

Blancminge

Should I use US or UK English to write my ebooks? And what about my ebooks website?

Here's some common sense guidelines about using US English / UK English to write and market your ebook.

It sounds glaringly obvious but if you have a dotcodotuk site - with a predominantly UK audience - it's best to use UK English. If your site and audience are mainly US-focused, use American English. If it isn't immediately obvious *where* your visitors and customers come from, find out by analysing your web stats and write for the majority.

What if you're global?

If your customers live all over the world, you can't really win. Luckily the biggest difference between UK and US English is the spelling. While you'll probably annoy a few purist readers no matter which version of the language you use, at least the differences in spelling won't actually mislead people.

Sometimes the same words mean completely different things in the US and UK. Americans might feel comfy wandering around the streets in pants and vest, but in the UK we'd probably be arrested for it! 'Public school', 'brackets' and 'first floor' all have totally different meanings too.

If you can manage it, always use words that mean the same thing in both countries and sidestep the contentious ones. There's usually a perfectly good work-around if you think creatively about copywriting.

Honesty and transparency are always the best policy. If you feel your use of US or UK English could present genuine problems, you can always include a sentence on your site to explain. Something like this:

"We've written this site in UK English because 90% of our customers are based in Britain. If you're in the USA, many apologies. We don't mean to be rude, we're just writing for the majority."

