



**Appum Group White Papers**

*Strategic communications that generate positive business results.*

**@ppum group**  
*the white paper company*



## I. Executive Summary

The term “white paper” often conjures up the unexciting image of a dense, esoteric piece of highly technical prose written by experts and technicians for the sole purpose of educating like-minded experts and technicians.

Today’s business white papers also adhere to an educational mission: informing high-level business decision makers in diverse industries, helping them make the best choices for their companies. In addition, these marketing pieces have an important secondary purpose: influencing the purchase decision and motivating the decision maker to take action.

### ***Here are some of the top reasons why white papers are effective marketing tools:***

- A white paper is the perfect medium to support marketing and sales of complex or highly technical services and products.
- Decision makers are more likely to read a white paper than a glossy marketing brochure because the content is perceived as more valuable and trustworthy.
- White papers are an appropriate marketing/sales support vehicle for any industry where there is a need to communicate detailed information to prospective clients and customers.
- Many industries — pharmaceutical, insurance, health care, banking/finance, construction/development — are discovering the effectiveness of white papers for marketing/sales support.

### ***White papers can effectively reach a wider audience at a lower cost:***

- White papers are easy to download from a website or pass along via email.
- The production costs are miniscule relative to a typical marketing brochure or direct mail piece.
- White paper content can easily be repurposed for sales tools, brochures, web content, direct marketing fulfillment and more.
- Business white papers are most commonly aimed at C-level executives, but can effectively educate and motivate any decision maker or influencer.
- A well-written white paper will be passed along by decision makers to others involved in the decision making process.

### ***Appum Group white papers are written with the dual purpose of helping you connect with important decision makers and making the appropriate call to action. With over 20 years of technical marketing experience, Appum Group can offer a proven methodology:***

- Content appropriate for the needs and expectations of your audience.
- Papers written from structured and approved outlines, ensuring effective communication of your messages.
- Length rarely exceeds ten pages.
- Simple and elegant supporting graphics.
- Competitive and flexible pricing structure.

Appum Group white papers get read – and our readers take action. The following overview provides detailed information about our philosophies at the Appum Group, our production methodologies, and the content and design guidelines employed in creating our business white papers.

**Today, white papers are recognized as a valuable piece of marketing collateral and sales support for a wide variety of industries.**

## II. Introduction

### *What is a white paper, really?*

The medium may be most familiar in high tech industries, such as computer hardware, software, and technology-related service organizations. The use of white papers in high tech began in the 1960s as a means for hardware and software designers to describe technical issues and explain the philosophies or operations behind their solutions. These papers were developed solely for internal use and considered confidential — and were rarely shared with customers or other outsiders.

Technology companies have begun to see the value of this medium for sharing information. Technical marketing papers are now common in both print and electronic formats, enhancing the understanding of products, services, and the features and benefits of solutions.

Today, white papers are recognized as a valuable piece of marketing collateral and sales support for a wide variety of industries. Today's business white papers still adhere to an educational mission: informing high-level business decision makers in diverse industries, helping them make the best choices for their companies. These technical marketing pieces also have an important secondary purpose: influencing the purchase decision and motivating the reader to take action.

A good business white paper conveys complex information as concisely as possible, and rarely exceeds 10 pages in length. The layout is uncomplicated and elegant, with simple graphics to visually support concepts where appropriate — this simplicity makes the documents easy to download and very inexpensive to print. Most of the time, white papers are distributed electronically, in Adobe® Acrobat® PDF format. The convenient PDF format has the ability to present both text and graphic information in a consistent fashion across the most popular computing platforms such as Microsoft® Windows®, Macintosh®, Palm™ and UNIX.

### *Why Are White Papers Effective Marketing Tools?*

C-level decision makers (CEO, COO, CFO, CIO) no longer delegate mission-critical business decisions to lower level department managers. These executives are directly involved in the process, especially when significant financial commitments are at stake.

Business and technical professionals want to be informed and educated — without being inundated with a plethora of technical terms or unnecessary marketing “fluff.” These busy people want high-quality information about how a product or service can solve business problems and impact their bottom line. And, they want information in a convenient form that is easy to scan, sufficiently detailed, and relevant.

Any company that needs to convey detailed, sophisticated information to help market and sell a complex product or service must be able to communicate effectively with this audience.

Here are some of the top reasons why white papers are effective marketing tools:

- A white paper is the perfect medium to support marketing and sales of complex or highly technical services and products.
- Decision makers are more likely to read a white paper than a glossy marketing brochure because the content is perceived as more valuable and trustworthy.
- White papers are an appropriate marketing/sales support vehicle for any industry where there is a need to communicate complex information to prospects and customers.
- Industries such as health care, banking/finance, pharmaceutical, insurance, biotechnology, and construction/development, are discovering the effectiveness of white papers for marketing and sales support.

**89% of the respondents said that the availability of a high quality vendor white paper positively influences their image of a company's product or service.**

***In addition, white papers can effectively reach a wider audience at a lower cost:***

- White papers are easy to download from a website or pass along via email.
- The production costs are miniscule relative to a typical marketing brochure or direct mail piece.
- White paper content can easily be repurposed for sales tools, brochures, web content, direct marketing fulfillment, and more.
- Business white papers are most commonly aimed at C-level executives, but can effectively educate and motivate any decision maker or influencer.
- A well-written, understandable white paper is most likely to get passed along by a decision maker to others involved in the decision making process.

The topics these elegant, detailed pieces can effectively address are as diverse as the potential audience. For example, a health care company wants to educate corporate prospects and customers about the benefits of its offerings to a customer and its employees. Or, a construction firm needs a convenient method to communicate to developers or architects about ground water mitigation. A company that sells high-end technology solutions may want a piece of collateral that is more informative than the standard glossy marketing brochure — and that conveys enough detail on features and benefits to inform a purchase decision.

## **II. Why Create White Papers?**

Growing numbers of executives look to white papers to inform their decision making processes. Surveys by experts such as Bitpipe, an online source for white papers, have validated the effectiveness of the medium.

In fact, white papers are the second-most important information resource for corporate decision makers, according to results of an executive survey reported by eMarketer.com. Of the top ten information resources cited by the survey, employee phone directories are first; market analysis is 10th.

In the recent 2004 Bitpipe Network User Study: Readership and Usage of White Papers in the IT Buying Process, over 86% of respondents read white papers to learn more about a company's products or technology. In addition, 89% of the respondents said that the availability of a high quality vendor white paper positively influences their image of a company's product or service.

White papers also fill an information void left by traditional marketing collateral and sales tools. While marketing brochures often address company positioning and a high-level overview of a particular business topic, they do not provide the technical depth to show business professionals how specific technical features can translate into satisfying their business needs and solving their problems.

The truth of the matter is that most business decision makers expect to find a white paper on your website when researching information about your product or service. Now, white papers are regarded as standard — and expected — marketing collateral.

Delivered on websites, search engines, and document libraries, today's business white paper is an effective medium that can educate and inform — and most importantly, significantly influence a prospective customer. Organizations that want to thrive in today's highly competitive business marketplace can leverage business white papers to generate positive results.

#### **IV. How Do Appum White Papers Get Results?**

Appum Group technical marketing/business white papers are written with the dual purpose of helping you connect with the executive-level, decision-making audience and providing the appropriate call to action.

##### ***Busy Executives Need Good Information Fast***

Today's intensely competitive business environment requires ever-increasing levels of understanding and expertise from business professionals at all levels. Organizations that market and sell complex products and services must be able to articulate how their solutions can solve a company's business problems and positively impact the bottom line — in a way that makes sense to any business professional.

##### ***Written to Audience Needs***

A big problem with traditional technical white papers is that they are written by technicians, for technicians. The writing duties for white papers typically fall to a subject matter expert. These authors usually focus their content on features, ignoring business benefits. This style of communication may even alienate the attention of the executive audience. The opportunity to communicate a strategic advantage message and influence the most important element of the decision making process is lost.

Holding the reader's attention — and ensuring information retention — requires walking the reader through a logical presentation including industry background, business challenges, business solutions, and business benefits. Formatting and design enhancements such as bullets, tables, graphics, and business charts help convey complex information in a way that these readers can quickly scan and easily understand.

##### ***Proven Methodology***

Appum Group uses a proven methodology, refined through many years of experience. We understand the right balance of form, function, and effective content that needs to go into a white paper to get your point across to these decision makers — and make an impact on your bottom line:

- Content is appropriate to the needs and expectations of your audience — our papers rarely exceed ten pages.
- Papers are written to structured, pre-approved outlines, ensuring effective communication of your messages.
- Supporting graphics are simple and elegant.
- Our pricing structure is competitive, and flexible to the requirements of your project.

## **Structured Process**

To facilitate a good reception for your message, Appum Group white papers follow a structured process and use everyday language that speaks to a reader's common sense. We seek to engage the reader in a way that will not only educate and inform, but also promote complete understanding of our clients' products and services.

Business decision makers who read Appum Group papers can visualize how a showcased offering will solve their unique business problems and reinforce their companies' continued success. Appum Group papers help our clients reach and educate corporate decision makers, opening minds and doors for complex products or services.

Our ability to deliver effective technical marketing materials and maintain high standards for technical content is informed by over 20 years of experience. We have produced papers on diverse topics, such as: health care, cutting-edge marketing strategies for personal care products, ground water mitigation, and a wide variety of technology topics. Satisfied customers include Proctor & Gamble, Humana, Inc., Intellisync, BMC Software, Intel Corporation, and Sun Microsystems.

## **V. Our White Paper Methodology**

Appum Group white papers can best be described as “technical marketing” or “business-oriented” pieces. They occupy an important niche between highly technical documents and promotional sales brochures.

Traditional white papers focus on technical, feature-oriented detail. While such content may be appropriate for technical audiences, an executive in charge of the purchase decision needs a different level of detail. One focused on how the features or technical attributes of a product or service will produce the desired business results. A communication that focuses on purely technical information may go over the heads of business professionals — along with the opportunity to show corporate decision makers the competitive advantage gained from using a product or service.

**Business decision makers who read Appum Group papers can visualize how a showcased offering will solve their unique business problems**

At the other extreme, glossy promotional brochures usually confine their remarks to a discussion of company positioning within an industry and give only a general overview of how a product or service works. This type of collateral cannot provide the extent of technical content necessary for a corporate executive to effectively translate how investment in a product or service would meet the complex needs of an organization and ultimately improve its profitability.

Our goal is to enable and enhance comprehension of your messages, because a reader can only be receptive to ideas that he or she understands. For example, when a new term or technical phrase is introduced in a white paper, a complete definition is provided at the point of its use. Business graphics can also be used to build understanding of how your offering accomplishes its objectives.

Appum Group white papers explain business issues step by step, to help business and technical readers firmly grasp how a given solution will solve an immediate business problem or improve the overall operation of an enterprise. We structure our content to ensure that even a reader who may know nothing about an industry, company, or solution at the beginning of a white paper can thoroughly understand the important issues at its conclusion.

## VI. How Does An Appum Group White Paper Address Content?

Given our years of experience and the range of topics we've covered, we recommend that a white paper follow this basic flow, which we use as a starting point to create a customized outline for each project:

- A. **Executive Summary:** a one-page summation of the information in the main body of the piece; the executive summary can be written to stand alone as an abstract. The executive summary is one page or less.
- B. **Introduction:** an overview of relevant marketplace issues that would motivate consideration of the solution provider as a viable supplier of goods or services. Questions are answered such as, "What is the problem or issue in the marketplace that needs attention? What business problems have arisen to make the featured solution attractive?" The introduction is up to one page in length.
- C. **The business or technical challenges related to the issue:** the unique challenges businesses face within a given industry. For example, what specific problems are associated with enterprise information security? Uncomfortable scenarios or "pain points" that most readers experience in the rush of business are generally reviewed, which introduces the next section. This part of the paper is one page or less.
- D. **How the featured product or service delivers a business solution:** the heart of how the showcased product or service works. Each aspect or component of the offering is examined in detail and discussed in terms of how it contributes to the solution as a whole and how it provides resolution to the presenting business problem(s). The features, advantages, and benefits of each component are called out with bullets and in-depth definitions. Step-by-step examples demonstrate how a particular solution performs. The length of this section can be three to five pages.
- E. **Business case study (optional):** another avenue for the business professional to see how the highlighted product or service can satisfy his or her business needs. A realistic, day-in-the-life story dramatizes how the solution would perform in a common business situation and what benefits would result. A case study can be presented by demonstrating the happy outcomes of using the offering — or by showing the unfortunate effects brought about by its non-use. A reader can vividly picture the benefits his or her business would enjoy if the product were employed — or the liabilities it might suffer if the product were ignored. A case study guides the reader to see the value of a product or service to his or her company's bottom line. The returns are spelled out as gains in productivity, profitability, resource allocation, or business relationships. The case study is usually two to three pages.
- F. **Summary:** quickly summarizes each section in the paper and reviews how the featured solution contributes to a company's greater productivity and profitability. This section conclusively persuades a reader that your company's offering can solve his or her business problems and that you have the history, background, and expertise necessary to accomplish the task. A summary may contain one or two paragraphs and emphasize major points in a few bullets. The summary is one page or less.
- G. **Your Company Advantage and Contact Information:** a statement of company advantage derived from the standard, boilerplate messages found on your company website and collateral material. This statement can communicate the central philosophy of the organization, what makes the company superior to the competition, and how other businesses would benefit by entering into a business partnership with your company.

The client-approved statement of company advantage can be included in subsequent white papers, so that a company's central theme is clear, consistent, and repeated. Your website URL, logo, and contact information are also included. This declaration provides further consistency of representation by giving sales personnel an effective communication to use in marketing presentations and proposals. This information is usually one-half page or less.

## **VII. Timelines and Terms**

Our methodology and approach allow for fast turnaround times. But, the time required for the completion of an Appum Group white paper can vary with the length of the piece, the level of graphic detail, and whether additional background research and interviews with subject matter experts are required. Time must also be allowed for editing and proofreading the document.

After all supporting materials have been provided to us and necessary interviews have been conducted, a proposed outline is created. Once all parties have agreed to the outline for a white paper and the client has approved it, the next step is to develop the document itself.

A typical 10-page white paper can take between two and four weeks to produce, depending on the quality of support materials and interviews a client furnishes up front. Review cycles, extensive case studies that require research, and any additional editing – especially that involving graphic production – will extend this timeframe.

The Appum Group offers two pricing plans: per-page pricing, and hourly pricing. The per-page pricing schedule makes it easy to estimate the cost of the project before we start. Under this pricing plan, a price for the white paper is based on the number of pages that are created and the level of related text, graphic, and design elements required.

A signed contract agreement outlining the negotiated price, as well as payment terms and conditions, is required prior to the start of a project. The agreement covers up to three revisions — after the third revision, additional revisions are billed separately.

The Appum Group is committed to completing white papers in the shortest timeframe possible. While we are able to complete most of our projects within two or three weeks, a turnaround cycle of two weeks or less will incur additional rush charges.

### VIII. Our Design Approaches

With white papers, simpler is better — to keep production costs in line and to ensure that downloading a paper is fast and easy for the reader. To help you get the look that is most appropriate, Appum Group offers three proven design approaches — from simple, to high-end:

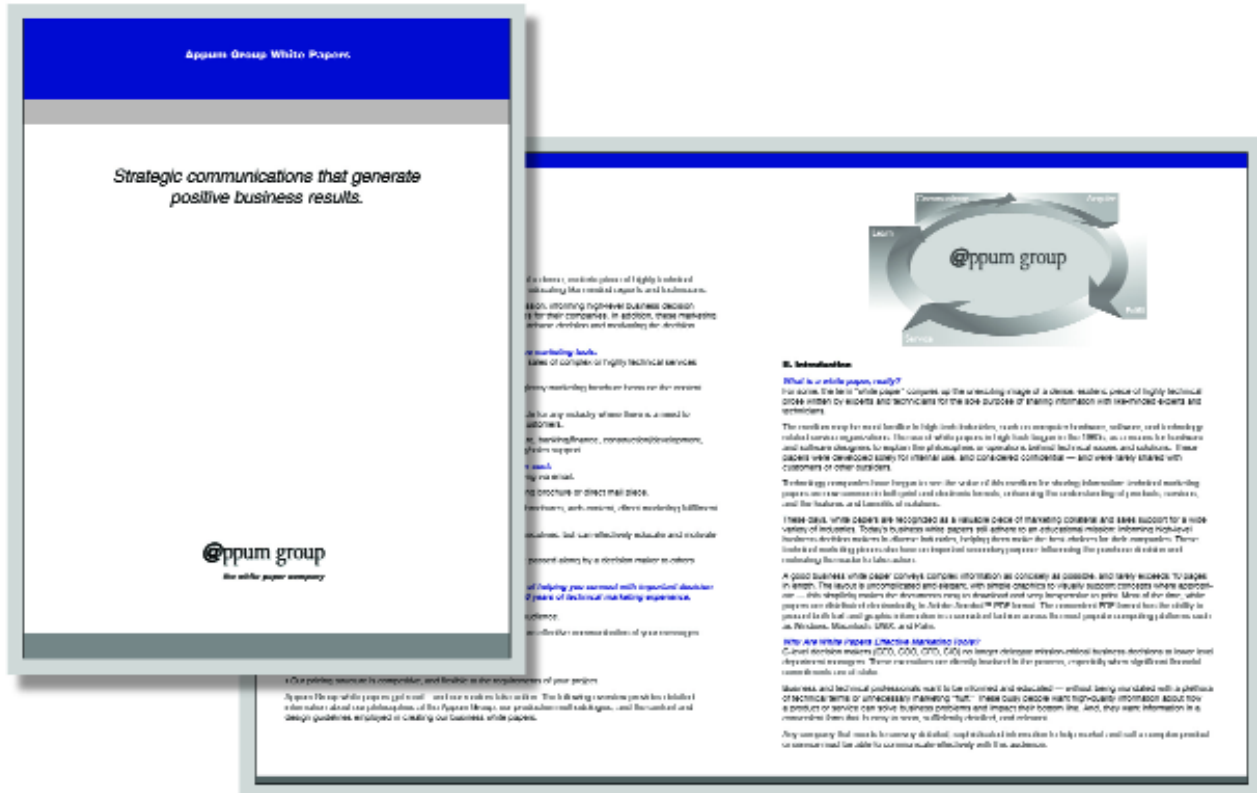
- **Text Only Design** – Black-and white, single-column design, no graphic elements — the least expensive to produce.
- **Text and Graphic Design** – A single column-design, incorporating charts, graphs, tables or other graphic elements — more expensive to produce, but still a good value. The business graphics visually support the information in the copy, enhancing the reader’s understanding and retention of the material. This format is usually black-and-white, but can incorporate some color.
- **Highly Stylized Design** – Multiple columns, front/rear cover artwork, print ready, brochure-quality design — the most expensive to produce, and more costly to print. High-end, full-color graphics also take longer to download. If this approach is used, it is important to remember the cardinal rule of simplicity. This design option is best when photos or four-color graphics are necessary to enhance message retention.

See the graphics that follow for an example of each of these design approaches.

**Figure 1:** Text Only Design



**Figure 2: Text and Graphic Design**



**Figure 3: Highly Stylized Design**



## **IX. Summary**

The Appum Group helps companies reach and educate corporate decision makers, opening doors and minds to complex products and services. We help your readers clearly visualize how your offering can solve their unique business problems — and reinforce their companies' continued success.

### ***White papers are a crucial element in your marketing collateral system, and can:***

- Effectively communicate complex concepts to important business decision makers.
- Give your company the opportunity to be recognized as the expert.
- Help influence the buying decision.
- Convey high-quality content.
- Educate prospects and support the sales process.

White papers fill a unique purpose, both educating prospects and supporting the sales process. In addition to educating and informing, these technical marketing pieces have a crucial secondary purpose: influencing the purchase decision and motivating the reader to take action.

Today's business white papers inform high-level business decision makers in diverse industries, such as pharmaceutical, insurance, health care, banking/finance, consumer goods and construction. White papers are a valuable vehicle for any industry where there is a need to communicate complex, detailed information to prospects and customers.

A good business white paper expresses ideas simply and concisely, both educating and motivating. Layout is uncomplicated and elegant, making these documents easy to download and very inexpensive to print. With many options for electronic delivery, white papers can help you reach a wider audience at a lower cost than most traditional marketing media.

Our ability to deliver effective white papers and maintain high standards for technical content is informed by over 20 years of experience. Appum Group white papers are strategic marketing communications that help you get results.

### ***Find Out More About Appum Group White Papers***

Pricing plans, white paper samples, and references are available upon request. Please contact us with your specific requirements, and we will be glad to issue a detailed price quote.

The Appum Group also consults with our customers on how to effectively leverage the content we create across various media and marketing deliverables. Visit our website for more information on how we help our clients repurpose their white paper content for brochures, fulfillment, sales tools, and more.



To learn more about how Appum Group white papers  
can generate results for your business, please contact:

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