

# Idea to Impact

## Material Development Guide

### Introduction to Design

**W**hen you communicate with someone face-to-face, you use not just words but the tone of your voice, facial expressions, hand gestures, and body movements. When you want to communicate with someone using the written word, you use not only the words on the page but the design of your page, the layout of page elements, and the graphics you choose. A well-crafted page will attract and keep your readers' attention, as well as walk them through the information to ensure that your entire message is understood.

This guide introduces the basics of page design. The companion guide, *How to Design a Layout*, covers the principles of layout and gives practical tips. To supplement the information given in both guides, a list of both print and online resources is also included at the end of *How to Design a Layout*. In addition, many desktop publishing programs include advice and templates to help you create materials, but being familiar with the basics first will help you understand and apply what your publishing program offers.

#### In this guide you will learn

- How to brainstorm design ideas
- Steps in the design process
- Parts of a page
- Basics of typography

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#### Brainstorming Design Ideas

Designing your own material can be very rewarding but does involve making many decisions. If you don't know where to start, don't despair. The first step is to study other designers' work to see what works and what doesn't and to get ideas. If you expect to be designing material on a regular basis, start an idea file where you keep pieces that appeal to you or that have been effective. Your collection doesn't have to be exclusively tobacco-related. Material on any topic may contain good design ideas. Always keep in mind that good design is what attracts your readers' attention. No matter how important your information may be, it will go unread if it's poorly designed.

Be alert for eye-catching examples of the following:

- Advertisements from magazines or newspapers (great poster ideas)
- Billboards (Take photos of them for poster ideas.)
- Booklets, brochures, flyers, fact sheets, newsletters
- Posters, postcards, bookmarks
- Comic and coloring books
- Novelty items like refrigerator magnets and t-shirts

### Steps in the Design Process

Before beginning to design any piece, wait until most of the decisions about purpose, audience, content, budget, type of material, deadline, and distribution method have been made. Design and layout decisions will be affected by all of these factors. Then start to brainstorm ideas and make rough sketches or mockups of your piece. If possible, assemble a focus group composed of members of your intended audience and present your ideas to them. What works for you may not work for them, so take careful notes and revise accordingly.

Remember that your job as a designer is to attract and keep your readers' attention and help them understand your message. Never assume that you can spot all the potential trouble spots within your piece that may confuse, mislead, or offend your readers. That's why it is essential that you incorporate field testing into your material development routine.

Next, if possible, bring your revised design ideas to your graphic designer, production manager, and/or printer. Their expert advice can help you decide how to proceed. Do you want to use color? Do you want glossy paper? Do you want a color to run off the edge of a page (bleed)? Any of these factors and others will affect the cost of production. If you want a bleed, for example, the printer must print on larger paper and trim it to size, so a design without bleeds is cheaper to produce.

Once you're done with these essential preliminaries, you arrange your text and graphics into their final form, present your draft to a focus group, revise once more, print, and distribute. Field test again periodically. Field tests help you decide when it's time to update or replace your piece.

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## Design Basics

Next, let's discuss some basics of good design. Basic design concepts include knowing the parts of a page and how they work together to convey your message. Even if you've been developing material for a while, it's always good to review basic principles.

### Parts of a Page

Every page contains common elements. The content, or body text, usually fills up the most space. Headers and footers, containing standard information like page numbers, may run along the top and bottom of the page. Headings and subheadings announce the content of each block of body text. Graphics include illustrations, charts, graphs, tables, and decorations.

Sometimes pages contain other elements. For example, text cues like bullets, arrows, circles, or boxes can help the reader navigate through the page. Sidebars, often positioned in a box of contrasting color, may contain additional, related information about a topic. Pull quotes, which are short snippets of text that are often memorable comments, may be "pulled out" of an article, set in a larger typeface, and styled to attract attention.

### Typography

Typography is the art of choosing and combining designs, styles, and sizes of type to create a legible, readable, and attractive layout. Type selection has a major impact on the readability and overall look and feel or style of your piece. Since the advent of desktop publishing, your possible choices may seem overwhelming. Here's a brief explanation of some terms you may hear in connection with type. For more detailed information about typography and how you can use type as an element of design, refer to Robin Williams' book, *The Non-Designer's Type Book*, listed in the resource section at the end of this guide.

- **Typeface:** the actual shape of the set of characters. Examples are **Flatbrush**, Courier New, and **Impact**.
- **Type style:** the variation in the shape of the characters of a particular typeface, e.g., normal (Roman), **bold**, *italic*, **bold italic**, **reverse** type.
- **Typeface family:** a group of character sets with the same typeface and different styles, such as Garamond, *Garamond Italic*, **Garamond Bold Italic**, and so on.
- **Font:** a specific set of characters of one typeface of a particular style and size: **Times New Roman Bold 12 points** is a single font while **Times New Roman Bold 10 points** is another separate font. These days, however, font is also used as a general term for different kinds of type.
- **Font family:** a set of fonts of different styles and sizes. **Times New Roman Bold 8 points** is in the same family as *Times New Roman Italic 16 points*.

## Serif and Sans Serif Typefaces

There are two major classifications of typefaces: serif and sans serif.

Book Antigua is a serif typeface. It has marks at the corners and tips of the letters.

Verdana is a sans serif typeface. It has no serifs.

To avoid clashing and to create contrast, don't mix two very similar typefaces, such as two sans serifs. Limit the number of different typefaces used in a single document to two or three.

One typeface should be used for the general content (body text). Another contrasting typeface is generally used for headings and yet another one for captions. The general rule is to use sans serif in headings and serif in body text. Online, however, sans serif is preferred for body text because of the low resolution of computer monitors, causing serif letters to blur. If you're confused, don't worry. The world of type can be bewildering. When in doubt, choose among the following font families.

### For body text in print publications:

Minion	Palatino
Garamond	Times
Book Antigua	Times New Roman
Goudy	

### For headings or for online body text:

<b>Comic Sans</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Futura	Syntax
Gill Sans	Verdana
Helvetica or Ariel	

In your material, don't mix two very similar typefaces, such as two sans serifs. Limit the number of different typefaces used in a single document to two or three.

## Type Size and Line Length

Type size and line length also matter. In typesetting, the unit of type size is the point, equal to approximately 1/72 of an inch. In general, use 10–12-point type for the body text. Select a substantially larger size for your headings (or a contrasting typeface or both) so that they stand out from the body text.

## Readability versus Legibility

Readability and legibility are two important goals of the designer. Readability refers to how easy it is to read a large amount of text, like a newspaper column or book. Legibility refers to how easy it is to read a short amount of text, like a headline, street sign, or catalog entry.

Serif type tends to be more readable because serifs help to guide the eye from one letter to the next. Sans serif is more legible because the lack of serifs makes each separate letter distinct, so a quick glance from a distance is enough to identify the whole word.

For maximum readability, lines of text should be no longer than five or six inches so that the eye can easily scan the line, and they should be no shorter than the amount of space necessary for a phrase of three or four words in the font size you are using because meaning is conveyed in connected phrases, not disjointed words.

Now that you've been introduced to the fundamentals of design in this guide, you can understand how good design helps to get across your message. In the next guide, *How to Design a Layout*, you'll learn how to apply what you've learned. You'll also find a list of resources at the end.