

## Introduction to the Luminex Corporate Style Guide

As Luminex moves to a new, single-source content approach, it's more important than ever to ensure that our technical information is presented in a way that's simple, adaptable, and easy to understand in any context.

No more unnecessary, complex jargon. No messy headings or endless run-on sentences. No complicated outlines or outdated graphics. Just clear, consistent content that's straightforward, conversational, and useful for our customers.

The Luminex Corporate Style Guide offers both [basic, high-level instructions](#) for contributors who might not be comfortable writing technical content, and [more specific, in-depth standards](#) for Luminex technical communicators to reference as needed. Use this resource as it best applies to your particular role and needs.

### Resources to Learn More

- [General Writing Style Guidelines](#)
- [Specific Usage and Style Guidelines](#)
- [The Luminex web site](#)

## What is Single-Source Content?

Luminex is moving to a single-source strategy for developing and publishing technical content. The simplest explanation of [single-source content](#) is this:

*Write once. Publish everywhere.*

At Luminex, we put this concept into practice by breaking large pieces of content—like user manuals or package inserts—into smaller pieces, then making those smaller topics available in a [Download Center](#), where they can be accessed individually or pulled into larger documents (also known as [outputs](#)) as needed. This is known as [topic-based writing](#), and it fundamentally changes the way we think about and develop content.

Because topics will be pulled into different outputs and, sometimes, accessed directly from the Download Center, you can't make assumptions about what the reader will see next. This means that every topic should be written to stand on its own—not as part of a larger narrative.

The most crucial goal of single-sourced content is *consistency*. If we write a topic only once, we know it will be the same throughout all of our outputs. Someone reading the job aide will be getting the exact same information as someone reading the manual, or some other output. It also cuts down on the time and effort involved when updates are needed.

### Resources to Learn More

- [Single-Source Publishing](#)

- [The Single Source Method: How to Deal with Unstable Training Content](#)
- [Single Source Publishing: Save Time and Money on Content Management](#)

## What is Topic-Based Writing?

The best way to explain **topic-based writing** is with an example:

The topic *Running an Assay* is found in a software user manual, a hardware user manual, and a job aide.

In a traditional writing process, this content would be written three times: once for the software manual, again as part of the hardware manual, and yet again when the job aide is developed. Each time, it's written by someone different—and the information isn't compared against the other sources, so it's probably not 100% consistent.

In topic-based writing, *Running an Assay* is written only once. It's then placed in a central location, where it can be pulled into each of the three documents separately when they are created.

Each topic answers one question: "How do I ...?" "What is ...?" "What went wrong?" Each topic has a heading that explains its purpose and contains enough information for someone to begin and complete a task, grasp a basic concept, or understand the history of something.

Topic-based writing helps us ensure that our content is consistent across channels, and makes us more productive as a whole, but it also requires us to think about our content in a different way. Where we once wrote entire narratives, with sections and chapters that were meant to work together in a particular order, we now look at each individual topic as a standalone piece of information—something that can work just as well in a user manual as it can in a training document.

This means the content must be flexible and simple.

### Resources to Learn More

- [Topic-Based Writing in DITA](#)
- [Getting Started with Topic-Based Writing](#)

## The Goals of Luminex Technical Content

At Luminex, we write nearly all of our technical content to accomplish one or both of the following goals:

- **Instruct.** Customers read our content because they *need to know how to do something*. They're not looking for the history of the product, or even why something works the way it does. They're looking for instructions to accomplish a specific goal.

- **Educate.** Internal audiences, such as Field Service or MSAs, need to know more than just specifics. They need more in-depth information about how a product works and, sometimes, why it works that way. In this case, we need to educate them on the entire product, not just the steps involved to run it.

To achieve these goals, our technical content must be:

- **Meaningful.** Every word you write should serve a purpose, both in the context of the writing and for the person who will read it.
- **Concise.** Get to your point quickly, keep sentences short, and don't waste words when they aren't needed.
- **Organized.** Plan out your topic beforehand, and make sure it has a logical beginning, middle, and end. Use tables, numbered lists, and bullets to help organize and simplify your content.
- **Helpful.** Think of yourself as a guide for the reader. It's your job to get them from point A to point B in the easiest, most pleasant way possible.

## The Right Tone for Luminex Technical Content

It's important to remember that, no matter how technical the information might be, content is really nothing more than a simple conversation. This is an interaction between two humans—you and the reader.

You can't know everything about the reader, but you *can* make a few assumptions:

- They can read at or above a 7<sup>th</sup> grade level.
- They understand basic scientific concepts.
- They are at least a little aware of the Luminex brand and the product that they're reading about.
- They *want to know how* to do something specific—or they *need an answer* to a specific question.
- They want to be *engaged*.

With these assumptions in mind, write your content like you would talk to a co-worker who needs to know something that only you can share.

You don't want to be too informal – this is technical content, after all – but try to convey some helpful friendliness as you write, as if you're speaking to someone you know and like, who just needs some simple instructions to get something done. To the point, but friendly.

With that said, it's also important to recognize that sometimes technical content is just... technical content. You can't always make it pleasant. This is okay; just try to be thoughtful about how you're presenting the information, and consider alternate ways of providing dense or complex data.

## Creating Effective Topic-Based Headings

When creating a heading for a topic, repeat this mantra:

*Clear, complete, consistent.*

Because topics are standalone, their titles must **clearly** state what they're explaining, and give **complete** information about the topic. Of course, **consistency** is always a priority, so it's important to review the rules listed in [Specific Heading Guidelines](#) and be sure your heading complies.

Clarity is especially important when naming content that can be accessed in several different ways. The first topic in this Style Guide, for example, couldn't have been named simply "Introduction," because someone browsing the Download Center wouldn't know what was being introduced. We couldn't have called it "Welcome to the Luminex Style Guide" either, because that implies that there's more to come—and there's no guarantee the reader will immediately move on to the next topic.

[Introducing the Luminex Corporate Style Guide](#) makes it clear that the topic is an introduction; it gives complete information about what's being introduced; and it's written in a style consistent with the rules listed in [Specific Heading Guidelines](#). So it meets all three guidelines.

Before settling on a heading for your topic, ask yourself if it makes sense:

- when listed in Download Center categories
- when listed in search results
- when read as an independent topic
- when read as part of a larger output, such as a manual or job aide

If you can answer "yes" to all of these questions, then you have an effective heading.

### Resources to Learn More

- [How to Create Technical Writing Headings](#)
- [General Guidelines for Technical Headings](#)
- [Titles and Headings in Technical Documents](#)

## Meeting Regulatory Requirements

The nature of our business requires us to comply with a number of governmental regulations. The Luminex [Regulatory department](#) reviews all of our content before it's released to be sure it complies with appropriate rules, but it's also helpful for us to start out with an understanding of the rules that govern the following:

- [Trademarks and copyrights](#)
- [Warning, Caution, and Danger notes and icons](#)

- [Layouts of RUO and IVD Package Inserts](#)

Take some time to read through our [Regulatory SOP](#) for an understanding of these requirements, and refer back to it when you need specific regulatory guidance. You can also reach out [directly to us](#) or contact the [Regulatory department](#).

## General Writing Style Guidelines

Even if you’re not a professional writer, you can still create well-written topic-based content by following some simple guidelines.

Think of these basic rules as a foundation for your existing knowledge. The [Content Development team](#) will review what you’ve written to ensure that it adheres to the rules in the [Luminex Corporate Style Guide](#), but that review and editing process goes much faster if the content has already been created with these basic concepts in mind.

Above all, remember that your expertise is why you’ve been asked to write content in the first place—so your contribution will be helpful regardless of your writing ability. Our [Specific Word Usage and Grammar Guidelines](#) can give you more in-depth guidance if you need it, but the [content review process](#) is also designed to support you in your efforts, so you should feel confident while writing.

Rule	Description
<b>Write in present tense.</b>	Describe the steps in present tense, not past or future. Yes: “A dialog box displays.” No: “A dialog box will display.”
<b>Use active voice.</b>	In active voice, the person performing the action is the subject of the sentence. Yes: “After you insert the USB, open the program.” No: “The program should be opened after the USB is inserted.”
<b>Write in second person.</b>	Write directly to the reader. A good example is how this guide is speaking directly to you right now. Yes: “Click <b>Yes</b> to accept the license agreement.” No: The license agreement is accepted when the user clicks <b>Yes</b> .”
<b>Keep it simple.</b>	Don’t weigh the reader down with a lot of unnecessary information or background. If the content doesn’t directly apply to the topic, it doesn’t belong there. You can always create a new topic for unrelated content, if it’s something that readers should know.
<b>Keep sentences and lists short.</b>	Long lists and complicated run-on sentences will confuse and bore the reader. Keep them short and to-the-point. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to keep sentences around 25 words.</li> <li>• If a list is longer than 5 items, consider creating a table instead.</li> </ul>
<b>Avoid technical jargon.</b>	Assume that your reader understands the basics about Luminex products, but not the specifics. Use the simplest and most direct terminology possible.

<b>Be conversational.</b>	Think of yourself as a friendly co-worker who’s trying to tell another employee how to do something. Be friendly in tone, but stick to the point. Use contractions like “you’re” and “don’t.”
<b>Be consistent.</b>	Don’t use similar terms to mean subtly different things. Once you use a term to describe something, use that same term throughout the rest of the topic.
<b>Explain acronyms.</b>	The first time you use an acronym in a topic, spell it out and give the acronym in parentheses. You can use just the acronym from that point on.
<b>Be positive.</b>	Try to keep your writing positive in tone. Focus on what people CAN do—not what they can’t.
<b>Reference other resources.</b>	Point the reader to outside resources when they’re helpful; but be sure you’re using accurate, updated links.

### Notes, Cautions, and Warnings

We sometimes use notes in our content to call attention to specific information. General notes, references, and tips support the text with more specific details, while Caution and Warning notes make the reader aware of important safety-related information.

**NOTE:** Some of these notes require symbols to accompany them.

Below are some general definitions to help you identify the different types of notes. For more detailed guidance and a look at their associated symbols, see [the Regulatory SOP](#).

**NOTE:** Caution, Warning, and Danger notes have regulatory and legal implications. Don’t add or delete them without first getting approval from our [Legal](#) and [Regulatory](#) departments.

Note Type	Description	Example Note
NOTE	Helpful additional information related to what’s already been said	<b>NOTE:</b> To refill the reservoir, reconnect each connector to its color-matched connection and use the software to run a prime command.
TIP	A piece of information that can help the reader better understand or apply the steps you’ve just described	<b>TIP:</b> This action only logs you out of the software.
REFERENCE	Refers the reader to another document for more information	For instructions, refer to the MAGPIX® Installation and Hardware User Manual.
CAUTION	Advises the reader that failure to take or avoid a specified action can result in loss of data; includes a yellow triangle icon.	<b>CAUTION:</b> High PMT settings must be used only with appropriately formulated kits for valid results.

WARNING	Advises the reader that failure to take or avoid a specific action can result in physical harm to the user or the hardware.	<b>WARNING:</b> During operation, this system contains exposed, moving parts. Risk of personal injury is present. Observe all warnings and cautions.
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## Using Lists and Tables

If you find yourself working with a paragraph or section of text that seems especially dense or complicated, try splitting it up into a table or a list. This can often help simplify the information and make it easier to digest. Readers can scan lists and tables more quickly for the information they need—and you can better organize your content.

- Use a **bulleted list** if the order doesn't matter. Try to keep these short, around 1-10 items. If you find that you need to add more, consider creating a table instead.
- If the order matters, use a **numbered list**. Keep these limited to 10 items or less, if it's at all possible.
- Use a **table** if your list is longer than 5-10 items and/or includes more than two dimensions of data. Try to keep your table as simple as possible, and with as little horizontal scrolling as possible. If you find it getting too complex, consider creating two tables, instead.

When introducing lists and tables:

- Introduce a list with a paragraph, sentence, or partial sentence explaining what it is.
- Most tables need titles, but if a table is introduced well in the text before it and isn't likely to be referenced in other places, you don't have to title it. Give tables titles that make sense. Capitalize the title like a sentence, not like a heading.

For more specific guidance, see the topics [Specific Guidelines for Tables](#) and [Specific Rules for Lists](#).

## Using Images in Your Content

Images can often be a powerful tool when creating content. When used correctly, they give the reader a valuable visual reference. Images can take many forms, but the most commonly used in Luminex technical content are:

- Product photos or illustrations
- Flowcharts
- Screenshots

Images are especially useful when trying to communicate complicated or complex ideas. If your content fits this description, feel free to use an image or two to give visual examples or help break ideas down. Just be sure the images you use:

- have a direct relationship to the content
- add substance to the conversation
- aren't there just for decoration
- are clearly introduced or captioned
- are legible
- are updated

A quick note about screenshots: Try to use them sparingly. They change frequently with software updates, and keeping them current can be difficult. Consider using just one at the beginning of a chapter or section, with captions for everything, rather than using several different screenshots throughout.

### Resources to Learn More

- <https://www.instructionalsolutions.com/blog/graphics-technical-writing>

### Adding Hyperlinks

As we sharpen our content to include only the most essential information, outside resources become more important. Hyperlinks present an opportunity to point the reader elsewhere for information that relates to or supports the topic, but isn't required or relevant enough to be included in the actual text.

You can provide hyperlinks in a couple of different ways:

- As a part of the text
- As a reference (Resources to Learn More)

[need to complete]

### When It's Okay to Break Writing Style Rules

The rules listed in our [General Writing Style Guidelines](#) are meant to provide a structure for you to build your content around—but sometimes, rules are meant to be broken. Our top priority is providing all of the information that our readers need, but creating content that's easy to understand is also important—so don't be afraid to break the rules if they're overcomplicating the conversation. Here are a few examples of rules that can and should be broken:

- **Active voice.** Don't use active voice if it sounds like you're blaming the user for something. "If an error occurs, the information might have been entered incorrectly," sounds much nicer than, "If an error occurs, you probably failed to enter the data correctly."
- **Prepositions.** Many of us were taught never to end a sentence with a preposition, but this is an antiquated rule and can create awkward sentences when applied to modern writing. Example: "The user is included in the group you've assigned them to," rather than, "The user belongs to the group to which you have assigned them."

Other situations might occur where it's necessary to break the rules to make your content more user-friendly. Use your judgment when these situations arise, or [contact the Content Development team](#) for help.

Most importantly, always make sure you're providing all of the information a topic should include, and *never sacrifice information for readability*. Sometimes it's simply impossible to provide dense, complex information in a way that's conversational or interesting, and that's okay. Just try to be thoughtful about how you're presenting your content.

## Before and After Examples of Technical Content

[need to gather and complete]

## Specific Usage and Style Guidelines

The majority of our guidelines for word usage and grammar have been taken from the *Microsoft® Manual of Style*, but a few of their rules don't apply to Luminex technical content. We've put together a list of some exceptions here, as well as a few rules you'll likely have to observe often when writing our technical content.

Subjects we've covered include:

- [Specific Heading Guidelines](#)
- [Using Proper Sentence Capitalization](#)
- [Using Correct Punctuation](#)
- [Using Numbers and Symbols Correctly](#)
- [Specific Guidelines for Tables](#)
- [Specific Rules for Lists](#)
- [Software Naming Conventions](#)
- [Scientific Nomenclature Guidelines](#)
- [Word Usage Dictionary](#)

## Specific Heading Guidelines

When creating a heading for your topic, follow these specific rules:

- Use proper syntax for the type of information in your topic:

If your topic is:	Use this syntax:	Examples:
A task ( <i>How do I...?</i> )	Start with a gerund ("-ing")	Adding Hyperlinks; Using Images in Your Content
A concept ( <i>What is...?</i> )	Ask the question, or start with a noun or adjective	What is Topic-Based Writing?; The Right Tone for Luminex Technical Content

A reference ( <i>How do I know...?</i> )	Start with a noun or adjective, and be specific about what you're providing.	Specific Heading Guidelines; Style Guide Glossary of Terms
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- Try to limit headings to 8 words or less.
- Use correct capitalization.
  - Capitalize the first and last words
  - **Don't** capitalize:
    - Articles like *a*, *an*, or *the* (unless the article is the first word in the title or follows a colon) Coordinating conjunctions like *and*, *but*, *for*, *nor*, *or*, *yet*, and *so* (unless it's the first word of the title)
    - Words that always begin with a lowercase letter
    - Prepositions (unless part of a Latin expression, like *In Vitro*)
    - The word "to" when used as a preposition and infinitive (*to Run*, *to Hide*)
    - The word "as" in any function
    - The second part of a species name, even if it's the last word in a title or subtitle (*Homo sapiens*)
- Don't show the spelled-out term of an abbreviation. Just use the abbreviation, and then define it in the first paragraph of the text.
- Don't end a heading with a colon or period. If the heading is in the form of a question, end it with a question mark.
- Don't apply font treatments like bold or italics to text in a heading.

### Resources to Learn More

- <https://capitalizemytitle.com/>

### Using Proper Sentence Capitalization

Sentence case capitalization is the same as you learned in elementary school: The first word of every sentence is capitalized, along with all proper nouns.

Some other words are also capitalized in Luminex technical content:

- menu names ("**Routine Name** dropdown menu")
- button names ("**Save As** button")
- tab names ("**Auto Maint** tab")
- commands ("Wash," "Alcohol Flush," "Sanitize")
- command buttons ("**Rinse** command," "**Prime** command")
- titles in the text ("*Chicago Manual of Style*")
- acronyms ("DNA," "CMS")

### Resources to Learn More

- <https://libguides.tru.ca/c.php?g=194005&p=1418565>

## Using Correct Punctuation

Basic rules of punctuation are fairly consistent among the most widely accepted style references, like *Chicago Manual of Style* or the *AP Style Guide*. You can refer to these for general guidance, but a few specific points of note:

### Ampersands

Don't use an ampersand (&) unless it's part of an object name ("Probe & Heater tab").

### Colons

Some rules about colons:

- Use a colon at the end of a sentence or phrase that introduces a list.
- Don't use a colon at the end of a heading.
- Avoid using a colon in a sentence. Try to create two sentences instead.
- If you do use a colon in a sentence, don't capitalize the word that comes after it (unless it is a name or the beginning of a quotation).

### Commas

See an accepted reference like the *Chicago Manual of Style* or *AP Style Guide* for the basic rules of comma usage. The table below outlines some rules that often apply to our technical content.

Rule	DO	DON'T
In a series that lists three or more items, use a serial comma (also known as an Oxford comma) to separate the last item.	"The list contains the <b>Name, Version, Manufacturer, and Date</b> about each protocol."	"The list contains the <b>Name, Version, Manufacturer</b> and <b>Date</b> about each protocol."
Separate independent clauses with a comma followed by a like "and" or "but."	"Click <b>Open</b> , and select <b>Options.</b> "	"Click <b>Open</b> , select <b>Options.</b> "
Use a comma to separate a non-restrictive clause (one that starts with "which").	"This button opens the <b>Report</b> dialog box, which contains the <b>Batch Plate Layout Report.</b> "	"This button opens the <b>Report</b> dialog box which contains the <b>Batch Plate Layout Report.</b> "
Don't use a comma to separate a restrictive clause (one that starts with "that").	"This button imports a batch that has not been previously run."	"This button imports a batch, that has not been previously run."
Use a comma to separate an introductory word or phrase.	"When you use an IMAP connection, you're managing your email directly from the email server."	"When you use an IMAP connection you're managing your email directly from the email server."

	“However, you can easily update the version by using the dashboard.”	“However you can easily update the version by using the dashboard.”
	“For more information, contact the Content Development team.”	“For more information contact the Content Development team.”
Use commas in large numbers (with 5 or more digits), but not in addresses, decimal numbers, or values entered by a user.	15,265 pounds  12201 Technology Blvd.  1025 bytes	15265 pounds  12,201 Technology Blvd.  1,025 bytes

Dashes and Hyphens

General rules on *em* and *en* dashes:

- Use an *em dash*—like this one—to separate qualifying information in the middle of a sentence.
- You can use em dashes after introducing list items, but don’t use them later in the descriptions. Example:
  - **List item #1**—Don’t use an em dash later in this sentence; it will be too repetitive. Use a semicolon instead, or break the description into two sentences.
- Don’t use spaces with em dashes, and don’t capitalize the word following an em dash unless it’s a proper noun.
- Use an *en dash* (longer than a hyphen and shorter than an em dash) to show a range of numbers in a table or list (“10–20 options”). In the body of your content, though, try to use “to” or “through” to separate ranges (“10 to 20 options,” “Options 10 through 20”).

Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary offers basic rules of hyphenation, but here are some specifics:

- Hyphenate a compound word that’s used to modify or describe, as in “drop-down menu” or “rear-engine bracket.”
- Don’t use a hyphen if the first word of a compound ends with –ly, as in “gently used.”
- Don’t use a hyphen if a compound is used as a verb, as in “warm up.”
- Use a hyphen if the first part of a modifier is a number, as in “64-bit operating system.”
- If a capitalized word is hyphenated, capitalize both parts, as in “Topic-Based.”

Exclamation points

Don’t use exclamation points! Use bold, italics, or other formatting to emphasize an important point.

## Parentheses

Try to avoid parentheses in the body of your topic, especially when the information would also make sense as a separate sentence. You can use them, however:

- To define acronyms or abbreviations
- To illustrate special characters
- To show examples
- In other cases where they are best used to clarify something

## Periods

Grammar references like the [\*Chicago Manual of Style\*](#) and [\*AP Style Guide\*](#) outline basic rules of period usage, but here are a few specific guidelines:

- Only use one space after a period. Don't use two spaces.
- Place periods inside [quotation marks](#).
- If all items in a list are sentences, end each item with a period.
- If all items in a list are fragments, don't end them with periods.
- In a list that mixes fragments with sentences, end every fragment *and* sentence with a period.
- If an abbreviation could be confused for a word (as with "in." for "inch"), use a period to distinguish it.
- Use periods with "a.m." and "p.m."
- Don't end a heading with a period.

## Quotation marks

Use quotation marks with these guidelines in mind:

- If you use a term in a unique way, use double quotation marks to show the first occurrence, and leave them out afterward. For example:
  - *Spell check "learns" the word. After it learns the word, the spelling checker ignores subsequent occurrences of the word in the document.*
- Don't use quotation marks for emphasis. Use bold, italics, or other formatting instead.
- Place a comma before the start of a quote.
- Place a period or comma before a closing quotation mark.
- Place a question mark after a quotation mark, unless it's actually part of the quote.
- Examples:
  - The software is licensed "as is."
  - Click **Yes** when asked, "Do you want to exit the software now?"
  - Have you opened the "window"?

## Semicolons

Use semicolons sparingly. Consider creating two sentences or a list instead.

## Slashes

When you include a slash between two words, do not include a space either before or after the slash.

## Using Numbers and Symbols Correctly

Many grammar references provide their own unique rules for numbers and symbols. We refer to the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th Edition for basic guidance, but here are some specific rules of note:

- Don't refer to specific numbered steps ("See step X for instructions..."), and don't refer to repeating a step in a procedure ("Repeat step 4"). Instead, write or type the step again and then, in parenthesis, indicate that the step's repeated. For example: "Vortex the tubes for 2 to 5 seconds to mix reagents (this is a repeat step)."
- Spell out numbers under 10, unless followed by a unit of measure. If a sentence includes two numbers but only one is less than 10, keep them consistent and use numerals for both.  
Examples:
  - Use two pipettes.
  - Use 2 pipettes for the first time, and 12 pipettes every time thereafter.
- Always leave a space between a number and a unit of measure, even if it's abbreviated. Spell out units of measure without numerals.
- If an expression includes two numbers with the same unit of measure, use the unit of measure only once. Examples:
  - 2 X 5 cm
  - 25 in.
  - measured in inches
- Don't use spaces in degree measurements or percentages. Examples:
  - 25°C
  - 75%
- In number ranges that use symbols, repeat the symbol for each number and separate them with "to." Example: "35% to 45%."
- If a decimal fraction is less than 1.0, include a zero before it. Example: "0.25."
- If a procedure includes a measurement of time, always use a numeral, no matter how small the number is. Example: "Vortex for 2 to 5 seconds."
- Examples of correct number and symbol usage:
  - 50 mL
  - 2 x 5 cm
  - 10°C
  - 3°C to 7°C
  - 35% to 50%
  - 5¼" x 8"
  - 3'9"

- 0.25
- 5 inches, 5 in., or 5”

## Resources to Learn More

- <https://www.quickanddirtytips.com/education/grammar/how-to-write-numbers>

## Specific Guidelines for Tables

Tables can help simplify, clarify, and organize your content, and they’re easy to scan for specific information. Our [Authoring Tool job aide](#) provides information about formatting tables, but here are some additional rules:

- Use sentence-style capitalization for table titles and column and row headings.
- Try not to leave table cells blank. Use “N/A” or “None” if there’s no information for a cell.
- If space is limited in a column or cell, it’s okay to get creative with abbreviations and symbols. Just make sure the data can still be read and makes sense, and be sure that the difference is noted in the content review process.
- If you need to use footnotes, you can use numbers, letters, or symbols.
  - The *Chicago Manual of Style* gives a specific order for symbols in footnotes (keyboard shortcuts are in parentheses):
    - \*
    - † (Alt0134)
    - ‡ (Alt0135)
    - § (Alt21)
    - || (Shift\ Shift\)
    - #
  - When more symbols are needed, you can double and triple them in the same order: \*\*, ††, ‡‡, etc., \*\*\*, †††, ‡‡‡, and so on.
  - Use symbols for footnotes in numeric tables, to avoid confusion with exponents.
  - If your table contains genotypes, don’t use an asterisk (\*) as a footnote symbol. Instead, start with the † symbol.

## Specific Rules for Lists

When creating a list, follow these guidelines:

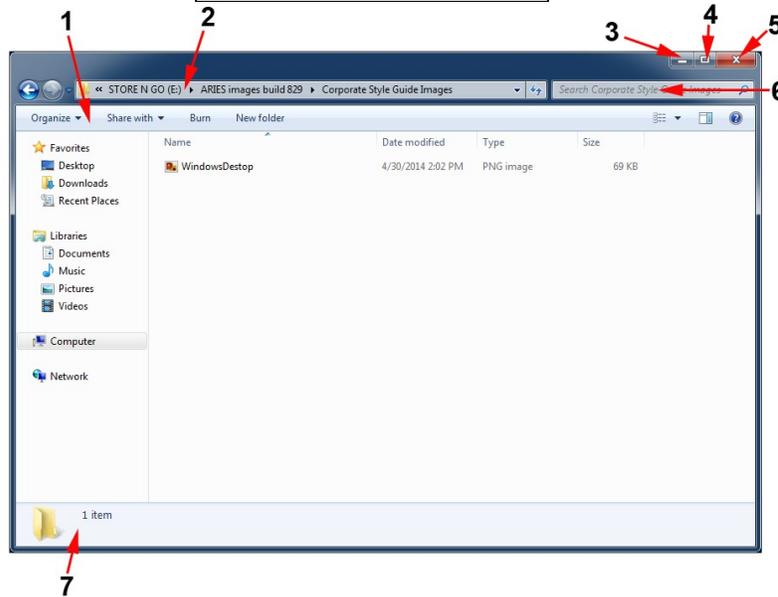
- Introduce a list with a complete grammatical sentence, followed by a colon. Fragments are also acceptable, if they make sense.
- If the items of a list are numbered, place a period after the numeral and start each item with a capital letter.
- If a list is bulleted and all items are complete sentences, capitalize the beginning of each sentence and end it with a period. See the [Periods](#) section in [Using Correct Punctuation](#) for more rules about punctuation and list items.

## Software Naming Conventions

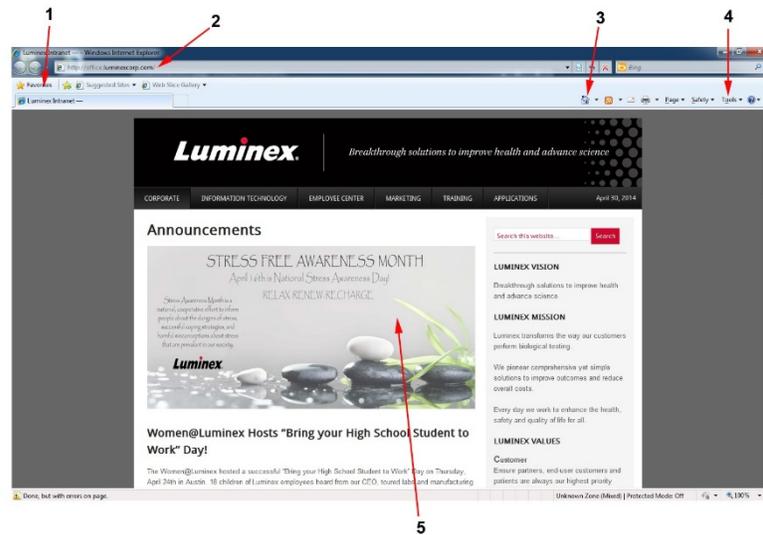
Use the [Microsoft® Manual of Style, 4th Edition](#) as a reference for common software terms. The images below illustrate some of the terms we use often:



1. Taskbar
2. Start button
3. Pinned taskbar button
4. Notification area
5. Show desktop button



1. Menu bar	6. Search box
2. Address bar	7. Status bar
3. Minimize button	5. Close button
4. Maximize button	



1. Favorites bar
2. Address bar
3. Home button
4. Tools button
5. Webpage

## Dialog Box Terms

Use the following terms when referring to dialog boxes:

- **Click**—for commands and command buttons (“Click the xPONENT 3.1 icon”)
- **Select** and **clear**—for check boxes and radio buttons (“Select the check box,” “Clear the radio button”)
- **Choose**—**when** the user must make a decision (“Choose an option from the drop-down menu”)
- **Type** or **enter**—referring to something the user can type or select in the accompanying text box

## Other Conventions

- Bold these types of terms:
  - GUI elements
  - dialog box titles
  - labels
  - command buttons
  - options

For example: “In the **Tools** menu, click **Options**. Then select **Save**.”

- Other common software elements:
  - **Check box**—A square box that’s selected or cleared to turn an option on or off. You can select more than one check box at a time.
  - **Panel**—A frame or box that encloses a set of related options, often just a single line that runs around a field of information. A panel is a visual device only.
  - **Radio button**—A round button used to select one option from a group. Only one radio button can be selected at a time.
  - **Field**—A rectangular box where text is entered.
  - **Menu**—When referring to a specific menu, use lowercase for the word menu (“Help menu”).
- Mouse term dos and don’ts:

Use	Don’t use
click	click on
point to	move the mouse pointer
double-click	double click
right-click	right click

## Guidelines for Scientific Nomenclature

Luminex technical content often includes scientific terms and names. The [\*Chicago Manual of Style, 16th Edition\*](#) is a good reference for this type of information, but some specific guidelines include:

- Genus and specific epithet
  - Italicize Latin names of plants and animals (“*Homo sapien*”)
  - Capitalize the genus name (generic name) (“*Homo*”)
  - Lowercase the species name (specific name) (“*sapien*”)
  - Lowercase the subspecies (subsp.) name
  - Correct: *Salmonella enterica* subsp. *enterica*, serotype Dublin
  - Incorrect: *Salmonella enterica* subsp. *Enterica*, serotype Dublin
- Human genes
  - Italicize
  - Set in full capitals (“*BRCA1*”)
- Mouse genes
  - Italicize
  - Capitalize only the first letter (“*Cmv1*”)
- Enzymes
  - Capitalize the first letter (“*Aval*”)

- Italicize the first three letters (“*BamHI*”)
- The roman numeral that follows is the serial number
- Sometimes an upper- or lowercase roman letter or arabic number will be between the name and serial number, (“*Sau3AI*” representing the strain of bacterium)

## Word Usage Dictionary

Use this usage dictionary as a reference to answer questions about specific terms in Luminex technical content. If you need help with a term that isn’t included here or elsewhere in the [Luminex Technical Content Style Guide](#), [contact the Content Development team](#) for help.

**About**—Use “information about”, not “information on.”

**All right**—Don’t use “all right.” Use “okay” or “acceptable” instead.

**And/or**—Try to avoid using this combination, but if you must, use “and/or.”

**Appear/Display/Open**—These can be used interchangeably when referring to the visual output on the user interface.

**Barcode**—Write “barcode” as one word.

**Bead/Microsphere**—“Bead” and “microsphere” are used interchangeably in Luminex technical content. Follow the user interface for proper usage, but if you’re still unsure, ask a subject matter expert (SME) for clarification.

**Browse**—Use “browse” to describe scanning Internet sites or other files. If your product refers to the ellipsis button as the **Browse** button, use “browse” to describe the associated action. If you’re describing the use of a search feature or Internet search engine, use “find” or “search.”

**Catalog/Catalogue**—Use “catalog,” not “catalogue.”

**Check box** - Use “check box.”

Use	Don’t use
check box	checkbox or box
select a check box	mark or unmark
clear a check box	check or uncheck
	turn on or turn off
	deselect

**Choose**—Use “choose” when the user must make a decision, as opposed to “selecting” (not picking) an item from a list. Don’t use “choose” as an alternative to “click” or “double-click.”

**Click**—Use “click” to describe issuing a command or setting an option. Don’t use “click on” or “click at,” unless “click in the window” is necessary.

**Color/Colour**—Use “color” rather than “colour.”

**Dialog box**—Use “dialog box,” not “dialog.”

**e.g./i.e.**—Avoid using these abbreviations. Use “for example” instead.

**Email**—Write “email” as one word.

**End-user/End user**—Use a hyphen when used as an adjective, but no hyphen when used as a noun. Examples: “The end user will see a new window open,” “Only an administrator can edit end-user profiles.”

**Expiration**—Use “expiration,” not “expiry.”

**Field**—Use “field” when appropriate, but be consistent.

**Figure**—Capitalize “figure” only when referring to a specific image. For example: “See Figure 10.”

**Help**—Don’t capitalize “help” when referring to online help:

Acceptable terms to describe an online help system
online help
definition help
context-sensitive help
online help files

**Highlight**—Don’t use “highlight” as a synonym for “select.” “Selecting” is a standard procedure, and “highlight” can be confused with product features like text highlighters that only provide visual emphasis.

**In/on**—When referring to screen elements, use “in” or “on” in the following situations:

In	On
in the pane in the (dialog or combo) box in the window in the menu in the list	on the screen on the tab on the page

**Its/It's**—"Its" is the possessive form. "It's" is the contraction meaning "it is."

**Luminex® 100/200™**—Use Luminex® 100/200™ when you're referring to an analyzer but it's unclear which system the reader is using.

**Log on/log off/logoff**—When referring to a user session on a computer or a network:

Use	Don't use (unless in the user interface)
log on (as a verb)	log in
log on to	login
sign in (referring to user sessions on the internet)	log onto
sign out (referring to user sessions on the internet)	log off of
log off (as a verb)	sign off
login (as a noun or adj.)	sign on
logoff (as a noun or adj.)	

**Online/offline**—Write both "online" and "offline" as one word.

**Percent/percentage/%**—In general, use the percent symbol (%) without a space ("17%"). If you're not using a number, write out "percent" and "percentage" ("It was a high percentage").

**Pick**—Don't use "pick" as a synonym for "select."

**Select**—Use "select" to describe the action of marking text, a cell, a radio button, or a similar item ("select the text," "select one check box"). Once these items have been marked, describe them as "selected," as in "selected text" or "the selection." Don't use "select" as a general term for clicking options in a dialog box; use "choose" instead.

**Warm up/warmup**—Use "warm up" as a verb ("warm up the analyzer"). Use "warmup" as a noun ("perform a system warmup").

**Website**—Write "website" as one word.

## Contacting the Content Development Team

If you have questions about the information in the Luminex Technical Content Style Guide, you can reach out to the Luminex Technical Content Team at any time. We'll respond to your request as quickly as possible, and work with you to make sure you get all the information you need.

You can also contact us with any comments or suggestions you might have about the Style Guide. We're always glad to get feedback that might help us make it better.

Email us at [xxxx@luminexcorp.com](mailto:xxxx@luminexcorp.com).

## Style Guide Glossary of Terms

Single-sourced content

Output

Download Center

Topic-based writing

Performance Support

Perforce

Content Specialist

Content Development team

## Helpful Reference Materials

We often use the following reference materials when creating our documentation. A hard copy of each external document is available in the Content Development department, but you can also access many of the internal documents through Agile.

- Abbreviations, Terms and Definitions Standard Operating Procedure (document #00573 in Agile)
- CD Labeling SOP (document #00576 in Agile)
- Chicago Manual of Style, 16th Edition (external document #01736 in Agile)
- Luminex® Brand Identity and Design Standards (document #00554 in Agile)
- Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (external document #01165 in Agile)
- Microsoft® Manual of Style, 4th Edition (external document #01108 in Agile)
- Adobe FrameMaker 11 Classroom in a Book (external document #02253 in Agile)
- SOP for Use of Perforce in Technical Publications (document #01461 in Agile)