



MASERATI
TONE OF VOICE GUIDE

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MASERATI TONE OF VOICE

This is a guide for everyone who communicates in writing on behalf of Maserati. It's for those of us who write brochures, web text, advertising, press packs, direct mail, customer invitations – and more.

It will help ensure that a single, consistent and differentiating Maserati voice is heard in different contexts – with its tone adapted, but never compromised, to suit the medium.

WHY IS THIS SO IMPORTANT?

Maserati customers, prospects and fans are drawn to the brand because it offers very particular and exclusive appeal. Some people know more about the brand than others. But everyone knows 'there's something about Maserati'.

Maserati manufactures some of the world's most beautiful high-performance luxury cars. It always has done. But there is much more to Maserati than power and style.

There is also its race-bred, full-blooded Italian soul.

We all know the Maserati story.

We know that Maserati embodies independence of spirit, enduring strength of character, and a hunger to go the full distance and come out winning.

CONSISTENT CHARACTER

This combination of sportiness, style and soul has shaped the character of the Maserati brand and its unique appeal. So when we write, we need to consistently and convincingly represent that character – we need to be *Maserati*.

When we do this, the essence of the Maserati brand comes to life in the written word. And when we do it consistently across all channels – from email subject lines to brochure text – we further strengthen the brand and ensure its ongoing success.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN VOICE AND TONE

WHAT IS VOICE?

Strong and charismatic personalities are instantly recognisable the moment they speak. Wherever, whenever and to whomever they are speaking. This is voice.

It's a kind of energy, unique to the individual, borne of their personal history, environment and motivation.

The Maserati brand has this energy.

Our job is to put it into words – giving it one voice so that no one can have any doubt about who is speaking.

WHAT IS TONE?

There is an important difference between voice and tone. Tone is the way a single and instantly recognisable voice is expressed according to a specific context.

Informal situations, for instance, require a different tone from formal ones. Tone also changes in response to another person's mood – it may need to be more assertive, or calming, or conversational, depending on how the person being addressed is feeling.

Maserati occupies a dynamic, multi-channel and fast-moving environment. So naturally its tone frequently changes. But crucially, the voice always remains the same.

This is why, for Maserati writers, a clear understanding of the brand, its core proposition and, in turn, its product truths are essential.

With this understanding, we can articulate the Maserati voice – voice that can be fine-tuned to suit any given medium.

THE MASERATI BRAND. A CORE PROPOSITION, A UNIQUE POINT OF DIFFERENCE

The GranTurismo proposition is the purest expression of the Maserati brand.

Maserati vehicles occupy their own unique territory in the world of performance automotive luxury. This is because each, in its own way, embodies the original spirit of GranTurismo motoring – a concept conceived and pioneered in Italy.

In the early and mid-20th century, long-distance touring in cars was the reserve of independent aesthetes with money, time and a bold taste for adventure.

That demanded a very special kind of vehicle, elegantly built for comfort and speed, and capable of covering thousands of kilometres in highly refined style. With room for the luggage.

Before GranTurismo, this kind of driving experience was simply not possible. Sports cars were hard-riding, unforgivingly loud and cramped.

The first GranTurismo model from Maserati was the legendary and much-loved A6 1500, launched at the Geneva Salon International de l'Auto in 1947. The A stood for Alfieri, one of the founding Maserati brothers, and the 6 for six cylinders. The A6 series remained in production until 1956.

Then came the stunning 3500 GT and the 3500 GT Convertible, made between 1957 and 1964. With their alluring Italian style, formidable power and liberating long-distance comfort, they took the automotive world by storm.

The brand's red-blooded racing soul asserted itself again with the launch of the Quattroporte at the 1963 Turin Motor Show – the first luxury sedan equipped with a race car engine, and another archetypal GranTurismo.

The emotive power of the GranTurismo name has faded over the years, however. From the 1960s onwards, non-Italian car makers latched on to the term, abbreviated it to 'GT' and used it to make cars such as standard, mass-market hatchbacks and sedans appear more sporty.

As a result, the expression 'GranTurismo' has lost much, if not all, of its original, evocative meaning.

Most people are not aware of the GranTurismo truth. Similarly, most do not know that it is an Italian-born concept.

And critically, for us at Maserati, no automotive brand is using GranTurismo as a focused, overall brand proposition.

RECLAIMING THE SPIRIT OF GRANTURISMO

The GranTurismo proposition is a powerful opportunity for Maserati, one of the pioneers of the Italian-born concept.

The GranTurismo proposition captures the essence of what makes all Maserati models stand out – what makes people stop, look and, of course, listen.

A GranTurismo vehicle is a promise in itself, composed of two fundamental elements.

First, it is a complete luxury offering, presenting a unique and authentic combination of effortlessly accessible power, long-distance comfort, Italian style and elegant craftsmanship.

Second, there is the audacious spirit of adventure and independence typified by race-bred, performance GranTurismo motoring.

There is an intrinsic tension between these two positions. On the one hand, we have concepts such as elegance, refinement and hand-crafted, upmarket sophistication.

On the other, we have a rebellious spirit, a hunger for speed and adventure, and a passion for living in the moment and maximising potential.

This provides dramatic contrast.

Serenity and excitement at the same time.

Soothing luxury and simultaneous, surging power.

Juxtapositions like these encapsulate the authentic edge of Maserati.

CREATIVE TENSION

Communication that also makes people stop, look and listen.

In many ways, the premium automotive market is a 'sea of sameness'. Certainly when it comes to marketing communications.

Brands talk about luxury, refinement, dynamics and other attributes. But there is rarely a convincing, oppositional – but complementary – value that creates any kind of compelling energy.

GranTurismo gives us this energy. And contrasting yet complementary GranTurismo values make people **stop and look** when expressed in writing.

This is particularly the case when it comes to headlines or banners.

The Maserati GranTurismo model, for example, is currently described as:

'The most exciting word in the Italian dictionary'

This tells us about great excitement and a certain 'Italianness' but not much else. We could strip this down to something like:

'Race-bred elegance'

This is a powerful idea related to elegance with an enticing, dynamic edge and, as such, both catches the eye and invites enquiry.

And people do know about Maserati, so they are very likely to get the message. It will reawaken them to what we know is the GranTurismo truth.

For those who don't know about Maserati, we are still offering them something strikingly different – a reason to stop and look more closely.

The GranTurismo proposition is not for everyone. But that is, itself, key to its attraction.

GRANTURISMO ATTRIBUTES ARE MASERATI ATTRIBUTES

Three high-level values define the essence of GranTurismo.

ATTRIBUTES	DYNAMIC	LUXURIOUS	ELEGANT
WE ARE...	Self-assured and poised yet daring and progressive	Composed and discerning yet assertive and incisive	Italian – so graceful and sophisticated yet challenging and provocative
BECAUSE...	<i>We are GranTurismo – we offer an empowering combination of race-bred power and dynamics plus grand touring luxury for the discerning customer</i>	<i>We are GranTurismo – our vehicles offer technically perfect dynamic balance and hand-crafted luxury with attention to every last detail – a combination that cossets, tempts and inspires</i>	<i>We are GranTurismo – our design philosophy is the expression of spirited Italian elegance, exclusive grand touring luxury and red-blooded, race-bred style</i>
AND WE DON'T...	Offer hard-edged, outright sports cars	Offer 'merely' comfortable and luxurious A-to-B vehicles	Offer exclusive and sporty Italian style in isolation – there is always the promise of something more

FROM VALUES TO VOICE

Here's how Maserati brand values take on the human dimension through voice and tone, or writing style.

ATTRIBUTES	DYNAMIC	LUXURIOUS	ELEGANT
WE ARE...	Self-assured and poised yet daring and progressive	Composed and discerning yet assertive and incisive	Italian – so graceful and sophisticated yet challenging and provocative
SO WE...	Communicate with clarity and confidence, while being bold and straight-talking when we have a dynamic point to make	Create a sense of effortless rapport with a well-paced conversational feel while getting to the point with economic precision	Write with engaging flow and rhythm, though we also show flair by challenging expectations with style, structure and messaging
AND WE DON'T...	Get lost in technicalities, over-explain, repeat ourselves when something's clear or obvious	Ramble, ignore the reader's needs and attention span, engage in false modesty	Bore the reader with conventional, one-dimensional propositions

STANDING OUT WITH CREATIVE

As mentioned previously, tone is how the single voice of Maserati is adapted to suit the channel or situation.

This can be done by making appropriate use of the affordances of any given medium, while remaining mindful of its limitations and where things can go wrong.

Brochures, for instance, allow plenty of room for expression. But this can, of course, lead to off-brand over-expression.

A single page print advert is a much more compressed space. This introduces the risk of being too direct, or hard-sell. But the challenge also introduces the opportunity.

There is always a concise, on-brand creative solution that can say 'GranTurismo'.

THE BRAND LADDER

Understanding audience needs is also critical. Different audiences need to be presented with differently measured **technical** attributes and **functional** and **emotional** benefits connected with any given product truth.

This is what's known as the brand ladder.

The technical and functional elements – aesthetics, technology, performance, etc. – are not enough for us to successfully differentiate the GranTurismo proposition. We need to include the human and emotional dimension through a believable GranTurismo promise.

This will often be expressed as some kind of dynamic contrast, as discussed in 'Creative tension' above.

That said, a journalist reading a press release needs to register the emotional benefit in a very different way from a prospect reading a brochure.

Both, however, need to clearly recognise the one voice of Maserati.

A FEW GENERAL PRINCIPLES

CONFIDENCE AND CONVICTION

DO

- Say it once, and with conviction.
- Speak in plain language – it shows strength of character.
- Give substance to your adjectives.
- Be judicious with model naming. It's ok to just say, 'The Maserati Quattroporte and the Ghibli'.
- Use language that shows we are a conviction brand: 'We believe, we will, our proud heritage...'

DON'T

- Overstress the point – automotive marketing is full of over-expression.
- Use complicated, antiquated or obscure language.
- Leave words such as sophisticated, intelligent, and refined unqualified. Explain how and why. And don't forget the spirit of GranTurismo.
- Keep repeating the brand name in copy. There's nothing in any rulebook that says we need to say 'Maserati' more than once in a paragraph.
- Pluralise: Maseratis/Ghiblis. (Work around it by saying, for example, 'Each Maserati/Ghibli is...' 'The Maserati/Ghibli models'.)

INTEGRITY/ELEGANCE

DO

- Help the reader when the reader needs helping.
- Be authentic.
- Hold attention with meaningful words.

DON'T

- Let it slide. If you don't understand a piece of writing, neither will the reader. Explain, but keep it simple and lead with the benefits.
- Over-emphasise for effect. For instance, 'quite' and 'very' in the following sentence will be off-putting for some: 'The leather's stitching is quite exquisite, reflecting the very finest tradition...'
- Create 'dead clusters'. Like this: 'For those wishing to opt for either a...'

ENERGY/BOLDNESS

DO

- Vary pace when writing. Repeating long sentences of the same length can make life difficult for the reader.
- Strive to keep copy fresh and vigorous.
- Use active sentence constructions.
- Directly address the reader where appropriate.

DON'T

- Necessarily avoid long sentences as a point of principle. They can work when elegantly constructed and mixed with shorter sentences.
- Use stale, off the shelf expressions. Some word pairings have become so common that they have no meaning. 'Breathless calm', for example. Disruption to convention is welcome, however. 'Breathtaking calm', is more Maserati.
- Use passive sentence constructions – 'A coupé has been developed by Maserati'. This is better: 'Maserati has developed a coupé'.

TWO CORE AUDIENCE GROUPS

CUSTOMERS/PROSPECTS

Work can always be done when it comes to building in-depth personas. But we can rely on a number of cornerstone characteristics when it comes to Maserati customers and prospects.

They are primarily male aged between 45 and 55, although the numbers of women owning Maserati are increasing fast thanks to Levante and, in some markets, there are increasing numbers of customers/prospects considerably younger than 45.

Generally, however, they are well educated, cultivated and affluent. They are bold thinkers, assertive, independent and frequently courageous in their decision-making – which is often the secret of their success.

This is the profile of a discerning and sophisticated customer. So ask questions such as:

- Are we selling too hard or directly?
- Are we being clear, authentic and honest?
- What are we saying that's genuinely new and interesting?
- Do we sound like every other premium car brand with this copy?
- Is this headline really going to grab the attention of a sophisticated high achiever?
- How are we expressing the essence of GranTurismo with this copy?

PRESS/MEDIA

Professionals in this category include editors, reporters and bloggers, and represent an essential interface between Maserati and the potential Maserati customer.

In the automotive press, they have strong product knowledge and also evaluate what we say with an objective and critical perspective. This means, among other things, that they want to know what the story is fast and why they should tell the world about it.

We also, of course, communicate with the lifestyle and the business press – the former more focused on luxury and experience, the latter often more on the facts. In some cases, therefore, communication needs to be specifically targeted, with information adapted to suit the audience. Sometimes, though, one piece of communication will need to serve all groups.

Whatever the case, remember the GranTurismo voice, consider its tone and ask questions such as:

- What's the story – and why should someone prioritise it over another story from another premium car brand?
- Where's the GranTurismo promise – and are we delivering it in a credible way?
- Do we have the information hierarchy (top-down) right?
- Are the facts easily digestible and repeatable?
- Are the facts clearly connecting with the benefits?
- Is the technology easy to understand?
- Are we addressing, as far as possible, the five Ws: 'what, who, why, when and where'?

EXAMPLES

BROCHURES

AUDIENCE NEEDS

Brochures are primarily for customers or prospects who are starting the consideration phase of their Maserati journey, either towards purchasing their first car from us or exploring other models. They may even be reading out of interest, as fans of the brand. They want to know what makes this car special and how it supports their aspirations and values. Brochures will be read again and again, and may be shown to family or partners who need to buy in to a purchase decision, so they must persuade and immerse.

POSITIVES

A brochure provides plenty of room for expression and narrative development. As a self-contained, offline medium it offers a span, however brief, of undivided attention from the reader. Images can support, or even tell the story, while headers provide opportunities for juxtapositions that express the GranTurismo creative tension.

PITFALLS

With lots of space available, there is a risk of over-expression, hyperbolic, unqualified descriptions and style over substance. A vehicle brochure is often seen as a standard format, which opens a risk of 'me-too' content that just follows the standard approach of the genre.

THE BRAND LADDER

Brochures provide ample room to touch on the technical, functional and emotional aspects of our product truths. It is typical for a luxury car brochure to start with the emotional and work down through the functional and technical. However, elements of each rung of the brand ladder should be held in mind throughout – every benefit stems from a feature, and every feature confers a benefit. Each package of text should ideally be read as a cohesive unit with a clear human and emotional pay-off.

EXAMPLE 1

Brochure: Before

Craftsmanship is at the helm

Far more than just an example of superb automotive design and craftsmanship, the Levante is underpinned by Maserati's unparalleled engineering prowess and its mastery of four-wheel-drive technology.

What's wrong with it?

The heading is meaningless and does not relate to the vehicle or the user. Empty, 'unbranded' superlatives fail to differentiate and are not qualified with technical detail or user benefit.

'Is at the' is not a good word cluster in a headline.

Brochure: After

Luxurious adventure

The Maserati Levante offers considerably more than soul-stirring design and commanding comfort. Thanks to sophisticated four-wheel-drive technology, it also satisfies those with a yearning for adventure – and speed.

What's right with it?

The heading invites you to join the ride. The reader's emotions are brought into the picture, acknowledging the aesthetic and power-loving sides of the personality. Empty descriptors are cut. Four-wheel-drive is anchored to the user benefit of go-anywhere capability coupled with the GranTurismo promise of speed.

EXAMPLE 2

Brochure: Before

CLIMATE CONTROL

The automatic dual-zone climate control automatically adjusts the intensity of the ventilation in relation to the outdoor temperature, and allows those in the front seats to select their own individual heat settings. With thirteen ventilation outlets, it is able to cool or heat the car extremely rapidly – the temperatures being set by means of the Maserati Touch Control display or the control panel beneath it. The system is fitted with a humidity sensor that is programmed to reduce the moisture content of the air as soon as the windows start to mist up. In addition, all Ghibli versions are equipped with Air Quality Sensor. This standard feature combines an intelligent sensor and an analysis system that calculates the external pollution levels and prevents polluted air and toxic gases from entering the car's cabin, giving the occupants the cleanest and safest air to breathe. In addition, the effective filtering of airborne particulates can also play a part in maintaining the health of all on-board.

What's wrong with it?

In parts of this brochure there is an abrupt tonal shift from brand-led copy to feature-heavy technical content. The voice here is practical and straightforward, but too prosaic. It brings the reader down to earth with a bump with mentions of toxic gases and airborne particulates.

We need to be careful with ideas of 'maintaining health'. And note the very long, dry sentences.

Brochure: After

Bespoke comfort

The Maserati Ghibli isn't just about exhilarating, race-bred performance. It's also about uncompromised comfort – whatever distance lies ahead and however hard you push.

Take the climate control system, for instance. Regardless of the weather outside, dual-zone technology automatically keeps the interior exactly as desired. No fewer than 13 ventilation outlets imperceptibly take care of your heating or cooling needs, which are pre-set using the intuitive Maserati Touch Control display or the panel beneath it. This is also, as you would expect, bespoke comfort thanks to individual climate zones for the driver and front passenger.

The Ghibli keeps the air quality suitably high, too. All models feature an Air Quality Sensor as standard. This monitors external pollution and keeps it out of the cabin. A humidity sensor, meanwhile, makes sure the windows never mist up.

It all means you can stay focused, breathe easy and enjoy the journey.

What's right with it?

We are introducing an enticing sense of journeying/travel. This is appropriate to the GranTurismo promise.

Delivers appropriate detail, but maintains the Maserati voice with its elegance and confidence, rather than getting lost in technical particulars.

The focus is on the user's experience of the vehicle, rather than the details of its features. There should be emotion and creativity even in a less brand-led part of a brochure.

CRM

AUDIENCE NEEDS

CRM emails, DMs and other communications are received by those already lured by the spell of Maserati cars, whether they're prospective customers or existing ones. Their CRM experience should make them feel included, recognised and valued, through the way we talk to them as well as the insider information we offer.

POSITIVES

CRM offers an opportunity for little-and-often, cumulative brand building and advancing customer loyalty. Because the executions are numerous, we can be granular and focus on a particular part of the Maserati story each time. It's also flexible, allowing us to communicate quickly and responsively with news, offers and updates.

PITFALLS

We need to avoid being samey with CRM communications. There is also a risk of being overly formal in our tone of voice, or conversely, forgoing brand by going in for the hard sell. Email is an informal medium, so we need to find an optimum balance.

THE BRAND LADDER

Emails are often concerned with practical details but it's important to keep the emotional benefits in mind too. Nothing about the Maserati experience should be pedestrian or dull, even if it's booking a service or updating your lease details.

EXAMPLE 1

Email: Before

Subject:

Continue the Journey.

Copy:

Dear Mr. Smith,

We trust you're greatly enjoying owning your Maserati Ghibli and that it is contributing to some remarkable experiences and vivid memories.

As your leasing contract is shortly due for renewal, we would like to take this opportunity to introduce the 2017 Maserati Ghibli. The new model encapsulates a host of refinements including Automated Emergency Braking, Stop&Go, Air Quality Sensor and Surround View Camera. And for the first time it is also available in dedicated 'Sport' and 'Luxury' packages.

To discover your favourite version and continue you're Trident Journey, please register below for a test drive.

We look forward to your continued affiliation.

Best regards,
Sample Name

What's wrong with it?

The tone lacks warmth and immediacy, coming across as overly formal and a little old-fashioned.

Subject line is tonally sound but lacks meaning – the email could be about anything.

Information about the features of the Ghibli is reeled off in sentence form, so that it feels cluttered and the reader doesn't have an opportunity to appreciate each benefit.

Email: After

Subject:

The new 2017 Maserati Ghibli – your journey continues

Copy:

Dear Mr. Smith,

We hope that your xx months of Maserati Ghibli ownership have been rewarding and memorable.

We also hope that you are now ready to continue your journey with Maserati. Which is why, now that your current leasing contract is due for renewal, we are introducing you to the 2017 Maserati Ghibli.

Along with a host of refinements, this model offers many new features, including:

- Autonomous Emergency Braking
- Stop & Go
- Air Quality Sensor
- Surround View Camera

For the first time, it is also available with dedicated 'Sport' and 'Luxury' packages, allowing you to tailor the Maserati experience to precisely suit your needs.

We're sure you'll like what you see. But we also know that appreciating a Maserati requires the direct, hands-on experience of a test drive.

Call the number below and we'll make it happen.

00 000 0000 0000

Best regards,
Sample Name

What's right with it?

More information added to the subject line so that there's an idea of what it contains (and why someone should open it).

Pronouns, in particular 'you' (not so much 'we'), are used to create a sense of conversational connection.

Bullets are used to showcase the features and make them easier to read and digest, without the constraints of a sentence structure.

More direct, bold messages (respecting the constraints of the medium).

EXAMPLE 2

Email: Before

Subject:

Maserati Web Request

Dear Name,

Your request has been recorded in the system.

You will be contacted in the following days.

Best Regards,
Maserati Marketing Team

What's wrong with it?

It's functional but little more.

There's no sense of emotion, welcome, excitement or anticipation, or any expression of brand personality.

Given that this is the very first impression a user receives after volunteering their information and interest to the brand, it should work a lot harder.

Email: After

Subject:

Welcome to Maserati

Dear Name,

Thank you for requesting information about Maserati.

Whether you would like a brochure, to talk to one of us about our vehicles or to experience first-hand a unique combination of race-bred exhilaration and sophisticated luxury in a test drive, we are here to help.

We'll be touch soon. Welcome to the Maserati experience.

Best regards,
Maserati

What's right with it?

The tone is polite yet warm and welcoming, but also fairly assertive and direct. Options the user might like to take are included in the email, showing that we have considered their needs and also laying out what they can expect from us.

PRESS RELEASES

AUDIENCE NEEDS

The journalist and media audience stands apart from customers and prospects. Our goal is not for them to embrace the brand itself but to help others to do so, telling the story of Maserati in their own voice. We need to supply them with the information they need to craft a story, providing enough for them to use but not so much that we try to impose our voice onto theirs.

POSITIVES

Press releases are a tried-and-trusted format that gives us a sturdy framework for putting messages across. They can be issued and shared rapidly, and we can produce them responsively rather than to a schedule. Press releases in general have an air of authority that newer digital formats can lack, if not used with care.

PITFALLS

Like a brochure, a press release is a fixed format that is at risk of becoming stale or formulaic, or of being written in a tone that is led by the medium rather than the brand or message. The heading of a press release can make or break it, as a busy journalist is likely to skim over vague or confusing headings in favour of stronger-looking stories.

THE BRAND LADDER

A press release should focus on the technical and functional aspects of the brand ladder, allowing just enough emotive detail to show personality and distinctiveness. Quotes are an opportunity to get a more emotional benefit across, but avoid too much subjectivity.

EXAMPLE 1

Press release: Before

Maserati at Milano AutoClassica

The Milano AutoClassica weekend began today at the Rho Exhibition Centre, and Maserati is there in Hall 12, on a stand of 280 m2 that includes a select group of classic cars, a modern Ghibli S Q4, a Lounge zone and the Maserati Store for the sale of Maserati Official Merchandising

The three Maserati classics on show are very interesting: an exclusive Tipo 6CM, an amazing single-seater racing car dating from the late 1930s; an elegant, glamorous 2+2 3500GT Spyder from the late 1950s, and an aggressive Khamsin, the 2+2 coupé designed by Marcello Gandini and created by Bertone in the 1970s. As well as the three exclusive classic Maserati cars, the stand also proudly displays a contemporary Ghibli S Q4 E-segment executive sedan, on show in the unique stylistic concept version which launched the "Zegna Edition", interiors available on the Maserati Ghibli and Quattroporte sedans and the new Levante SUV.

The stand also incorporates the Maserati Store: with a blend of crafted details and contemporary design, choice quality materials and latest-generation fabrics, it offers for sale the key articles from the four merchandising lines: Maserati Corse, Contemporary, Officine Alfieri Maserati and Classiche. Four stylish collections, sporty and refined, for a look that is always contemporary and up-to-date.

What's wrong with it?

The heading misses an opportunity to add colour and interest.

The piece leads with the event rather than Maserati itself, which throws the focus off right at the start.

Saying 'very interesting' imposes an opinion, rather than showing what's interesting about the cars.

Empty descriptors like amazing, elegant and glamorous take up space without advancing the reader's understanding of what was displayed.

The paragraph about the store is very salesy, without adding any of the detail that may be useful for crafting a story.

Press release: After

Maserati out in force at the Milano AutoClassica

Rare Maserati cars past and present are on display from today at the Milano AutoClassica weekend.

Alongside a select group of classic Maserati cars, a modern Ghibli S Q4 concept is also on show in Hall 12 of the Rho Exhibition Centre.

On the stand:

- Tipo 6CM, single-seat racer. One of just 27 built between 1936 and 1939 for European racing and 'gentleman-driver' customers. The Tipo 6CM finally ended the dominance of the seemingly invincible British E.R.A. racers in 1938.
- 3500GT Spyder, 2+2 from the late 1950s. A true, race-bred GranTurismo, with 220hp, a top speed of over 230km/h, luxury fittings and a spacious boot. One of only 259 made.
- Khamsin, 2+2 coupé. True 1970s exotica, designed by Marcello Gandini for Bertone and featuring a 220hp, 4.9-litre V8 mounted behind the front axle for optimum dynamic balance.
- Ghibli S Q4 concept. This contemporary model launched the "Zegna Edition", interiors for the Maserati Ghibli and Quattroporte sedans and the new Levante SUV

The stand also features the Maserati Store, offering an exclusive range of official merchandise from the Maserati Corse, Contemporary, Officine Alfieri Maserati and Classiche lines.

What's right with it?

The heading clearly indicates the exciting content of the release.

First paragraph leads with Maserati, not the show. The vehicles are front-loaded in the description, with the lounge and store mentioned later rather than alongside the cars.

The paragraph describing the vehicles is leaner and more informative, incorporating distinctive details instead of superlatives.

The paragraph about the store is toned down and made more human-focused.

EXAMPLE 2

Press release: Before

Italian luxury car manufacturer Maserati re-enters India

Italian luxury car manufacturer Maserati has announced its re-entry into the Indian market. The renewed focus on the Indian market is in line with Maserati's growth strategy as the market bears significant potential for the brand over the medium term.

Maserati has grown its worldwide annual sales to 36,500 units in 2014 through entering new markets and new additions to its product portfolio. The GranTurismo and GranCabrio were joined by the 6th generation of the Quattroporte and the new Ghibli – Maserati's first four-door sports executive sedan in the E-segment. All models are being produced in Maserati's native Italy.

What's wrong with it?

There should be no need to say 'Italian luxury car manufacturer' if this press release is being pitched to the automotive media, and 're-enters' suggests a past failure.

The first line repeats the heading, wasting precious space at the start of the release.

Being in line with Maserati's growth strategy is of relevance to the business, but it's unlikely to be the case for anyone else. Likewise, the growth information isn't specific to the Indian market and seems too general to make a good story.

Press release: After

Maserati branches out into India with three new dealerships

Indian customers will soon be able to see and test drive the new Ghibli, Levante, GranTurismo and other legendary Maserati models in New Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore.

This development follows strong worldwide growth for Maserati, which continues to branch out with new models and new markets.

The brand will operate out of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles India. Three dealerships are planned to open in the major hubs of New Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore in the third quarter of 2015.

'More and more customers in India are asking for something different. Not just luxury and technical sophistication but also full-blooded excitement and real character. Maserati offers this. And we're all really excited to be starting this journey with them,' says xx xxx xxx, of xxxxx.

AMP Supercars Pvt. Ltd. in New Delhi, Bagga Luxury Motorcars LLP in Mumbai and Jubilant Autoworks Pvt. Ltd. in Bangalore will all be representing Maserati. Dedicated Maserati service facilities, which are fully in line with Maserati global standards, are also planned for all locations.

Maserati has grown its worldwide annual sales to 36,500 units in 2014, and recently added the 6th generation Quattroporte and the new four-door Ghibli to its range. All models are being produced in Maserati's native Italy.

What's right with it?

The heading has a more positive spin and the name Maserati isn't qualified by 'luxury car'.

The first line is used to deliver a different part of the story than the heading.

The quote works for us by introducing a voice that can articulate our GranTurismo promise.

The story is pitched in terms of its interest to the general reader, rather than the brand.

WEB CONTENT

AUDIENCE NEEDS

An online audience is as varied as it is large. Readers can arrive at any point, from anywhere. So it's important to keep content as accessible as possible and avoid assuming knowledge. Web users read quickly and impatiently, scanning content in a non-linear way. So it's wise to make content modular and easy to digest at speed, with informative headings that help the scanning process.

POSITIVES

Web content offers as much space as you need, with as much variety as you can ask for. As the default information platform of the 21st century, online provides virtually infinite reach across space and time.

PITFALLS

Short attention spans, low trust, a crowded field and the load on working memory imposed by mobile screens. Your message needs to be concise and focused to cut through the noise. It's also important to maintain credibility by writing in a consistent style and maintaining good proofing and editing practices.

THE BRAND LADDER

Aspects of the brand ladder should flow from high-level emotional and aspirational benefits taking the lead on homepages and landing pages, with functional and technical detail coming through more at deeper levels.

EXAMPLE 1

Web content: Before

Certified Pre-Owned

Emotions without worries

The exclusive “Maserati Certified Pre-Owned” program will conform each certified vehicle to the highest standards and will also satisfy the needs of the most demanding customers. All you need to do is enjoy the timeless emotion of driving your Maserati.

The program is applicable to the following models: Ghibli, Quattroporte, GranTurismo, GranTurismo MC Stradale, GranCabrio.

What’s wrong with it?

This reads like a mission statement with its ‘will conform’ and ‘will also satisfy’.

Emotions without worries is awkward as worry is an emotion. (Reads like a translation, so it blocks.)

‘Is applicable to’ is unnecessarily wordy.

Web content: After

Certified Pre-owned

Luxury without compromise

All models in the exclusive Maserati Certified Pre-owned program are meticulously checked by our technicians according to the highest standards.

That means every Certified Maserati meets the requirements of the most discerning customer, and delivers on a unique promise of race-bred exhilaration and sophisticated luxury – without compromise.

Ghibli, Quattroporte, GranTurismo, GranTurismo MC Stradale and GranCabrio models are available.

What’s right with it?

Copy is clear and focused. It fulfils the objection-handling done by the initial copy, but without the awkward phrasing.

Simple and focused GranTurismo messaging tied to the need for reassurance when buying used.

EXAMPLE 2

Web content: Before

Watches

The technical perfection and attention to detail that Maserati dedicates to every single car it makes is reflected here in its chronographs. The most iconic elements in the history and design of Maserati are captured in these original, classy creations.

What's wrong with it?

The word 'chronograph' is too esoteric for most people to recognise.

'Classy' and 'original' are too generic and casual to describe Maserati products.

Web content: After

Watches

Every Maserati watch is the embodiment the Maserati brand – technically perfect, elegantly crafted, innovative, inspirational. Wherever life takes you, you'll feel the passion of Maserati in every second.

What's right with it?

The copy focuses on the watch, rather than the cars, while bringing in the heritage and appeal of the brand. Descriptors are more in line with the price point and target customer.

Short. Incisive.

GranTurismo journey message (journey/passion).

Maserati Tone of Voice Guide
Version 1

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