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Tech-Talk 27 years

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OFFICE - Do I Want to Add a Copyright Notice?

Intermediate

Do you spend a lot of your time writing reports, blog posts or presentations? Every time you do this, you create what is known as your "work product" … and it's a valuable entity. When you are done, you will most probably be sharing it with others.

Copyright

Even if you want to freely share it (or *especially* if you want others to have it) it's **best practice to mark your creation with a copyright.** That's right, your work product could benefit from a copyright ... using your name or your organization.

Let's look at a variety of reasons for adding a copyright, how it should look and a few shortcuts to make that happen. But first, a true story to remind us of one of the more important reasons for protecting your work.

presentation

STORY: Jean is a productivity consultant who developed a presentation on *"Steps to Getting Organized."* She often uses it in her talks and guest blogs. It is an important business generator for her. So you can imagine her surprise when one day attending a colleague's presentation, she saw *her* slides on the screen. She felt her material had been stolen.

In researching how this happened, she realized that nope, she had not put a copyright notice on her presentation. This meant that while her material was technically "protected" because she *had* created the original, there had been nothing on her slides to tell others *who* had authored them .... nor any permissions required to use it.

Why Add a Copyright?

Sure, copyrights lend protection against others "stealing" your work, but there are more reasons to **consider putting it on all, or many, of your authored creations.** For one thing, the symbol and notice are *educational*. It tells folks that copyright protection exists for your work and to respect that.

A copyright also:

- *Reminds* people that a copyright exists for the work.
- Keeps someone from saying that they *didn't know* that protection was in place.
- Identifies the work's copyright *owner* (you or the organization).
- Shows the work's *first year* of publication.
- Helps people who want to use the material *locate* the copyright owner and obtain permission.

What to Include in a Copyright Notice

A copyright notice should have at least three elements in it, with an optional fourth.

1. The copyright *symbol* © (or the word *Copyright* or abbreviation *Copr*)
2. The *year* of first publication
3. The *name* of the copyright owner
4. Optional: Tell what rights are retained by the copyright. Often you will see the phrase: *All rights reserved.*

Examples of Notice

© 2023 XYZ Company. All Rights Reserved.

Copyright 2019-2023 Joe Smith.

NOTE: The *order* of the *date* and *owner* are not important.

Where to Add the Copyright

You may wonder *where* you need to put this notice and *how often*. Typically, once in each communication entity is enough. Be sure to put it in a place where it can be clearly seen. Here are some ideas:

- **Books, Papers or Reports** – Add to the title page.
- **Presentations** – Place on the cover page and/or footer of each slide.
- **Images** – These are trickier. Often you see them at the bottom.
- **Websites and Blogs** – Put the *current* year in the footer.

Examples:

copyright

How to Quickly Add the Copyright Symbol

Adding the copyright symbol (the letter "C" in a circle that looks like this: ©) can be done in several different ways. We're showcasing two of them. These methods work in both Microsoft's Office Suite apps and Google's G-Suite.

1. Typing Shortcut. Yes, you actually start typing and when you're done it switches to the actual symbol. Here's how it works:

- Type an opening parenthesis: **(**
- Type the letter: **C** (for copyright)
- Type a closing parenthesis: **)**
- Press the space bar (this step is required in some cases)
- As soon as you type the last parenthesis, the copyright symbol will appear.

2. Get the Symbol from the Insert Menu.

- Place your cursor where you want the symbol to be.
- Go to the *Insert* menu.

In Word, PPT, Excel: click on the *Symbol* icon in the *Symbols* area and choose the circled "c".

In Google Docs, Slides, Sheets: choose *Special Characters* from the drop-down menu and find the symbol.

Communications: Email

"Personalize the subject line"

Sometimes you really want to catch someone's attention with an email, so that they open it quickly, right?

One technique to consider is to **start the subject line with the recipient's first name.** Take a look at these examples, substituting your name to see how they make you feel.

Sue, can we set up a call?
Kevin, here's the info you asked for.
Shanai, take a look at this data before we talk.

You'll notice that two of the three also have a *call to action*. The combo makes for an especially strong communication.

TIP: Use this personalizing technique sparingly. If you overdo it, the effect may be lost.

Ask a question

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