

## **Writing White Papers – The Process**

White papers are authoritative reports that help readers to comprehend an issue, unravel a problem and make a decision. They are prepared by governments to formulate policy and solve major issues. They are frequently used in marketing to generate sales leads, persuade potential customers to buy a product and convince capitalists to invest in a company. There are certain steps that can be followed to write a professional white paper.

The first step is to understand the objectives of preparing the white paper. The writer should familiarize himself with his target audience and the nature of their problems. It is also essential to identify the attention span and technical expertise of the readers. If the white paper is being written for common customers then it would need to be simple and pleasing. It is alright for the white paper to use complicated jargon if it is being written for industry professionals.

The next step is conducting research. It is essential to find and gather all the material in one place, whether it is primary or secondary sources of information. For marketing professionals this would mean assembling product specifications, sales data, customer testimonials and power point presentations. On many occasion interviews are conducted during the course of the research process. The next step is to write a creative brief. Writers who are writing for a client often prepare a concise report and send it to them. This basically specifies the outline of the white paper and what pattern the content is going to follow. Once the client approves the brief, the writer begins work on the final copy of the white paper.

The paper should have an appealing title that instantly grabs the attention of the reader. The report should also be broken into easily readable components. The first part of the paper should outline the problem that the report attempts to solve. The introduction should be clear and concise. The writer should then move on to specific aspects of the problem by using names, dates and figures. Wherever possible, real life examples should be used to enhance the understanding of the reader. The next part of the paper should provide the solution to the problem and the steps that can be taken to implement it. Finally, a summary should be prepared to review everything that has been said in the report. Once complete, the report should be looked over by an editor.