

Style Guide/Manual

Any organization that produces external publications (brochures, fact sheets, newsletters, Web sites, etc.) can benefit from a style guide. Style guides help to make your publications consistent, clear, and identifiable as coming from your organization by enforcing a similar sound, look, and feel. Branding your organization in this manner breeds confidence for your audience as well as saves time during the creative process.

A style guide/manual is a set of standards for the design and writing of documents and educational materials. Some style guides focus on graphic design, covering such topics as typography and white space. Other style guides focus on prose style, best usage, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and fairness. Style guides are revised periodically to accommodate changes in conventions and usage.

Communications and public relations departments of business and nonprofit organizations often have style guides for their publications (newsletters, press releases, Web sites). The style guides should include a glossary of suggested terms that are culturally sensitive to their constituency.

Many organizations use graphic design style guides to demonstrate the preferred layout and formatting of a published page. These can be extremely detailed in specifying, for example, which fonts and colors to use. Such guides allow a design team to produce visually consistent work for the organization.

Items that may be included in your style guide:

- Logo
- Fonts
- Colors
- Proper usage
- Terminology