

VERBAL EXPRESSION
BRAND GUIDELINES

VERBAL EXPRESSION | PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

Verbal expression guidelines are meant to focus, direct and inspire player-, public- and fan-facing communications.

Familiarizing yourself with the following content will ensure we activate the Oklahoma City Thunder's brand voice through clear, cohesive and high-impact execution.

VERBAL EXPRESSION | CONTENTS

DEFINITION

IS	IS NOT

VOICE OF TONE
The signature traits that define our brand voice.

PRINCIPLE.

PRINCIPLES
The purposeful way we activate our brand voice.

APPLICATION

SOCIAL	SPIRIT	PROMOTION
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PURPOSE
The role and jobs to be done for each messaging category.

DO'S:	DONT'S:

GUARDRAILS
The rules or 'do's and don'ts' that apply.

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BEFORE & AFTER
Concrete examples of brand tone of voice and principles in action.

VERBAL EXPRESSION | TONE OF VOICE

IS:

CONVERSATIONAL

Speak casually using relatable phraseology to spark dialogue.

MOTIVATING

Engage our audience with active, impassioned verbiage.

UPBEAT

Focus on the bright side of things; exude positive energy.

WITTY

Quick and inventive with verbal humor and off-the-cuff remarks.

PITHY

Execute a punchy writing style, making our words count.

IS NOT:

CHATTY

Talk to hear our own voice with trivial or long-winded messaging.

PERSUASIVE

Forcibly try to coerce our audience with contrived messaging.

RAH-RAH

Over-enthusiastic, blinded by bias or naively optimistic.

HIGH-BROW

Intellectual and academic, flaunting obscure references.

BLUNT

Too direct or forceful so we sound harsh or abrasive.

SPEAK TO BE HEARD.

We treat every message as an opportunity to connect with our people. We're not about content for content's sake. We communicate in a way that speaks volumes with impactful, relatable language that emotionally resonates.

LEAD FANS FORWARD.

We know fan-speak, but we're choiceful with the catchphrases we adopt and we look to coin our own. We exude optimism and rally the troops with active, energetic messaging—never riding the wave of emotions.

KEEP THE CROWD ON ITS TOES.

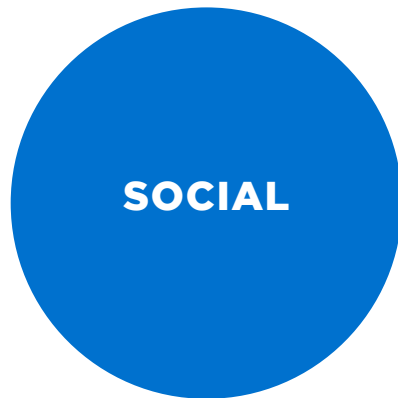
We're here to entertain, so we seek to capture and keep people's attention. Never repetitive or too literal, we mix up messaging and find clever, creative ways to engage with our audience.

LIGHTEN THINGS UP.

In the end it's all for sport, and a little lighthearted humor can go a long way. We soften the mood with funny observations, playful remarks and topical cultural references from time to time.

VERBAL EXPRESSION | MESSAGING CATEGORIES

Our brand voice needs to flex across **3 primary types** of messaging, each defined by a different purpose and jobs to be done for optimal application.



Messaging fit for social platforms (e.g., Twitter, Instagram, Facebook), often a quick, real-time conversation.



Content intended to inspire a mindset, mood or feeling, often a rallying message.



A call to action to drive a specific behavior (e.g., a sale, attendance), often a very pointed message.



SOCIAL

PURPOSE:

Content fit for social platforms (e.g., Twitter, Instagram, Facebook), often a quick, real-time conversation.

JOBS TO BE DONE:

- Engage fans, players and the basketball community in dialogue.
- Offer insights, observations and reactions from an “in-the-know” perspective.
- Champion all things Thunder—on and off the court.

VERBAL EXPRESSION | SOCIAL GUARDRAILS

DO'S:

- Selectively and creatively weave emojis into captions with intent (e.g., “D 🏀 dominates & Thunder 🌩️ by 🚀’s for the W.”)
- Riff off an accompanying image, infographic or video with supporting copy (e.g., [Abrines long buzzer-beating 3] “AA with a stroke of genius before the clock strikes.”)
- Be purposeful with punctuation, leveraging it to add impact (e.g., Russ. Is. Relentless.)
- Put contemporary twists on traditional basketball terminology (e.g., “Drive, dish & dunk = Thunder in overdrive.”)

DONT'S:

- Liberally tack them on to the end of a caption or overuse certain ones (e.g., “that move was pure 🔥🔥🔥🔥.”)
- Verbally repeat what the image, infographic or video visually communicates (e.g., [Abrines long buzzer-beating 3] “Abrines drills the three from way downtown just in the nick of time.”)
- Abuse punctuation, specifically exclamation marks (e.g., “Russ to the rescue!!!”)
- Be extremely literal or use cliché and/or dated basketball vernacular (e.g., “Nice look and he lays it in on the fastbreak.”)

VERBAL EXPRESSION | SOCIAL BEFORE & AFTER

Happy Birthday to our very own Bro,
@realstevenadams ! #stachebros
#thunderisfamily

Happy 20 months, Steven's 🧔
(Oh, and Happy 24th @
realstevenadams.) #stachebro 🎉

Even with 23-point lead in 2nd half,
Thunder stays aggressive.

Playing with a 23-point lead,
but not playing around 😐.
#Thunder 📈

👉 Dre ⚡💰🏀

Dre nails another tre. #ThunderUP



PURPOSE:

Messaging intended to inspire a mindset, mood or feeling, often a statement piece.

JOBS TO BE DONE:

- Galvanize the fans and community.
- Reach them on an emotional level.
- Leverage Thunder fan insights (lifestyle, routines, passion).
- Create a sense of momentum and excitement around the team.

VERBAL EXPRESSION | SPIRIT GUARDRAILS

DO'S:

- Reach people with relatable, expressive language (e.g., “Thunder 2017... coming to a court near you.”)
- Execute punchy messaging with clever wordplay and turns of phrase that speaks to the fans & team (e.g., “be game. every game.”)
- Craft original/ownable calls to action (e.g., “show us your Thunderous intentions.”)
- When appropriate, speak in the collective (e.g., “we”, “us”, “our”)

DONT'S:

- Be prescriptive or state the obvious with corporate-speak (e.g., “don’t miss the Thunder this season.”)
- Employ nonchalant fan-speak that heroes individual players (e.g., “come see the Brodie show.”)
- Adopt extreme cliches & irrelevant CTA’s (e.g., “keep calm & Thunder on.”)
- Create distance between the team and the fans (e.g., “The Thunder is ready to roll. Are you?”)

VERBAL EXPRESSION | SPIRIT BEFORE & AFTER

Hard work. Passion. Loud City.
It all happens here.

Show up. Stand up. Thunder Up.
Live the Loud City life.

Thunder season starts soon. Be there.

Thunder season starts in 3, 2, 1... Beat
you there.

All. Season. Long.

All in to go all out.



PROMOTION

PURPOSE:

A call to action to drive a specific behavior (e.g., a sale, attendance), often a very pointed message.

JOBS TO BE DONE:

- Compel fans into action (e.g., sign up, show up, DL, etc.)
- Humanize the messaging so that it feels natural, not transactional.
- Create a sense of urgency in that it's a “can't miss” experience.

VERBAL EXPRESSION | PROMOTION GUARDRAILS

DO'S:

- Speak colloquially when crafting actionable messaging (e.g., “get a seat. it’s going to be jumping.”)
- Allude to the consumer benefit in clever ways (e.g., “historic MVP campaigns are rare. So are these limited edition Russ MVP tees.”)
- Leverage punctuation to add impact and keep messaging pithy (e.g., “DL the Thunder app. why? why not?”)
- Apply an active tone of voice. (e.g., “it’s game day and you need tickets”)

DONT'S:

- Employ transactional language that reflects an internal agenda (e.g., “we need you there. get your tickets now!”)
- Be too literal with brick-to-forehead messaging (e.g., “pick up your Russ MVP t-shirt today at the Thunder store.”)
- Put forth generic, flat messaging that gets lost in the shuffle (e.g., “download the Thunder app for all Thunder updates.”)
- Apply a passive tone of voice. (e.g., “looking for Thunder tickets?”)

VERBAL EXPRESSION | PROMOTION BEFORE & AFTER

The Thunder has a chance to seal up the series Thursday night on the Warriors' home court. Tune in on TNT starting at 8 p.m. Central, and bring your ROAR wherever you're watching. If you cheer loud enough, you think our players will hear you in Oakland?

Looking for a game-day opportunity to win Thunder tickets? Join us before every home game for the Kia Thunder Rewards Zone for your chance to win two tickets for that day's game.

Take the Thunder with you.

Don't miss the action. Get your tickets now.

Our Thunder are set to cap off a historic postseason run with a W in Oakland. Tune in to TNT @ 8 PM Central. Rock your lucky socks, throw on your trusty OKC tee and will us to another road W!

It's game-day and you need Thunder tickets. Free tickets. Swing by the Kia Thunder Rewards Zone before every home game for a chance to win 2 tickets to the game. Hey, half the battle is showing up.

The Thunder. In the palm of your hand.

The Thunder show is about to begin. Get seats to jump out of.

VERBAL EXPRESSION | WORD & PHRASE BANK

	SPIRIT	FANS
SIGNATURE	<p>#ThunderUP #ThunderFWD #WeAreThunder Be game. Every game.</p>	<p>Thunder Nation Loud City #LoudCity #mythunderstory #ThunderNation Welcome to Loud City!</p>
SECONDARY	<p>Game. On. Game on, every game. All in to go all out. No days off in Loud City. Strike like Thunder. Every game is the game to watch. Break the sound barrier.</p>	<p>The Blue Clan This isn't Hushtown. It's Loud City. Blue United A United Force Proud. Loud. Rowdy. Thunder real Born loud [verb, e.g., fight] as one</p>