-SPECIFIC WRITING GUIDELINES

The following guidelines help standardize customer- and public-facing material.

Brand Names

Each of the Copart brands should be written as shown below in all circumstances. When the brand's website is referenced, it should be written with the below casing.

Brand Name	Brand Website
Copart	Copart.com
CrashedToys	CrashedTovs.com
Copart Direct	CopartDirect.com
CashForCars.com*	CashForCars.com
National Powersport Auctions (NPA)	NPAuctions.com
Copart Construction	CopartConstruction.com

* *CashForCars.com* may be referred to as *C4C* on internal material only. *CashForCars.com* may be referred to as *CashForCars* internally or externally; it should always be one word with capital Cs and a capital F, as shown.

When writing about other brands, honor the company's brand and style guidelines, including capitalization, spacing and punctuation. Reference the company's official website and/or "about us" / "history" / "press" section to see the name in writing.

Common Words

These words are used frequently in Copart material and should be written as shown for consistency in all circumstances (internal and external).

- airbag
- clean title vehicles
- decommissioned
- email (not hyphenated or capitalized, unless starting a sentence)
- homepage (one word)
- horsepower (when abbreviated, no space between number and "hp" - "777hp")
- internet (not capitalized)
- login (as a noun - "use your login credentials"), log in (as a verb - "when you log in")
- overdrive
- pick up - pick up your vehicle
- pickup - schedule your vehicle pickup with Copart (not hyphenated)
- pickup truck
- publicly traded (no hyphen when preceding adjective ends in "ly")
- Run and Drive (not "Runs and Drives;" always capitalized; in print, "Run and Drive verified")
- salvage title vehicles
- sign in (as a verb, so it is always "sign in to your account," not "sign into your account")
- turbocharger, turbocharged, turbocharge
- vehicle pick-up
- website (one word)

Additional guidelines around terms and phrases used at Copart in public-facing material:

- Copart yards are referred to as *locations*, not *yards* or *facilities*.
- Inventory is referred to as *inventory*, *vehicles* or the specific type of vehicle (e.g., *motorcycles*), not as *units* or *lots*.
- U.S. requires periods if used in the body of copy (no periods when used in a heading). USA and other abbreviated countries do not require periods in any circumstance.

Capitalization

As part of Copart's style, certain words pertaining to Copart are capitalized and specific rules are followed in written text.

Guideline	Example(s)
<p>Seller, Buyer, Member and Broker are capitalized when referring to someone who works with, or buys from, Copart</p> <p>(when referring to general members, buyers, sellers, etc., not specific or pertaining to Copart, these words do not need to be capitalized)</p>	<p>As a Member, you have access to thousands of vehicles daily!</p> <p>All members of your teams can leave early on Tuesdays!</p>
<p>Basic Membership, Premier Membership and Copart Membership are capitalized. The word "membership" in isolation with no preceding descriptor is not capitalized.</p>	<p>Upgrade to Premier Membership today!</p> <p>Benefits of your membership include...</p>
<p>Most Featured Items (that are unique to Copart and/or the online auto auction industry) on the Copart website are capitalized</p>	<p>Featured Item(s), Buy It Now, Featured Vehicles, Municipal Fleet, New Items, No License Required, Offsite Sale, Pure Sale, Recovered Thefts, Run and Drive Verified, Sealed Bid, Seller Certified</p>
<p>The official title of the mobile app of any Copart brand, when preceded by the brand name</p>	<p>Download the Copart Mobile App today!</p> <p>Did you know Copart has a mobile app for Android and iOS?</p>

URLs and Email

Vanity URLs should be used in all print material to make the call-to-action easier to remember and look better from a design perspective.

Guideline	Example(s)
Exclude “www.” at the beginning of a URL (unless required, such as in YouTube descriptions in order to link text)	Find out more at Copart.com/Community .
Email addresses should also capitalize each word or name and the brand/domain name.	For more information, email MemberServices@Copart.com or John.Smith@Copart.com .
“Copart” and the first letter of all words after the first slash are capitalized	Learn more at Copart.com/LocalCommunity .
In digital content, vanity URLs are not required; any URLs or destination text should be hyperlinked accordingly.	Check out last year’s Copart Rebuild Challenge winners!

GENERAL GRAMMAR AND MECHANICS

The following are grammar guidelines not specific to Copart but which Copart employees should adhere to for consistency.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Guideline	Example(s)
Spell out abbreviations or acronyms the first time if there's a chance the reader won't recognize it or if it's jargon, then use the short version for other references	Our Catastrophe Response Team (CAT Team) answers the call during and after a disaster. During this time, speed is important, and our CAT Team is there to help.
If the abbreviation or acronym is well known, use it without spelling it out first	If the link doesn't work, simply type in the URL above to access our FAQ a e.

Apostrophes and Pluralizing

Guideline	Example(s)
Apostrophes show possession, not pluralization; when making something plural (especially an abbreviation), simply add an "s" without the apostrophe	Copart's inventory includes cars, trucks, RVs, ATVs, boats and more!

Bulleted Lists

Guideline	Example(s)
AP Style dictates periods (or question marks) are used at the end of each bulleted item.	When writing, ask yourself: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is your audience? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Put yourself in that person's shoes. • What is the benefit we offer? • What are the features available?
When writing for Copart, include this when each bullet is a full thought or sentence.	
Do not include periods or sentence-ending punctuation when bulleted items are just a list of quick/ short words or phrases.	Member communications include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertisements • Banner stands • Brochures

Capitalization

Guideline	Example(s)
In headings, capitalize all words except for the examples to the right.	Articles: the, a, an Short conjunctions: and, as, but, if, or, nor Short prepositions: at, by for, in of, off, on, out, to, u

Do not capitalize "the" at the beginning of a proper name of a publication or website unless it is part of the actual title.	Copart is featured on the Motor Trend website.
	Copart is featured in The Dallas Morning News.
If "the" is at the beginning of a heading, it should be capitalized regardless of the above rules.	The Motor Trend website featured Copart.

Colons

Guideline	Example(s)
<p>Use a colon at the end of a complete sentence to introduce a list.</p> <p>(Do not capitalize the first word that follows a colon unless it is a proper noun or the beginning of a complete sentence. Colons are also used for FAQ pages in question and answer portions.</p>	<p>Correct: This location has the following inventory in storage: cars, RVs and trucks.</p> <p>Incorrect: This location's inventory consists of: cars, RVs and trucks. <i>the colon is not needed in this example</i></p> <p>Q: Does Copart sell planes? A: Yes. While we do not always have planes available in inventory, we have auctioned lanes in the past.</p>

Commas

Guideline	Example(s)
Copart does not use the Oxford comma; commas are used to separate elements in a series/list but not used before the conjunction in a simple series.	Copart's inventory consists of cars, RVs, motorcycles, trucks, boats and more!
<u>Exception:</u> Use a comma before the concluding conjunction in a series/list if its absence would cause confusion or the items in the series/list are complex phrases.	Copart strives to be the best car auction site in the world, to support our employees as they further their careers, and to continue to improve our technology for our Members.

Dashes and Hyphens

There are two types of dashes, which are different than hyphens.

Guideline	Example(s)
<p>Em dashes are long dashes (—) and are used to replace commas for a series of words, a phrase that requires emphasis, or to attribute an author at the end of a quote.</p> <p>No space before or after the em dash in copy, unless attributing a quote.</p>	<p>Copart's most popular searches—Buy It Now, Pure Sale and No License Required—are all under the Featured Items filter.</p> <p>We offer the best online auction experience-guaranteed!</p>

<p>En dashes are medium length dashes (–) and are used for ranges of time and dates.</p> <p>Space before and after the en dash.</p>	<p>Flood vehicles will be featured from March 15 – April 15.</p> <p>The meeting is from 4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.</p>
<p>Hyphens are short dashes(-) used to link words into a single phrase.</p> <p>No space before or after the hyphen.</p>	<p>Each year, we welcome many first-time users to the Copart auction platform.</p>

Ellipses

Guideline	Example(s)
<p>Ellipses are not to have a space between the text and ellipses in any circumstance.</p>	<p>To provide an unmatched experience... every day and everywhere... driven by our people, process and technology.</p>

Numbers in Text

Guideline	Example(s)
<p>Numbers zero through nine should be written out in copy; anything greater than nine can be written numerically.</p>	<p>Today, Copart is hosting three new auctions.</p>
<p><u>Exception:</u> When the number begins a sentence, it should be written out.</p>	<p>Twelve of Copart's locations are in Germany alone!</p>
<p><u>Exception:</u> Numbers in dates and time are written numerically.</p>	<p>As of January 1, Copart has more than 200 locations worldwide.</p>
<p><u>Exception:</u> Percentages are written numerically, unless being published in a professional article.</p>	<p>Copart had a year-over-year profit growth of 8%.</p>
<p><u>Exception:</u> Dimensions to indicate depth, height, length and width are written numerically.</p>	<p>The car is 15 feet long, 6 feet wide and 5 feet in height.</p>
<p>Figures of millions and billions should be written using a figure-word combination. Never spell out the word "dollars." Use the \$ symbol before the dollar amount.</p>	<p>Copart had over 90 million visits to its website last year.</p> <p>Copart is an international company with revenue of over \$1 billion U.S.</p>

Quotation Marks and Punctuation

Guideline	Example(s)
Periods and commas always go inside quotation marks.	For more information, click the button that says, "Click here."
Dashes, semicolons, question marks and exclamation points go inside quotation marks when they're part of the quote; if they apply to the whole sentence, they go outside the quotation marks.	As a new Member, you may be asking yourself, "How do I purchase a vehicle via online auction?" If I want more information, do I need to click the button that says, "Click here"?

Time

The below guidelines are used for U.S. time and should be used with modification as needed for international time.

Guideline	Example(s)
Use "a.m." and "p.m." with a space between the time and the a.m. or p.m. designation (no space between the period between alp and m)	The meeting is at 10:30 a.m.
No zeroes following top-of-hour times when the time is shown by itself; however, if shown with a time that's not top-of-hour, include following zeroes for balanced appearance	There is an auction starting at 10 a.m. The webinar is from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Time zone designation should be shown following the a.m. or p.m. designation, all capitalized and using either the "D" or "S" designation for daylight savings time [Check Copart website and change time zone in top right for confirmation of D or S <u>designation</u>]	Our first auction will be held at 2:30 p.m. CST.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you need assistance with writing, editing, grammar or punctuation, contact the Marketing Department (Advertising@Copart.com) or reference the most recent edition of The Associated Press Stylebook.