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# The Ethos of the Brand in Digital Times. Implications for Copywriters' Work

**Abstract:** Copywriters have always been trained to search for a communication style that would differentiate a brand from its competitors. A well-known writing technique in advertising is for the brand to 'speak' in the voice of an implicit character that embodies the values and lifestyle of the target audience. In this way, a feeling of communion between the brand and its (potential) customers can emerge, which might translate into brand messages being received with more interest and openness by these audiences. The novelty brought by the digital era is that this communion between the brand and its audience can be taken to a performative level, with new platforms for direct-response on the part of viewers. Today people no longer settle for being at the receiving end of the communication spectrum, they want to participate, to contribute, to comment, to be co-producers of content or co-advisers of product improvements. Given that this willingness is not always tied to a high level of competence for such interventions, the emerging dialogue is often challenging for the brand-atmosphere that copywriters would want to create and maintain. In the midst of such difficulties, copywriters are required to rethink of their job in a dialogic manner, one that would still keep the style of the brand alive, but would allow enough room for consumers to bring their own input in the public spaces occupied (physically, virtually, or conceptually) by the brand. The *ethos* of the brand – the implicit personality that shines through the brand messages – is a construct that can be used to guide copywriters in their wide-ranging efforts to cope with this emerging dialogue. In broad lines, *ethos* refers to the ethical core of the personality that the brand is trying to project. This article addresses some of the features that a copy should have in order to help build brand *ethos*, and it discusses the practical implications of (not) employing these features.