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doTERRA International In-House Style Guide

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doTERRA International, LLC (doterra.com) is a worldwide company with its global headquarters based in Pleasant Grove, Utah. It produces and distributes Certified Pure Therapeutic Grade® (CPTG) essential oils through more than three million independent distributors around the world. In addition to its line of essential oils, the company also distributes various other naturally safe, effective, essential-oil infused products: personal care and spa products, nutritional supplements, and healthy living products.

doTERRA strives to improve lives throughout the world. It started a foundation called the doTERRA Healing Hands Foundation. Its mission is to bring healing and hope to the world, helping people be free of disease and poverty. Ultimately, the Healing Hands Foundation would like to teach third-world countries and cultures to be self-reliant. Among other projects, the doTERRA Healing Hands Foundation is involved in providing clean water wells and programs, building schools and clinics, and providing medical equipment and resources to hospitals.

Because doTERRA is an international, far-reaching company that ships products to customers in nearly 100 countries and has corporate offices in 17 countries, it must clearly communicate with people that speak many different languages in order to be successful.

This in-house style guide is intended to improve clarity and consistency in communication for doTERRA's online publications and other distribution products; it is therefore intended for a global audience. This guide will comply with standards in *The Chicago Manual of Style* (sixteenth edition). This guide will specifically cover style decisions not covered by *Chicago*, as well as company-specific style decisions. It will also incorporate aspects of global English in order to better communicate with its audience, complying with principles from *The Global English Style Guide: Writing Clear, Translatable Documentation for a Global Market* by John R. Kohl (2008, SAS Press: Cary, North Carolina, ISBN 978-1-59994-657-3).

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5 Grammar and Usage

5.1 Positive Verb Use

According to Kohl 3.12, positive writing is clearer than negative writing; “. . . if you can accurately express an idea either positively or negatively, then express it positively.”

The doTERRA Healing Hands Foundation seeks to bring healing and hope to the world and **empower** impoverished communities with the tools needed to become self-reliant.

NOT

The doTERRA Healing Hands Foundation seeks to bring healing and hope to the world, **by not dictating** but helping impoverished communities with the tools needed to become self-reliant.

5.2 Verb Suffixes/Prefixes

According to Kohl 2.3, do not add verb suffixes or prefixes to nouns, acronyms, initialisms, or conjunctions. Kohl says, “It is difficult and time-consuming for translators to determine what such words mean and to find other ways of expressing them.” (See also *Chicago* 5.23.)

This commitment to quality ensures that every essential oil **is** Certified Pure Therapeutic Grade® (**CPTG**) before distribution.

NOT

This commitment to quality ensures that doTERRA only **distributes CPTG’d** (Certified Pure Therapeutic Grade®) essential oils.

5.3 Verb-Centered Writing

Kohl 3.3 stresses the importance of using “verbs to convey the most significant actions in your sentences. This guideline is not specific to Global English, but it is so important to clear, readable, translatable communication that it deserves special emphasis.”

doTERRA’S Wellness Advocates **sell** essential oils all over the world.

NOT

doTERRA’S Wellness Advocates **enable** essential oil **sales** all over the world.

5.4 Complete Verbs

Do not use long interrupters between verb elements in lists. Using complete verbs is necessary for clear understanding; repeat words if necessary to avoid stranded verb elements.

The company's president **has** been involved in the global world of direct selling and **has** lived and worked in Hong Kong, Japan, China, Australia, and the United States.

NOT

The company's president **has** been involved in the global world of direct selling and lived and worked in Hong Kong, Japan, China, Australia, and the United States.

5.5 Singular and Plural Nouns

It is important to maintain parallelism when referencing two nouns. Kohl 2.9 states, "When you are discussing two nouns that exist in some kind of a relationship, be sure to convey the relationship accurately."

The sales items from 2012 **each** have a standard price.

NOT

The sales items from 2012 have a standard price.

5.6 Noun Phrases

Use articles in each noun phrase to increase clarity and consistency. Use the appropriate article for each definite or indefinite noun phrase. See Kohl 6.2.

Buy **the** Deep Blue Rub, **a** Cleanse & Restore Kit, and **the** Citrus Bliss Blend for a reduced price today only.

NOT

Buy Deep Blue Rub, Cleanse & Restore Kit, and Citrus Bliss Blend for a reduced price today only.

5.7 Relative Clauses

In *Chicago*, omitting the antecedent (that, who, which) is sometimes acceptable if it does not affect the sentence's meaning. However, Kohl states, "In Global English, you should almost always include these relative pronouns in order to make the sentence structure explicit." (Kohl 6.4) Always include relative pronouns in order to increase coherency.

The essential oils **that** you purchased will be beneficial for many parts of your daily routine.

NOT

The essential oils you purchased will be beneficial for many parts of your daily routine.

5.8 Precision of Language

Kohl 2.1 talks about being logical, literal, and precise in all language use. This is especially important for doTERRA, as it is a global company that markets to people from many different language backgrounds.

doTERRA Certified Pure Therapeutic Grade® (CPTG) essential oils represent the safest and most beneficial **oils** available in the world today.

NOT

doTERRA Certified Pure Therapeutic Grade® (CPTG) essential oils represent the safest and most beneficial available in the world today.

6 Punctuation

6.1 Sentence Length

Short sentences are most helpful in conveying clear meanings to an audience. Kohl 3.1 states, “Short sentences are less likely than long sentences to contain ambiguities and complexities that impede translation and reduce readability.”

Jenny Smith had been building experience for a doTERRA business for years. **She** worked as a yoga instructor, Pilates teacher, and health coach. **She** also managed a major health club in Colorado.

NOT

Without knowing it, Jenny Smith had for years been building ideal experience for a doTERRA business: she worked as a yoga instructor, Pilates teacher, health coach, as well as managed a major health club in Colorado.

6.2 Serial Comma

In a list of more than two items, a comma preceding the *and* is optional under some style guides. However, *Chicago* 6.18 says that using the serial comma avoids confusion and prevents possible misreading. Always use a serial comma in a list of two or more items.

doTERRA's most popular oils are Lemon, Peppermint, and Lavender.

NOT

doTERRA'S most popular oils are Lemon, Peppermint and Lavender.

6.3 Commas with Locations

Always use a comma after both the city and state (or country) in running text. (See *Chicago* 6.46.)

The doTERRA Healing Hands Foundation has assisted in the education efforts for children in Uurwayne, Somaliland, since 2015.

NOT

The doTERRA Healing Hands Foundation has assisted in the education efforts for children in Uurwayne, Somaliland since 2015.

6.4 Commas with Dates

Always use the month-day-year format when writing dates. Maintain this throughout all publications. Always use a comma to offset the year. (See *Chicago* 6.45.)

Volunteers with the doTERRA Helping Hands Foundation will leave for Nepal on June 1, 2016, to aid in earthquake relief.

NOT

Volunteers with the doTERRA Helping Hands Foundation will leave for Nepal on June 1, 2016 to aid in earthquake relief.

6.5 Semicolons to Separate Clauses

Chicago allows for the semicolon to join two closely related independent clauses (*Chicago* 6.54), but Kohl suggests eliminating the semicolon to increase consistency and clarity (Kohl 8.10.1). Always eliminate the semicolon between two clauses and replace it with a period or a comma followed by a conjunction.

Weight loss depends on dietary and exercise changes. Control will support your efforts to decrease calorie intake by controlling appetite.

NOT

Weight loss depends on dietary and exercise changes; control will support your efforts to decrease calorie intake by controlling appetite.

6.6 Introductory Adverbial Phrases

Using introductory adverbial phrases such as *however* or *therefore* is acceptable in Global English. They should always be at the beginning of a sentence and set off with a comma. (See Kohl 3.9.2.)

doTERRA's products are wonderful. **However**, I still believe in traditional medicine.

NOT

doTERRA's products are wonderful. I still believe, **however**, in traditional medicine.

6.7 Em Dashes

Do not use an em dash to introduce a complete sentence. Global English depends on complete clarity and consistency, and em dashes can be confusing to a global audience. Divide such sentences in two or use a comma with a conjunction. (See Kohl 8.5 and *Chicago* 6.82.)

This company has me coming back to buy its products again and again. doTERRA has gained a new lifelong customer.

NOT

This company has me coming back to buy its products again and again — doTERRA has gained a new lifelong customer.

7 Spelling, Distinctive Treatment of Words, and Compounds

7.1 Its and It's

Use the word *it's* as a contraction. Use the word *its* as a possessive. (See *Chicago* 5.220.)

Its benefits are incredible.

NOT

It's benefits are incredible.

It's almost time to buy some more OnGuard oil.

NOT

Its almost time to buy some more OnGuard oil.

7.2 Plurals

Chicago 7.5 says, “Most nouns form their plural by adding *s* or—if they end in *ch*, *j*, *s*, *sh*, *x*, or *z*—by adding *es*.” Use the word *oils* after each plural of specific products to eliminate confusion.

The Deep Blue **oils** are some of my favorite oils for muscle relaxation.

NOT

The **Deep Blues** are some of my favorite oils for muscle relaxation.

7.3 Possessives

In compound nouns and noun phrases the final element usually takes the possessive form, even in the plural. (See *Chicago* 7.23.)

Our student **interns'** experience is invaluable.

NOT

Our student **intern's** experience is invaluable.

8 Names and Terms

8.1 Name Consistency

Do not italicize the name of the organization.

Research of **doTERRA** Essential Oils has been extensive.

NOT

Research of **doTERRA** Essential Oils has been extensive.

Also, use lowercase and uppercase letters in the name of the organization as follows, even when the name of the organization starts a sentence.

doTERRA has done extensive research.

NOT

DoTerra has done extensive research.

8.2 Capitalization

Capitalize all names of doTERRA Essential Oils. Follow all other rules of capitalization as stated in *Chicago* 8.

I absolutely love doTERRA's **Lavender** oil when I go to sleep.

NOT

I absolutely love doTERRA'S **lavender** oil when I go to sleep.

9 Numbers

9.1 Small and Large Numbers

Write out numbers less than 10 in word form. (See *Chicago* 9.3.)

Buy a pack of **three** Essential Oils and save money on a **fourth**.

NOT

Buy a pack of **3** Essential Oils and save money on a **4th**.

9.2 Money

doTERRA is an international company that ships products to customers in nearly 100 countries and has corporate offices in 17 countries. Therefore, always specify the form of currency. (See *Chicago* 9.22.)

The doTERRA Helping Hands Foundation raised nearly **US\$80,000** last year alone.

NOT

The doTERRA Helping Hands Foundation raised nearly **\$80,000** last year alone.

9.3 Spelling Out Dates

Always use the month-day-year format (as specified in 6.4 of this guide). When a day is mentioned without the month or year, the number is usually spelled out in ordinal form. (See *Chicago* 9.32.)

On October 3, doTERRA sold over a million oils. By the **tenth**, it had sold over three million.

NOT

On October 3, doTERRA sold over a million oils. By the **10th**, it had sold over three million.

10 Abbreviations

10.1 Latin Abbreviations

Kohl 9.11 says to eliminate Latin abbreviations since non-native English speakers may be unfamiliar with them.

The oils help with weight loss, hair care, skin care, and **other hygiene needs**.

NOT

The oils help with weight loss, hair care, skin care, **etc**.

10.2 Company-Specific Abbreviations

In company-specific abbreviations, always use the full, unabbreviated term on first reference. Include the abbreviation in parentheses. Abbreviations are acceptable on second reference.

First reference:

doTERRA **Certified Pure Therapeutic Grade® (CPTG)** essential oils represent the safest and most beneficial oils available in the world today.

NOT

doTERRA **CPTG** essential oils represent the safest and most beneficial oils available in the world today.

10.3 Clipped Terms

According to Kohl 9.13, do not use clipped terms. They confuse non-native English speakers.

Extra **information** can be found in any of doTERRA's brochures.

NOT

Extra **info** can be found in any of doTERRA's brochures.