



A KEYSTONE PUBLICATION

The Guide to Successful Wikipedia Engagement

A Handbook for Corporate Professionals

WIKIBLUEMPRINT

Ethical Wikipedia Consulting

wikibluemprint.com · info@wikibluemprint.com

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Why We Wrote It

Wikipedia is the most consulted reference work in human history. An article there sits near the top of nearly every search for a company's name, feeds the answer boxes and AI assistants that increasingly stand between a company and its customers, and shapes the first impressions that journalists, investors, and job candidates form. For corporate professionals, the accuracy of that article is a serious business concern.

This handbook draws on years of work where corporate communications meets Wikipedia's editorial culture. It is written for in-house communicators, public affairs leaders, and the executives who advise them. Its purpose is to show you how to engage with Wikipedia on its own terms, ethically and effectively, so that the public record of your organization stays accurate and well sourced.

One rule runs through every page: people with a conflict of interest do not edit articles about themselves. You disclose your role, you propose changes on the article's Talk page with independent sources attached, and volunteer editors decide what goes in. Every protocol, strategy, and example in this guide is built on that model. The model is Wikipedia's own: the conflict of interest guideline prescribes it, and the community treats it as best practice. It is the approach that gets changes accepted and keeps them accepted.

You will find a plain account of the principles that govern Wikipedia, a step-by-step protocol for proposing changes with a disclosed conflict of interest, the common changes sorted by risk, and candid guidance on when a Wikipedia article is appropriate at all. The advice is practical, strategic, and effective, because it is built on how Wikipedia actually works.

Read it once for orientation. Return to it as a reference.

The WikiBlueprint Team

Santa Cruz, California

CONTENTS

Table of Contents

PART 1 Foundations

1 Introduction

The opportunity and the obligation

2 Why Wikipedia Matters

Five reasons the article deserves executive attention

3 Wikipedia's Key Principles

The rules behind the rules

PART 2 The Practice

4 The Engagement Protocol

Eight steps from audit to maintenance, without touching the article

5 Strategies for Minimizing Backlash

Eight ways to engage without inflaming

6 Working Well with a Conflict of Interest

Tone, posture, and what to avoid

7 Sorting Changes by Risk

What passes, what draws scrutiny, and what fails

PART 3 Hard Questions

8 Frequently Asked Questions

Fifteen questions clients ask most often

9 Why Your Company Probably Doesn't Qualify

An honest look at notability for corporations

10 Why You Probably Don't Qualify for a Biography

An honest look at notability for individuals

PART 4 Working with Help

11 Why You Shouldn't Hire a Wikipedia Consultant

The objections, and the realities they overlook

12 Why You Should Hire WikiBlueprint

How we work, and where we fit

REF Glossary

A working vocabulary for Wikipedia engagement

PART 1

Foundations

“Wikipedia is the most consulted reference work in human history, and the first thing much of the world reads about any company.”

SECTION 1

Introduction

The opportunity and the obligation.

Wikipedia is the largest and most widely read reference site in the world, with millions of visitors every day. For corporate professionals, it is an opportunity that comes with rules attached.

An accurate, well-sourced Wikipedia article strengthens how the world understands your company. It also sits on a platform you do not control, governed by policies on neutrality, verifiability, and conflict of interest that are enforced by volunteers with long memories. The companies that do well on Wikipedia are the ones that respect that arrangement.

One practical consequence matters most. Because you have a conflict of interest, you will not be editing the article. You will be proposing changes on its Talk page under a disclosed account, backing every proposal with independent sources, and letting volunteer editors carry the accepted changes into the article. That is the engagement Wikipedia's own guidelines call for. This guide teaches that discipline in full: the principles, the protocol, the tone, and the judgment calls.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Sections 2 and 3 explain why Wikipedia matters and what its principles require. Sections 4 through 7 give you the operational core: how to propose changes, how to handle pushback, and how to sort requests by risk. Sections 8 through 12 answer the questions most clients raise before they begin.

If you are pressed for time, read Sections 3, 4, and 7 first. They are the working core of the document.

SECTION 2

Why Wikipedia Matters

Five reasons the article deserves executive attention.

The case for taking Wikipedia seriously is larger than any single search result. A Wikipedia article shapes how people and machines describe your company, and its influence compounds over time. Five reasons stand out.

01 Search Visibility

A Wikipedia article ranks near the top of nearly every search for a company's name, often above the company's own site. When a prospective customer, partner, reporter, or recruit searches for you, the article is frequently the first substantive thing they read. Its framing becomes their starting point before your own materials reach them.

02 Answer Boxes and AI Assistants

Search engines draw their knowledge panels largely from Wikipedia, and the large language models behind AI assistants train heavily on it. What the article says is what the machines repeat, at a scale no press release approaches. As more of the public's questions get answered by systems built on Wikipedia, the article's accuracy matters more each year, and errors travel further.

03 Legitimacy That Cannot Be Bought

Wikipedia's credibility rests on the fact that coverage there is earned. An article exists because independent sources wrote about the company, and its contents survive because volunteer editors judged them neutral and verifiable. That endorsement carries a weight advertising cannot match, for the same reason it cannot be bought.

04 Transparency and Accountability

A balanced article that covers both achievements and setbacks signals that your company is open to public scrutiny. Trying to scrub the record signals

the opposite, and on Wikipedia those attempts are visible in the edit history forever. Companies that engage honestly with their full record, controversies included, come across better than companies that fight it.

05 The Widening Gap

The distance between companies with a solid article and companies without one keeps growing. Every answer box, AI summary, and journalist's background check widens it a little further. An article, once earned, is an asset that grows in value. That is why the work of maintaining it accurately is worth doing now, and worth doing right.

A caution. None of this makes the article a marketing channel. Wikipedia is a public record maintained by others, and every benefit above flows from its independence. Keep the article accurate, leave the optimizing instinct at the door, and the benefits follow on their own.

SECTION 3

Wikipedia's Key Principles

The rules behind the rules. Learn them once, apply them always.

Before proposing any change, it is essential to understand the policies that govern Wikipedia. These principles keep the platform neutral, reliable, and verifiable. For corporate professionals, following them is more than best practice. It is the price of being heard at all.

01 Neutral Point of View

Wikipedia operates under a strict neutral point of view policy, known as NPOV. All content must be written without bias, and articles may not promote or defend any particular position. When engaging with an article about your company, present information as factually and plainly as possible, with no promotional language.

For corporate editors this principle takes discipline, because there is usually a mandate to highlight the positive. Articles must reflect the favorable and the unfavorable alike, as reliable third-party sources report them. Neutrality means representing the significant views that credible sources support, fairly and in proportion. The favorable ones get no extra room.

EXAMPLE

Instead of: “XYZ Corporation is a global leader in sustainability.”

Propose: “In 2023, XYZ Corporation was recognized by [reputable source] for its sustainability efforts.”

02 Verifiability

Every fact on a Wikipedia page must be supported by reliable, independent sources that other editors can check. For corporate professionals, this means company websites and press releases carry little weight on their own. Reputable news outlets, academic publications, and independent industry reports are what count. Material that cannot be verified in

independent sources will be removed, and promotional material will be removed faster.

IN PRACTICE

When proposing updated revenue figures or a CEO change, cite a third-party financial news outlet or an official SEC filing rather than linking only to a company press release.

03 No Original Research

Wikipedia is not a venue for new claims. Editors cannot add their own interpretations, analyses, or unpublished facts. Everything must come from previously published, reputable sources. This rule is what makes Wikipedia an encyclopedia.

This can frustrate companies that hold proprietary knowledge or internal data. Until those insights appear in an independent, reputable publication, they cannot appear on Wikipedia. Argue from the published record; internal knowledge, however solid, carries no weight.

IN PRACTICE

Instead of citing an unpublished internal report on market trends, find independent reports from recognized industry analysts and cite those.

“Wikipedia's neutrality is the discipline that gives the encyclopedia its credibility, and yours.”

04 Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest, or COI, arises when an editor has a stake in the subject of an article, as any corporate professional does with their own company's page. A COI changes the method of engagement, and only the method.

Disclosure comes first: state your role on your user page and on the article's Talk page before proposing anything. If your engagement is part of your job, Wikipedia's Terms of Use require you to disclose the paid relationship regardless of how you participate. Then propose changes on the Talk page rather than editing the article. Undisclosed COI editing is the fastest way to lose the community's trust, and the edit history preserves the evidence permanently.

EXAMPLE

"I work in corporate communications for XYZ Corporation and would like to request an update to our revenue figures, using this third-party source [reputable financial publication]."

05 No Advocacy

Wikipedia is not a platform for promotion, even in service of a worthy cause. Advocacy takes many forms: overemphasizing the positive, downplaying controversies, or reaching for language that flatters. The community watches for corporate advocacy, and detecting it is a skill volunteer editors practice daily.

Keep your proposals factual, sourced, and balanced in word choice and tone. If a sentence would look at home in a brochure, it does not belong in an encyclopedia.

EXAMPLE

Instead of: "XYZ Corporation is at the forefront of technological innovation."

Propose: "In 2022, XYZ Corporation introduced a new product line, covered by independent technology publications including TechCrunch and Forbes."

06 Transparency and Collaboration

Wikipedia is built by volunteers who maintain millions of articles together. Your role is to contribute in a way that respects that collaborative culture:

disclose your COI, request changes rather than make them, explain your reasoning, and engage other editors with courtesy. Transparency builds trust, and trust is what moves a request from the pile to the page.

EXAMPLE

“I am requesting these updates to reflect the company's current leadership structure, using this reliable third-party source [Business Insider]. Happy to provide additional sourcing if useful.”

Professionals who internalize these principles find Wikipedia navigable. The rules are public, consistently applied, and designed to reward exactly the kind of engagement this guide describes.

PART 2

The Practice

“Bring Wikipedia material that meets its own standard, and the standard starts working for you.”

SECTION 4

The Engagement Protocol

Eight steps from audit to maintenance, without touching the article.

Wikipedia rewards preparation and punishes improvisation. The eight steps below form a complete protocol for keeping your company's article accurate while staying on the right side of the conflict of interest rules. Notice what is absent: at no point do you edit the article itself. Every change moves through disclosure and request, and volunteer editors carry accepted changes into the article. This is the process Wikipedia's own guidelines prescribe, and editors recognize and respect it.

Step 1 Audit the Article and the Record

Before anything else, assess the current state of your company's article. Note factual inaccuracies, outdated information, and missing developments such as leadership changes or new business lines. Read the tone: is it neutral, or does it lean? Then read the Talk page and the edit history. They tell you who watches the article, what disputes have already been fought, and which arguments succeeded. An hour in the history saves weeks of friction later.

IN PRACTICE

You might find the article still lists a CEO who departed two years ago, and the Talk page shows a prior undisclosed account was blocked for promotional editing. Both facts shape your approach: the first is your opening request, and the second means your disclosure needs to be spotless.

Step 2 Register an Account and Disclose

Create a Wikipedia account with a name that does not impersonate the company, then disclose. State your employer and role on your user page, and repeat the disclosure on the article's Talk page before your first request. If you are engaging as part of your job, the Terms of Use require paid-

contribution disclosure whether or not you ever touch an article. Disclosure is the foundation everything else stands on, and it only works in advance.

IN PRACTICE

“I work for XYZ Corporation in the communications department. In line with the conflict of interest guideline, I will be proposing updates on this Talk page rather than editing the article, with independent sources attached to each request.”

Step 3 Build the Source File

Gather the independent coverage before you draft a single request. Every proposal must rest on reliable, third-party sources: reputable news outlets, industry analysts, academic publications, official filings. Company materials can support basic uncontested facts, and no more. Organize what you find by the article section it supports, and note the gaps. Where independent coverage does not exist, a request cannot succeed, and knowing that in advance keeps you from spending credibility on losing proposals.

IN PRACTICE

For a product launch, the press release announces the product; the independent review establishes it. File both, and lead with the review.

Step 4 Propose Changes as Edit Requests

The formal mechanism is the edit request: a Talk page post that states the current text, the proposed text, and the sources, wrapped in the request template so it enters the volunteer review queue. Make each request specific enough that a reviewing editor can act on it without research of their own. Exact wording, exact placement, sources attached. The easier a request is to act on, the sooner it gets acted on.

IN PRACTICE

“Request: replace ‘The company reported revenue of \$1.2 billion in 2019’ with ‘The company reported revenue of \$2 billion in 2022,’ per this Bloomberg report [link]. The current figure is three years out of date.”

Step 5 Sequence the Work

Begin with small, uncontroversial requests: factual corrections, leadership updates, well-sourced recent developments. Space requests out so each can be reviewed on its own merits. A batch of simultaneous proposals, especially favorable ones, looks like an attempted overhaul and invites blanket suspicion. Early accepted requests build a track record that makes later, harder requests easier.

IN PRACTICE

Open with the leadership correction. Once it is accepted, move to the product portfolio. Save anything touching the controversy section until your account has a history of clean, sourced requests.

Step 6 Engage with the Editors Who Respond

Volunteer editors may accept your request, decline it, or counter with modified wording. If a request is declined, ask why, listen to the answer, and adjust. Never respond to a decline by re-arguing the same points harder, and never touch the article to implement a declined request yourself. Consensus is the currency here, and it is earned through responsiveness. An editor who modifies your wording has engaged with your request; treat that as progress.

KEEP IN MIND

Stay professional and courteous in every exchange. Defensiveness draws scrutiny to your entire request history, and future reviewers read the old threads.

Step 7 Approach Contentious Sections with Context, Not Deletion

If the article covers lawsuits, layoffs, or controversies, work within that coverage rather than against it. Requests to delete well-sourced criticism are read as whitewashing, fail almost without exception, and poison the account's credibility for everything that follows. The productive move is addition: sourced updates on how a matter was resolved, what changed afterward, and what independent reporting said next. Section 7 treats this territory in detail.

IN PRACTICE

If the company settled a lawsuit, request an addition: “In 2022, XYZ Corporation reached a settlement, as reported by [independent news source]. The company subsequently implemented new compliance measures, per [second source].”

Step 8 Monitor and Maintain

The work continues after requests are accepted. Add the article to a watchlist so you are notified of changes. Watch for vandalism, misinformation, and significant unsourced additions, and respond to each through the Talk page with sources in hand. Keep the cadence low. A steady drip of company-driven requests attracts the wrong kind of attention; occasional, well-founded ones build a reputation for good-faith stewardship.

Followed in order, these steps let a corporate team keep its article accurate indefinitely without a single direct edit. The method delivers accepted changes and lasting credibility.

SECTION 5

Strategies for Minimizing Backlash

Eight ways to engage without inflaming the community.

Backlash on Wikipedia usually traces to how a proposal was made: whether the conflict was disclosed, whether the community was consulted, and what tone carried the request. The eight strategies below address the how.

01 Lead with Disclosure

Undisclosed COI activity is viewed with deep suspicion, and the suspicion works backward: once discovered, it taints everything you contributed before. Declare your conflict on your user page and the article's Talk page, and disclose paid contributions as the Terms of Use require. Openness costs nothing and buys the presumption of good faith.

EXAMPLE

"I am a corporate communications representative for XYZ Corp. Our CEO was recently succeeded by Jane Doe, and I would like to request that update, using this Wall Street Journal article as the source."

02 Argue from Independent Sources

Requests built only on company materials get declined as promotional. Reference reputable news outlets, industry reports, and government records, and let the sources carry the argument. Where your record includes controversy, acknowledge it and cite the reporting on how it was addressed. A request that engages the whole record is far harder to dismiss than one that cherry-picks it.

03 Consult Before You Ask

Editors are protective of the encyclopedia's neutrality, and significant changes proposed cold can land as demands. Raise substantial matters on the Talk page conversationally before filing the formal request, and invite

reactions to your framing. The consultation itself signals respect for the culture, which lowers the temperature of everything that follows.

EXAMPLE

“I would like to suggest rewording this section to reflect that the layoffs were part of a broader restructuring, as covered by Business Insider. Does this framing seem neutral to others watching this page?”

04 Keep Requests Factual, Never Promotional

Marketing language is the fastest tell of a corporate hand. Words like “leading,” “innovative,” and “cutting-edge” are flagged on sight. Present achievements in measured, factual terms with the sourcing attached; the facts will do the promoting. A restrained request is a credible request.

05 Move Gradually on Sensitive Ground

Requests touching scandals, layoffs, or litigation draw the most scrutiny, and sweeping proposals in those areas provoke backlash even when individually defensible. Add context rather than requesting deletions, and break large revisions into small, reviewable pieces. Each accepted piece makes the next one easier.

EXAMPLE

“Following the 2022 recall, XYZ Corporation implemented stricter quality control measures, as reported by Bloomberg.”

06 Anticipate the Objections

Editors are wary of corporate requests on legal disputes, controversies, and financial claims. Address the concern before it is raised: acknowledge the sensitivity, explain how your sourcing ensures neutrality, and cite the specific policies your request satisfies. Fluency in the guidelines signals that you have done the work, and reviewers extend more patience to requesters who have.

EXAMPLE

“I understand this is a sensitive topic. I am proposing context on the resolution of the case, as covered by Reuters. The request is written to the NPOV and Verifiability policies.”

07 One Request at a Time

Several simultaneous requests, especially favorable ones, look like an attempted overhaul and get treated as one. Space your requests so the community can weigh each on its merits, and start with the least controversial. Trust accumulates request by request, and so does the reviewing editors' familiarity with your account.

08 Never Escalate a Decline into a Dispute

If an editor declines a request, fighting the decision entrenches it. Ask what would make the proposal acceptable, offer alternative wording, and be genuinely willing to compromise. Consensus is how everything moves on Wikipedia, and flexibility on phrasing is usually the price of the substance. Accounts that treat declines as invitations to battle get blocked, and their requests die with them.

KEEP IN MIND

If your proposal is seen as too promotional, work with the reviewing editor toward neutral phrasing. The editor who declined your request is often the editor who will accept its revision.

SECTION 6

Working Well with a Conflict of Interest

Tone, posture, and what to avoid.

Engaging on Wikipedia with a COI takes transparency, professionalism, and patience in careful balance. Editors read tone before they read substance, and the postures below decide how far your sourcing gets you.

01 Be Calm and Patient

Approach every discussion with composure, including when your requests are challenged or declined. Emotional or defensive responses escalate tension and shrink the space for collaboration. Editors work readily with requesters who stay measured.

02 Be Clear, Polite, and Deferential

Use plain, concise language to explain what you are proposing and why. Politeness goes a long way, and acknowledging the work other editors have put into an article goes further. You are improving an article together, and the framing of every message should reflect that.

03 Be Inquisitive When Declined

If a request is turned down, ask why and invite feedback. Genuine curiosity about the reasoning signals good faith, and good faith is remembered.

04 Be Prepared and Transparent

Arrive with reliable, independent sources, and disclose your role fully. Undisclosed conflicts are flagged fast, and the discovery costs more than the disclosure ever would.

05 Be Direct but Diplomatic

Acknowledge the sensitivity of hard topics, and make clear that accuracy is the aim and the criticism stays. Frame proposals as the addition of sourced

context. Directness about what you want, paired with respect for why editors might hesitate, is the posture that gets hard requests through.

06 Avoid Humor, Especially Sarcasm

Humor is easily misread in text, and sarcasm lands as condescension almost every time. In a COI engagement, keep every interaction straightforward and professional. Save the wit for internal channels.

Patterns That Inflame

The patterns below reliably escalate conflict and reduce the odds your proposals are accepted.

- **Arrogance or dismissiveness.** A tone that treats other editors' work as less informed triggers immediate resistance. The community runs on mutual respect and notices its absence instantly.
- **Overconfidence in your expertise.** Knowing your industry does not outrank knowing Wikipedia's principles, and claiming it does alienates the people whose consensus you need.
- **Aggressive rebuttals.** Pushing hard against criticism signals you are there to win rather than collaborate, and it produces knee-jerk rejection.
- **A polished corporate voice.** A heavy PR voice strikes volunteer editors as manipulation and raises immediate suspicion about motive. Write like a person.
- **Excessive apology.** Over-apologizing comes across as unsure and invites editors to question the strength of your sourcing. Respect and firmness coexist comfortably.
- **Inflexibility.** Signaling that you will not consider alternatives hardens opposition before the discussion starts.

Approaches That Build Trust

By contrast, the following postures consistently earn goodwill and compound across engagements.

- **A conversational register.** Phrases like “I wonder if we could consider” and “I would value your thoughts on” open an exchange instead of a negotiation.
- **Respectful curiosity.** Asking why content is structured a certain way, or why a request was declined, defuses tension and shows regard for other perspectives.
- **Balanced confidence.** Prepared and informed without being dismissive. Calm self-assurance paired with openness to feedback signals thoughtful contribution.
- **Empathy for the article's builders.** Editors feel protective of pages they have shaped. “I can see how much work has gone into this section” opens doors that arguments cannot.
- **Informal but professional.** The community appreciates a genuine, approachable voice. Drop the corporate voice and stay professional without it.
- **Deliberateness.** A measured tone that considers the broader effect of a proposal signals investment in the encyclopedia itself.

On a volunteer platform, tone does much of the work, and the goodwill it builds pays off in every future engagement.

SECTION 7

Sorting Changes by Risk

What passes, what draws scrutiny, and what fails.

Not every request carries the same weight. Some are routine maintenance and pass with minimal review. Some are substantive and earn scrutiny. And some fail so reliably that the productive move is to ask for something else. The three tiers below sort the most common corporate requests.

Tier 1 Routine

Low-risk factual updates. Properly sourced, these typically pass without contest.

Change type	The request that lands	Sources that carry it
Office locations and headquarters	This updates verifiable public information.	News coverage of the move, with the company announcement as support.
Outdated logo	The logo changed in a rebranding and should be current.	Third-party coverage of the rebrand, or published brand guidelines.
Awards and recognitions	The award is notable and independently covered.	Industry publications or mainstream media reporting the award.
Executive names, titles, and dates	This corrects the factual record.	Business press coverage of the appointments.
Founding date, ownership, subsidiaries	This corrects basic corporate facts.	Official filings and established reference sources.
Revenue figures	This reflects current, publicly reported figures.	Annual reports, SEC filings, or reputable financial press.

Change type	The request that lands	Sources that carry it
New products	The product is notable and independently reviewed.	Reviews and reporting from respected industry outlets.
Partnerships	The partnership is public and widely reported.	Reputable business publications.
Dead links and broken citations	This repairs the article's existing sourcing.	Archived versions or equivalent replacement sources.
Typographical and small factual slips	This aligns the text with its own cited sources.	The sources already cited in the article.

Tier 2 Substantive

Material updates that warrant careful sourcing. Expect review, and raise these on the Talk page with your reasoning spelled out.

Change type	The request that lands	Sources that carry it
Leadership transitions	This is a significant change with independent coverage.	Reputable business news covering the transition.
Historical acquisitions	This adds relevant history with verifiable sources.	Business archives and reputable M&A reporting.
Workforce figures	This reflects publicly reported data.	Company reports, independent surveys, or labor statistics.
Environmental record	This adds neutral, verifiable information.	Independent watchdog reports and reputable media.
Expanded company history	This adds well-sourced context.	Business histories and analytical reporting.

Change type	The request that lands	Sources that carry it
Citation quality upgrades	This replaces weak sourcing with stronger sourcing.	Reliable third-party publications and academic sources.
Correcting misinformation	This correction rests on verifiable third-party information.	Fact-checking organizations and primary records.
Market position	The market data is notable and independently produced.	Research firms such as Gartner or Statista.
International expansion	The expansion received independent coverage.	Global business press and industry analysis.
Workplace rankings	The ranking is notable and third-party.	Recognized workplace surveys with independent methodology.

Tier 3 Requests That Fail

Certain requests fail so consistently that filing them costs credibility with nothing gained. Each row names the request, the reason it fails, and the version of it that can actually succeed.

The request	Why it fails	What to propose instead
Delete the controversy section	Well-sourced criticism belongs in the article, and removal requests read as whitewashing. They also draw fresh attention to the material.	A sourced addition covering the resolution and what changed afterward, alongside the existing coverage.

The request	Why it fails	What to propose instead
Soften the language of criticism	Rewording sourced criticism to blunt it is advocacy, and reviewers compare proposed text against the sources.	Additional independent sources that supply context or aftermath, added as new facts.
Reframe the layoffs	Framing belongs to the sources and the editors who weigh them, and a company's preferred frame is presumed self-serving.	Independent reporting on the restructuring, requested as factual addition with the reporting's own language.
Remove an old scandal as outdated	Age alone does not disqualify coverage. Events that received serious reporting remain part of the record.	A sourced update on current status, and where genuinely warranted, an argument that the event takes more space than the overall coverage supports.
Answer critics inside the article	The article is not a right-of-reply venue, and company statements carry no independent weight.	The company's response only as covered by independent outlets, cited to that coverage.
Add favorable competitor comparisons	Selective comparison is promotion in the shape of data.	Neutral market figures from independent research, stated without ranking language.
Replace the article with a company-written version	Wholesale replacement from a conflicted account is declined out of hand regardless of quality.	A numbered change log of specific proposals, each sourced, submitted one at a time for review.
Delete the whole article	Subjects rarely succeed in deleting articles about themselves once independent coverage exists.	Accuracy work inside the article, which is where the leverage is.

One genuine exception. Unsourced or falsely sourced negative claims are a different matter entirely, and there Wikipedia policy is on your side. Material that fails verification can be challenged and removed, and claims about living people face an even stricter sourcing standard. Point to the policy, show the record, and keep the request narrow. Editors act quickly on well-founded verifiability challenges, because a verifiability challenge defends the encyclopedia itself.

PART 3

Hard Questions

“The bar is high by design. Honesty about where you stand is worth more than enthusiasm about where you want to be.”

SECTION 8

Frequently Asked Questions

Fifteen questions clients ask most often.

These are the questions we hear most from corporate communications leads, public affairs professionals, and executives navigating Wikipedia for the first time. The answers are short by design. Each connects to a fuller treatment elsewhere in this guide.

Q1 Can I remove negative information about my company?

No. Deleting well-sourced critical content is treated as a violation of the neutrality policy, and requesting it damages your standing. The productive path is addition: sourced context and updates on how the issue was resolved. If a negative claim is genuinely unsourced or fails verification, that is a different matter, and policy supports a narrow, well-documented challenge.

Q2 How do I correct inaccurate or outdated information?

File an edit request on the article's Talk page: current text, proposed text, and the reliable sources that support the change. Explain plainly why the existing information is wrong. A volunteer editor reviews the request and, if it holds up, makes the change. You never make it yourself.

Q3 How long does it take for changes to be approved?

It varies. Small, uncontroversial requests may be handled within days. Substantial or sensitive ones can take weeks or longer, and the request queue runs on volunteer time that cannot be scheduled. Strong sourcing and a request that is easy to act on are the only levers you control.

Q4 Do I need to disclose my role?

Yes, without exception. Disclose your connection on your user page and on the Talk page of any article you engage with. If the engagement is part of your job, the Terms of Use require paid-contribution disclosure. Disclosure

is what separates ethical engagement from covert influence, and the community treats it that way.

Q5 Can I use my company's press releases as sources?

Sparingly, and only for basic uncontested facts such as a launch date. Press releases are self-published and read as promotional. Independent coverage from reputable outlets is what carries a request, and a press release standing alone will sink one.

Q6 What sources does Wikipedia consider reliable?

Reputable news organizations, academic journals, established industry reports, and government publications. Corporate websites, marketing materials, sponsored content, and most blogs carry little or no weight. The test is editorial independence and a reputation for fact-checking.

Q7 Can I create an article for my company if one doesn't exist?

Only if the company meets Wikipedia's notability guidelines, which require significant coverage in multiple reliable, independent sources. A premature article gets deleted, and the deletion becomes part of the public record. Section 9 walks through the standard honestly. If the coverage exists, the path runs through Articles for Creation with full disclosure.

Q8 What if an edit war starts around our article?

Stay out of it. If editors are reverting each other over content that concerns you, contribute sources and reasoning on the Talk page and let the community reach consensus. Joining a revert cycle from a conflicted account ends badly every time.

Q9 What if someone accuses me of biased editing?

Respond calmly and transparently. Point to your disclosure, restate your sourcing, and invite review of your requests. If your engagement has followed the protocol in this guide, the record defends you. That is one of the underrated benefits of doing it right.

Q10 How do I avoid being flagged as promotional?

Write in neutral, factual language and cut the sales language. Words like “innovative,” “leading,” and “cutting-edge” are red flags. Balance the record, cite independent sources, and avoid requests that only ever add favorable material.

Q11 What happens if my request is declined?

Ask the declining editor to explain, and treat the explanation as a roadmap. Many declined requests succeed on the second pass with better sourcing or more neutral wording. What never works is re-filing the same request unchanged, or making the edit yourself.

Q12 Should I hire a professional Wikipedia consultant?

It can be worthwhile if you are unfamiliar with the policies, and it can be catastrophic if you choose badly. The market includes operators who edit covertly and promise outcomes, and their work gets exposed and reversed. Evaluate any consultant on disclosure practices, verifiable standing in the editor community, and willingness to tell you no. Part 4 takes this up in full.

Q13 How do I keep my requests from looking self-serving?

Disclose your role, request rather than edit, cite independent sources, and engage with the unflattering parts of the record as readily as the flattering ones. A history of balanced requests is the strongest answer to the suspicion, and it accumulates.

Q14 How often should I monitor the article?

A weekly or monthly check is reasonable for most companies, with a watchlist set to notify you of changes. Monitor consistently and request sparingly. High-visibility companies during news events warrant closer attention.

Q15 Can Wikipedia articles be deleted?

Yes. Articles that fail notability or verifiability standards, or that are irredeemably promotional, get nominated and deleted through community

discussion. If your article is nominated, engage calmly in the discussion with sources and policy-grounded arguments. If it is deleted, the answer is more independent coverage over time, and only then another attempt.

SECTION 9

Why Your Company Probably Doesn't Qualify

An honest look at notability for corporations.

Whether you run a small business or lead marketing at a mid-sized company, you may wonder why your successful, well-regarded organization has no Wikipedia article. You have put in the years, earned industry recognition, perhaps generated real media coverage. So why are you absent from one of the world's most visited websites?

The answer lies in Wikipedia's strict standard for notability, which prioritizes independent verification over self-description. The test is documentation, and documentation is where most companies fall short.

01 Notability: Wikipedia's Gatekeeper

Notability, as Wikipedia defines it, has nothing to do with how successful your company is. It refers to the presence of significant coverage in reliable, independent, secondary sources. That is the criterion for whether any subject warrants a standalone article. If that coverage does not exist for your company, no article will stand, regardless of how valuable the business is or how respected it is within its industry.

02 The General Notability Guideline

The General Notability Guideline, or GNG, is the overarching rule. A topic qualifies if it has received significant coverage in reliable, independent, secondary sources. Each of those words carries weight.

- **Significant coverage.** In-depth articles or analyses about your company. Passing mentions, short blurbs, and directory listings do not count.
- **Independent sources.** Outlets with no connection to the company. Company blogs, press releases, and marketing materials are excluded, and articles that merely republish your interviews generally are too.

- **Reliable sources.** Publications with established reputations for fact-checking and editorial oversight. Major newspapers, respected journals, and academic publications qualify. Social media and self-published content do not.
- **Secondary sources.** Analysis or commentary about the company by someone else. A journalist's assessment of your performance qualifies. An interview with your founder is a primary source and does not.

Qualifying requires significant coverage across multiple sources that satisfy all of these tests at once. Many companies, particularly growing or niche-focused ones, are not there yet.

03 An Even Higher Bar for Companies

Beyond the GNG, Wikipedia applies extra scrutiny to businesses through its organizations and companies guideline, known as NCORP. The community's working expectations there are demanding.

- **Multiple references.** More than one or two articles. Strong company pages often rest on ten or twenty qualifying sources.
- **Depth.** Whole paragraphs or entire articles devoted to the company, its history, and its offerings.
- **True independence.** Trade publications that serve your own industry are often discounted, and sponsored or pitched coverage is discounted entirely.
- **Editorial reliability.** Recognized outlets with real fact-checking. Industry blogs do not meet the standard.
- **Secondary analysis.** Independent evaluation of the company. Founder interviews and launch announcements do not suffice.

For many mid-sized and regional companies this is the hard truth: a handful of trade features and local stories, however genuine, does not clear the bar. Without high-quality coverage across multiple independent outlets, the company is unlikely to qualify.

04 The Pitfalls of Hiring Covert Editors

Faced with these requirements, some companies turn to paid editors who promise fast results and work in secret, without disclosing their conflicts. The convenience is an illusion, and the risks are real.

- **Wasted money.** The community hunts undisclosed paid editing. Flagged articles get scrutinized and deleted, and the spend produces nothing lasting.
- **Reputation risk.** Covert editing operations have been exposed in major news outlets, and the resulting coverage does far more harm than the missing article ever did.
- **No permanence.** Even a published article faces continuous review, and pages that fail the notability standard are eventually found and deleted.

05 The Ethical Alternative

If your company may genuinely qualify, there is a better path.

- **Build the source base first.** Gather the independent, secondary coverage before considering an article: feature treatment in respected publications, national media, academic mentions.
- **Submit for community review.** Use the Articles for Creation process with your conflict of interest disclosed. Volunteer reviewers weigh the sources and decide.
- **Hire consultants who disclose, never editors who hide.** An ethical consultant follows the disclosure rules, guarantees nothing, and will tell you honestly whether the record is ready.

A Wikipedia article is the recognition of a body of independent coverage the company has already earned. If the body of work is not there yet, build it through media engagement and genuine industry contribution, and let the article follow. On Wikipedia, patience and verifiable coverage are the only shortcuts that exist.

SECTION 10

Why You Probably Don't Qualify for a Biography

An honest look at notability for individuals.

Most people, including the very accomplished and widely respected, do not qualify for a Wikipedia biography. That is no judgment on the work or the person. Wikipedia is an encyclopedia rather than a directory of professionals, and encyclopedias include only subjects with significant, independent, reliable, secondary coverage.

That requirement sits at the heart of Wikipedia's biography guideline, WP:NBIO, and it applies identically to artists, founders, academics, scientists, CEOs, organizers, and musicians. The question is the same for all of them: has this person been written about deeply, repeatedly, and independently by reputable publications? If the answer is no, then however extraordinary the career, Wikipedia is not yet the venue.

01 The People Who Most Often Fall Short

Highly successful individuals miss the bar constantly, and the shortfall traces to the documentation that exists, almost never to the quality of the work. The patterns below are the ones we see most.

- **Interview-driven media presence.** Coverage consists mostly of interviews or PR-shaped pieces in which the subject's own framing dominates.
- **Local or niche-only press.** Coverage confined to hometown outlets or industry publications without the editorial weight notability requires.
- **Pitched or paid placements.** Articles that exist because they were arranged, contributed, or purchased rather than independently pursued.
- **Audience without analysis.** A large following, with little serious journalism examining the work itself.

- **Achievements without third-party study.** Real accomplishments that no independent reporter, scholar, or critic has yet profiled in depth.

None of this is an insult. It reflects the difference between personal success and encyclopedic documentation. Wikipedia records how the world has chosen to write about someone, and that record either exists or it does not.

02 What Significant Coverage Really Means

Many people assume any media mention counts. It does not. A name-drop or a brief quote establishes nothing. Significant coverage is specific.

- **Articles substantially about you.** Pieces where you are the subject of the reporting rather than a quoted source in someone else's story.
- **Reporting that examines the work.** Coverage that engages your career and impact in depth rather than gesturing at them in passing.
- **Multiple pieces across multiple outlets.** A single profile is rarely enough. Notability rests on a body of independent coverage.

A longform feature, a critical review, a reported analysis: sources like these form a defensible biography. Mentions in event writeups, listicles, newsletters, and alumni magazines signal activity without documenting notability.

03 Reliable, Independent, Secondary: All Three

WP:NBO requires sources that satisfy all three conditions together.

Reliable. Publications with established fact-checking and editorial oversight: major newspapers, reputable magazines, academic journals, scholarly books. Personal websites, social media, newsletter platforms, company blogs, self-published books, sponsored content, and interviews you gave do not establish notability, even when their portrayal of you is accurate.

Independent. Coverage cannot come from you, your organization, your PR team, your clients, or your collaborators. If a piece exists because someone close to you arranged it, it does not count toward notability, wherever it was published.

Secondary. Wikipedia needs reporting about you rather than statements by you. Interviews and first-person essays can support specific facts inside an article, but they cannot demonstrate that you belong in the encyclopedia. Secondary coverage means a journalist, scholar, or critic engaged your work on their own terms.

“A Wikipedia article should never be the goal. It is the byproduct of work the world has decided, on its own, to document.”

04 Who Does Qualify

Notable subjects share a common pattern: their work was judged important enough that others documented it at length without their involvement.

- **Multiple in-depth profiles.** Substantial pieces in major or respected media that treat the subject seriously as a topic.
- **Significant awards with press coverage.** Nationally or internationally recognized honors that prompted independent reporting.
- **A body of work analyzed by others.** Contributions that critics, scholars, or journalists have engaged on their own initiative.
- **A central role in reported events.** Material involvement in events covered seriously on their own newsworthiness.
- **Sustained third-party discussion.** Work that prompted continuing analysis well past the initial moment.

05 Why the Bar Is So High

Wikipedia's rules exist to keep articles neutral, accurate, and verifiable. Without substantial independent coverage, a biography would have to rest on promotional material, unverifiable claims, or framing supplied by the subject. That is why Wikipedia does not accept a posture of trust me, I have done great things. It requires documentation from others, and the requirement is what allows a global reference work to remain trustworthy.

THE PATH FORWARD

The clearest path is to keep doing substantive, public-facing work that draws independent attention on its own merits. Over time, journalists write about work that warrants it, coverage accumulates, and a base of sources that clears the bar can emerge.

At that point a Wikipedia biography becomes achievable, because it simply reflects the public record.

If you are unsure whether you or someone you represent meets the biography standard, we are glad to help. WikiBlueprint performs ethical notability evaluations: we audit the existing sourcing, weigh it against WP:NBIO, and deliver a written verdict with candid guidance on whether a draft is viable now or what would need to change first. We operate transparently and in full alignment with Wikipedia's conflict of interest and neutrality policies.

PART 4

Working with Help

*“The right help works in the open, and stays
through review.”*

SECTION 11

Why You Shouldn't Hire a Wikipedia Consultant

The objections, and the realities they overlook.

When we started WikiBlueprint, the goal was simple: help organizations and individuals navigate Wikipedia ethically and effectively. But Wikipedia looks easy. It is free, user-generated, and open to everyone. So why hire a specialized consultancy at all?

Below are the six objections we hear most often, paired with the realities they tend to overlook. We share them because a mishandled Wikipedia engagement is one of the few communications problems with no fast fix once it goes public.

01 “We can do it cheaper.”

There is no shortage of freelancers offering cut-rate Wikipedia work, and you get what you pay for. The hidden costs arrive later: errors that take real effort to unwind, requests that violate the guidelines, and in the worst case an article deleted because it was created improperly. When that happens you are back at the start, with time lost and your credibility on the platform damaged, because the failed attempt is preserved in the record.

02 “We can do it ourselves.”

Anyone can engage with Wikipedia, and in-house teams regularly try. The editorial standards around notability, verifiability, and neutrality are unforgiving, and well-intentioned teams run into problems they did not anticipate: requests declined for reasons they cannot make sense of, drafts rejected for sourcing they thought was strong, tone that draws exactly the scrutiny it was meant to avoid. The DIY route often costs more in cleanup than expert help would have cost at the outset.

03 “We don't care how it gets done.”

Some clients want the article published and are indifferent to the method. On Wikipedia that posture backfires completely. Undisclosed paid editing and covert promotion lead to deletion, to account blocks that follow the company, and in exposed cases to press coverage that becomes its own crisis. The community is vigilant, and the archives are permanent. Publication is the easy part, and staying published is the whole point.

04 “It doesn't look that hard.”

The editing interface is approachable, which misleads. Producing content that survives requires meeting the notability standard, sourcing every claim to reliable publications, clearing a high neutrality bar, and navigating a community whose established editors have built their judgment over decades. The learning curve is steep, and it is climbed in public, where every stumble is logged.

05 “Wikipedia isn't that important for our business.”

The article outranks your website in search, feeds the answer boxes, and trains the AI assistants your customers now ask first. It is often where a potential client, partner, or journalist starts, and it carries a credibility your own channels cannot match because you do not control it. That lack of control is the strongest reason to take it seriously.

06 “Bigger shops must be better.”

Large PR agencies routinely hand Wikipedia work to junior staff still learning the platform's policies. You believe you are buying senior counsel and receive a second-year associate's education at your expense. What matters here is depth of experience inside Wikipedia's community and an unbroken record of working within its rules. Headcount is no substitute for either.

SECTION 12

Why You Should Hire WikiBlueprint

How we work, and where we fit.

WikiBlueprint is an ethical Wikipedia consulting practice founded by Jake Orlowitz, a nineteen-year Wikipedia editor, English Wikipedia administrator, and founder of The Wikipedia Library at the Wikimedia Foundation. We are a small team by design: a founder who has spent two decades inside the community, an academic librarian who runs research, and two developers. Every engagement gets senior attention, because there is no one else to hand it to.

Four commitments define how we work.

01 The Audit Comes First

Before any drafting begins, we run the full source audit: the deep sweep of press archives, trade publications, institutional records, and everything in between, weighed source by source against Wikipedia's actual tests. You receive a written notability verdict you can act on before committing to a larger engagement. When the honest answer is not yet, we say so in writing, along with what would need to change. Clients tell us the verdict alone was worth the fee, whichever way it came out.

02 Named, Verifiable Standing

Our founder's identity, editing history, and standing in the Wikipedia community are public and checkable. That matters in a market where many providers operate anonymously for reasons that become obvious later. When we disclose on a Talk page, the disclosure carries a two-decade record behind it, and the editors reviewing your requests can see exactly who prepared the ground.

03 Finished Work, and You Post It

Everything we produce is finished work handed to you: exact proposed text, exact disclosure language, exact replies, ready to copy and paste. You never

compose a word for Wikipedia, and you post everything under your own openly disclosed account. We never edit Wikipedia ourselves, on any engagement, under any circumstances. That division keeps the engagement transparent from end to end, and it leaves a public record your organization controls and can stand behind.

04 We Stay Through the Full Arc

Community review runs on Wikipedia's own clock, and most providers disappear once something is submitted. We stay: prepared responses to reviewer questions, policy-grounded replies to challenges, and monitoring after publication for reverts, tags, and deletion nominations. An article's first year is when it is tested, and the engagement is built to cover it.

"Jake was able to teach me about editor norms and culture, as well as how to successfully engage with them. This resulted in my research institute's page being successfully updated with news and sources. Jake's strong ethical standards and deep understanding of Wikipedia processes has proven invaluable to me and my organization."

Seth Kroll, **Harvard**

What We Promise

Wikipedia is reviewed by volunteers who weigh coverage differently from one another, and no consultant can promise that a reviewer will accept a proposal or act on any schedule. Pushing volunteers to move faster reliably backfires; patience and policy are what move requests. What we promise is the work: proposals grounded in the strongest independent sourcing, argued as the analysis recommends, submitted openly, defended with policy, and written for you down to the last word, so that your only jobs are checking facts and pressing post.

We work inside Wikipedia's rules because work built any other way does not last. We do not edit without disclosure. We do not write promotional copy. We do not promise outcomes the community would not endorse.

IN CLOSING

Wikipedia is an essential part of your organization's public record, and it is worth getting right. You could try to do it cheaper, do it yourself, or cut corners. On a platform this public and this closely watched, those shortcuts cost more than they save.

If you want an accurate, ethical, lasting presence on Wikipedia, we would be glad to help.

GET IN TOUCH

WikiBlueprint

Jake Orlowitz, Founder · jorlowitz@wikiblueprint.com · wikiblueprint.com

"The most striking thing about Jake is his ability to build a strategic vision and light a flame to see it made real. Jake has inspired faith at the highest levels, and has rewarded that faith by delivering tangible, impressive results. I trust his vision; I trust his drive; I trust his ability to execute. When Jake tells me something is a good idea, I listen."

Maggie Dennis, **Wikimedia Foundation**

REFERENCE

Glossary

A working vocabulary for Wikipedia engagement.

The terms below appear throughout this handbook and are central to Wikipedia's editorial culture. Many carry the WP: prefix that marks a Wikipedia policy or guideline. Familiarity with this vocabulary is the difference between requests that get accepted and requests that get declined.

Articles for Creation (AfC)

The process by which new article drafts are submitted for community review before publication. The required path for editors with a conflict of interest.

Conflict of Interest (COI)

A relationship between an editor and an article's subject that creates an incentive for biased editing. Wikipedia requires COI editors to disclose openly and to propose changes on the Talk page rather than edit articles directly.

Edit Request

A formal Talk page proposal, entered into a volunteer review queue, that states the current text, the proposed text, and the supporting sources. The standard mechanism for COI contributions.

Edit War

A cycle of editors repeatedly undoing each other's changes. A serious violation of collaborative norms that can result in blocks. The remedy is Talk page discussion.

General Notability Guideline (GNG)

Wikipedia's overarching rule for whether a subject warrants a standalone article. Requires significant coverage in reliable, independent, secondary sources.

Independent Source

A source with no connection to the article's subject. Excludes the subject's own publications, press releases, paid placements, and content produced by collaborators. Independence is a precondition for establishing notability.

Notability

The standard a subject must meet to qualify for an article, established by significant coverage in reliable, independent, secondary sources. A subject's importance or success is not the test.

Neutral Point of View (NPOV)

Wikipedia's core editorial policy: content presented fairly, proportionately, and without editorial bias. Significant viewpoints are represented in proportion to their coverage in reliable sources.

No Original Research (NOR)

The policy prohibiting unpublished facts, interpretations, or analyses. All content must trace to previously published reliable sources, and editors may not synthesize new claims from them.

Paid Editing

Contributing to Wikipedia in exchange for compensation, direct or indirect. The Terms of Use require disclosure of all paid contributions. Undisclosed paid editing is a serious violation that can result in bans and deletions.

Primary Source

Material produced by an article's subject or by direct participants: interviews, press releases, official statements, self-published work. Primary sources can support specific facts and cannot establish notability.

Reliable Source

A publication with a reputation for accuracy, fact-checking, and editorial oversight: major newspapers, peer-reviewed journals, established magazines, respected industry publications. Excludes personal blogs, social media, self-published works, and paid placements.

Secondary Source

A source that analyzes, evaluates, or interprets primary material. Independent journalism, scholarly analysis, and critical reviews qualify. Notability is established primarily through secondary coverage.

Significant Coverage

Substantive treatment of a subject: articles substantially about it, examining its work or impact in depth. Passing mentions and brief quotes do not qualify.

Talk Page

The discussion page attached to every article, where editors propose changes, raise concerns, and build consensus. The required venue for editors with a conflict of interest.

Verifiability (WP:V)

The policy that all content must be supported by reliable published sources other editors can check. Verifiability is the threshold for inclusion, and even accurate information can be removed if it cannot be verified.

Watchlist

A personal feature that notifies an editor of changes to tracked articles. Useful for monitoring your organization's article for inaccuracies, vandalism, and significant changes.

WP:NBIO

The notability guideline for biographies. Requires that a person has received significant coverage in reliable, independent, secondary sources.

WP:NCORP

The notability guideline for organizations and companies. Stricter than the general guideline, requiring multiple in-depth sources with full editorial independence from the subject.

COLOPHON

About This Edition

Designed and produced by WikiBlueprint in Santa Cruz, California.

Set in Cambria.

First published 2026. Revised August 2026.

WIKIBLUEPRINT

Ethical Wikipedia Consulting