



Paro x Ann Storr

Messaging, Tone of Voice,
Copywriting.

Spring/Summer 2024

The Brief

Do you need a sector specialist? Or a smart person who can become one?

Paro wondered if they did. Their company has been supporting hydraulic engineers since 1974. It's a niche and complex skill-set.

Their software products are beloved*, but communicating pride isn't part of Dutch culture.

Taking the opportunity to revisit the brand during a site re-build, CEO Marc Paro was looking for a freelancer who could understand his product, how to communicate with engineers, and articulate pride without grandstanding.

Messaging, tone of voice and copy

Planning, designing and manufacturing hydraulic manifolds is complex, prone to error, and expensive. Paro makes the hardest parts of hydraulic engineering easier.

The challenges were how to share this message with a larger audience? How can Paro defend their position in an increasingly noisy marketplace? And how can their brand and voice communicate pride of their work and Dutch sensibility, without losing their real, understated, engineering voice?

*I spoke with their customers. They are beloved.



Specialist products

What is a hydraulic manifold?

Voila. This semi-solid steel cuboid weighs so much I could barely pick it up. For reference, I can carry a lazy 32kg greyhound 100 metres down a country lane*.

Inside the cuboid is even more complex. You can see the number of different holes, their irregular spacing, and difference in size and complexity.

Planning the accurate drilling of these holes is a highly complex task. Engineers need to consider many variables, to make sure the manifold is accurate and efficient. Small changes can compound to alter performance, positive or negative.

A software that can minimise errors at any stage will save each engineer time, and can save companies huge amounts of money in efficiency, accuracy, and speed. Paro's products minimise these variables, allowing engineers to check the practicality of their designs as they work.

*Greyhounds are drama queens and will demand to be carried if they mildly hurt a toe.





Friction

A complex product, explained via a kitchen...

Paro was built in the Netherlands by engineers, for engineers: any new brand needed to communicate efficacy, simplicity, and skill.

I'm an English speaker, and my relationship to mechanical and hydraulic engineering is tangential at best*. But throughout my career I've worked with technical experts, so I knew we needed to take a little time to find the right analogy.

We realised that designing a kitchen was perfect: it has one job ("be a kitchen") with many, many variables ("which lightbulbs go in the ceiling, and which ones under the extractor fan?"). With this device in hand, the complexities of engineering melted away.

Now we could uncover the elements of Paro's brand that are defensible: Jos Paro's founding mission, the innovations of Marc, Frank, and CTO Wouter van der Zwan.

*If you're curious, some of my great-grandfathers built things like the first pylon, first fountain pen, two-colour printing press, and mass-delivery of the tin can. I barely passed GCSE physics and maps make me cry.



Relationships

Design vs copy? Chicken vs egg?

Copy and visuals should lift each other up, not compete for space or the audience's attention. But who goes first, and who gets the final say?

Dave Smyth, the designer, and I knew each other but we hadn't worked together.

Early on, we agreed how we'd collaborate: joining each other's client meetings, so Paro never had to repeat themselves.

Messaging, tone of voice and copy

Partway through, I flagged some changes I thought would help Paro communicate their benefits more clearly. Dave pushed back at first, but once I'd made the case for readability, we landed on trimming the list from five benefits to four. Easier for him to build and easier for the reader to take in.

Take the About page. Marc's dad founded the company in 1974. There simply had to be amazing images in their archives. The team found the best images, and Dave built a simple layout that highlights their legacy and experience in a busy marketplace.

Our story



1974

Founded by Jos Paro

Jos had been working at [unclear] realised his skills could be [unclear] consultant. Ingenieursbu

1986

First version of Hydro

Jos develops the first ver



1987

Jos's first hire was a technical student, F

Together, Frank and Jos works on the tech, and J

1989

Sadly, Jos passed aw

His wife, Margot, started HydroMan so that engine manifolds.

2003

Margot retires, and h joins Frank to lead P

Together, Marc and Fran to use your schematic t

Resolution

Care, simplicity, trust.

During my time in their Heemskerk office, Marc would interrupt our meetings because a customer had a question, or he'd triple-checked that I'd started the customer interview. In our copy meetings, he'd ask for a pause because a customer was phoning. During team lunches, team members would duck out to answer pressing customer calls.

In customer interviews, people told me that they know they can call Marc, Frank, Wouter, or any of the team. Over six, 1:1 qualitative interviews with long-term and new customers, I was told that problems are taken seriously, and someone will take accountability to fix a bug or add a component to the library, until the job is done.

Take the component library. An engineer can add their own item to the database, or ask someone at Paro to add it. This helps the engineer, and it makes the library stronger for every user.

As care was a driving force, the messaging and voice needed to prove it. I needed to balance simple language, Paro's care, and industry language.

That's the voice the copy needed to earn: as clear as an engineer's schematic, as reliable as Marc picking up the phone.

Nuts & bolts

Scope of work

The project had two distinct phases: messaging and voice, and copy.

Uncovering a brand's tone of voice is most efficient when you can allow the process to unfold over a number of weeks. This allows you to provide feedback that's knee-jerk, and then more reflective, nuanced feedback.

A visit to Paro's Heemskerk office allowed me to witness how truthful they were about their commitment to their clients and engineering,

This copy took a while to deliver, as we were working across Dutch and English. I provided close support with Paro's CEO, talking him through British English, making sure I understood the engineering idiom, and my copy reflected their logic and processes of engineering.

Month one: messaging and voice

- A succinct document, confirming the more clear and confident voice, the story we're telling across web, copy and socials, the benefits we're selling.
- Light tone of voice: clear guidance about how to use the voice
- Additional: re-writing price change communications

Months two to four: design and copy

- Home page
- Product pages: HydroSym, HydroMan, HydroCam
- Services: Integration, Engineering
- About page: Company history, Profiles of senior leaders
- Case studies: landing page and one case study
- Knowledge base
- Library
- Documentation
- Blog: landing page

Process and timings

Paro had a designer and developer booked, so my job was to locate the message, the tone, and the words to help Paro take their next steps. Please note that the process can be shorter, but we decided on a little and often approach, allowing Paro to control the process.

Uncovering: month 1

- Site visit to Heemskerk
- Interviewing senior leaders
- 1:1 qualitative customer interviews
- Collaborating on brand workshop with designer

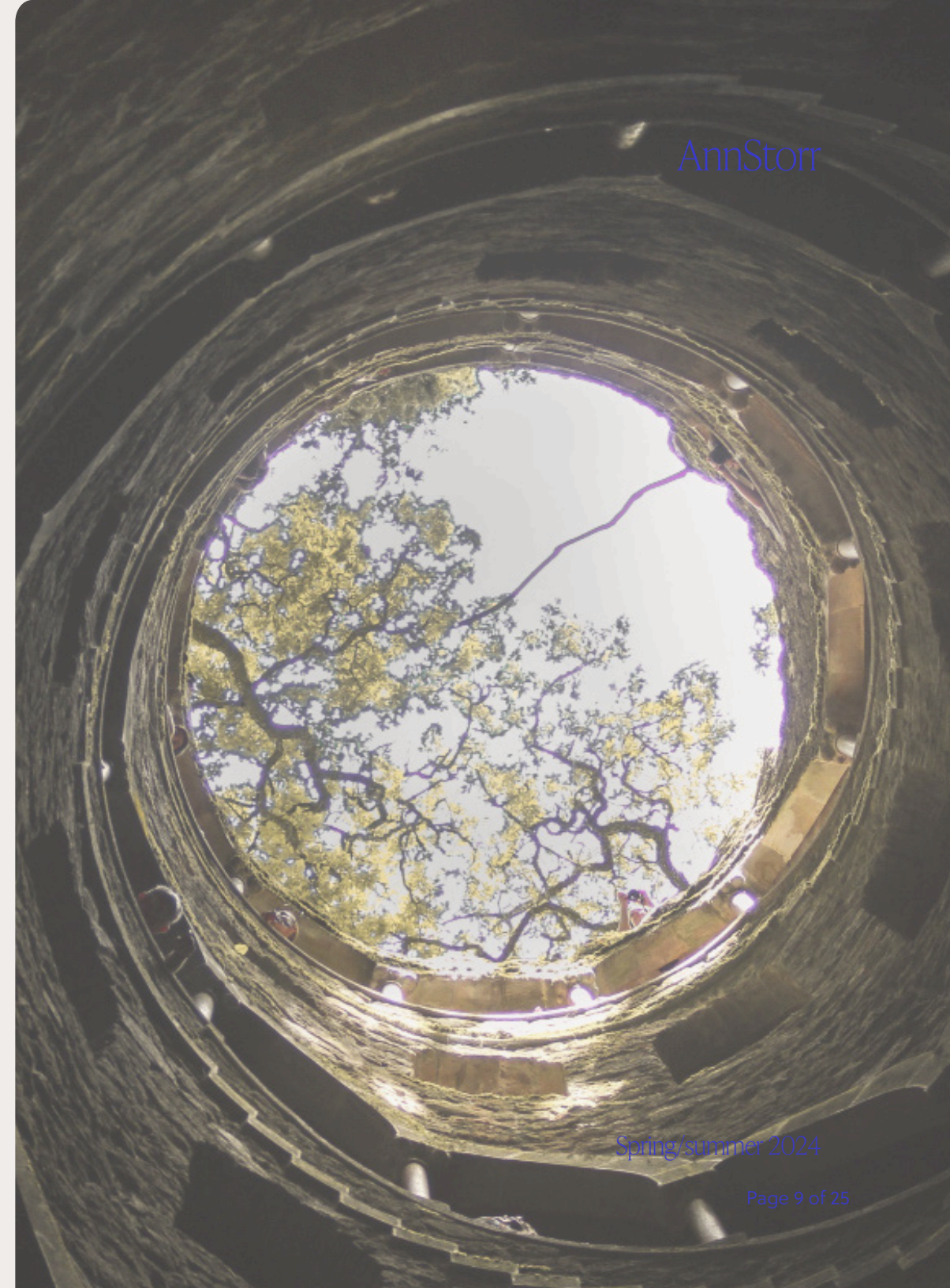
Reflecting: month 2

- Sharing ideas with designer
- Locating the message
- Landing concepts with senior leaders

Writing: months 2 to 4

- Project managing delivery
- Simplifying concepts
- Finding organising principles
- Creating new language
- Suggesting conversion-first layouts to designer
- Delivery copy to client
- Applying feedback

Messaging, tone of voice and copy



Before & after

To



Why do you need to care about value claims?

"36% of runners ran faster in Greyhound Sprint Shoes."
"Every greyhound we place will sleep for 20 hours every day."

These are value claims. Yes, they are silly ones, but they're the kind you'd see selling running shoes, or convincing someone to adopt the world's laziest dog.

If you say something like "36% of surveyed users," or "flawless, guaranteed", your brand needs to be able to prove these numbers or claims, on request, at any time.

Messaging, tone of voice and copy

Paro's commitment to excellence, their product, and their customer service deserved to be communicated clearly. But lines like "Flawless hydraulic design. Guaranteed." and "We don't stop until you are 100% satisfied" left them exposed: a single dissatisfied customer, or a competitor, only needs one unmet "100%" to turn a brand's own words against it. Ahead of a push into wider markets, Paro's leadership eventually agreed: better to make claims that were smaller, and true.

(Why greyhounds? I love greyhounds.)

Key Copy



The rhythm of success

Words needed to communicate Paro’s simplicity and efficacy. A gentle rhythm that helps busy engineers understand that Paro is here for them, and that this growing company is here to work with the world’s biggest engineering brands.

Copy gets straight to the point, assuring readers that their time will be well-spent: creating accurate schematics is a complex process, previously taking hours.

Paro are so confident in their process that you can have a free trial, no credit card required. By placing the “free trial” button at the top of the site, and suggesting illustrations that bring the engineer’s job to life, we grab the reader’s attention and let them know: we see you, and we truly believe we can help you to succeed.

Messaging, tone of voice and copy

[HydroSym](#) [HydroMan](#) [HydroCam](#) [Component Library](#) [Account](#)

Home / HydroSym

[Subscribe](#) [Free Trial](#)

HydroSym

Accurate hydraulic schematics Created in minutes

The all-in-one program for connected schematics.

[Start your free trial](#) [Compare plans](#)

Component ordering code

Manufacturer
Sun Hydraulics

Type
FXAA X A

A 15 in³/min. (250 cc/min.)

B

D

F

H

J

L

Pos.	Qty	Type	Description	Manufacturer
3.1	1	RSPS-12-N-7-O-7	Pressure relief valve	Bucher Hydraulics
3.2	1	SV13-12-C	2/2 Directional poppet valve	Eaton
3.3.1	1	DKE-0613-00-AC/	4/2 Directional spool valve	ATOS
3.3.2	1	DKE-0613-00-AC/	4/2 Directional spool valve	ATOS

Readability

Headers are simple, allowing customers to scan the page.

Paro knows what engineers need: accuracy within some of the most complex and most expensive fabrications in manufacturing.

Word games and allusions were not appropriate for this international company, but the odd exception was allowed: every engineer learns the maxim, “measure twice, cut once”.

We didn’t lead with comparing Paro to its competition. Paro software is more powerful, and it’s so effective that it stands on its merits. Referring negatively to competitors stands against Paro’s positive, affable personality. The dominant competitor deserved a mention, as we needed to overcome objections.

Leading the section with credibility - “spool types”, “accumulator volume” - demonstrates Paro’s credentials. This sets us up to the value claim of being more powerful than the industry leader, thus building more trust with the reader.

Messaging, tone of voice and copy

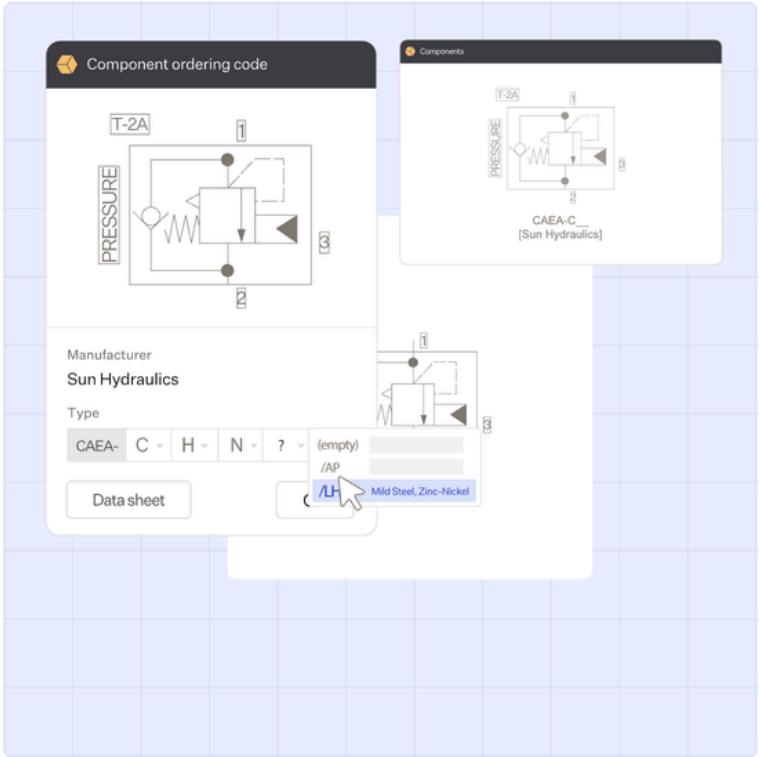
Select once, configure once

From spool types to pressure setting or accumulator volume, as you draw, configurable components allow you to modify the property’s components.

Each component in HydroSym guides you through manufacturer parameters, all the way to a complete ordering code.

More powerful than CAD software, with just a few clicks, you can find the manufacturer’s specifications, ordering codes, and link to the product sheet.

Less admin, more design.



Explaining simplicity

Paro can have the biggest impact on customers when all three programmes are used in sequence: one to draw, one to design, one to fabricate.

This message hadn't been captured in previous work - it was living in the heads of the team, but wasn't being shared with customers.

So here's what one process might look like: an engineer might start with drawing one schematic, then designing the manifold, then fabricating it.

Well, that sounds like 1, 2, 3. A simple, replicable formula.

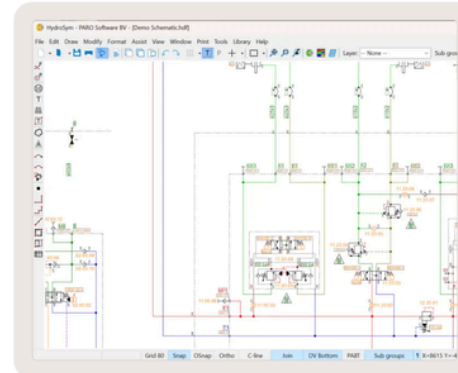
By repeating "Draw", "Design", and "Generate" across the new site, engineers can see how Paro removes unnecessary complexity, de-risks every stage of a multi-step process, and helps them to deliver the best possible result.

Additionally, every button has a clear Call to Action or Call to Value, directing people around the site.

Messaging, tone of voice and copy

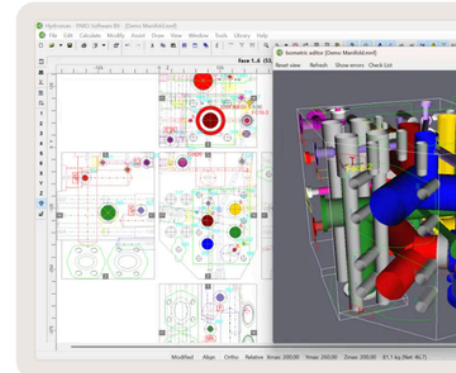
Your engineering design, simplified

From designing a schematic to fabricating a 900-hole manifold, Paro makes creating as simple as 1, 2, 3.



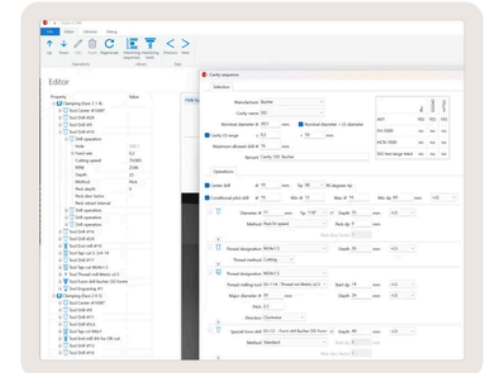
1. Draw a smart schematic in HydroSym

[Explore HydroSym](#)



2. Design your hydraulic manifold in HydroMan

[Explore HydroMan](#)



3. Generate your CNC program in HydroCam

[Explore HydroCam](#)

Library: a lightbulb moment

Imagine trying to find the one lightbulb you need for your new kitchen in the biggest DIY shop. But what if selecting the wrong lamp could cost you tens of thousands of pounds?

That's the risk hydraulic engineers are working with, every day.

Paro's Component Library allows engineers to find their equivalent of the most unusual lightbulb, test that it's the right one for the schematic the engineer is creating. Each symbol (like a drawing) or component (looks like a drawing but it's loaded with information) can help engineers stress-test their work by the minute, avoiding these expensive mistakes.

If Paro don't have the symbol, they'll create it, ASAP.

And I mean ASAP: Monday to Friday, one of Paro's engineers will configure the symbol as a priority. If they know you need it, it's their priority, because they care about your work.

Messaging, tone of voice and copy

Search, find, create

Whether you need a simple symbol or a fully configured component, search by function, brand name, or manufacturing code.

Then, drag your selection onto your HydroSym canvas and start creating.

Fast, simple, effective.

Find your component

As simple as 1, 2, 3.

Engineers need to create diagrams and illustrations that they can send to peers and clients. Creating these files has been costly and inefficient, making them out-of-reach for many professionals.

Knowing how embarrassing it can be to be without files that represent their work, Paro make it possible for engineers to share their prep work with the status and elegance this specialised, detailed work it deserves.

The components they selected through the Library are linked to every single manufacturer's specifications, ordering codes, and product sheets.

Say someone asks to see the cost of two, or even three versions of a manifold.

With Paro's Library and linking technology, engineers can create elegant and accurate files that help their peers understand the impact of small decisions on cost and delivery time.

It's simple, effective, and shows engineers that Paro knows the pains and problems that engineers face every day - and they're in their corner.

Messaging, tone of voice and copy

Link, pack, save

We've linked every component to the manufacturer's specifications, ordering codes and product sheets.

From diagram to Bill of Materials to hose list, your components are fully configured.

With just a few clicks, you can create client-ready files.

Results

Visibility is up

+37%

www.paro.nl moved from 12.9 to 8.1.

This increase moved their site from page two to page one of Google, increasing their reach to a global audience: one of the goals of the project.

Messaging, tone of voice and copy

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Impressions

+19%

As a consequence of Paro's improved position, impressions grew from 451K in 2025 to 536K in 2026.

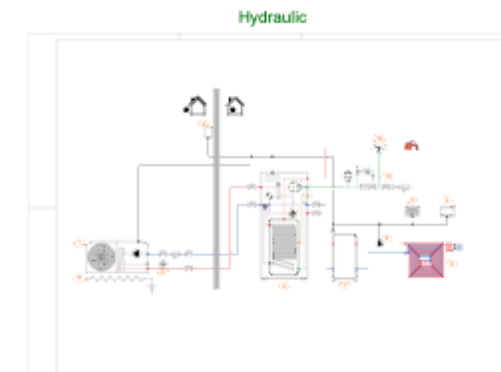
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Messaging, tone of voice and copy

Ariston needed a reliable and efficient way to present and share schematics of their complex heating systems. Their existing drawing tools were too simple and lacked the functionality to support cross-functional collaboration or maintain consistency across globally dispersed teams. They required a solution that could serve as a single source of truth, be easily shareable, and support both hydraulic and electrical schematics.



The Review

"Before working with Ann, we knew what we did, but we weren't always explaining clearly why it mattered to our customers.

Ann helped us sharpen our positioning and challenged us to be more precise about our products and the value they provide. That process helped us create a brand voice that feels more like us and makes it easier for customers to understand what we do.

The project required quite a bit of work and discussion, but Ann guided us through the process and kept us focused on getting the message right.

We now have a much clearer way of communicating what Paro offers and why it matters."

Marc Paro,
CEO, Paro.

What you'll get if you work with me

I help growing businesses find a voice that supports real commercial goals. You'll get a plain-speaking communications expert who wants you to succeed.

Every project starts with its own scope of work. This is agreed and signed before work begins, giving you full visibility over cost from day one. I don't quote before talking with potential clients, because every project is different, and a number given before a conversation is usually wrong. Please tell me your budget, and I'll tell you what's achievable within it.

Administratively, you'll get weekly project updates via email. If you wish, you can have a Trello deck, but in my experience on email with "Here's what's done", "Here's what's next", and "Here's what I need from you" is the most effective tool to keep everyone on track.

I've spent my career working with technical experts operating in a second language. Brilliant people apologise for imperfect English that doesn't need apologising for. Part of my job is making sure they know they don't need to apologise, and that we're here to learn from each other. And my job is to help readers understand you.

Audit	Send me what you have: existing copy, old briefs, anything from previous agencies. I work from what your business has, what it needs, and I don't make lazy assumptions.
Messaging and tone of voice	Market research, stakeholder interviews, team workshops. You'll have a message and voice that's yours alone: distinct, simple, built to last as you grow.
Copy	We start with one page, talked through on a call. Two rounds of edits included in your quoted price (structural rewrites get their own scope). Once we've found our rhythm, you'll receive files in Google Docs.
Check-in	At three-months, and six months, you'll receive an email

Messaging, tone of voice and copy

Got a complicated story? Want to talk?

Drop me an email: ann@annstorr.com

Surely you've seen it: www.annstorr.com

Substack: [voilà](#)

Naturally on LinkedIn: [ann storr](#)