

NetCom Learning

Voice & Editorial Support

Case study by Lillian Teague

Background

A global leader in IT training and certification with over 3,000 certified instructors and 24+ years of business experience needed to create content that would resonate with an American audience. NetCom Learning offered technical training across major platforms, including Microsoft, AWS, CompTIA, Cisco, Adobe, and more, but faced challenges with content consistency across their diverse team of highly skilled technical writers. With a client base that included 80% of Fortune 1000 companies and over a million learners trained, the stakes for clear, consistent technical communication were high. This was the challenge I tackled as their Editorial Specialist.

Challenge

NetCom Learning faced several critical content challenges:

- Creating technical content that would resonate with an American audience while maintaining technical accuracy
- Establishing consistency across a distributed team of highly specialized technical writers
- Developing clear voice and tone guidelines for complex technical subject matter
- Balancing educational value with marketing effectiveness in course descriptions
- Ensuring quality control across thousands of training course descriptions and materials
- Standardizing terminology across multiple technology platforms and certification paths

Details

Before diving into the how-to, here's what you need to know about this case study:

My role: Editorial Specialist, focusing on voice, tone, and quality control

Company: NetCom Learning – a global IT training and certification provider

Business model: B2B and B2C technical training across major IT platforms

Challenge: Transform highly technical content created by specialized writers into:

- Consistent, clearly branded communications for an American audience
- Accessible descriptions that maintained technical accuracy
- Quality-controlled content across thousands of course offerings

Scale: Working across communications and web content for 4,000+ courses covering dozens of technology platforms

Timeline: Two years of ongoing editorial support

Key results:

- Standardized voice and terminology across all course descriptions
- Increased course enrollment from American corporate clients
- Reduced editing cycles for new content by 45%
- Improved content creator efficiency through clear guidelines
- Established sustainable quality control processes

My approach

I developed a comprehensive editorial framework that addressed both technical accuracy and audience-appropriate voice:

1. **Technical voice assessment:** I conducted a thorough audit of existing content, identifying inconsistencies in terminology, structure, and tone. This revealed wide variations in how technical concepts were presented across different technology platforms and instructors.
2. **American market alignment:** I created guidelines specifically addressing American business communication preferences, including directness, benefit-focused language, and cultural references that would resonate with U.S. corporate clients.
3. **Technical accuracy preservation:** I developed a system for editorial review that maintained the technical integrity of content while standardizing presentation. This included creating a comprehensive glossary of technical terms with approved usage across platforms.

4. **Quality control workflow:** I established a multi-stage review process that ensured all content met both technical and editorial standards before publication, creating checkpoints specifically for technical accuracy, brand voice, and market alignment.
5. **Writer enablement:** I built templates, examples, and desk references that helped NetCom's diverse technical writing team maintain consistency without sacrificing their subject matter expertise or spending excessive time on formatting and style issues.

This approach transformed NetCom's technical communications from inconsistent and variable to clearly branded, technically accurate, and accessible to their American target audience.

Results

My editorial framework had measurable business impact:

- Course descriptions maintained a consistent voice while preserving technical accuracy
- Reduced editing cycles by 45%, improving time-to-market for new course offerings
- Increased enrollment from American corporate clients
- Standardized terminology across multiple technology platforms
- Improved client understanding of technical course content, reducing pre-sales support needs
- Created sustainable processes for ongoing quality control as new courses were developed

The editorial system I developed enabled NetCom Learning to effectively communicate complex technical information to non-technical decision-makers while maintaining the technical precision their professional audience required.

Mistakes to avoid when standardizing technical voice

When developing editorial standards for technical subject matter, here are the critical mistakes I've learned to avoid:

1. **Don't sacrifice technical accuracy for readability.** Many organizations oversimplify complex concepts in an attempt to make them more accessible. The

key is enhancing understanding through structure and context, not by diluting technical content.

2. **Avoid imposing generic voice guidelines on technical content.** Standard marketing voice often conflicts with technical precision. Creating guidelines specifically designed for technical communication is essential.
3. **Don't underestimate the importance of technical writer buy-in.** Subject matter experts are protective of their knowledge. Involving them in the development of editorial guidelines ensures both accuracy and adoption.
4. **Beware of inconsistent technical terminology.** Different platforms and certifications often use similar terms in subtly different ways. Creating a comprehensive glossary ensures clarity across diverse technical domains.

The #1 secret behind my success

If I had to identify the single factor that made the biggest difference in this project, it was my **development of a layered editorial approach that separated technical accuracy from voice standards.**

Most content standardization projects attempt to address all aspects of quality simultaneously. I built a system that recognized different layers of editorial concerns:

- **Technical Layer:** Ensuring accuracy of specifications, processes, and terminology
- **Structural Layer:** Creating consistent organization and hierarchy across diverse technical topics
- **Voice Layer:** Applying appropriate tone while respecting the constraints of technical subject matter
- **Market Layer:** Adapting content to meet the expectations of the American business audience

This "layered editorial approach" meant technical writers could focus first on accuracy, then apply consistent structure, and finally adjust voice and market alignment. By separating these concerns, I created a process that:

- Respected the expertise of technical subject matter experts
- Ensured consistency without sacrificing precision
- Made complex technical content accessible to diverse audiences
- Scaled efficiently across thousands of course descriptions

The question isn't "How do we make technical content sound more engaging?" but "How do we preserve technical integrity while creating a consistent, market-appropriate voice?"

Want to see how I bring that same value to your editorial project? Let's connect!

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