



# imbue

BRAND VOICE + MESSAGING GUIDE

# overview

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- Customer Personas
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# our why

**imbue** is a performance athletic apparel brand that elevates comfort, performance, and style.

**There is a direct connection between looking good and feeling good. Our products help people do both.**

Not only do our products help everyday athletes perform their best in comfort and style, they also address the consumer's concern for a more sustainable lifestyle.

At **imbue** "think global, act local" is more than a cute slogan. We manufacture our apparel in Oregon. This supports the local community with high-quality jobs, reduces freight-related carbon emissions, and holds us to a higher environmental standard than overseas manufacturing regulations.

Our innovative design and manufacturing process allows customers to select the right size for the right environment and intended use. **Consumers want performance, function, and style—made in a way that aligns with their needs—and we are here for it.**

# target audience

## **female**

- ~Age 30-45
- ~60K+ annual income
- ~Professional
- ~College degree likely
- ~Fashion/fitness conscious
- ~Hobbies: cycling, running, yoga, fitness, diet, holistic wellness
- ~Urban/suburban
- ~Wants style and social connection, fitness, comfort

## **male**

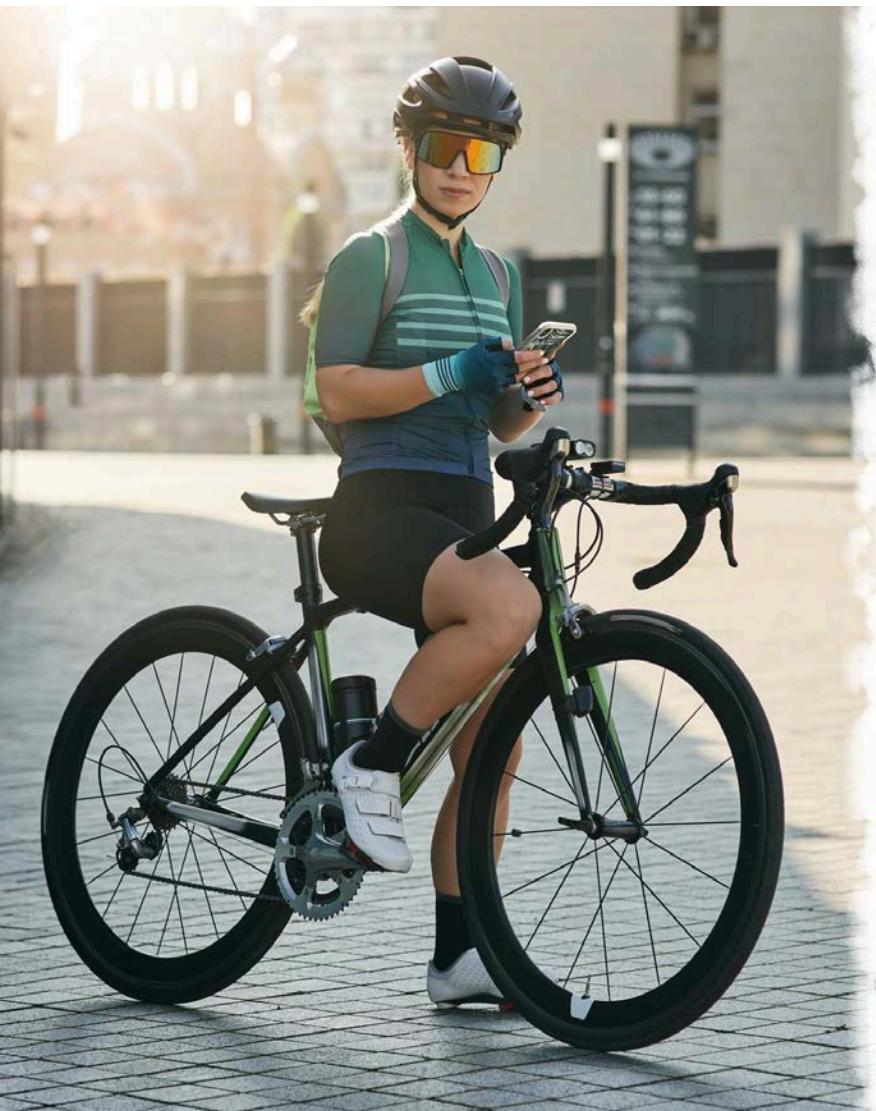
- ~Age 30-55
- ~75K+ annual income
- ~Professional
- ~College educated
- ~Hobbies: sports, music, travel, art
- ~College degree likely
- ~Urban/suburban
- ~Wants to look good and feel good. Social status among peers.

## **both**

Want style, function, and comfort but don't really understand the technical differences between one product and the next.

They don't mind spending more for quality but don't know what quality is or why it matters. If they are newer to the sport they don't know why they should bother buying performance apparel.

# meet ashley



Ashley is a 33 year old junior architect for a green home building company. The daughter of a Brazilian chef, she also runs a side hustle—making vegan trail snacks with a spicy South American flair.

An avid hiker, backpacker, kayaker and cyclist, Ashley hiked the PCT one summer during college and does two bikepacking trips each spring and summer. In winter she enjoys XC skiing and indoor cycling to stay fit. Ashley loves to challenge her fitness but moreso, she thrives when she challenges her notions of what's possible, mentally. Ashley is very aware of her "tokenism" in her outdoor pursuits; you don't see too many Latina girls out bikepacking. She is hoping to change that through her social media influence.

Ashley's commitment to wellness includes a subscription to Sun Basket meal prep service, which allows her to eat healthy while minimizing shopping and maximizing play time.

Ashley's values—sustainability, wellness, and excellence—guide her purchasing decisions. Ashley carefully researches her purchases to be sure she is getting the quality, performance, and values she seeks. She is an avid reader and is active on Instagram and Twitter, where she is considered an influencer with a small but passionate following of fellow Latinx health-minded riders.

# meet Jason

Jason—aka J—is a senior software development manager for Amazon Web Services. He earns \$175K annually and he works hard for it. At 29, he's the youngest senior manager on staff. The pace of the work is brutal, his workload is heavy, but he loves his work. His team consistently gives him high marks as a leader—he even rides to work with two of them.

J makes the commute from Bellevue to Amazon HQ by bike 2-3x per week during the rainy season and 4-5 days a week in summer. It's just under an hour to ride from home to work and slightly longer going home due to the hills. When he isn't riding, he takes public transportation. J feels his success in his job is at least partially due to the time he spends commuting by bike.

Recently married, J and his wife plan to start a family soon. Because of the density of traffic in the area, J knows that driving to work would add to his stress without increasing family time in the evenings; he is committed to commuting by bike, even as family demands increase. Whether they have a boy or girl, J is already looking forward to cycling with his child when they're old enough.

Jason values comfort, durability, and purpose-specific functionality. He doesn't care about being trendy and his only social media platform is LinkedIn, but he does enjoy geeking out on Strava.



## meet sallie



Sallie is a 52 year old partner and co-founder of a UX design firm with Fortune 100 clients. She plans to retire at age 55 and travel the world by sailboat before deciding where to settle down. In preparation for this life change, she has cut back to part-time involvement at the agency.

Sallie divorced her husband amicably 7 years ago, but was dispirited trying to date. She instead found purpose and satisfaction by discovering her "inner athlete". Sallie signed up for her first triathlon six years ago and joined a training club to prepare for it. Now, she schedules two Ironman competitions every year. She and her daughter, enjoy an annual bike tour around the Finger Lakes most summers.

Winters in New York are brutal; that's when Sallie trains exclusively at Peloton. She loves the blend of intensity and community and loves Robin Arzon's indomitable spirit.

Although she's a late bloomer to athletic pursuits in general, Sallie is focused, passionate, and driven. In her own words, Sallie said "I compete because it keeps me young and sharp." Sallie reads cycling magazines and uses Instagram and Threads for connection with her global network of friends and peers.

# meet Kevin

Growing up, Kevin was always looking for the opportunity to run, play ball or compete. He was a collegiate football hopeful until an ACL injury sidelined his career. During his recovery he discovered cycling as a tool for physical therapy. What started as therapy became a lifestyle and mindset change. Kevin changed his major to get a degree in exercise science and started down the path of becoming a certified athletic trainer.

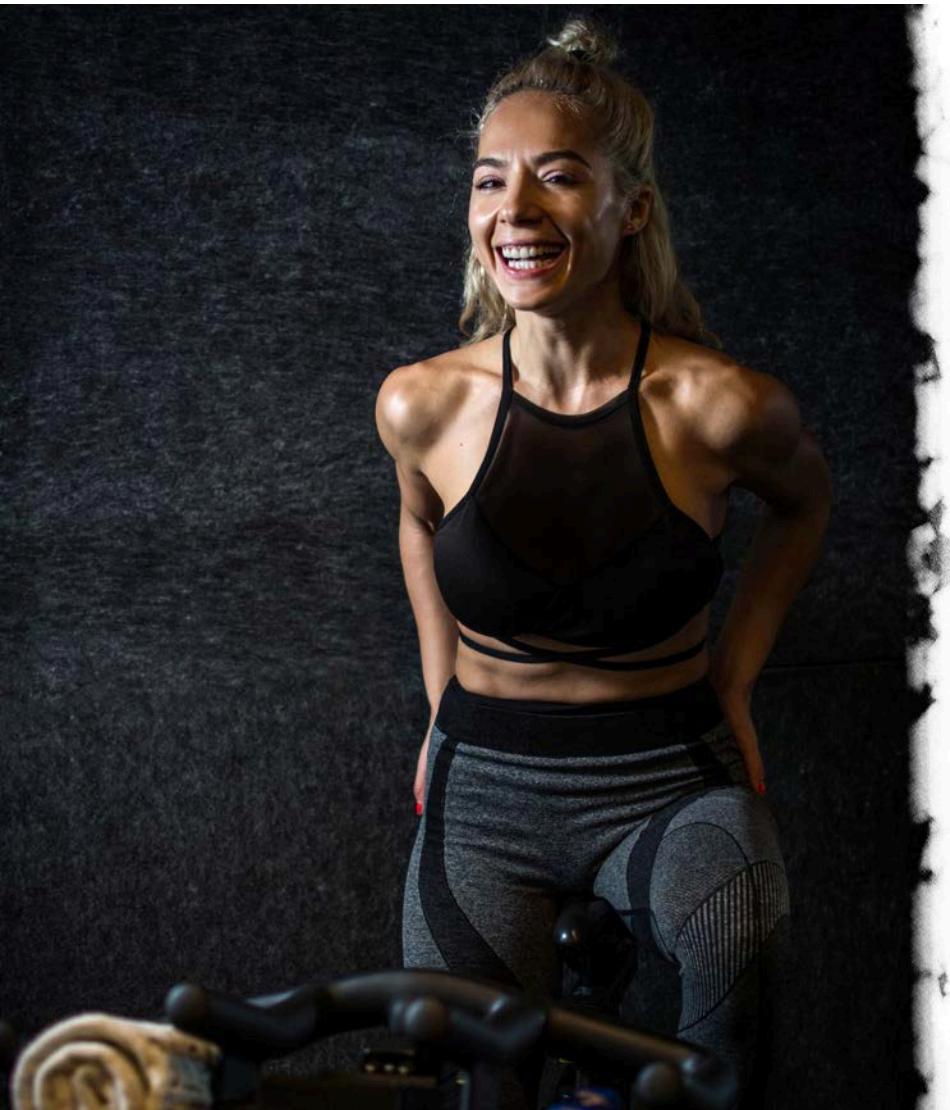
Kevin loves his work helping others move more freely, with less pain, and greater strength. In addition to his work as a trainer, Kevin is also a certified Peloton instructor and a wellness coach for men and women who have never been "active". His classes are infused with a kick-ass playlist, spontaneous high-fives, and a no-food-shaming approach to weight management

Kevin values fashion, fitness, holistic wellness and inclusivity. Twice a month, he volunteers to lead group rides for a local LGBTQ+ cycling club. When he's not working, you can find Kevin kicking back at the beach with a good book or magazine..

Kevin is obsessive about checking in daily with his community through the Peloton app and his private Facebook Group. He pays a social media specialist to manage his IG, FB, and TikTok accounts.



# meet Tori



Tori is a 32 year old native Seattleite and mother of two kids—aged four and six. Her husband is a film industry veteran who splits his time between LA and Seattle. An art history major, Tori works part-time at the Seattle Art Museum. She also serves on the board of directors at Art With Heart where she leads philanthropic efforts.

Tori is obsessed with staying fit but, professional and family demands require a creative approach to fitting in socializing and fitness.

Before the pandemic, Tori enjoyed three weekly workouts at the Soul Cycle studio downtown. She dragged several of her reluctant mom-friends who all became equally obsessed. Spinning became “their thing”—a way of connecting, having a fun, friendly competition, and staying fit. It’s not all about buns of steel either—they all agree their commitment to working out makes them better moms.

When COVID forced the spinning studio to close, Tori bought a stationary bike, a subscription to Peloton, and a Mirror home gym. She and her friends continue their weekly workout dates virtually and eagerly await the reopening of the studio so they can “get together and sweat together”. Tori is very fashion conscious and is always on the lookout for new styles, textures, and colors.

# pain points

## **aware**

- Knowledgeable about the technical aspects of their bikes.
- Committed to cycling and the community it represents.
- Tribal and passionate about their community.
- Influenced by what they see others wearing/using.
- Harder to regulate body temperature indoors (hotter/more sweat).

## **unaware**

- Don't understand the *value* of performance athletic apparel.
- Don't know what looks good or fits well.
- What's a "chamois"?
- Don't know they don't have to suffer discomfort.
- There are good-looking color options beyond black.

# brand voice + tone

Voice is brand personality. It is consistent no matter what channel or which audience or persona we're communicating to. Brand voice is how we use language to convey imbue's value and benefits, stand out in the marketplace, and make a meaningful connection with our audience. *Brand voice is the message of our mission.*

Tone is a subset of our brand voice. It can adapt to factors like audience, situation, or channel as needed. *Tone is the application of our mission statement.*

***It is our mission to create performance athletic apparel for every body.***

The **imbue** voice is authentic with a hint of curiosity. Our voice is the outcome of our brand values. The way we say things can spark a feeling for our customers. Carefully chosen words can impact their experience with our brand in a powerful way. Our brand voice should be subtle, even so far as to go unnoticed. We avoid jargon, clichés, and contrived statements, relying instead on a warm, friendly, and direct voice to evoke a sense of belonging and warmth.

# brand values

## community

**imbue** believes in the power of athletic pursuits to create connection—both a deeper connection within the individual, as well as connection with others. Whether it's looking to get fit, have fun, ride to work, compete, or some combination of all the above, **imbue is here to make your ride more comfortable, stylish, and rewarding.**

## high standards

**imbue goes beyond the bare minimum of apparel design for people who seek to push their limits.** We know what it's like to set high standards. At **imbue**, we go beyond the status quo in our design, our sustainable manufacturing practices, and our exceptional customer service.

## inclusion and belonging

Human beings were born to move. Movement makes us happy, healthy, and fuels our "best lives". So regardless of your watts, your BMI, your Strava standings or Peloton placements, **we are here to support every body** in their pursuit of movement.

# brand persona

## We are...

Designer  
Performance  
Sustainability-centered  
Accessible  
Inspirational  
Fresh  
Innovative  
Edgy  
Professional  
Fun

## We are not:

Luxury  
Elitist  
Niched  
Cheap  
Exclusive  
Stuffy

## We provide:

1. **Great design.** We can create small batch limited edition color and graphic collections very quickly.
2. **Innovative, comfortable materials and manufacturing.** We are developing purpose-specific apparel, not just applying different labels on our product and calling it unique.
3. **High performance.** We are discerning riders who appreciate high performance. If we wouldn't wear it, why would our customers?
4. **Conscientious creation.** We design and manufacture our goods with an eye toward sustainability—with a focus on local manufacturing, and resource and waste reduction—from the start.

# competitive positioning

## Status Quo

- Limited colorways and design options
- Sustainability is secondary (or nonexistent)
- Unable to meet market demands for quick, high-quality short runs
- Made in Southeast Asia
- Limited sizes reflective of extreme endurance athlete physiques (e.g. small)
- Tone deaf. Doesn't include women, newbies, POC or other historically underrepresented users—or if they do, it's just lip service
- Meh quality, either in raw materials or in manufacturing
- Focus on performance in an elitist way

## imbue

- Limitless** design options due to innovative manufacturing
- Sustainable** packaging from the start (no plastic!)
- Agility**: Able to do small production runs as well as large orders
- Think global, buy local.** Our products are proudly **Made in Oregon!**
- Inclusive**: We make athletic apparel **for every body** size and shape
- Representative: We are **intersectional and representative** in our marketing and business practices. We walk the talk.
- High-performance athletic apparel featuring **innovative materials and refined construction**, providing the ultimate in comfort
- We take a **holistic view** between looking good, feeling good, and performing well

# unique value (usp)

**imbue creates performance athletic apparel for every body.**

**#forEVERYbody**

With a focus on high performance cycling apparel, **imbue** offers bespoke "kit" that meets the demands of strenuous cycling while satisfying the desire to be a more conscious consumer.

As consumers grow increasingly aware of the impact of their consumption, we offer apparel that is less conspicuous than it is conscientious. Our production model prioritizes efficiency, by designing low waste into our process. Our packaging is made from post-consumer cardboard and paper, uses no plastic, and is 100% recyclable or compostable.

Finally, we offer custom bespoke design to appeal to the fashion-conscious buyer. Consumers don't have to choose between performance and fashion; with **imbue** they get both, by design.

# keywords

crafted  
gravel  
road  
mountain  
indoor  
outdoor  
comfortable  
progressive  
real  
belonging

imagined  
bespoke  
artistic  
creative  
inclusive  
lifestyle  
performance  
fit  
excellence  
community

inspired  
gym  
fabrics  
innovation  
inventive  
vision  
athletic  
trainer  
experience

# brands we are inspired by



**patagonia**<sup>®</sup>



ATHLETA



# messaging mediums

- website
- testimonials
- blog articles and customer content
- profile editorials
- endorsements
- articles
- press
- social media
- marketing emails
- Google
- YouTube
- Medium (lifestyle articles)

# writing rules

To keep communications consistent across multiple channels and authors, we will follow the grammatical and style guidelines of the Associated Press. Their handbook can be found here:  
<https://www.apstylebook.com/>

Language is constantly evolving. With every generation, new language emerges. To stay fresh and contemporary, we keep an eye on common language developments by taking cues from the [Diversity Style Guide](#), the [GLAAD Media Resource](#), and the [Conscious Style Guide](#).

Other writing “rules”:

- Use the *em dash*—not the hyphen, en dash, or double-dash—to separate sentence fragments with no space on either side.
- Use curly quotes for display text (anything larger than text size).
- Use the en dash (–) between numbers, not a hyphen or single “dash”.
- Each sentence is followed by one space, not two, after punctuation.

# mission statement

#1)

To create performance athletic apparel for **every body**.

#2)

To create performance athletic apparel with style, comfort, and quality for **every body**.

**#forEVERYbody**