# 

# Book Proposal

Proposed Book Title: API Guidelines

Subtitle: Creating and Managing Guidance for a Successful API Journey

Author(s): Erik Wilde

Author title(s) and affiliation(s): Axway

Mailing address(es): Salvatorstrasse 33, 8050 Zurich, Switzerland

Phone number: +41-79-6431851

Preferred Email address(es): erik.wilde@dret.net

## About the Author(s)

*Author biography (write in the 3rd person as you would like the bio to appear on Amazon):*

Erik Wilde is a well-known practitioner, consultant, and writer in the API space. In his roles at major software companies (he currently works at Axway) he has always focused on educating organizations how to establish and run API programs. APIs are the connective tissue of digital transformation, and one of the major roles of APIs is to become the “ubiquitous language” that is used across an organization. Erik starts by explaining the importance of this language for an organization’s digital transformation success. He continues by describing how to establish guidelines that make defining and evolving the ubiquitous language something that improves communications across teams. In this book, Erik clearly explains why API guidelines are important, what is essential for defining and managing them effectively, and how this can be done inside organizations. Erik also includes a sample set of guidelines to start with, but in the end, it is important that each organization creates and manages their own ubiquitous language for their digital transformation efforts.

*LinkedIn profile:* [*https://www.linkedin.com/in/netdret/*](https://www.linkedin.com/in/netdret/)

*Twitter handle:* [*https://twitter.com/dret*](https://twitter.com/dret)

*Author public speaking samples (YouTube, etc.):* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwrrI3EHpGY*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwrrI3EHpGY)*,* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7iKsytDDc8g*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7iKsytDDc8g)*,* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIAURl0WccY*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIAURl0WccY)*,* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-pmqCwaLSA*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-pmqCwaLSA)

## Marketing Description

*In 1-2 paragraphs, summarize what the book is about, like you would pitch it to a potential reader on the back cover. What makes your book unique in the marketplace?*

APIs are the connective tissue of digital transformation, and each organization embarking on their digitalization journey should have an API strategy, and API program to put the strategy into action, and API guidelines as an essential component of this program. API guidelines are the representation of an organization’s API culture, and it is important that they are created, managed, and evolved as a shared set of principles, patterns, and practices. In the end, API guidelines establish one very simple and very important principle in the API space: “This is how we tend to do things around here.”

Establishing and managing API guidelines follows the general shift in mindset that comes with moving from traditional centralized command-and-control IT architecture to a modern decentralized approach: Digital transformation is all about enabling and building new value chains, and APIs make it easy to assemble these new value chains. API guidelines are the representation of a culture where all teams produce and consume APIs, thus always contributing to the evolving API landscape of the organization. Like APIs themselves, the culture and practices around APIs are continuously changing, meaning that guidelines must be a living and shared document. This book clearly explains why guidelines matter, what matters when it comes to managing them, and how organizations can get started with their own API guidelines.

## About the Topic

*Briefly explain the topic and why it is important.*

API guidelines are one essential building block of an API program (which in turn is one essential building block of digital transformation). Many organizations today struggle with defining and adopting API guidelines. There are popular ones that have been shared by large organizations, and these in most cases are good starting points. But it still matters that guidelines reflect an organizations specific approach to using APIs, and that they are managed so that teams find them helpful and relevant rather than burdensome and potentially outdated.

The main focus of this book is not on presenting actual guidelines, but on presenting how to write and manage guidelines. Modern IT architecture in large organizations has moved away from centralized decisions, and has moved towards decentralized approaches, with the role of “enterprise IT” becoming one of enablers and supporters of individual teams. The goal is to regulate as little as possible, but as much as necessary. API guidelines often are used as a way to establish and communicate this approach, and this book helps to better understand the role of API guidelines, and to better understand how to properly play that role.

## Audience

*In 1-2 paragraphs, explain who the primary audience is for your book. What professional positions do they hold? What positions are they considering next in their careers? What knowledge do you assume of them? What books can you assume they have read? What skills can you assume they have mastered?*

One target group of this book are members of “API platform” or “API center for enablement” teams, which nowadays often are created as part of traditional enterprise IT, but their role is to empower individual teams throughout the organization. One of their roles often is to establish, manage, and evolve API guidelines.

Another target group are managers and practitioners in the API space. Establishing a robust and healthy API culture is not trivial, and API guidelines play a central role in this task. By better understanding the role of API guidelines and how to manage them, everybody being part of the “API practice” group in an organization can more effectively help to establish and improve guidelines.

Readers of this book either want to become better at becoming part of the API culture in their organization, or they want to move into roles that work across teams and help the API culture and platform of their organizations.

It is expected that readers have a good understanding of what APIs are, and which role they play in large organizations and in digital transformation. Readers of this book also should have an understanding of how individual APIs make up entire “API landscapes”, and how one of the main values of these landscapes is to continuously evolve, as for example explained in the book “Continuous API Management”.

*Estimate how many people will use this technology. Please state any applicable statistics (e.g., Google Trends, analyst reports, blogs, leading companies adopting the topic of your book) indicating market use or market potential.*

API management is still a rising topic. While digital transformation is more than just APIs, without APIs digital transformation cannot happen. As part of API management, API guidelines are one building block that many organizations either are looking for, or already have. Many large organizations are struggling with how to make sure that API guidelines are useful and relevant as part of their API program, and this books fills this gap which so far no other book is addressing.

*Please provide some scenarios that indicate how the audience will use your book. For example, will readers refer to it daily as a reference? Will they read it once to learn the concepts and then refer to it occasionally?*

Since this book is not about a technology, it will not be a reference that people use every day. It is about how to produce and manage guidance in large-scale digital transformation scenarios. However, there is practical guidance in the book that readers can refer to frequently, for example how to establish guidelines that are relevant and useful, and how to establish practices around evolving the API guidelines. The goal of the book is to be not overly long, so that people can go back to it frequently and find advice about good API guidance looks like.

# What the reader will learn — and how to apply it

By the end of this book the reader will understand:

* Why API guidelines matter
* What to put (and what to not put) into API guidelines
* How to structure guidelines for maximum effectiveness
* How to publish guidelines so that they can be easily consumed and edited
* How to manage guidelines so that they are a living and shared document
* How to evolve guidelines so that they do not become overwhelming

And the reader will be able to:

* Establish their own API guidelines
* Manage or be part of managing API guidelines
* Make sure that API guidelines remain effective and useful
* Help the organization to maintain guidelines that all teams use and contribute to

## Keywords

*What are the trending terms for the topics covered in your book?*

API, API Management, Digital Transformation, API Platforms, API Guidelines

## Other Book Features

*Will there be a github site for code samples?*

Yes, but I am still working on it.

## Software Dependencies

*What software updates or releases could potentially impact the release of your book?*

None.

## Competing Titles

*What print books compete with your book? Please list at least 3 books from other publishers and include title, author, ISBN, publisher name and year. Explain how your book will be different or better in timing, content, coverage, approach or tone than each competing title.*

The following books are about API management and design, but they are not so much about large-scale API management. There currently are (to my knowledge) not any books about large-scale API management, or at least none that explain the teams in charge of supporting APIs and the API landscape how to best do this.

1. The Design of Web APIs, Arnaud Lauret, 9781617295102, Manning, 2019

2. Enterprise API Management, Luis Weir, 9781787284432, Packt, 2019

3. API Management, Brajesh De, 9781484213063, 2017

## Related O’Reilly Titles

*What O’Reilly book(s) cover similar topics or related technology?*

1. Continuous API Management

## Book Outline

*Until we can envision your book in exceedingly concrete terms, we cannot know whether to sign it. Include a detailed outline for the project here, following the example format below. (If proposing a second edition, please highlight changes from the previous edition.)*

* Part I: Why API Guidelines
  + Chapter 1: The Big Picture: Digital Transformation, API Strategy, API Programs, and API Guidelines
  + Chapter 2: API Guidelines as Emerging and Evolving Practice
  + Chapter 3: Helping Teams on their API Journeys
* Part II: API Guidelines as a Product
  + Chapter 4: Release Early, Release Often, Listen to your Users
  + Chapter 5: From MVP to User-Driven Development
  + Chapter 6: Focusing on Participation and UX
* Part III: Structuring Guidelines
  + Chapter 7: The Rule of Two: There is no Best Practice
  + Chapter 8: Why, What, How, and Test: The Structure of a Guideline
  + Chapter 9: Additional Metadata for Better Guideline Management
* Part IV: Sharing and Managing Guidelines
  + Chapter 10: Guidelines as a Shared Resource
  + Chapter 11: Contributing and Commenting
  + Chapter 12: The Editorial Role for Guideline Management
* Part V: Platforms and Processes
  + Chapter 13: Using GitHub as API Guideline Platform
  + Chapter 14: Managing Guideline Contributions on GitHub
  + Chapter 15: From Editorial Models to Open Source

## Specs and Schedule

*How many pages do you expect the book to be?*

Up for discussion, and depends on which seems likely to be a successful format. Not a very large book, so maybe around 150 pages.

*Will you be using illustrations or screenshots?*

Yes.

*Do any special considerations apply to your plans for the book, including unusual format, use of color, hard-to-get illustrations, or anything else calling for unusual resources?*

No.

*What do you anticipate your delivery schedule to be? Please fill out the following:*

Two draft chapters to be delivered by: End of March 2020

Half draft manuscript to be delivered by: End of May 2020

Full draft manuscript ready for tech review delivered by: End of July 2020

Final and full manuscript ready for production: End of August 2020