

Digital Billboard Content Guidelines

Content Design
Recommendations


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BEST SEEN



DIGITAL BEST PRACTICES: KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL DESIGN



Simple. Bold. Legible. Brief.

Though digital billboards show an ad for approximately 7 to 10 seconds, those that are most effective should be “devoured” in three seconds. Build the message based on the three-second rule. Narrow the focus and decide what your message will be. Make it concise. The message can be one of the following:

- A person
- A national brand
- A Web site
- A Service
- A call-to-action
- A location
- A product
- A price
- An event
- A local brand
- A special promotion
- A specific time: Morning, Noon or Evening

Effective.

- Placement of the car moves the eye naturally to the information.
- Excellent use of color contributes to the legibility.
- Fewer design elements clarify the message.
- Web site encourages consumer to take action.



Ineffective.

- Too many design elements compete for visual importance.
- Too much color confuses the customer.
- Poor car placement does not encourage the eye's natural flow.
- The local brand (Miles) and national brand (Chevrolet) are buried in the text.



Graphic designers solve visual creative problems using these basic principles:

The information in this guide will help you understand the use of these three basic design principles for creating digital display content that wins the glance and entices your client's customers.

1. COMPOSITION

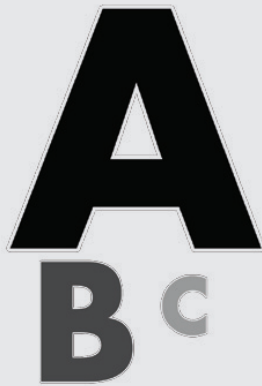
2. TYPOGRAPHY

3. COLOR

Define Layout

Layout is the design principle that determines the finished look of an advertisement. The most important principle for creating effective outdoor content is visual prioritization of the message, or hierarchy of communication. Consumers can't hear and understand four messages at once; they can't see and understand four messages at once, either. Define the items (ABC levels) you want to communicate and prioritize each piece in order of importance according to the following information.

People read in chunks of information. They scan across, then down, and pick up information in logical sections. The more distinct those sections of information, the faster people interpret the meaning or the purpose of the message. Visual and written information that overlap cause the reader to pause and sort the two apart before understanding the message. Using hierarchy of communication helps speed comprehension and increases retention of the message.



Visual Priority



Visual Clutter

Tip:

Ask your audience to take action, such as "call today."

DIGITAL BEST PRACTICES: COMPOSITION



Hierarchy of Communication

Use the levels as guidelines to first capture the viewer's attention with a clear, single point of communication. Then give the viewer definition or detail that points back to the first level. Finally, give them the information they need to inspire an emotion, an action, or a purchase.

Level A: A photo, logo, service, product image or price. Whichever is the most important piece of information.

Level B: Supporting information that gives definition or detail to support level A.

Level C: Relevant information that tells the customer where, how or who to contact for the information in levels A and B.



Traditional vs. Digital Advertising

Some worry they will not be able to get all of their information on one frame or piece of artwork. So they add every possible detail they can think of. This mindset derives from traditional print advertising.



DIGITAL BEST PRACTICES: TYPOGRAPHY



Define Typography

Typography is the arrangement and appearance of type on a page.

Readability: Select easy-to-read typefaces. Large, bold fonts make it easier for your audience to read and comprehend text from different viewing distances. In addition, text using all capital letters is harder to read. Use text made up of both upper- and lower-case letters.

Selecting Effective Fonts

Select fonts that are easy to read from different viewing distances, such as large, bold fonts. Remember to use text containing both upper and lower-case characters when you have a long message. Using text with all caps should be limited to short messages. Using a limited amount of text will help viewers' readability and comprehension. Examples of these variations on text are below.



Regular Text



Bold Text



All Cap Text



Tip:

When possible, after creating the ad, look at the content on the actual digital billboard display to make sure it's easy to read.

DIGITAL BEST PRACTICES: TYPOGRAPHY



Make it a Campaign

Digital advertising needs to be created differently than traditional print magazine/newspaper advertising because of the unique capabilities of the medium. Print advertising has one chance to convey all necessary information to customers, whereas digital advertising can show several messages in a series of rotations giving advertisers multiple chances to convey the necessary information to customers.

Digital Display Management allows multiple clients to advertise separately on a digital billboard. The web-based software easily updates and automatically rotates through a series of individual clients' digital advertisement slots. The slot belonging to one advertiser may also have unique digital content showing at each rotation. This provides a better chance to attract the attention of different demographics and promotes campaigns of ads with small amounts of text (i.e. information) instead of a single text heavy advertisement.



Digital Advertising Design



Traditional Print Ad Design



Examples of Digital Campaigns:

A campaign of digital advertisements for a zoo with each ad containing similar design characteristics. The information is broken into five separate ads, making it easier for viewers to comprehend on a digital billboard rotation.

Tip:

When using a colored background, outlining the letters in black and using drop shadows can create interest and increase readability.

DIGITAL BEST PRACTICES: COLOR

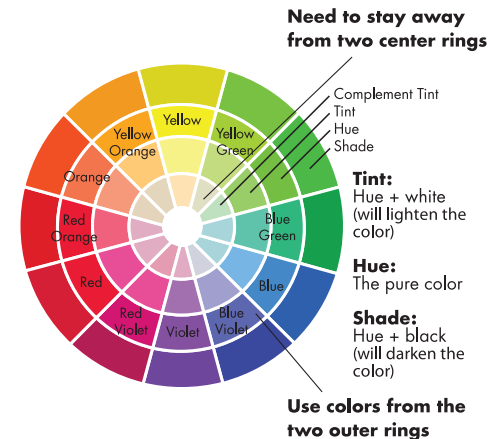


Define Color

Take full advantage of your display's color capability by using rich, vibrant colors. Bright, saturated colors (colors with no white in them) work better than pastel or low-contrast colors.

The color wheel to the right features a full color range.

Certain colors tend to evoke specific emotions or ideas, so choose them carefully to help support products and ideas. See chart below.



COLOR	EMOTIONS EVOKED
RED	Stimulating, exciting, provocative, dynamic
RED ORANGE	Domination, aggression, and action
ORANGE	Friendly, vital, playful, energizing, inviting
YELLOW ORANGE	Illumination, wisdom, and wealth
YELLOW	Sunny, warming, cheerful
YELLOW GREEN	Sickness, cowardice, discord, and jealousy
GREEN	Soothing, nature, refreshing, healing, fresh
BLUE GREEN	Emotional healing, protection
BLUE	Cool, quiet, serene, constant
BLUE VIOLET	Uniqueness, preciousness, royalty, and sacredness
VIOLET	Creative, regal, spiritual, mysterious
RED VIOLET	Energetic, happy, sweet, romantic, youthful
BLACK	Strong, classic, elegant, mysterious

DIGITAL BEST PRACTICES: COLOR



Use Tonal Contrast

Using contrast is vital to your design because it helps the viewer distinguish between design elements. For best contrast, use tonal contrast (or value difference) instead of only color difference.

Tonal contrast can be measured by using compositing software such as Adobe® Photoshop®. Simply open your advertisement using your preferred compositing software and then convert it to gray scale. You can now easily measure the advertisement's tonal contrast. An example of this is shown on the right.



Color

Greyscale

The bottom image uses hues of red and green that have the same tonal value (bad contrast). It is difficult to distinguish between background and text. This produces an effect called "vibrating." After converting content to gray scale with compositing software, the advertisement's tonal contrast is apparent.

Good Tonal Contrast



Tip:

After turning your content to gray scale, is your advertisement still readable? Do all of your elements stand out? If so, your content piece has good tonal contrast.

DIGITAL BEST PRACTICES: COLOR



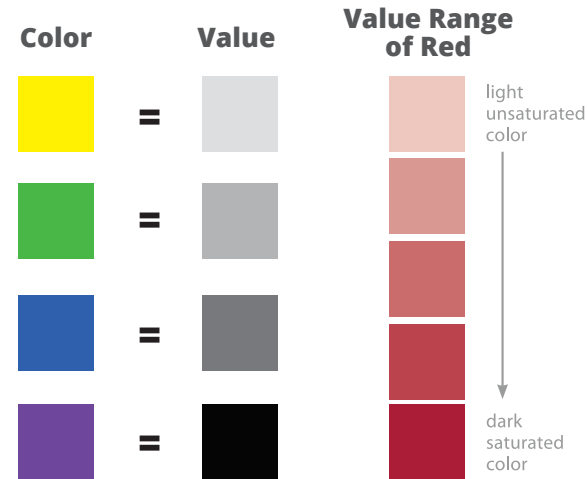
Using Contrasting Colors

Select colors that provide good contrast to make your content more appealing and easier to read. Achieve effective contrast by using colors with different values (how bright or dark a color is).

Use the chart at the right to guide your design. You can see that yellow is a bright color with a very light-gray value. Purple, on the other hand, is a dark color with a black value. Therefore, using yellow and purple together provides very good contrast.

By looking at the chart again, you can see that yellow and green aren't the best colors to use together because the contrast between the two is so low. Solve this problem by using a darker green that has a darker value to increase contrast and readability.

The value range chart on this page shows you how each color (in this example we used red) has a number of values to choose from. This makes contrast easy to achieve.



GOOD CONTRAST LIKE THIS MAKES YOUR CONTENT HIGHLY VIEWABLE.



Tips:

Remember the product user must be able to see the artwork, scan for details, and make an assessment of the data. Do not overwhelm them with visual clutter.

Choose a color or graphic that supports your essential message. In this case, blue implies cool or cold and orange is inviting and energizing; just what you need in the morning.

DIGITAL BEST PRACTICES: COLOR



White Backgrounds

Avoid White Backgrounds: With LED technology, the use of emitted light, white or very light colors may repel the eye—not the desired response in advertising. A grave concern in most regulatory environments is offensive use of light or white content. Even though digital displays are fully capable of producing white and pastel colors it is not recommended. Taking advantage of the color capabilities is thoughtful and in general more pleasing to the eye. If white or pastels must be used, the content should only be scheduled for daytime viewing.

Black Backgrounds: For digital billboards, black is the absence of color. Black is created with the use of less light. White is the blending of all colors and the use of more light in digital billboards.



DIGITAL BEST PRACTICES: COLOR



Standard Colors

Make your digital content pop with colors that work. Find information below about the RGB (red, green and blue) colors that look the best on a digital display. Choose these colors when building digital content/artwork/advertisements to take advantage of the full-color capabilities of your cutting-edge digital billboard.

True Colors

Red R=255 G=0 B=0	Green R=0 G=255 B=0	Blue R=0 G=0 B=255	Yellow R=254 G=233 B=0	Orange R=255 G=88 B=0	Purple R=182 G=52 B=187

Other Colors

Yellow Orange R=255 G=182 B=15	Light Orange R=255 G=161 B=0	Sunshine R=252 G=217 B=0	Orange R=255 G=121 B=0	Red Orange R=255 G=88 B=0	Coral R=255 G=109 B=66	Warm Red R=247 G=64 B=58	Red R=205 G=32 B=44	Medium Red R=198 G=12 B=48	Salmon R=245 G=63 B=91	Pink R=236 G=67 B=112
Rose R=202 G=0 B=93	Ruby Red R=202 G=0 B=93	Rhod Red R=224 G=17 B=157	Purple Pink R=195 G=0 B=0	Dark Purple R=87 G=6 B=6	Violet R=75 G=8 B=161 B=158	Royal Blue R=37 G=38 B=169 B=140	Medium Blue R=15 G=77 B=188	Dark Blue R=0 G=35 B=149	Aqua R=0 G=115 B=207	Pro Blue R=0 G=136 B=206
Grey Blue R=0 G=101 B=189	Sky Blue R=0 G=122 B=201	Apple Green R=0 G=175 B=63	Forest Green R=0 G=121 B=52	Grass Green R=88 G=166 B=24	Lime Green R=146 G=212 B=0	Canary R=234 G=223 B=0	Gold R=233 G=233 B=0	Dandelion R=228 G=215 B=0	Burnt Umber R=181 G=163 B=0	Dark Gold R=193 G=187 B=0

DIGITAL BEST PRACTICES: TIPS FOR SUCCESS



Tips & Techniques for Digital Billboard Content Success

Start with a red, green, and blue color space, also known as RGB, the standard digital technology. This is the same mode as your TV or computer. Cyan, magenta, yellow and black, also known as CMYK, unlike RGB, are used for high resolution printing. When creating content for digital signage, images must be created in RGB. Use the following tips to create files that work best for digital signage.

Color Mode

Photoshop Tips:

Is your file CMYK or RGB?

- Look at the title bar.
- The color mode is next to the file's name.
- The color mode should be RGB/8 bit.

Creating a new file:

- File > New
- In color Mode drop-down menu, select RGB.

Converting from CMYK to RGB:

- If the image has layers, you will be given the option of flattening your image when converting to RGB. The best practice if you already have a CMYK image is to finish in that color mode, then convert to RGB and flatten the layers when possible. *Note: colors may shift when converting from CMYK to RGB.*
- To convert a flattened image (1-layer), go to Image > Mode > RGB color.

Illustrator Tips:

Is your file CMYK or RGB?

- Look at the title bar.
- The color mode is next to the file's name.
- The color mode should be RGB.

Creating a new file:

- File > New
- Select RGB radio button.

Converting from CMYK to RGB:

- File > Document Color Mode > RGB Color

DIGITAL BEST PRACTICES: TIPS FOR SUCCESS



Tips & Techniques for Digital Billboard Content Success

- Build content in its native measurement (pixel by pixel - not inch by inch) Example: 888 w x 260 h.
- Save files as JPEGs
- 72 ppi is recommended for resolution for this technology.

File Size

- Under “My computer,” identify the image you wish to check. Right click on the .jpeg image.
- Click on “properties.” This will show the properties of the image you created.
- The file size should be listed in the middle of the panel.
- The file size should be around 70-150KB.

Photoshop Tips:

Compressing File Size:

- Open the file in Adobe Photoshop.
- Choose “save as.” Rename your file. Choose .jpg format.
- A window will come up. Move the slider bar in the center to the left in order to compress the file size.
- Use the “file size” instructions, left, to view file size. If it is still too big, repeat the directions above.

Illustrator Tips:

Compressing File Size:

- Open the file in Adobe Illustrator.
- Choose “save as.” Rename your file. Choose .eps format.
- This will compress the file size.

DIGITAL BEST PRACTICES: TIPS FOR SUCCESS



Importable Image Files

- Choose photos to import that have a smooth gradation (smooth change from one color to another) of color shades and don't contain much detail.
- You may need to change the size of an image to fit your display and then crop it so it will look its best.
- For the most attractive images, use those in raster format (.jpg, .png, .gif, .bmp, and .tif) and set them at 72 ppi.
- Logos appearing on a black or colored background will be more effective than logos on a white background.

Image for Digital Advertisement



Tip:

Add interest—show only a portion or the focal point of an image. Examples left.

Focal Point of the Image



DIGITAL BEST PRACTICES: TIPS FOR SUCCESS

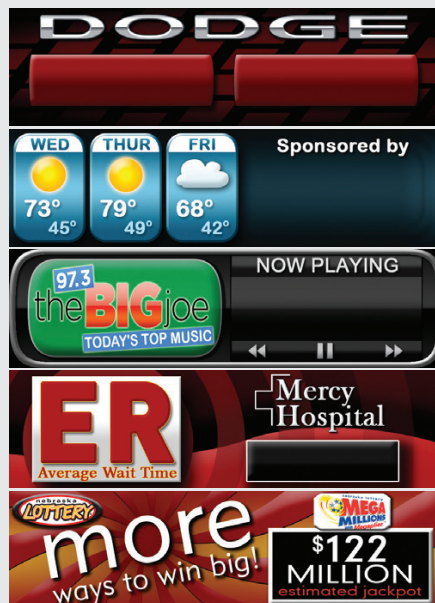


Examples of Dynamic Content

Dynamic content is defined as the ability to automatically update data within a creative template utilizing a RSS feed.

Interact with audiences by displaying interactive content, such as time and temperature, the artist and song on a featured radio station, hospital ER waiting times, and live feeds. Talk to your representative about our dynamic content options.

Creative Template



Creative Template with Data

