

An abstract geometric pattern consisting of thin white lines connecting several circular nodes of varying sizes. The nodes are positioned at the top, right, and bottom-left of the frame. The background is a solid, light blue color.

VOICE AND TONE

WHY THE TONE?

What you say and how you say it matters. Cybersecurity is serious business and trust must be earned. But that trust involves connections between people, and Proofpoint's brand experience helps build that trust by connecting with our audience in an authentic way. Voice conveys a brand's overall personality, and tone expresses the mood — subtleties that will help us speak to our readers in a consistent, clear, and honest voice that embodies the power of Proofpoint.

The tone of our collateral should always reinforce the Proofpoint voice and our role as trusted partner.

“Trusted” means maintaining our singular authority as cybersecurity experts. Collateral that comes across to readers as glib, defensive, or bellicose can undermine that authority. Avoid hype and scare tactics — if readers sense they're being manipulated or lied to, we lose their trust. Do not make claims we cannot back up with facts. Cite sources when possible. Speak confidently and truthfully. And never resort to FUD (fear, uncertainty, and doubt).

“Partner” means we are on our reader's side. Our tone should be welcoming and approachable. Our prose should be easily consumed. We are not trying to impress our readers with flowery language or dazzling intellect — we are trying to help them protect their people, data, and brand. Explain new concepts in a way that makes the reader smarter. And celebrate Proofpoint successes in a way that makes our customer the hero.

WHO ARE WE?

WE ARE AUTHENTIC.

Proofpoint is honest and transparent. We never exaggerate, obscure, or insinuate. We say what we mean. We don't shy away from hard truths. And we communicate in a clear, straightforward style. While our content stands out and engages readers — and deals with subject matter that is often riveting — the writing style is simple, concise, and direct.

WE ARE PROBLEM SOLVERS.

Proofpoint strives to be a reliable partner, working with customers to solve their biggest security and compliance challenges. Accordingly, our tone is helpful and collaborative — never arrogant or dismissive. Proofpoint is forward-thinking. But we are also no-nonsense, logical, and realistic about today's security challenges. Our content, informed by our real-world experience, is smart, innovative, and useful. We use concrete language, cite tangible examples, and address prospects' practical needs.

WE ARE URGENT.

Proofpoint is passionate about helping organizations protect what matters most. We move proactively and forcefully to address customers' needs and combat today's cyber threats. Our content reflects this trait through copy that is crisp, current, and relevant. Like our products, our content helps people make smarter security decisions. We keep readers front and center by delivering the right content in the right format — right when our audience needs it.

WE ARE CONFIDENT.

Proofpoint is focused and assured. While our content is approachable and accessible, we speak with authority. Cyber threats are real, but we do not prey on victims' fear, uncertainty, and doubt. Our copy is muscular. Our tone is positive. Our outlook is optimistic.

HOW DO WE CONVEY THAT IN OUR WRITTEN COMMUNICATION?

1. We are authentic, honest, and reliable.

WHY: We know that today's businesses can't operate in a fortress. That's why our approach to security focuses on the fluidity of today's business – protecting people and the information they create based no matter where or how they create, send, or use it. Strong brands depend on security solutions that work; this responsibility drives our continual innovation and tireless dedication to security that meets our customers' needs.

HOW: Our voice and tone must speak business just as fluently as we do security. We don't need to hide behind buzzwords. We demonstrate the effectiveness of our security solutions through language that is simple, clear, accessible, and intelligent. Our prose is personable but professional, always centered on the customer.

2. We are confident, focused, and urgent.

WHY: Our advanced threat and compliance solutions use the speed of the cloud and advanced analytics that keep us trained on the ever-evolving threat landscape. Our proven solutions follow the data wherever people take it — email, mobile apps, and social media. We're committed to protect wherever business goes.

HOW: Our passion and expertise must resonate in our voice and tone. We express them through positive and engaging language grounded in forward-thinking intelligence. We demonstrate our strength with pragmatism. Our confidence is rooted in business savvy and customer commitment, not chest-beating ego.

We convey urgency through direct and active language and bold statements that speak to our unrelenting commitment to customers at the pace of today's business.

3. We deliver on our promise.

WHY: We work tirelessly to help our customers with innovative security solutions that keep their business moving. We are not up against traditional security companies that offer endpoint or network protection as the answer. Our approach mirrors business demands; it follows data's fluid path and the various channels people take to get the job done — from anywhere.

HOW: Our voice and tone should affirm that we are a breed apart. We are a brand that connects with customers on this critical business understanding. We demonstrate our commitment to protect customers' people, data, and brands with a clear and assuring confidence through well-crafted, intelligent content that informs.

DOS AND DON'TS

DO BE

CONFIDENT

Your copy should reflect and inspire confidence without being arrogant or over the top.

INTELLIGENT

Our customers are savvy and know the space we operate in. Be careful not to speak down to them. Your copy should be clear and simple – but never dumbed down.

CANDID

Use an engaging, straightforward tone, and avoid being verbose. Be factual and unambiguous about the company, its products, and its capabilities.

ACTIVE

Favor active voice. Use passive voice sparingly and purposefully.

POSITIVE

Avoid fear-mongering. Stick to the facts. Focus on helping the reader succeed.

DON'T BE

DULL

Don't let the products' technical aspects take charge. Bring value propositions and customer benefits front and center. Avoid corporate jargon and cliches. When technical or industry-specific terms are required, use them judiciously.

PATRONIZING

Our clients are intelligent and informed with an overwhelming responsibility to protect data, people, and ultimately their brand. They're well aware of the risks involved. Create a conversation and speak with them as equals.

ARROGANT

While we are a key player in the space, we never make claims we can't back up. Hyperbole breeds distrust. Convey confidence without arrogance, as there's no such thing as "100% safe" in security.

IRONIC OR INSINCERE

Never let the candor of "business casual" veer into glibness or snark. Use language thoughtfully to meet our brand values and customer expectations.

WRITING THAT GETS IT RIGHT

SOLUTIONS OVERVIEW:

Advanced Threat Protection

Attackers are always changing their tactics and crafting increasingly sophisticated threats. Targeted attacks and advanced persistent threats (APTs) have grown routine. Now more than ever, organizations need to defend themselves across the full attack lifecycle. Proofpoint protects your people, data, and brand from advanced threats and compliance risks. We start with our secure email gateway, widely recognized as the industry leader. Then we add dynamic malware analysis, real-time threat intelligence, and automated threat response. **The powerful combination** blocks targeted attacks and other advanced threats. And when something goes wrong, it helps you respond quickly.

SET THE STAGE

Conveys an informed urgency about the state of security without invoking fear.

SET EXPECTATIONS

Clearly states what the customer can expect from Proofpoint's unique combination of security solutions.

FOR VERTICALS:

Key Benefits of Proofpoint Protection Products for Education

PROTECT WHAT MATTERS

Starts by identifying the vertical's valuable resources to protect — its people and data — rather than leading with the threat or method to secure it.

Protection on All Devices, Everywhere

Protect your faculty, staff, students, records and research from email- and social-media-borne cyber threats.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Expanding the audience definition conveys an understanding of their environment while inspiring confidence in our approach to secure those diverse usage patterns that leave it vulnerable.

Modern universities face an array of new challenges. They must protect a wide swath of people from email- and social-media-borne cyber threats. **From researchers to professors to medical staff to students**, your users have a wide range of usage patterns and access needs. This diversity gives attackers countless new openings to compromise your users, data, and reputation.

Proofpoint solutions for universities keep malware, spam, and targeted attacks such as phishing out of your users' mailboxes and social-media accounts. We help you protect them transparently, no matter where they access those accounts — on campus or off, across desktops, laptops, and mobile

FOR PRODUCTS:

Malvertising Protection

For publishers, ad networks, servers, exchanges, optimizers, and demand-side platforms (DSPs): **Protect your site** from delivering malicious online ads, also known as malvertising. Track the flow of malvertisements. And warn owners about problematic ad networks.

PROTECT THE BRAND

This is a strong example of articulating how our product can protect a customer's brand.

Publishers and other demand-side providers know how malvertising can hurt them: revenue loss, fines, and a tarnished brand. Proofpoint Malvertising Protection helps ensure that your ads are authentic and unaltered.

DEFINE THE RISK

Defines the scope of the risk without added drama by acknowledging the audience's awareness of it.

Our cloud-based malvertising protection solution detects and analyzes the ad tags, creative, and actual impressions served. Then it delivers notifications that you can customize. You get timely information and analytics about the safety of your site's ads – all in a way that scales to the largest operations.

SPEAK THEIR LANGUAGE

Explains in clear, industry-appropriate language and with relevant detail both how we can protect them against this threat and how they will benefit.

We provide deep insight into the entire ad chain so you can precisely pinpoint any problems in the context of your whole ecosystem. The result: much greater control over the safety of your online ads.

FOR CASE STUDY SUMMARIES:

The Golden State Warriors®

GRAB INTEREST

With little time to entice readers to learn more, this summary efficiently explains the challenge with engaging language without resorting to topical wordplay.

CUSTOMER STORY

As their social pages became more popular, the Warriors were finding that they were becoming victims of their own success. At the arena, on TV, and in social media, the Warriors want to create a comfortable and safe environment for their fans.

COPY EXAMPLES

1. Why Proofpoint: Cloud Infrastructure

BEFORE: Proofpoint Enterprise applications are delivered on a cloud infrastructure and can be deployed as secure, cloud-only solutions, or as hybrid email services that combine SaaS with optional physical or virtual points-of-presence installed behind the enterprise firewall (for customers who prefer to deploy certain functions inside their security perimeter). Regardless of the deployment scenario, this cloud-based email architecture enables Proofpoint to leverage the benefits of the cloud — bringing customers superior, cost-effective cloud email services for email security and compliance — while maintaining the flexibility to optimize deployments for each customers' unique requirements. Proofpoint's modular approach for cloud email services and solutions enables our existing customers to implement additional modules in a simple and efficient manner.

<http://www.proofpoint.com/us/why-proofpoint/cloud-big-data>

AFTER: Proofpoint solutions are delivered through a cloud architecture. That means they deploy quickly and adapt continuously to new threats.

They are also flexible, delivered the way you want them:

- As a secure, cloud-only service
- As a hybrid email service combining software as a service model with optional physical or virtual points of presence behind your firewall

Whatever option you choose, our cloud-based email architecture delivers superior, cost-effective email security and compliance. You get all the benefits of the cloud in a way that fits your unique needs. And with our modular cloud-based approach, adding components is simple and efficient as those needs change.

2. Solutions: Threat Classification and Real-Time Analysis

BEFORE: Some vectors contain multiple threats, which should be handled differently. For example, an inbound email might appear to be simple advertising, based on content – but also link to dangerous advanced malware. Fine-grained classification is essential, to prevent such an email being placed into user-releasable spam quarantine vs. preserved in a safe environment for IT analysis of the malware risk...

<http://www.proofpoint.com/us/node/2429#real-time-analysis>

AFTER: To handle threats effectively, you first have to know what you're dealing with. That requires understanding the precise nature and threat level of the traffic — in real time. For example, an inbound email might appear to be simple content-based advertising, but it also links to dangerous advanced malware. Without fine-grained threat classification, that email can head into spam quarantine for possible release. With Proofpoint, the email would be immediately recognized for the threat that it is and quarantined in a safe environment for IT to analyze the malware risk...