**Group Report:**

**Improving Written Communication Strategies at Finestyle**

**Course**: Bachelor of IT/Bachelor of IT with a specialization in Cyber Security

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**Improving Finestyle’s Written Communication Strategies**

**Executive Summary**

This report reviews Finestyle’s current written communication strategies and provides recommendations for improvements. The key areas of focus include target audience characteristics, writing style features, stakeholder communication, and online written communication.

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**Introduction**

Finestyle is one of the largest retailers in Australia and New Zealand seeking to improve its written communication strategies. This report deals with the key questions Seth, Finestyle’s corporate communication manager, has raised concerning target audience characteristics, writing style features, stakeholder communication improvements, and general online written communication enhancement.

Seth, Finestyle’s corporate communication manager, has been tasked with reviewing and improving the company’s communication strategies to ensure messages are clearly understood by internal and external stakeholders. This report aims to analyze the effectiveness of Finestyle’s current written communication and recommend enhancements that align with the company’s strategic goals.

**Objectives**

The key objectives of this report are:

1. **Reviewing current written communication strategies**: Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of existing practices across internal and external channels.
2. **Improving communication**: Proposing improvements that enhance the clarity, effectiveness, and engagement of written communications with stakeholders.

**Executive Summary**

This report examines Finestyle's current written communication strategies and identifies opportunities for improvement in internal and external communication with stakeholders. By analyzing the company's communication channels, this report provides actionable recommendations to enhance clarity, engagement, and the effectiveness of Finestyle’s messaging. Key improvements suggested include tailoring communication to different audience segments, refining the company’s writing style, optimizing communication for online platforms, and ensuring consistency across communication mediums.

**Introduction**

Finestyle is a prominent Australian retailer with over 200 stores across Australia and New Zealand, supported by a growing e-commerce platform. Effective communication is vital to maintaining the company’s relationships with its 15,000 staff and large customer base. Written communication channels include letters, emails, reports, manuals, forms, and digital platforms like the company website and intranet.

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**Methodologies**

The research methodology used in this report includes:

1. **Literature Review**: A review of existing academic literature on effective business communication and stakeholder management.
2. **Stakeholder Interviews**: Interviews with internal staff and a sample of external stakeholders (e.g., customers) to gather feedback on the current communication practices.
3. **Document Analysis**: Analyzing samples of written communication, including emails, reports, and web content, to assess their effectiveness in terms of structure, tone, and audience engagement.

**Information Analysis**

Internal Communication:

* Emails.
* Reports and manuals.

External Communication:

* Website content.
* Customer emails.

**Recommendations:**

**1. Target Audience Characteristics**

Understanding the target audience is crucial for evaluating the success of Finestyle’s written communication strategies. Seth should consider the following characteristics:

1. **Demographics**: This involves age bracket, gender, occupation, where they live among others. For example, younger audiences might prefer how things are done on digital platforms while older audiences might prefer the hard copies of how things are done. This means people tend to pay attention to the factors above for the messages to be more appropriate.
2. **Psychographics**: These are people’s interests, values, beliefs, and lifestyle. Understanding what drives people can improve the storytelling and therefore capture the audience. For example, green customers may be more responsive to advertising that promotes the company’s green initiatives rather than just its products.
3. **Behavioral Aspects**: This includes how the audience has purchased from Finestyle, how loyal they are to the brand, and how much are their interactions with Finestyle. Messaging these supporters based on this behavior can yield better results as well as higher satisfaction levels.
4. **Cultural Background**: Awareness and understanding of such issues are crucial so as to avoid impolite messages and also guarantees that the information is intended for the intended audience. This perspective is very useful in a pluralistic society such as Australia and New Zealand.
5. **Technological Proficiency**: The level of adoption of technology by the audience may affect which approaches of communication are employed and how simple or hard the messages can be. For example, customers who are familiar with technology may wish to engage with interactivity and elements such as video.

**2. Features of Writing Style for Effective Communication**

To ensure that messages are understood by the target audience, the following writing style features should be adhered to:

A. **Clarity:** Express yourself understandably and simplify language to avoid confusion. Special language and professionals’ terms should only be used if necessary. Speaking to the audience in plain language ensures a clear appreciation of the message by all the audience.

B. **Conciseness:** Make sure that every message contains only information that the audience should be included. This helps to bring forth the aspects of the message within a short time. It is and has always been important to be brief in writing and especially in the current technological era.

C. **Correctness:** Make use of accurate information and write without making mistakes. This enhances how credible the audience perceives the information they are receiving. Being correct also has the responsibility of being accurate with the information and how current it may be.

D. **Consistency:** Ensure uniformity in the tone and style used in all the communication means employed. This is important in the reinforcement of the brand identity and the audience receiving a consistent communication. Consistency sometimes also means sticking to the same stylistic and conceptual norms across separate documents and editors.

E. **Courtesy:** Respect the audience as much as possible when speaking or writing. When done well it promotes a good interaction with the audience and makes them want to actively participate. Being courteous also means appreciating the audience and trying to be useful through the communication made.

F. **Engagement**: Use active voice and engaging language to make the content more interesting and dynamic. Engaging writing captures the audience’s attention and encourages them to take action, whether it’s making a purchase or providing feedback.

**3. Improving Communication with Stakeholders Internally and Externally**

Effective communication with stakeholders is vital for Finestyle’s success. Here are some strategies to improve both internal and external communication:

**Internal Communication:**

1. **Regular Updates**: Internal communication involves regular updates on corporate news, policy, and processes via email, intranet, and newsletters. Regular communication keeps staff informed and on track with the company's goals.
2. **Feedback Mechanisms**: Implement avenues for staff feedback and suggestions. This can include surveys, suggestion boxes, and frequent meetings. Feedback tools help employees feel heard and valued.
3. **Training Programs**: Training Programs: Provide instruction on good communication skills and the use of communication tools. Training programs assist staff enhance their communication skills and make better use of the company's communication resources.
4. **Transparent Communication**: Transparent Communication: Create an open culture that ensures employees feel informed and valued. Transparent communication fosters trust and promotes a collaborative working atmosphere.
5. **External Communication:**
6. **Personalized Messages**: Personalize communications to fit the needs and tastes of different client segments. Personalized communication increases client pleasure and loyalty.
7. **Multi-Channel Approach**: Use multiple communication channels, including social media, email, and blogs, to reach a larger audience. A multichannel strategy guarantees that communications reach the intended audience via their preferred channels.
8. **Customer Feedback**: Gather consumer input to improve services and communication techniques. Customer feedback identifies areas for development and improves the entire customer experience.
9. **Consistent Branding**: Consistent Branding: Make sure all external communications represent the brand's values and identity consistently. Consistent branding enhances the company's image and fosters confidence among its audience.

**4. Key Points for Improving Online Written Communication**

When working on improvements in online written communication, Seth should consider the following key points:

1. **User Experience**: Make sure the website and online platforms are easy to navigate. This includes clear headlines, simple menus, and easily accessible content. A pleasant user experience encourages visitors to remain longer and interact with the material.
2. **SEO Optimization**: Improve online content visibility through search engine optimization (SEO). This involves the use of relevant keywords, meta descriptions, and picture alt text. SEO optimization attracts more people to the website and boosts the company's online visibility.
3. **Engaging Content**: Create compelling and valuable content that speaks to the audience's needs and interests. This may include blog postings, articles, and social media updates. Engaging material retains the audience's attention and motivates them to return for more.
4. **Interactive Elements**: Use interactive components like movies, infographics, and quizzes to make material more interesting and shareable. Interactive components improve the user experience and promote social sharing.
5. **Feedback and Analytics**: Track online content performance and collect user feedback. This information can be used to make sound judgments and continual improvements. Feedback and analytics help to determine what works and what doesn't, allowing for continuous improvement.

**Conclusion**

Effective written communication is critical to Finestyle's success in both internal and external relationships. By knowing the target audience, sticking to essential writing style elements, increasing stakeholder communication, and improving online written communication, Seth can ensure that Finestyle's communications are clear, consistent, and impactful.

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