

# The Importance of Editing and Proofreading

Essential tools for business and how to prevent mistakes from blemishing your company's overall impression.



Most business people worry about what to say and how to say it when they write a document, but few are worried about editing and fewer still about proofreading.

"If you send out emails, letters, proposals, reports, and other documents that are poorly written and have typos or other errors, your reputation suffers."

Proofreading is essential in business; however, one little blemish can detract from an entire piece, causing a customer's overall impression to suffer. Mistakes and imperfections convey carelessness in any kind of work, and in the workplace, the stakes are even higher. A piece that is ridden with errors

in spelling, punctuation, and grammar is difficult to read and undermines the credibility and authority you have probably worked hard to achieve for your business.

In addition to being a necessity, editing and proofreading can have a positive business impact. They can help increase your credibility, improve customer loyalty, and even help increase sales and revenues.

## **Common Misconceptions**

With professional editing and proofreading services making it possible for every business to always have error-free communications, why are many businesses still not taking advantage of these services?

According to Papercheck, LLC, one of professional writers' biggest misconceptions is that computers can do the job with their built-in software for checking spelling and grammar. It is a fact that spell check will not catch all the mistakes in your text. Specifically, it will not catch misspellings that form other valid words.

"These 'checkers' are not yet on par with professional editors and proofreaders," says Darren Shafae, founder of Papercheck. For example, spell-check software cannot "read" for context with regard to homophones, or words that sound alike but are spelled differently, such as "two" and "too" or "team" and "teem." As a result, notes Shafae, it pays to work with a real editor and proofreader and not just depend on the ones that came with your word processor.

### The Experience of One Small Business

One small business that has made the transition to a professional editing and proofreading service is an

independent advertising and public relations firm in south Florida. The firm outsourced its editing and proofreading to Papercheck about five years ago after witnessing too many mistakes getting through to documents edited using the computer's spell check and grammar check. Now the firm has a proofing system in place so that three to four pairs of eyes review those very important documents before they go to clients—or to the press.

As a business that believes it is worth being overly cautious to avoid mistakes, Papercheck reviews a variety of documents such as marketing proposals, magazine articles, and manuscripts.

The focus is first on editing the document, checking for accuracy, style, and clarity of details prior to technical aspects such as punctuation. Are the dates correct, for example? Can the sentences be easily understood by readers? Is the document structured in a logical manner? If there are problems in the overall presentation of the manuscript, it is the editor's job to clean it up.

After that, the document moves to the process of proofreading. Proofreading ensures that the final written document is free of grammatical errors, misspellings, typos, ambiguous vocabulary, and other inconsistencies. It is the final and most essential step that must be taken before a document can be considered complete.



A simple typo, misspelling, or improperly phrased sentence may convey a message contrary to what was intended. Such mistakes in advertising and promotional materials (as well as websites and business documents) can create an unprofessional company image and may turn off potential clients. Errors may even change the meaning of content, giving customers a false impression; conversely, thoroughly proofread content helps readers grasp its meaning and makes a document more credible

#### Why Have Others Read It

Editing and proofreading are services on which you really cannot afford to compromise, no matter the size of your organization. You should not try to revise your own work. After reading your own writing numerous times, you become immune to mistakes in your work.

When fresh eyes see your document, they are likely to catch some errors you missed. After all, it is much harder to detect mistakes in your own writing than in someone else's!

Though editing and proofreading are crucial, they are nevertheless tedious, unexciting, and time-consuming jobs. Here's where a professional editing and proofreading service can help.

# Do not Underestimate the Importance of Editing and Proofreading

The importance of editing and proofreading cannot be underestimated. When you or someone from your business communicates within or outside your company, the correspondence is a reflection of your business. If you send out emails, letters, proposals, reports, and other documents that are poorly written and have typos or other errors, your reputation suffers.

More than a company's reputation can also suffer. Mistakes and imperfections in any kind of work can cause harm. Typos and grammatical errors have caused retailers to suffer sales losses, companies to lose investors, employers to face lawsuits, and businesses to incur costly reprints of printed materials.



#### **About Papercheck**

Papercheck, LLC is a San Franciscobased company that offers essay editing and proofreading services in addition to innovative services such as Deadline Advance and SMS Notification.

Established in 2001, Papercheck, LLC provides students and businesses instant access to editors—24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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