Microsoft visual identity guidelines

March 2013

Microsoft

Microsoft confidential.

The Microsoft visual identity system capitalizes on our current wave of product offerings. It helps us be simple, clear, and direct. It elevates the content that matters most. It highlights the role we play in many consumers' lives today.

Microsoft confidential. For internal use only. Materials herein are not for use by third parties including but not limited to OEMS, DSPs, ISVs, IHVs, or resellers. Authorized vendors may use materials only pursuant to an express work request and/or agreement from Microsoft.

Our visual elements express our brand

These guidelines are your introduction to how we can use the visual identity as a thread that ties Microsoft together. They are a call to action to align our creative work and bring a new focus on our connected visual identity system.

Our shared elements unite the things we offer, and when they're used together—again and again—they become the foundation for the stories that we want our brand, our products, and our services, to tell.

For questions regarding the new visual identity system, please see Brand Tools or visit Help center.

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One Microsoft, shared elements

We have a united vision and these shared design elements—logo, color, type, and imagery—connect our portfolio of offerings across the whole company.

If your communication is leading with a product brand, such as Bing, Office, Skype, Windows, Visual Studio, or Xbox, use these shared design elements as outlined for each product.

If you are not leading with one of these products brands, then you lead with the Microsoft brand—whether an event, competition, program, service, solutions (multi-product or cross business), device, or a Microsoft product or technology. Use these elements as outlined in these guidelines for your communications.

Shared design elements



Logo & logotype



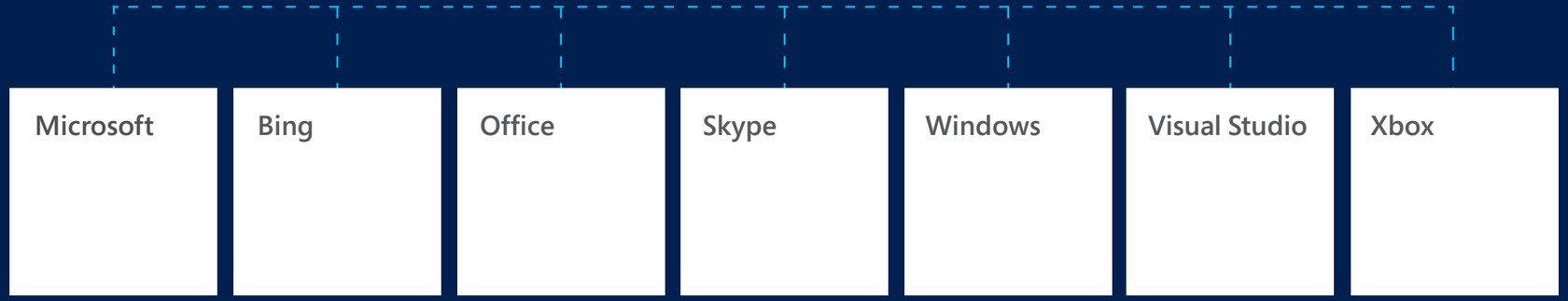
Color



Type



Imagery



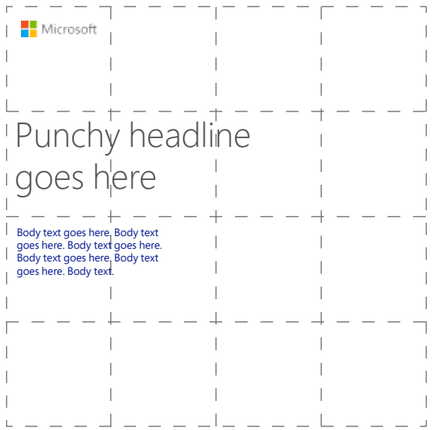
Microsoft and product brands

Logo

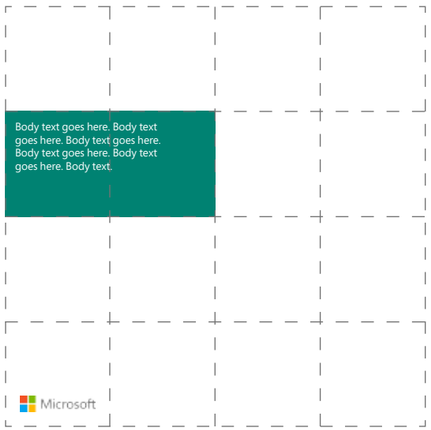
Microsoft

Tile

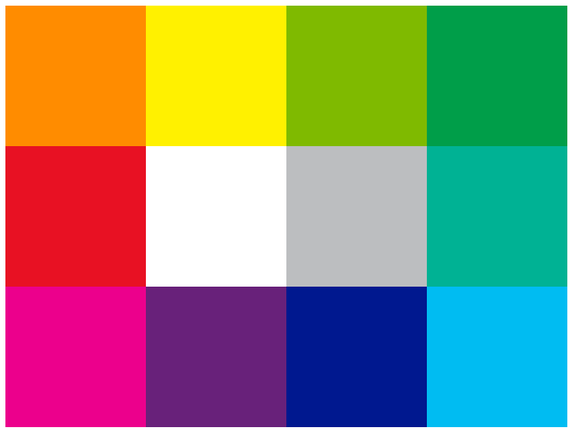
Layout grids



Content tiles



Color



Type

Segoe Light

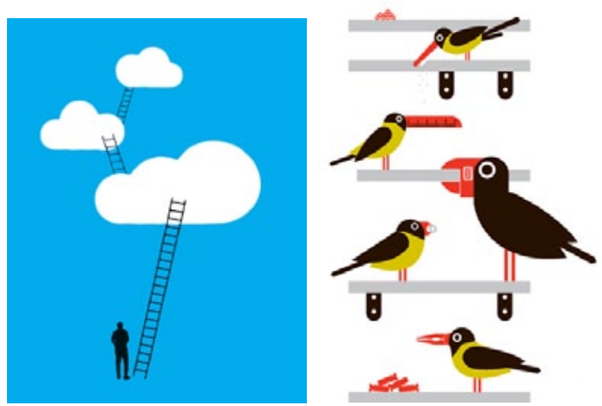
Segoe Regular

Segoe Bold

Photography



Illustration



Perfect time for a new logo

With the recent release of an unprecedented wave of new products and connected experiences across PCs, phones, tablets, and TVs, we felt our logo should evolve as well, visually accentuating this new era.

The new Microsoft logo is familiar and welcoming, drawing upon the heritage of our brand values, typeface, and colors. The symbol is built for the digital world, supporting the diversity of our businesses, representing and endorsing our products and services.

Download the logo from Brand Tools.



All Microsoft marketing and communications must use the logo

Use the Microsoft logo on 100% of internal and external marketing and communications.

Microsoft

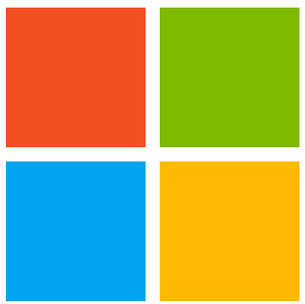
The logo = symbol + logotype

The logo has two components – the symbol with multiple squares of color intended to symbolize the company's diverse portfolio of products, and the logotype that uses the Segoe typeface used in our products and marketing communications.

The symbol must be used as part of the logo in all communications. The symbol alone is only used as a favorites icon by MSCOM and the Microsoft Store. No other use is allowed at this time. If you have questions, visit Help center.

Symbol

Logotype



Microsoft

Logo

Let the logo breathe

Clear space
We respect the logo by giving it some space. The minimum clear space that must surround the logo is equivalent to the height of its capital M.

Minimum size
In print, the logo should never appear smaller than 1" (25 mm). On-screen, it must appear at least 70 pixels wide.

Registration marks
In marketing, registration marks on the logo are no longer necessary, except in consumer packaging applications.

Logo art files (PDF or EPS)
We use PDFs as our standard vector file format. Today's PDF is versatile and provides better screen preview and compatibility with other programs than EPS files. PDF files are fully scalable and work like .AI or .EPS files. PDF files can be placed in InDesign as a link graphic or opened in Illustrator. We do not offer AI or EPS files.

Clear space



Minimum size



On-screen: 70 px
Print: 1" (25 mm)

Logo color

The full-color logo is the primary version of the logo and is always preferred. Use the positive version (logotype in gray) on light or white backgrounds.

The full-color reverse logo may be used on dark color backgrounds, as well as dark areas within photographs.

Full-color positive



Full-color reverse



One color

Use the full color logo. A one color logo is only acceptable when media reproduction is limited. In these cases, the logo may be reversed to white on a brand color or image. A black logo is allowed when media reproduction is black only.

The logo can be embossed, debossed, etched, or engraved on materials such as glass, brushed aluminum, or wood. Please visit Help center for guidance on specific executions.

White logo



Black logo



Acceptable backgrounds for the full-color logo

The full-color logo may be shown on any of the colors shown here or on simple areas of photographs. See page 33 for color values.

* To ensure the integrity and visual impact, when the Microsoft logo appears 1.125" or smaller in width use a white background color (preferred), or one of the alternate dark colors marked with an asterisk noted to the right.



White*



Cyan 300



Blue 660



Blue 286*



Blue 288*



Purple 526



Purple 269*



Red 1807



Orange 144



Green 348*



Teal 3295



Cool Gray 7



Cool Gray 11



Black*

Use the display version of the logo for very large applications

The standard version of the logo is optimized for use at small sizes, making it the best choice for most marketing applications. Subtle adjustments have been made to the standard logo to help it reproduce cleanly and clearly at small sizes. However, these adjustments—called ink traps—are distracting and unnecessary when the logo is enlarged.

If the logo will be displayed at a size where the M in the logotype is more than 1 inch (25 mm) tall, use the display logo artwork.

Standard logo



Display logo



Placement on the end card in TV advertising

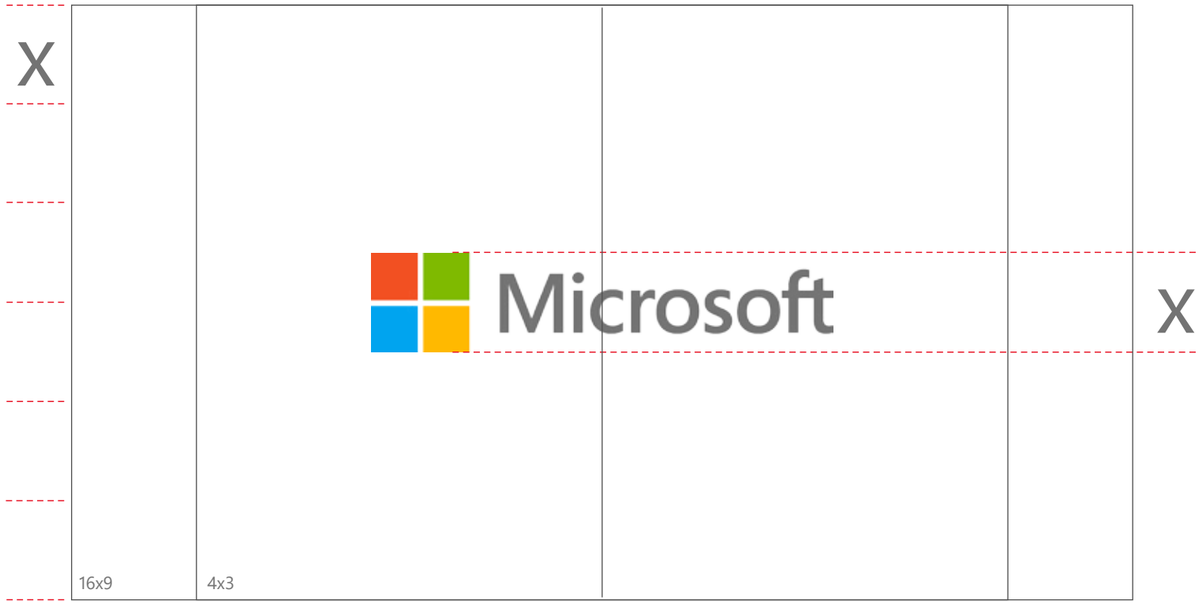
The Microsoft logo must appear on the end-card screen of every TV advertisement and video to reinforce the association between Microsoft and product.

Timing
The Microsoft logo must appear for a minimum of one second.

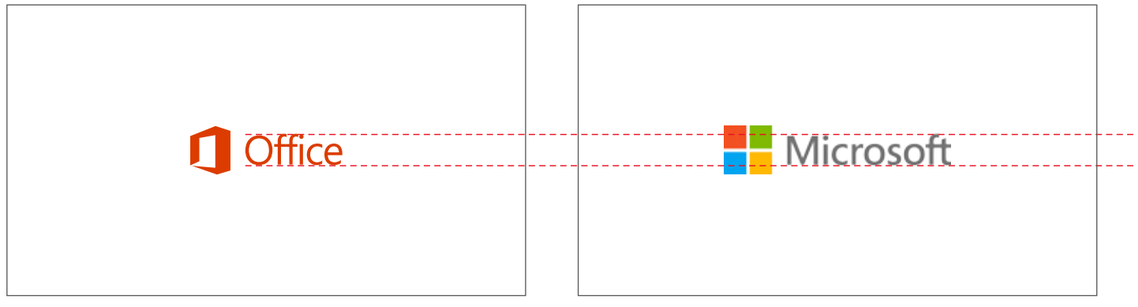
Size
The height of the symbol in the logo must be 1/6 the height of the end-card screen or the Microsoft logo cap height must be equal in size to the product logo cap height.

Background
The logo should appear on a white background (preferred). Alternately, it may appear on a black background.

Placement
The Microsoft logo should be centered both vertically and horizontally on the end-card screen.



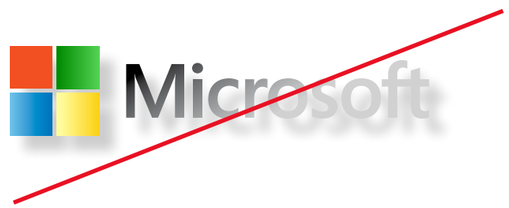
The height of the symbol in the logo must be 1/6 the height of the end-card.



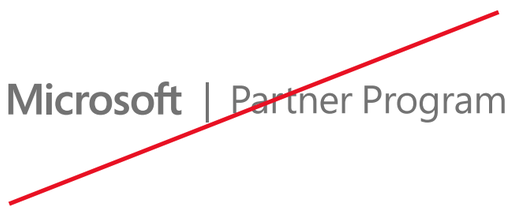
The Microsoft logo and product logo are equal cap height.



Do not change the size relationship of the symbol to the logotype.



Don't add effects like shadows, dimensions, and gradients to the logo.



Don't create logo "lockups" by adding text in close proximity to the logotype.



Don't create logo "lockups" by adding text in close proximity to the logo.



Don't stretch the logo.



Don't compress the logo.



Do not add anything to the symbol.



Don't alter the color specifications within the symbol or the logotype.



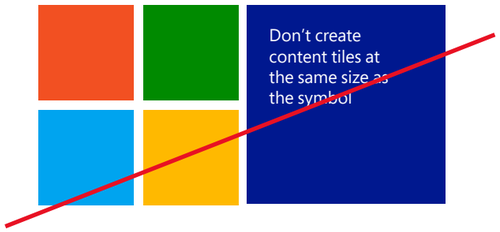
Do not attach text of any kind to the symbol



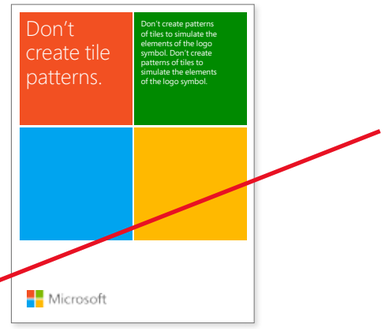
Don’t create multi-color logos for any sub-brand, business group or division. Only the master brand may use multiple colors.



Don’t use the symbol by itself in email signatures. Refer to page 83 for the approved email signatures.



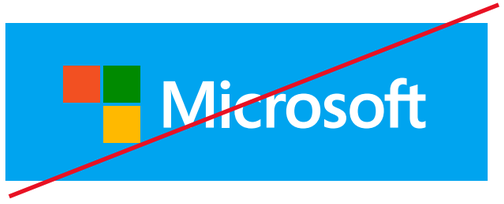
Don’t create content tiles at the same size as the symbol



Don’t create patterns of tiles to simulate the elements of the logo symbol.



Don’t place the logo over busy photographic backgrounds.



Don’t place the logo on backgrounds that provide insufficient contrast.

Product brand led marketing and communications use the logotype

Use the Microsoft logotype on single frame print or digital communications, or packaging. The Microsoft logo is used as a sign-off for video, television commercials, animated banners, or any multi-screen communication. See page 11 for use in animated banners or multi-screen communications. See Video end-card guidelines PDF for more information on animated logos.

Microsoft

The logotype complements the product logo

Shown here is the ideal color and scale relationship. The Microsoft logotype is available in the core brand colors and dark tints, as well as Cool Gray 9, black and white. Use a color logotype on white backgrounds and a white logotype on color backgrounds. For contrast, when the logotype is used on a photo background, use a color logotype on light images and a white logotype on dark images.

Consult Brand Tools for the product brand you are working with for additional details on scale and color.







Place the logotype so it aligns with other elements in the layout

The logotype should be placed in an area at the periphery of the layout, away from the focal point of the layout. Placing the logotype in one corner of the layout is a good way to signal that it is an endorsement, rather than the lead brand. Regardless of where it's placed, use care in positioning the logotype so it aligns with the layout grid or with other graphic elements in the design.

See the guidelines for the product you're working with for details on logo placement and alignment.





Let the logotype breathe

Clear space
We respect the logotype by giving it some space. The minimum clear space that must surround the logotype is equivalent to the height of its capital M.

Minimum size
In print, the logo should never appear smaller than 0.7" (18 mm). On-screen, it must appear at least 44 pixels wide.

Logo art files (PDF or EPS)
We use PDFs as our standard vector file format. Today's PDF is versatile and provides better screen preview and compatibility with other programs than EPS files. PDF files are fully scalable and work like .AI or .EPS files. PDF files can be placed in InDesign as a link graphic or opened in Illustrator. We do not offer AI or EPS files.

Clear space



Minimum size



On-screen: 44 px
Print: 0.7" (18 mm)

Use the display version of the logotype for very large applications

The standard version of the logotype is optimized for use at small sizes, making it the best choice for most marketing applications. Subtle adjustments have been made to the standard logotype to help it reproduce cleanly and clearly at small sizes. However, these adjustments—called ink traps—are distracting and unnecessary when the logotype is enlarged.

If the logotype will be printed at sizes larger than 1 inch tall, use the display logotype artwork.

Standard logotype



Display logotype

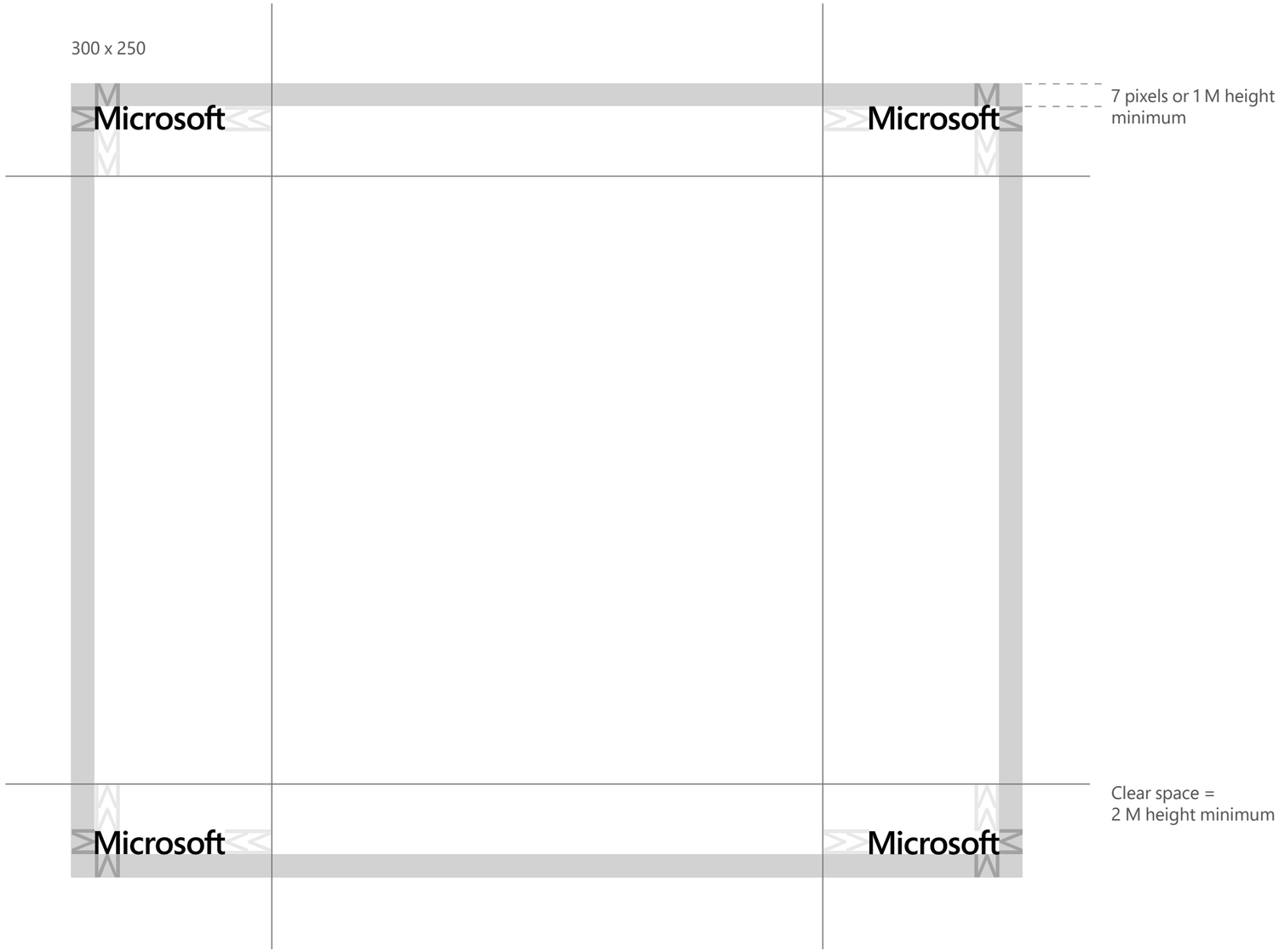


Logotype placement in digital communications

The Microsoft logotype must appear in one of two positions for a minimum of one second in all digital communications (e.g. ads, banners, etc.):

1. Call-to-action end-panel (shared)
2. Alone on the end-panel

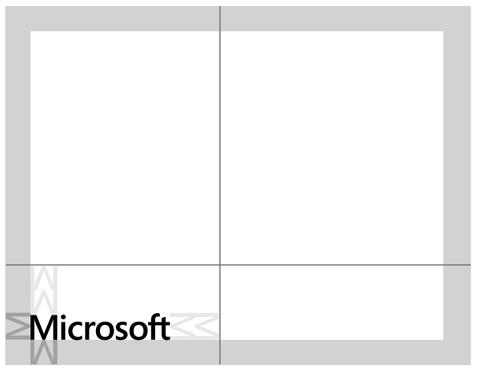
The Microsoft logotype should be placed in one of the 4 corners of the ad, equal distance from two edges in space constrained communications. Accompanying subbrand logos should be placed no closer than two (2) “M” spaces next to the logotype.



Small space banners

The Microsoft logotype must appear in all banner advertising, with a few exceptions. The Microsoft logotype may be dropped when the ad sizes are smaller than 120 x 90 and using the Microsoft logotype would prohibit appropriate subbrand sponsorship and messaging.

In the rare instance when the Microsoft logotype is not used, it must appear on the "call-to-action" (CTA) landing page.



Logo placement for 120 x 90 ad



120 x 90 ad with proper clear space



120 x 60 ad does not allow proper clear space.



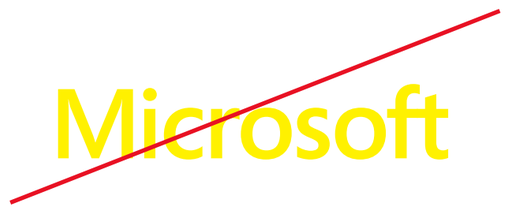
Microsoft logo appears in at least one frame of the animated ad



Dont' stretch or extend the logotype



Don't compress the logotype



Don't use light colored logotype artwork on white or light backgrounds.



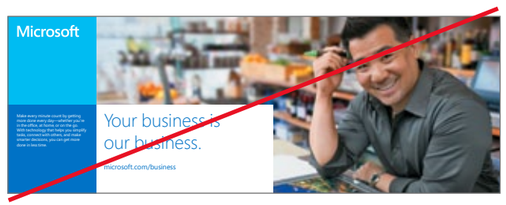
Don't group the logotype with other text, product names, or product logos



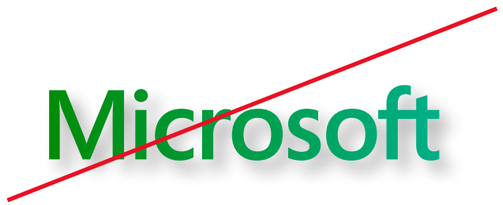
Don't use legacy logotype artwork on new materials



Don't place the logotype over busy backgrounds



Don't place the logotype within a cornerstone tile



Don't apply gradients, dropshadows or other effects to the logotype



dont create the logotype by typing "Microsoft" in Segoe font. Use the provided artwork.

Type is beautiful, and it matters

Type is more than a design element. It articulates our message, expressing both what we say and how we say it. Modern, easy to read, and humanist, the Segoe type family is closely aligned with the Microsoft brand personality. We use it within products and in communications across brands.

Segoe is straightforward, allowing our messages—from the enthusiastic to the practical—to be easily understood.

Use Segoe

Keep it simple

Limit type sizes to three

Keep it flush left

Use sentence case

Segoe is our type family

We use Segoe, a completely custom type family created for Microsoft that has become a longstanding core element of our visual identity.

Segoe Pro is the brand font used for print and graphic executions. Segoe UI is the Windows OS font, and the font that is used for on-screen and digital executions.

To download the Segoe Pro font family, visit Brand Tools.

Segoe Pro

Use for all print applications.

Segoe Pro Light

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe Pro Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe Pro Semibold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe Pro Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe UI

Use for on-screen applications like PowerPoint, email, and websites.

Segoe UI Light

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe UI Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe UI Semibold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe UI Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Size and weight

- Limit type to no more than three sizes.
- Use Light for large headlines.
- Use Regular or Semibold for increased legibility at small sizes or over backgrounds.
- Use Semibold or Bold for subheads, but not for headlines.
- Segoe Black or Condensed weights should be used sparingly.

Case

- Sentence case is our standard for all communications.
- Use all-uppercase sparingly—for titles, short headings, or subheadings, and never for full paragraphs.
- Do not use all-lowercase type.

Line spacing

- Line spacing refers to the space between lines of type. See the chart at right for line spacing guidelines.

Letter spacing

- Letter spacing (also known as tracking) is the space between letters.
- Segoe is designed so that letter spacing and word spacing are set by default to 0. In some cases, spacing may need to be adjusted. Make sure that letters never touch one another. See the chart at right for tracking guidelines.

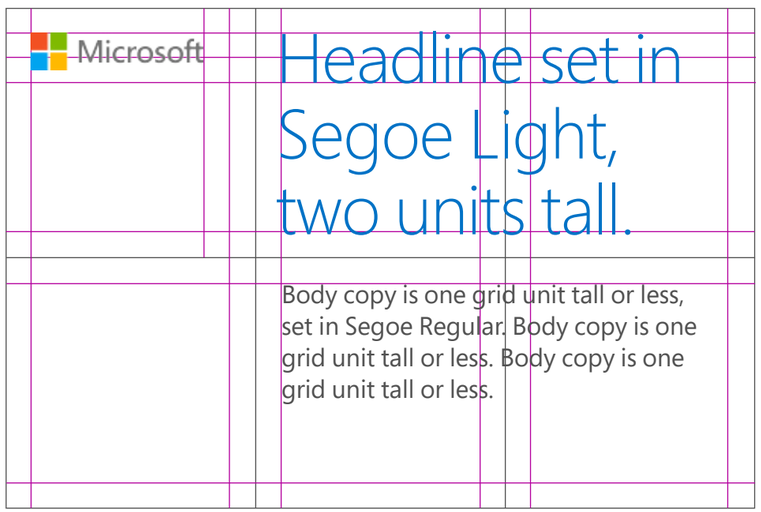
Justification

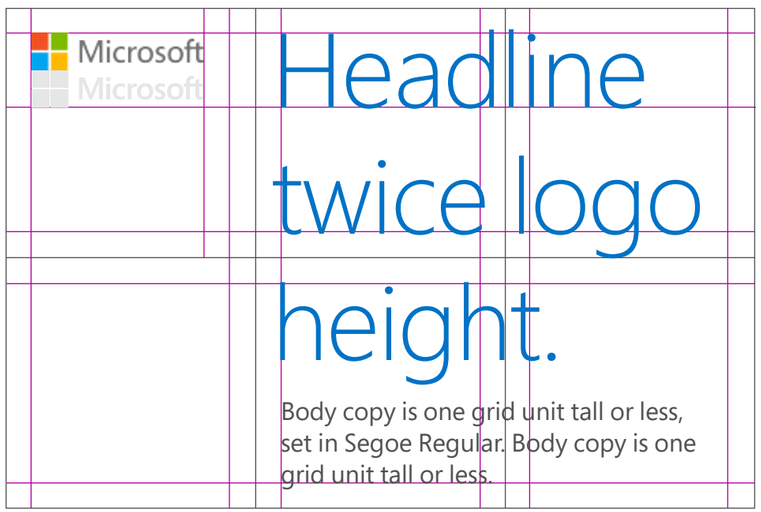
- Type should always be set flush left, ragged right.
- Segoe should never be justified or centered.
- Avoid widows, orphans, and lines that end with hyphens.

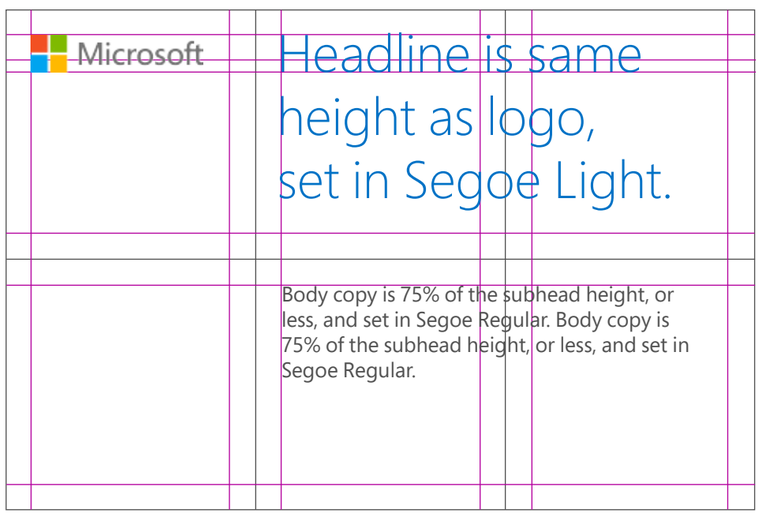
	Leading	Tracking
Body text (<8~14pt)	120% (minimum)	0
Subhead text (14~36pt)	110% (minimum)	-15
Headline text (36~72pt+)	120% (maximum)	-15

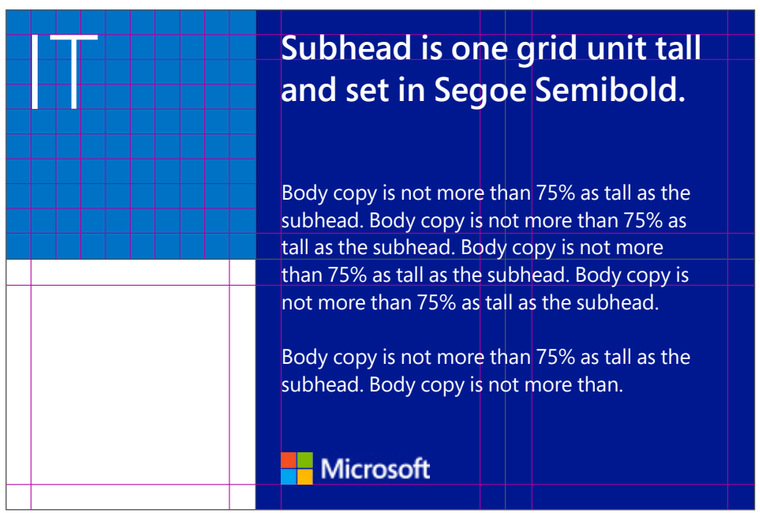
Type size and relationships

While there are many possibilities in the size and style of type, here are some proven relationships for using Segoe in composition.









Segoe works around the world

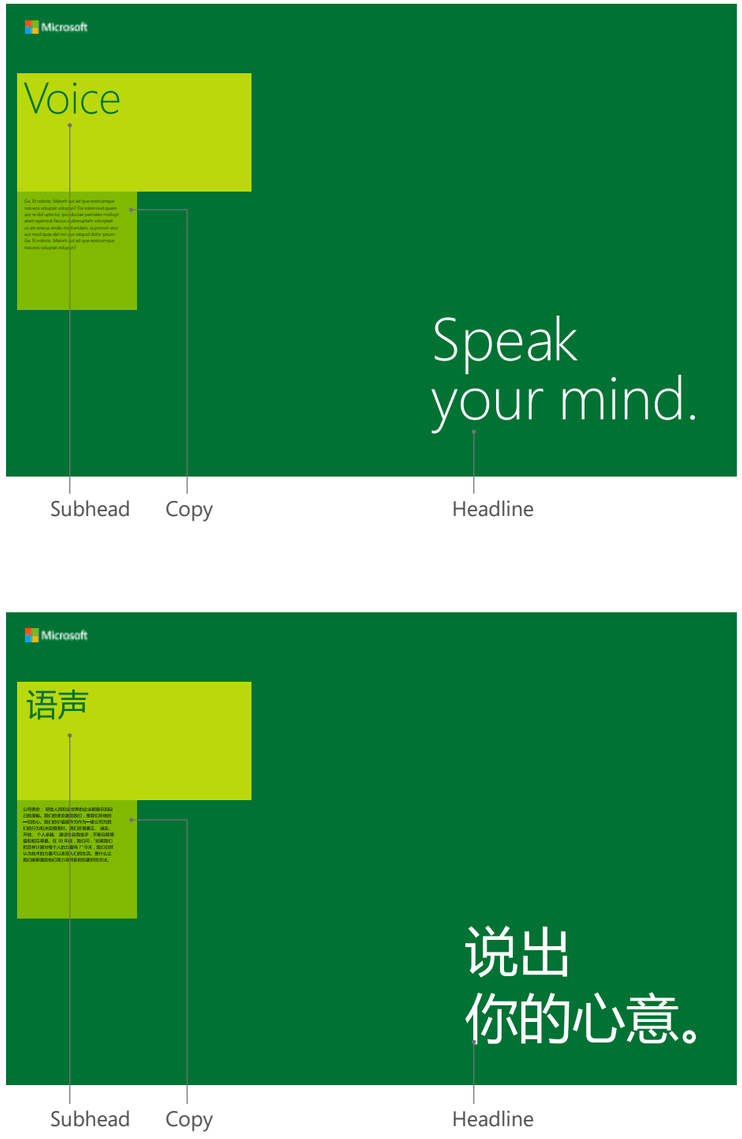
We recommend specific fonts for use around the world. If subsidiaries have identified alternate third party fonts they feel align better with Segoe please visit Help center.

Language	Print	On Screen
Latin, Greek, Cyrillic	Segoe Pro	Segoe UI (Win 8 version)
Hebrew, Armenian, Georgian	Segoe UI (Win 8 version)	Segoe UI (Win 8 version)
Arabic	Segoe UI (Win 8 version) Majalla "Traditional"	Segoe UI (Win 8 version)
Indian languages	Nirmala UI	Nirmala UI
Thai	Leelawadee	Leelawadee
Indiginios American	Gadugi	Gadugi
China (simplified)	YaHei	YaHei UI
China (traditional)	JhengHei	JhengHei UI
Korea	Malgun Gothic	Malgun Gothic
Japan	Meiryo	Meiryo UI
Lao	Lao UI	Lao UI
Khmer	DaunPenh	Khmer UI
African languages	Ebrima	Ebrima

Layouts

When designing for right-to-left reading language communications, it may be necessary to mirror the layout guidance, with right-alignment replacing left-alignment.

Go to page 58 to read more about how to design the grid layout.



Keep type aligned with the grid

Clear, organized messages are easier for our audiences to read and respond to. Align all type, regardless of messaging category or whether it appears inside a color block, to the same grid.



Internal SharePoints (exhibits for layout only)



Don’t add drop shadows to type.



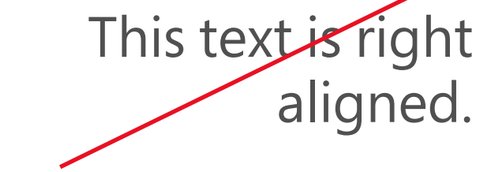
Don’t kern text too tightly or loosely.



Avoid loose line spacing measures.



Avoid widows (words by themselves on a line) shorter than 7 characters.



Avoid right-aligned type.



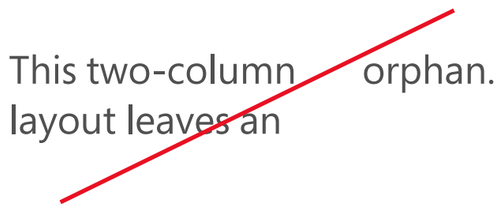
Don’t use more than 1 or 2 type styles in close proximity, and try to follow the rule of 3 type sizes per page layout.



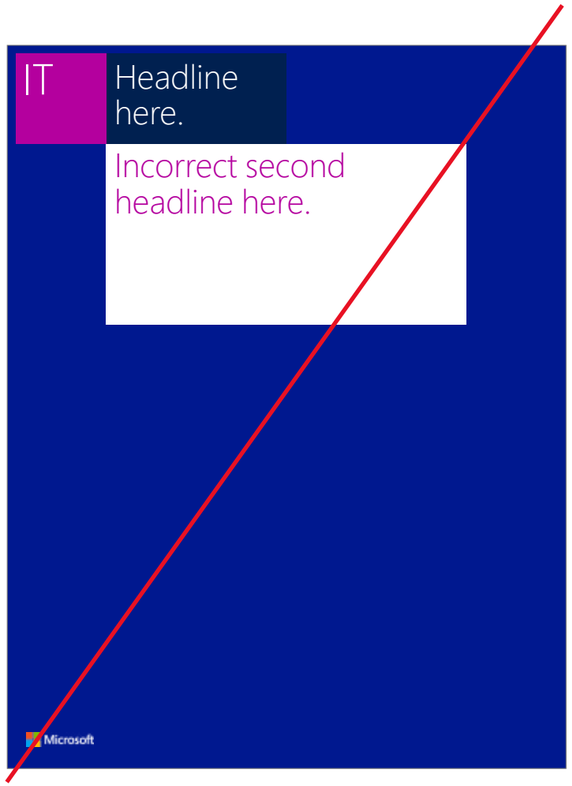
Avoid using all-capital letters in typography.



Don’t stretch type horizontally or vertically.



Don’t leave orphans in your text. (An orphan is a lone word at the top of a page or column—the last word in a sentence carried over from the prior text block.)



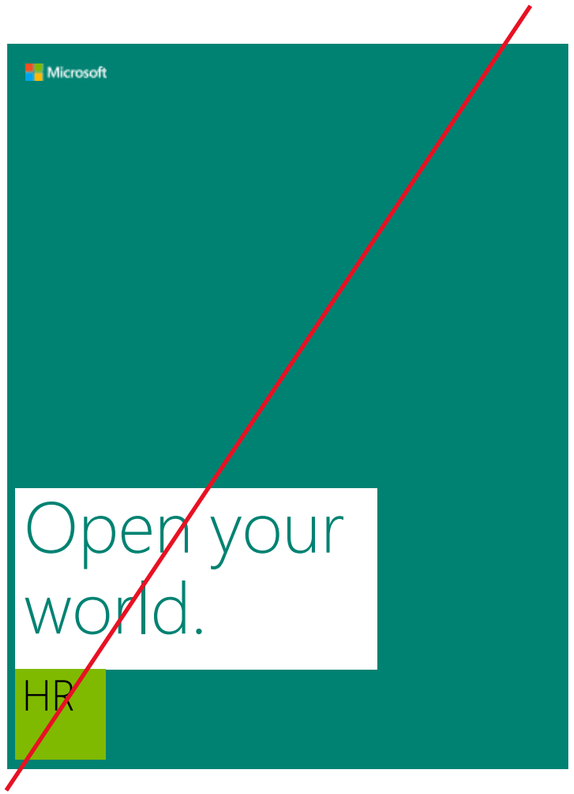
Internal communication

Don’t use more than one headline per layout. Always maintain a clear hierarchy when there is more than one level of information.



External communication

Don’t place body copy in more than one tile. Body copy within a single tile may be arranged into multiple columns.



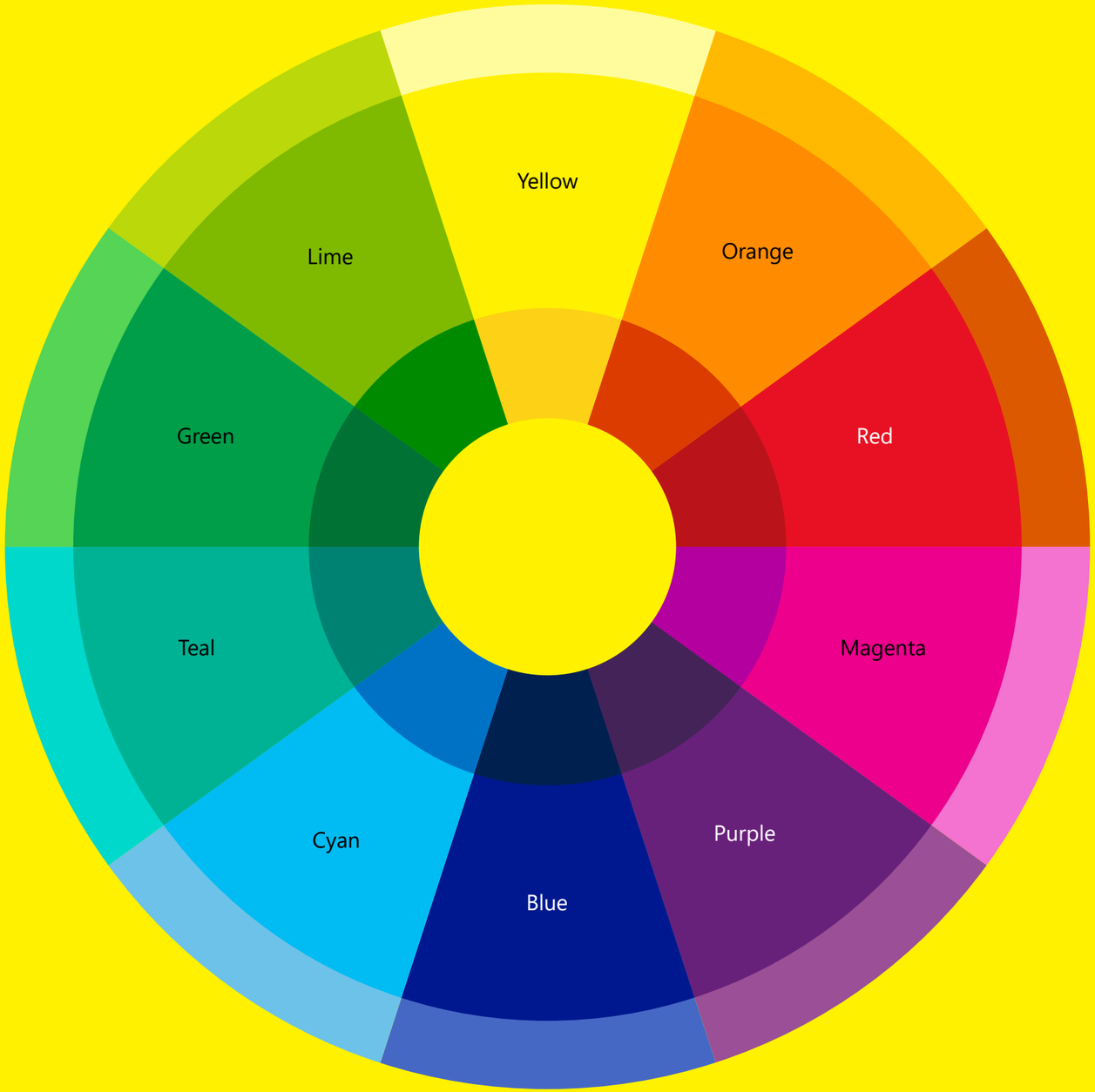
Internal communication

Don’t set type too large within a tile. Generally, headline text no larger than 75% of the tile width will provide the best results.

We are colorful

Life happens in color. Color captures passions, inspires emotions, and connects people. Bright and energetic, pure and beautiful, the Microsoft colors add vibrancy to communications and are among the most recognizable and unifying elements in our visual identity.

Choose one of the 10 core colors (the labeled ring in the color wheel shown here) as the primary color in your layout. The lighter and darker tints may be used as highlights and accents.



Use the 10 core colors in the right places

Use RGB and HEX formulas for on-screen and digital use. CMYK builds and PMS colors are for print applications.

Please note that each color has been optimized for on-screen (RGB) or print (solid or 4CP) reproduction. The specific RGB color formula, PMS color, and CMYK color formula are provided here and must be specified individually for each color. Do not use the automated color conversion tools in your software.



Process Yellow
C0 M0 Y100 K0
R255 G241 B0
HEX #FFF100

Orange 144
C0 M50 Y100 K0
R255 G140 B0
HEX #FF8C00

Red 185
C0 M100 Y100 K0
R232 G17 B35
HEX #E81123

Process Magenta
C0 M100 Y0 K0
R236 G0 B140
HEX #EC008C

Purple 526
C75 M100 Y0 K0
R104 G33 B122
HEX #68217A



Blue 286
C100 M75 Y0 K0
R0 G24 B143
HEX #00188F

Process Cyan
C100 M0 Y0 K0
R0 G188 B242
HEX #00BCF2

Teal 3275
C100 M0 Y50 K0
R0 G178 B148
HEX #00B294

Green 355
C100 M0 Y100 K0
R0 G158 B73
HEX #009E49

Lime 376
C50 M0 Y100 K0
R127 G186 B0
HEX #7FBA00

Our 10 core colors have lighter and darker tints

Layouts should utilize the 10 core colors most frequently. Our secondary palettes of lighter and darker tints provide a wide range of supporting colors.

White, gray, and black are additional supporting colors, used for copy. White may also be used as a background color.

These colors have been optimized for on-screen (RGB or HEX) or print (PMS or CMYK) use. Use the color specifications provided here. Do not use the automated color conversion tools in your software.

Yellow 100
C0 M0 Y50 K0
R255 G252 B158
HEX #FFFC9E

Orange 124
C0 M25 Y100 K0
R255 G185 B0
HEX #FFB900

Red 1665
C0 M85 Y100 K0
R221 G89 B0
HEX #DD5900

Magenta 218
C0 M75 Y0 K0
R244 G114 B208
HEX #F472D0

Purple 258
C60 M85 Y0 K0
R155 G79 B150
HEX #9B4F96

Yellow 116
C0 M13 Y100 K0
R252 G209 B22
HEX #FCD116

Orange 166
C0 M75 Y100 K0
R220 G60 B0
HEX #DC3C00

Red 1807
C0 M100 Y100 K25
R186 G20 B26
HEX #BA141A

Magenta 241
C25 M100 Y0 K0
R180 G0 B158
HEX #B4009E

Purple 269
C75 M100 Y0 K25
R68 G35 B89
HEX #442359

Blue 660
C80 M60 Y0 K0
R70 G104 B197
HEX #4668C5

Cyan 2985
C60 M0 Y0 K0
R109 G194 B233
HEX #6DC2E9

Teal 325
C65 M0 Y30 K0
R0 G216 B204
HEX #00D8CC

Green 7480
C70 M0 Y85 K0
R85 G212 B85
HEX #55D455

Lime 382
C25 M0 Y100 K0
R186 G216 B10
HEX #BAD80A

Blue 288
C100 M75 Y0 K25
R0 G32 B80
HEX #002050

Cyan 300
C100 M50 Y0 K0
R0 G114 B198
HEX #0072C6

Teal 3295
C100 M0 Y50 K25
R0 G130 B114
HEX #008272

Green 348
C100 M0 Y100 K25
R0 G114 B51
HEX #007233

Lime 362
C75 M0 Y100 K0
R0 G138 B0
HEX #008A00

Black
C0 M0 Y0 K100
R0 G0 B0
HEX #000000

Cool Gray 11
C0 M0 Y0 K80
R80 G80 B80
HEX #505050

Cool Gray 9
C0 M0 Y0 K65
R115 G115 B115
HEX #737373

Cool Gray 3
C0 M0 Y0 K20
R210 G210 B210
HEX #D2D2D2

White
C0 M0 Y0 K0
R255 G255 B255
HEX #FFFFFF

Our colors are accessible

The appropriate use of color helps make sure all of our customers can access and understand Microsoft communications, regardless of their abilities.

Avoid relying on color alone to convey information. Always provide text or other graphical cues to guide customers to our message.

Note: Type reversed to white, or black type over a colored background, should exceed the minimum 4.5:1 contrast ratio for accessibility. Examples at right demonstrate correct color use for on-screen (RGB) applications.

For more information on accessibility at Microsoft, visit www.microsoft.com/enable.

Yellow 100 R255 G252 B158	**Orange 124** R255 G185 B0	**Red 1665** R221 G89 B0	**Magenta 218** R244 G114 B208	**Purple 258** R155 G79 B150
Process Yellow R255 G241 B0	**Orange 144** R255 G140 B0	**Red 185** R232 G17 B35	**Process Magenta** R236 G0 B140	**Purple 526** R104 G33 B122
Yellow 116 R252 G209 B22	**Orange 166** R220 G60 B0	**Red 1807** R186 G20 B26	**Magenta 241** R180 G0 B158	**Purple 269** R68 G35 B89

Blue 660 R70 G104 B197	**Cyan 2985** R109 G194 B233	**Teal 325** R0 G216 B204	**Green 7480** R85 G212 B85	**Lime 382** R186 G216 B10
Blue 286 R0 G24 B143	**Process Cyan** R0 G188 B242	**Teal 3275** R0 G178 B148	**Green 355** R0 G158 B73	**Lime 376** R127 G186 B0
Blue 288 R0 G32 B80	**Cyan 300** R0 G114 B198	**Teal 3295** R0 G130 B114	**Green 348** R0 G114 B51	**Lime 362** R0 G138 B0

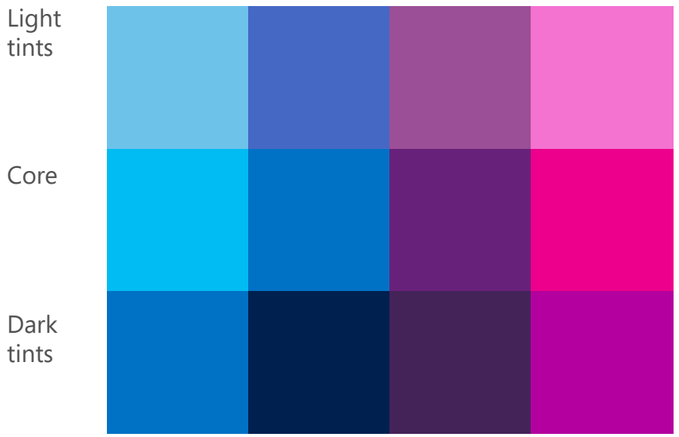
Black R0 G0 B0	**Cool Gray 11** R80 G80 B80	**Cool Gray 9** R115 G115 B115	**Cool Gray 3** R210 G210 B210	**White** R255 G255 B255

Powerful color combinations

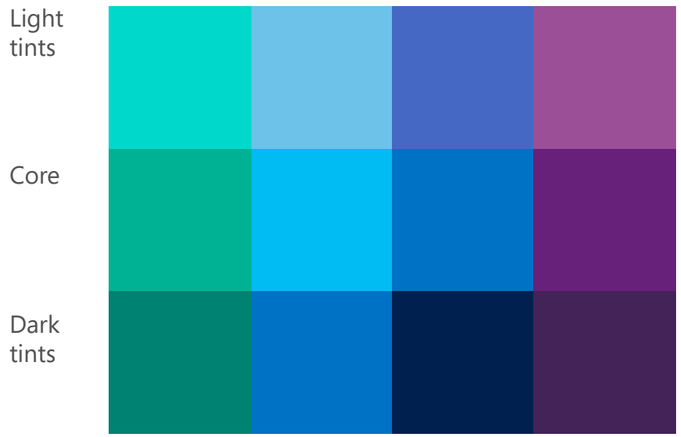
These sample analogous color groups demonstrate the use of color pairings derived from relationships in the Microsoft color wheel. Pick a minimum of one and a maximum of four colors from your chosen group per application (not including white, gray, and black). Its recommended that you choose no more than one light tint per application to maintain vibrancy.



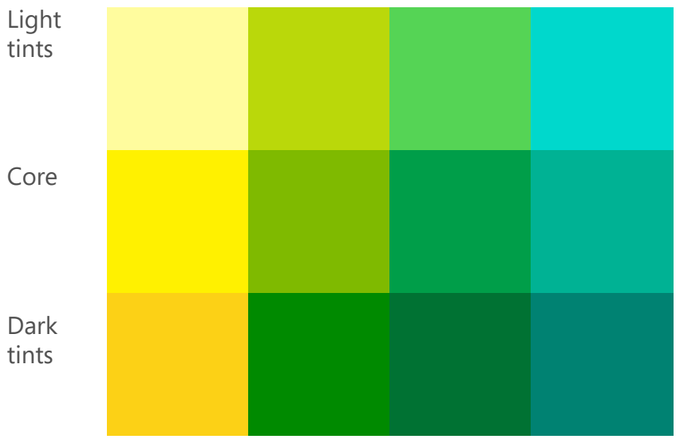
Group 1



Group 2

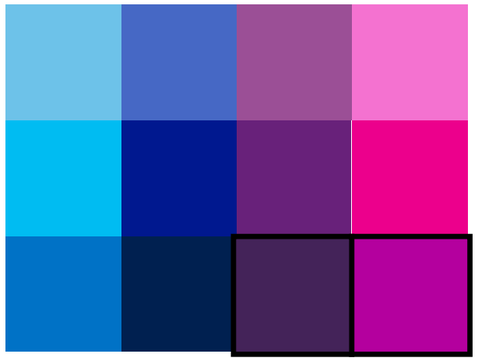


Group 3

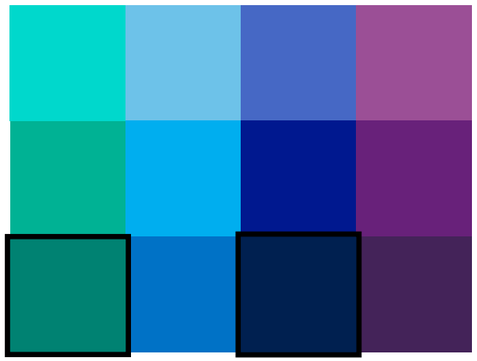


Group 4

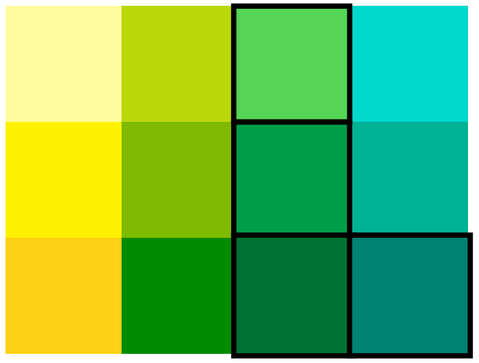




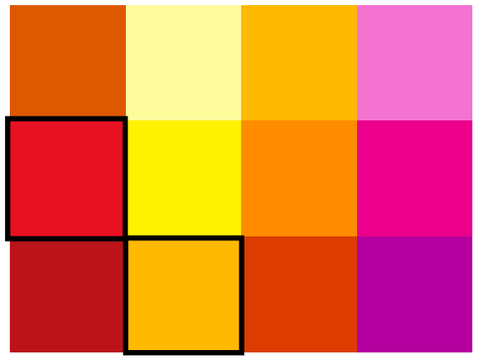
Colored type can be used against a white background as long as the color is represented somewhere else in the composition.



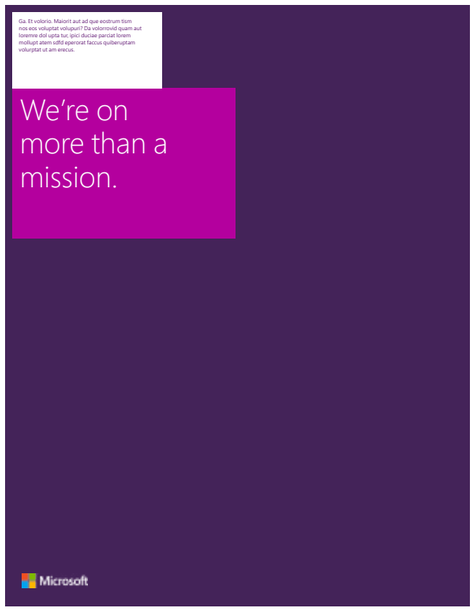
You can as few as one or two colors from the group.



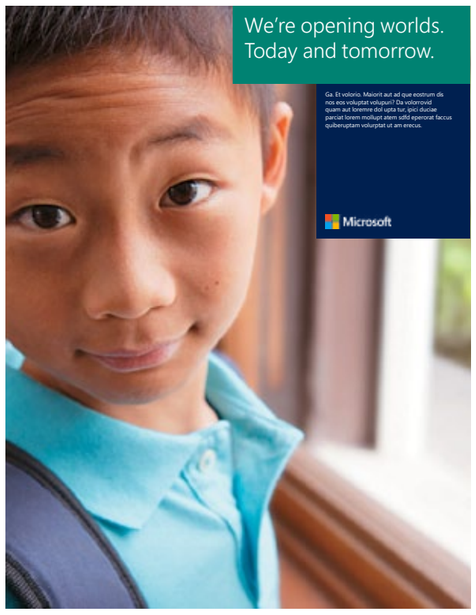
Multiple colors from the dark or mid-range zones can be used in one composition.



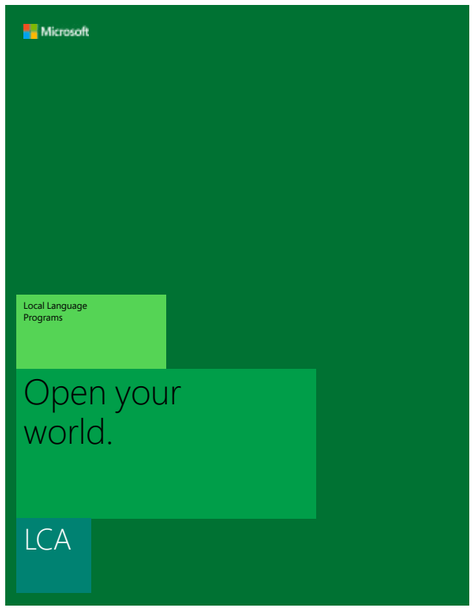
Black or gray type can be used on white or light colored backgrounds.



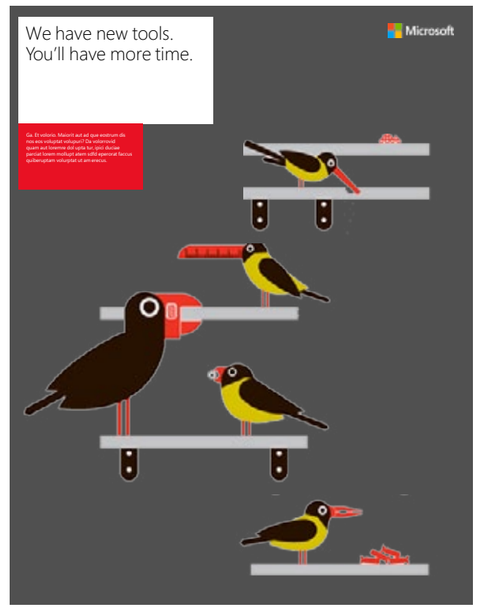
External communication



External communication



Internal communication



External communication



Avoid low-contrast color combinations.



Avoid low-contrast color combinations.

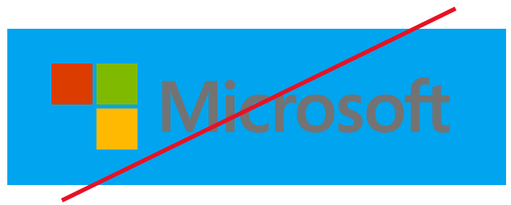


Avoid using more than three colors in a tile layout.

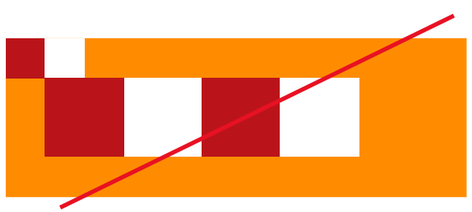
Don't use more than two colors in a single text grouping.



Don't tint the brand colors. Choose a color from the secondary palette—or white, black, or gray—if the core colors aren't sufficient.



Don't place the logo over any color or background that provides insufficient contrast.



Don't repeat colors in ways that create a "checkerboard" effect.

Grids: invisible but critical

Even when you can't see it, the grid is the most important organizational tool in the visual identity. It's what every layout is built on. It helps deliver our messages in a clean, simple, and direct way. It makes our communications feel like they come from Microsoft. Starting with a well-defined grid will give your design a solid foundation.

The underlying grid brings structure to simplicity. It creates the spaces where we tell our stories.

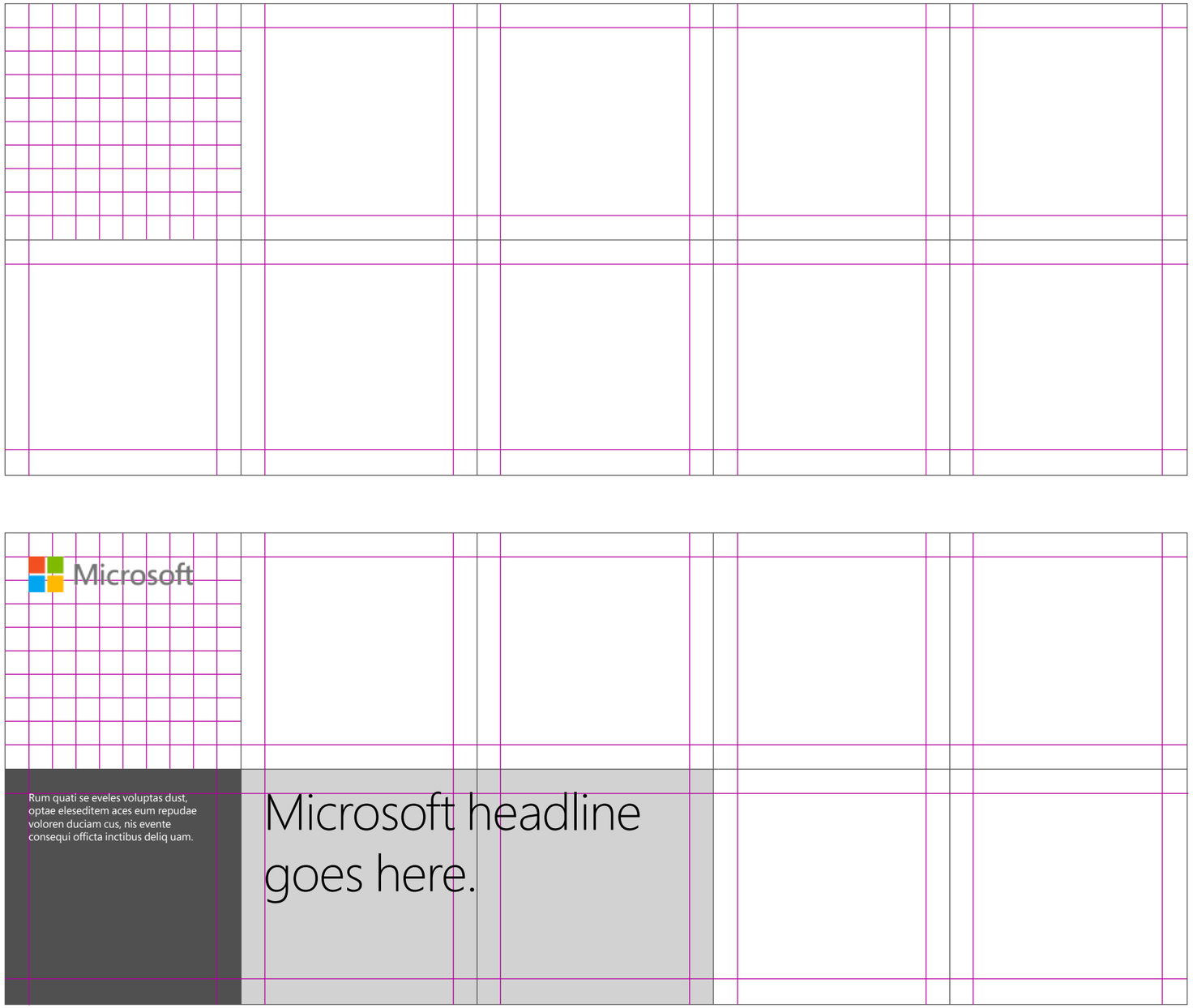
Grids provide organization, with or without tiles

The underlying structure of all Microsoft design, grids help balance your layout, creating the spacing and information organization that will guide customers to the most important visual elements and messages.

Dark Magenta lines = margins within the grid

Gray lines = grid columns and rows

For details on how to build the grid foundation, go to page 58.



Tiles: a defining design element

A new part of the Microsoft visual identity system and a connection to our product experience, tiles bring a fresh, captivating element to layouts, and are our primary vehicle for sending messages with type or identifying the author of internal communications.

Tiles provide a colorful starting point for a conversation. They contain important wayfinding information, letting the reader know who's talking.

What is a content tile?

Content tiles provide an opportunity for interesting and bold color combinations, and create strong areas in which to place type.

A content tile may contain the primary communication information—headline, subhead, body copy and call to action. It may also identify who the communication is from, contain illustration, photography, and color.





Internal e-mail banners

Content tiles align to the layout grid

Content tiles align to the layout grid (shown as blue lines in this example) in at least one dimension (height or width). It is preferable that they align to both.



External communication

Placing the logo inside a content tile

It is not necessary to place the logo within a tile. Content tiles must be at least two tiles wide if they will contain the logo.



External communication

Content tile must be at least two tiles wide if it will contain the logo



Internal banner

Placing the logo outside a tile

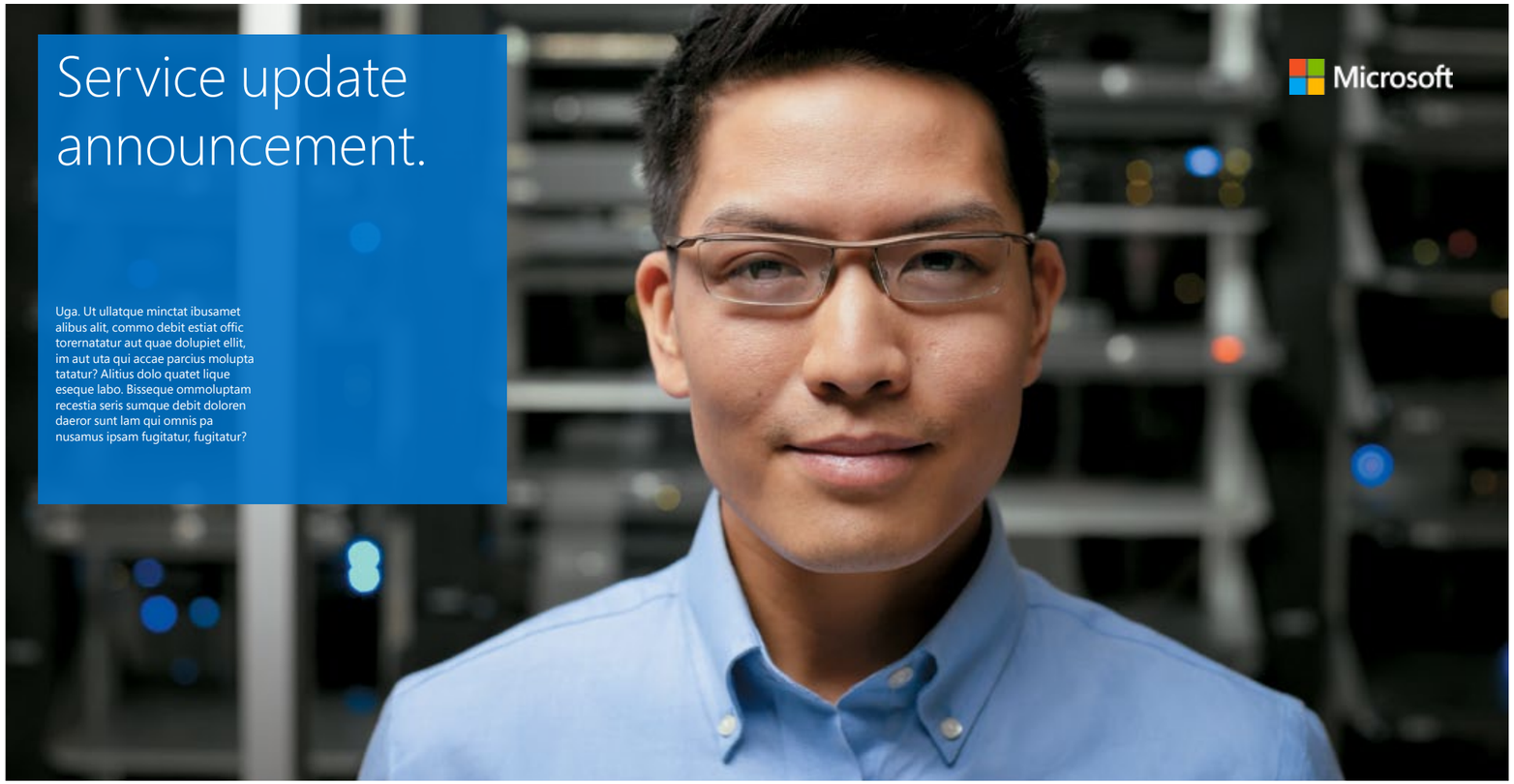
If you choose to use tiles in your layout but wish to place the Microsoft logo outside of the tile, be sure it aligns to the grid, and try to align it with other typographic elements in the layout. This simplifies the composition.



External publication spread

Using transparency when content tiles interact with photos

While cornerstone tiles must always be 100% opaque, content tiles may be set to a variety of transparency levels when applied over imagery. Colors will react differently in combination with different photos, but transparency levels should generally fall between 80 and 100 percent opaque. The goal is to maintain the color's vibrancy while creating a softening effect as it interacts with the image.



Internal banner

The fewer tiles the better

Tiles establish a consistent visual language across all Microsoft brand communications. Tiles form natural structures for placing type, especially on photographic backgrounds, giving us an opportunity to start meaningful conversations with customers.

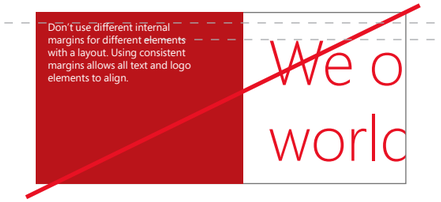
As useful and memorable as tiles can be, overusing them can dilute their impact and crowd your layout.

Limit the number of tiles to as few as possible. A good rule of thumb is to incorporate two tiles (including the cornerstone tile for internal communications). Add a third tile only if needed.

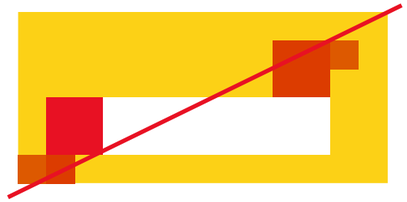




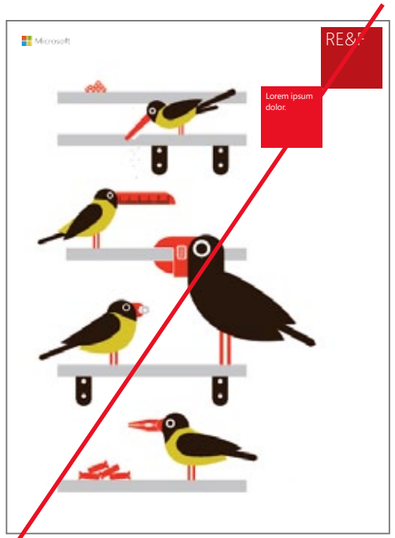
External web banners



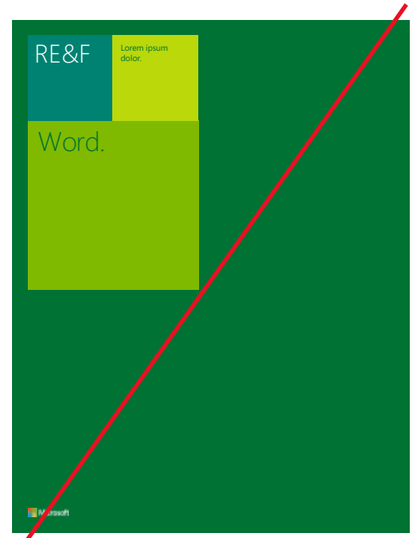
Don’t use different internal margins for different elements with a layout. Using consistent margins allows all text and logo elements to align.



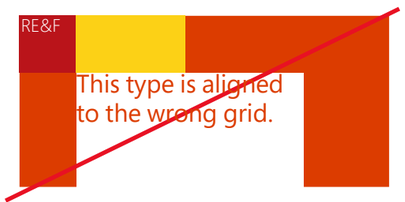
Avoid excessive use of tiles. Use them sparingly to create maximum impact.



Don’t align tiles diagonally.



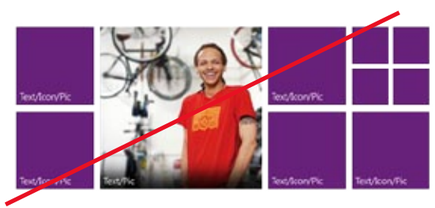
Avoid flush shapes—create movement, not blocks.



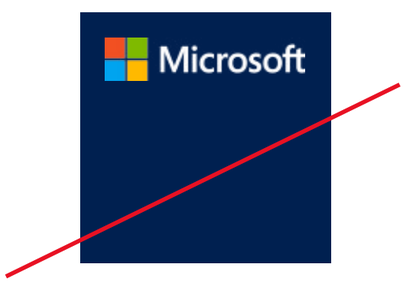
Don’t align type to the tile grid. It should align to the interior margins.



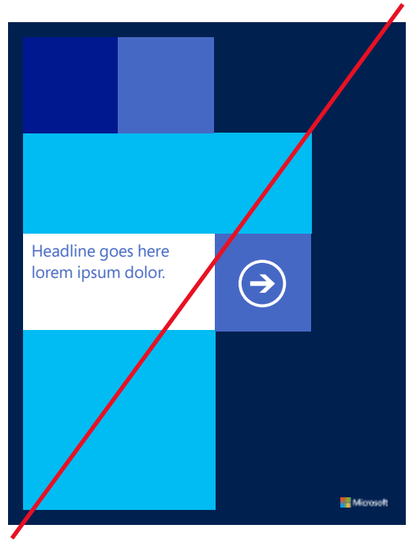
Don’t create black tiles. Microsoft is vibrant and colorful.



Don’t separate tiles with gaps or margins in marketing collateral. This is a design scheme for use in user interface and PowerPoint, and is not intended for martketing collateral.



Don’t place the logo in a single tile. The logo may only be placed in areas two tiles or more in width.



Don’t overuse tiles



Don’t use tiles as decoration. Tiles are purposeful and must contain content.

For internal facing communications only

The cornerstone tile is used in internal Microsoft communications to identify the source of the content.

When used, the cornerstone tile is the first tile placed in a layout. It is placed in one corner of the layout, and all other tiles are dependent on its position and size.

Cornerstone tiles are always colorful. They are not translucent and do not appear white, gray, or black.

Even when the cornerstone tile is used, keep in mind that the Microsoft logo must also appear on all communications.

Do not create your own cornerstone tiles. To request a group cornerstone tile please visit Help center.

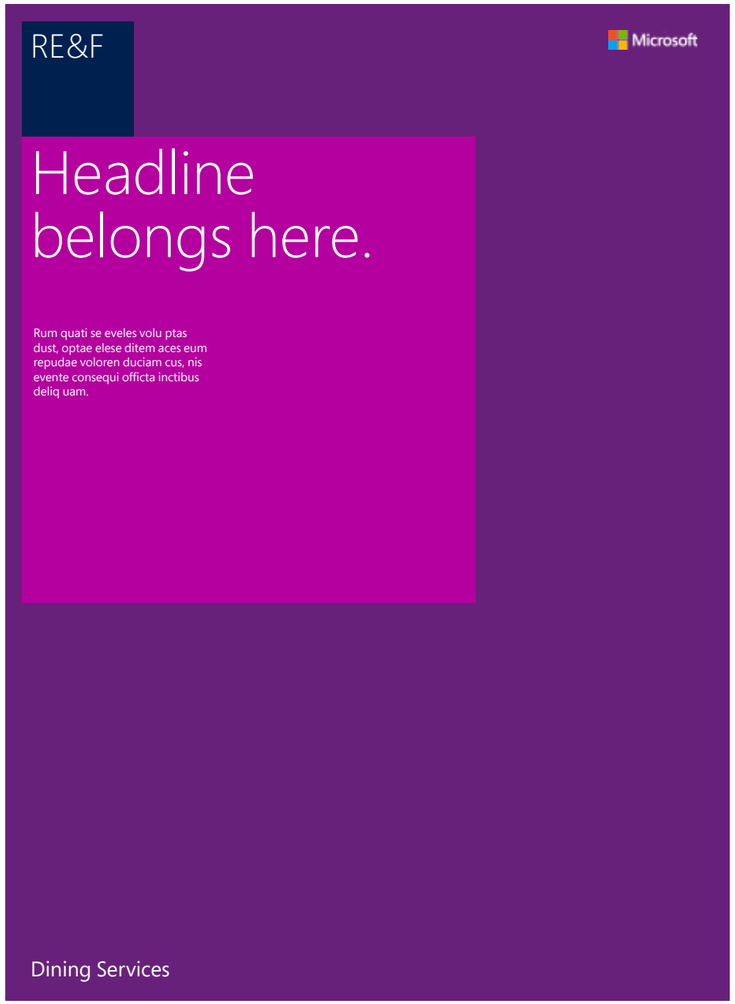




Identifying internal groups that don't have a cornerstone tile

Not all groups within the Microsoft organization should have a cornerstone tile. The highest-level divisional name belongs in the cornerstone tile.

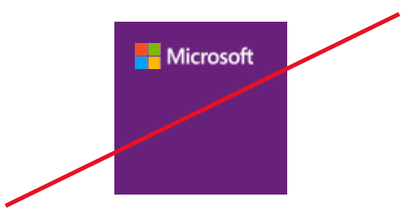
Sub-group designations may be handled elsewhere within the layout. For instance, a communication from the "Dining" sub-group would use the parent group's cornerstone tile ("Real Estate and Facilities").



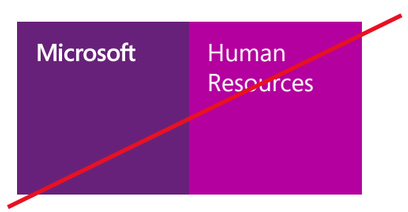
Internal poster



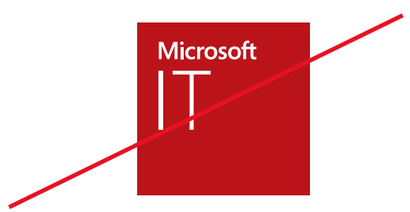
Internal newsletter cover



Don't place the Microsoft logo or logotype in a cornerstone tile.



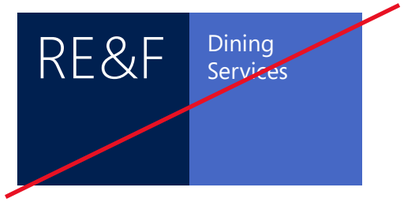
Don't create group name lock-ups with the Microsoft logo or logotype.



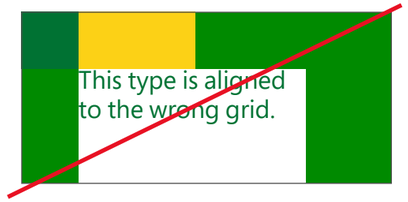
Don't create lockups of group names together with the Microsoft name, logo or logotype, either inside or outside a tile.



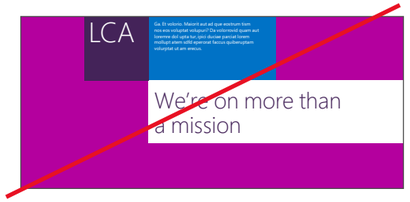
Cornerstone tiles are never black. Use provided artwork.



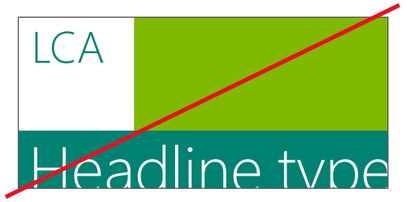
Don't create branded tile groupings or use the cornerstone tile to identify sub-groups within the organization.



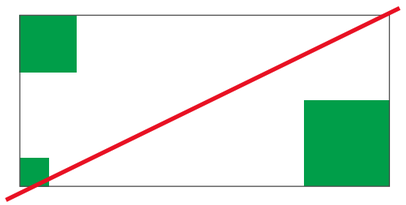
Don't align type to the tile grid. It should align to the interior margins.



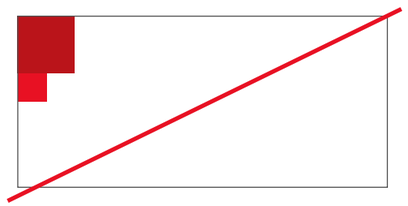
The cornerstone tile should always align to one of the four corners of the layout.



Cornerstone tiles are never white. Use provided artwork.



Don't use more than one cornerstone tile in a single layout.



Additional tiles should never be smaller than the cornerstone tile.



Don't use transparency with cornerstone tiles.

Photos that capture the real world we live in—authentic, optimistic, and brave



Use the Microsoft photo libraries

Approved lifestyle and product photography is available for use in Microsoft communication materials. Avoid purchasing stock photography whenever possible.

For more information on creating photography assets, please visit Brand Tools or Help center.



Avoid off-brand treatments

The following is a short list of what to avoid when producing Microsoft photography.

- Emotionless images
- Device-focused images that are not part of a bigger human story
- Clichéd scenarios or contrived settings
- Staged interactions
- Obvious posing
- Bland color
- Obvious post-production or Photoshop effects



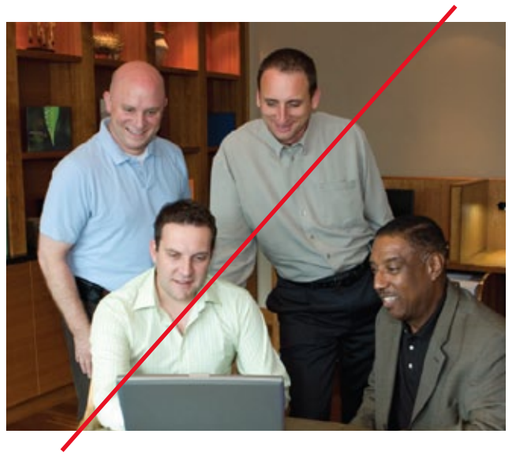
Avoid emotionless images.



Don't use photographs in which the models are obviously posing.



Avoid device-focused images that don't tell a human story.

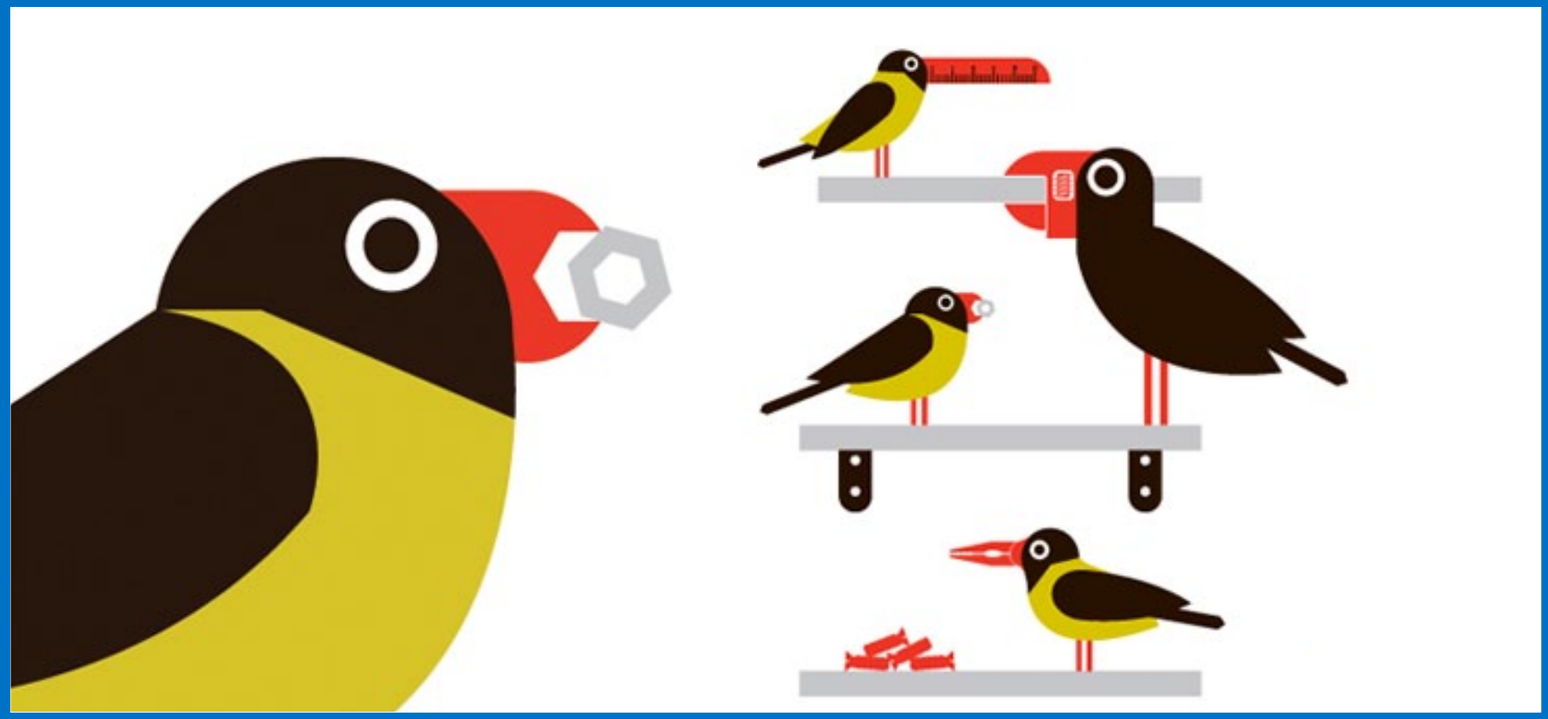


Avoid staged interactions and bland color.

Illustrate to communicate

Illustration is an engaging way to convey ideas and tell stories. It should always have a purpose and never be used as decoration.

Illustration can be an effective solution when photography isn't available or if you want to create an even more distinctive impression—but within the Microsoft visual identity family.









Sample illustrations by Robert Samuel Hanson www.robertsamuelhanson.com. Do not distribute or reproduce. Represented in the UK and North America by Eyecandy: info@eyecandy.co.uk

Use distinctive, ownable images unique to Microsoft

Illustration is an important element of the Microsoft visual system. As with photography, you should not purchase stock illustration.

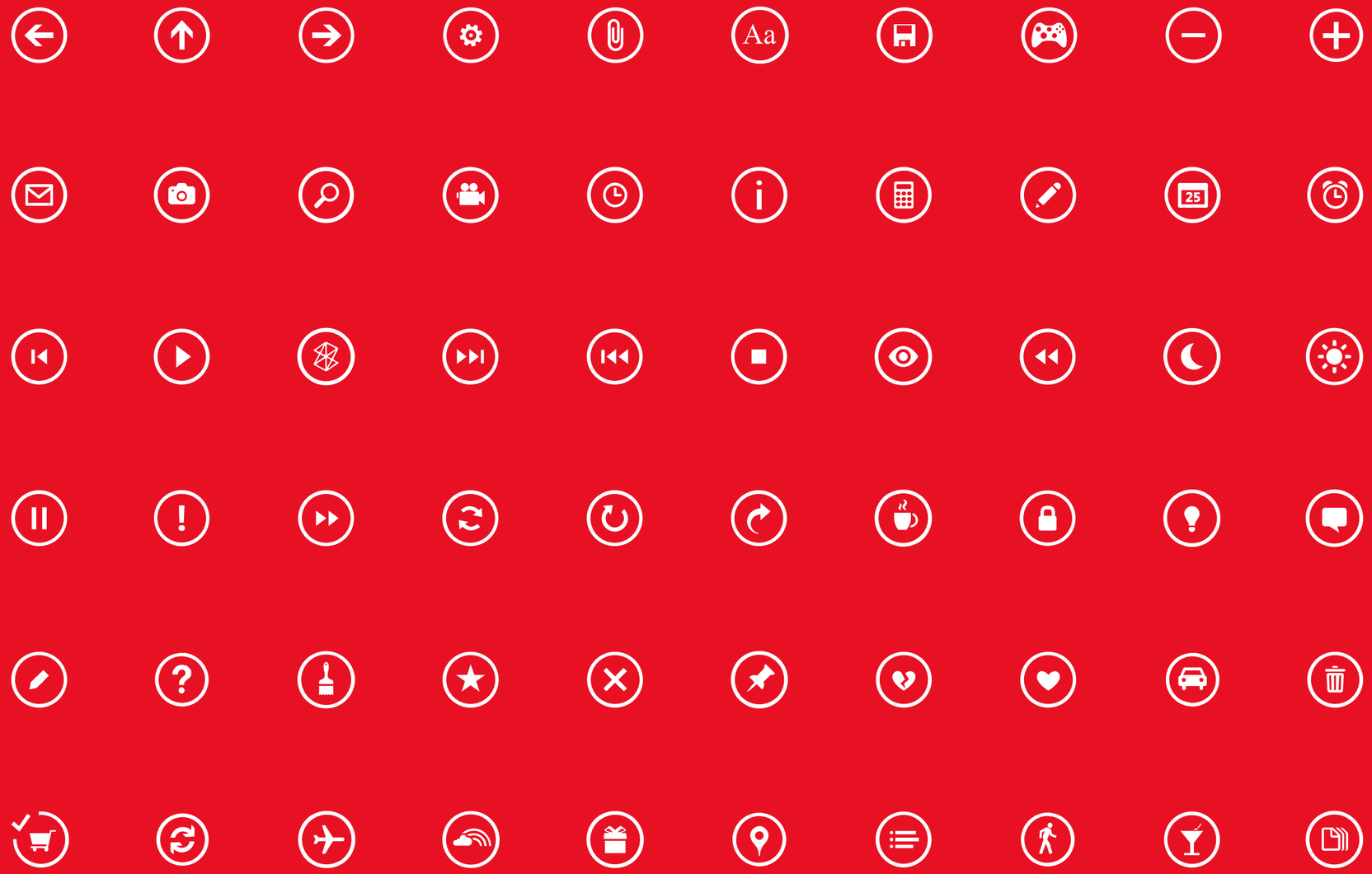
If you need to create illustrations for your communication, please visit Help center.

- Illustrations tell stories and convey ideas.
- They are simple and made up of geometric shapes.
- Use flat colors from the Microsoft palette.
- Use illustration when photography won't work.
- Illustrations should be witty but not cartoonish.
- They are vector-based artwork.
- Never use illustration as decoration.

Icons inform

Icons are functional and used as a call-to-action in product and marketing. If an icon for a certain action exists, don't use or create another icon with the same meaning. Please visit Help center for any questions.

Go to Brand Tools to get the icons.



Use icons to convey information, not for decoration

Icons are primarily used in onscreen scenarios where they are actionable. They should be used rarely in print and marketing communication.

Microsoft has many icons and icon libraries. Do not create a new icon if one already exists.

Please visit Help center for additional information or visit BrandTools.

- Use icons where there is a clear function or where words won’t work.
- Icons should only appear in white or black. They may be placed within tiles or separately.
- Icons should never be used decoratively.
- Stay true to the medium. Don’t try to make an icon look realistic.
- Don’t use an icon to represent a complex message.
- Don’t use an icon if the message can be communicated in another way.
- Don’t overuse icons.

Putting it all together

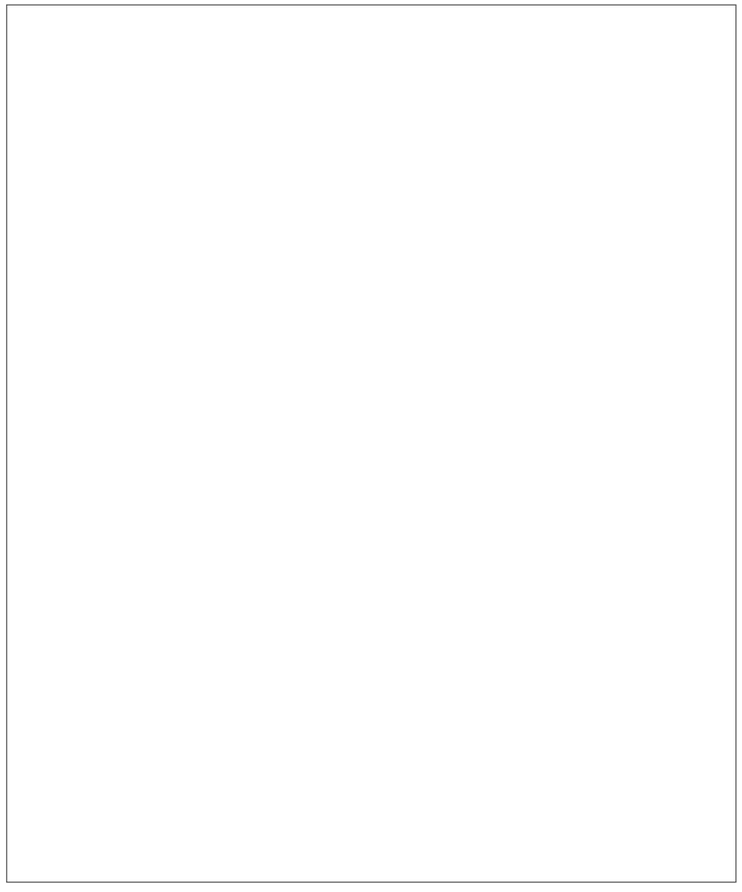
Our brand elements come together to tell stunning stories that celebrate and delight people across the planet.

Step 1: Determine whether your layout will have a border

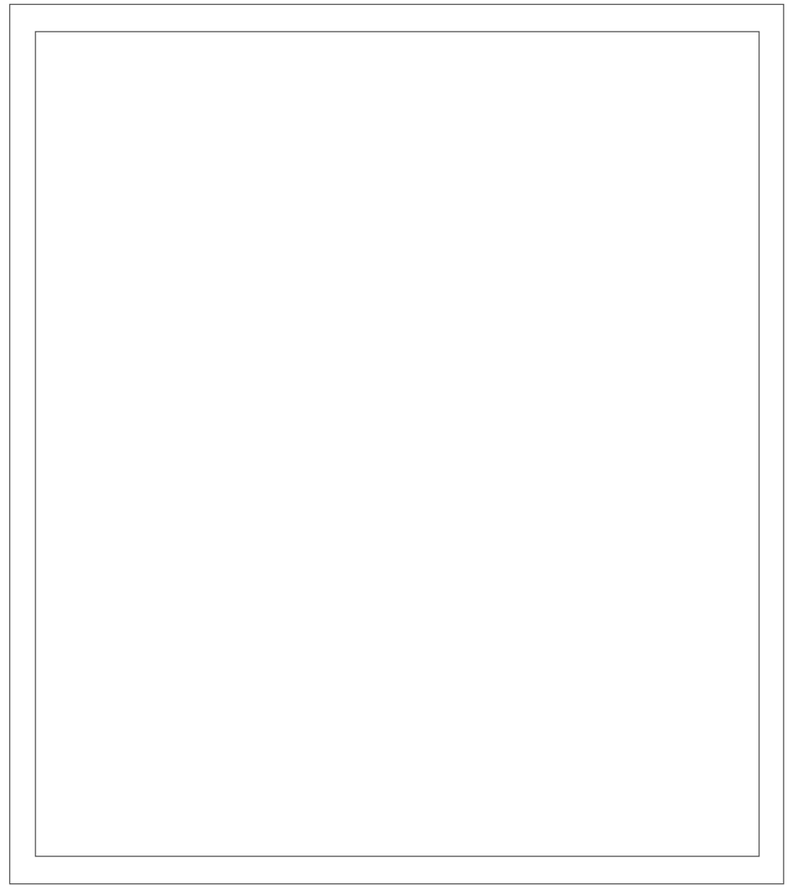
Your layout may “bleed” to the edges of the working area, or you may add a border which can later be filled with color or imagery. The size of the border is flexible, but it must have an equal thickness on all sides. In some cases the “live area” will determine what the border needs to be so you do not lose important content because of projection or print limitations.

Once a grid has been established, the same grid needs to be used through the entire mutli-page document or layout.

Layout without border



Layout with border

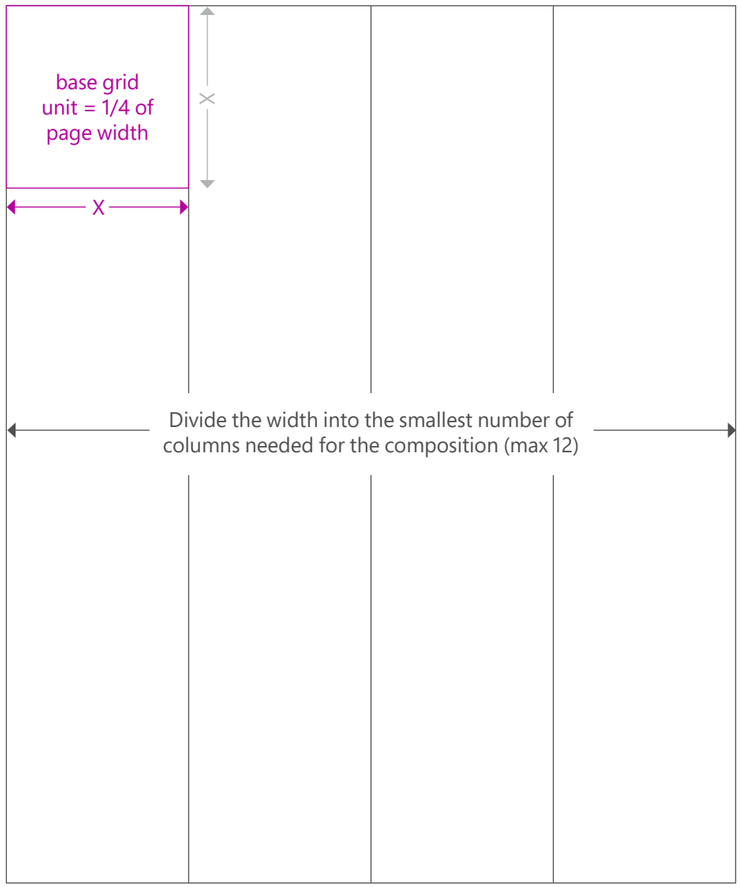


Step 2: Define your columns or rows and the base grid unit

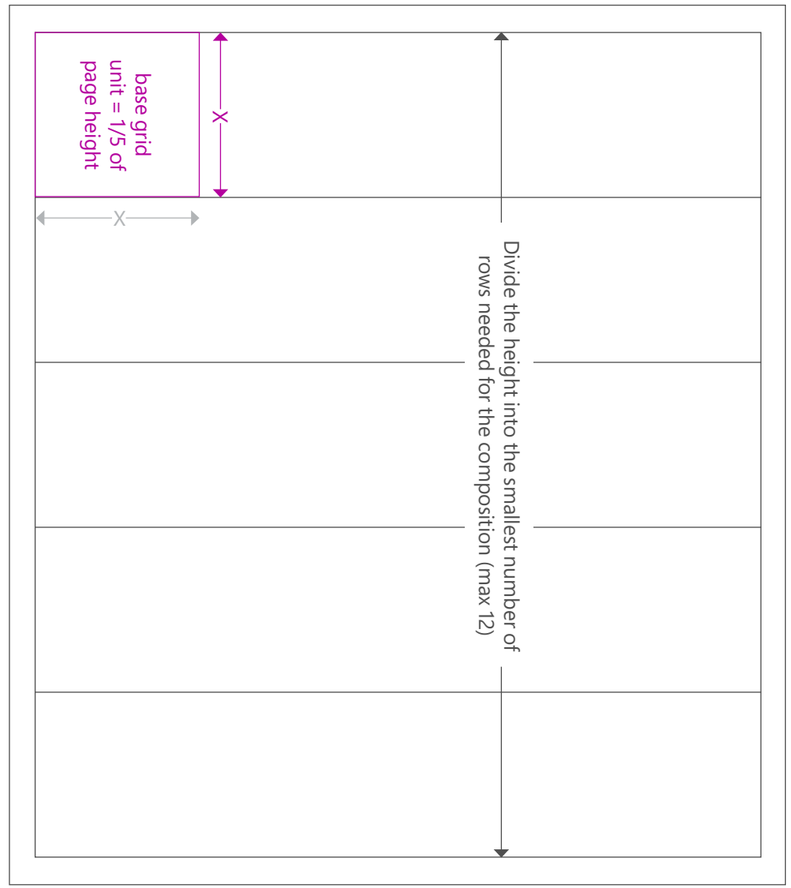
Choose the width or height of your layout (usually the larger of the two, but not always) as your defining dimension. Divide that dimension into the minimum number of columns or rows needed for the composition (maximum of 13).

Use this dimension (“X” in the diagrams at right) to create a square in one corner of your layout. This is the base grid unit from which you will derive the rest of your grid elements.

Grid with a horizontal defining dimension



Grid with a vertical defining dimension

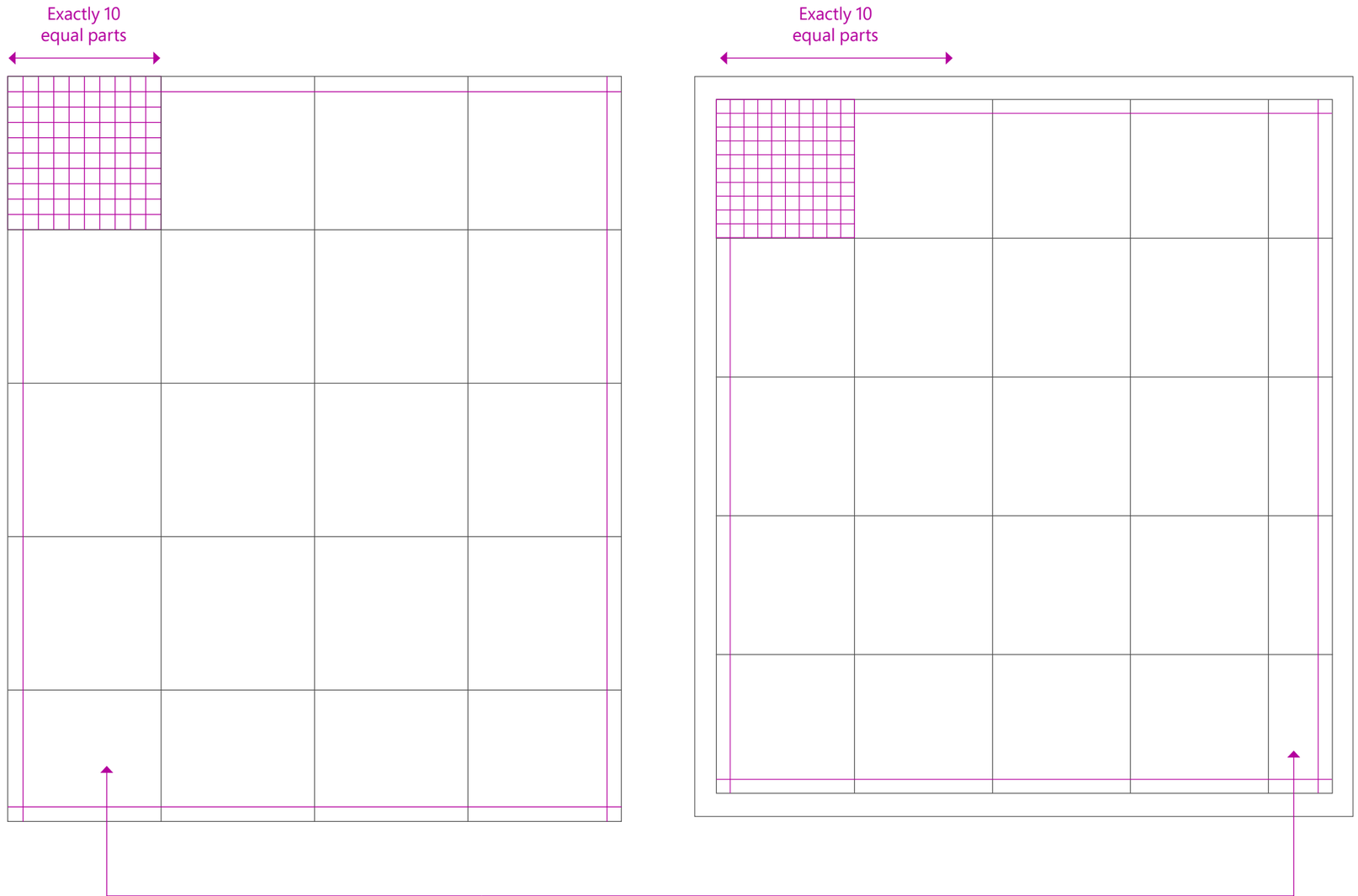


Step 3: Finish the base grid and establish margins

Fill in the rest of the base grid (shown here in blue lines) using the unit established in step 2. If you began by establishing columns, this means drawing the rows. If you started with rows, this means drawing the columns.

Next, divide the base grid unit into exactly 10 equal parts in both directions. Use one or two of these units as the exterior margin for your document. If your layout will include a cornerstone tile, use one grid unit as your margin to ensure proper alignment.

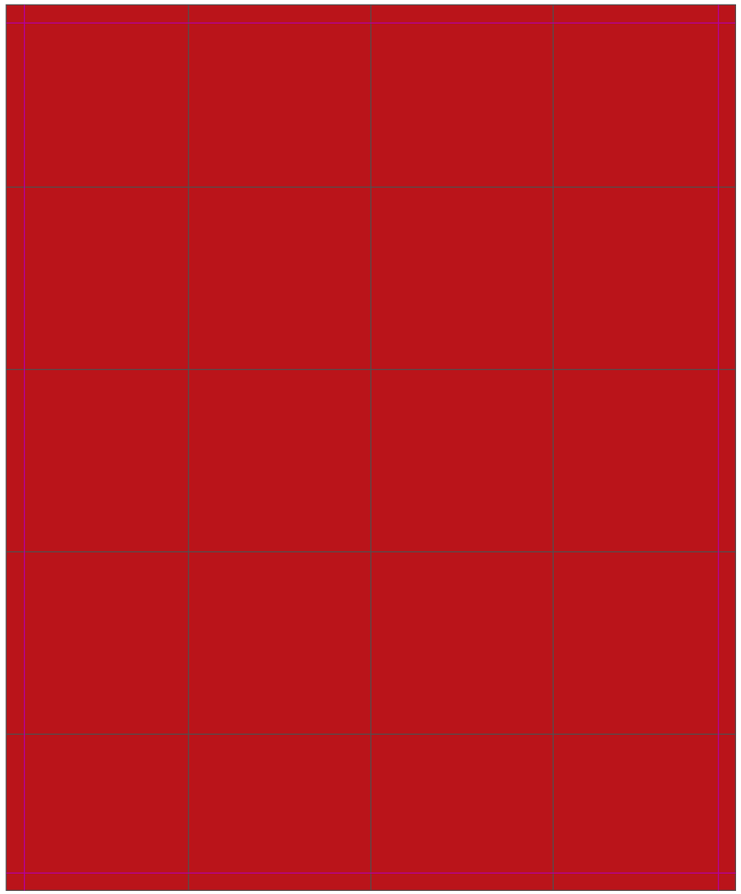
Use this same measurement as the interior margin between your rows and columns. If your design includes an outer border, then this margin is an additional space inside that border.



Note:
When you create an equal margin on all sides of your layout, it's acceptable if the margin guide doesn't align perfectly with the grid along one edge.

Step 4: Add a background photo or color

Backgrounds may be left blank or filled with color or imagery.





Step 5: Add the logo (and the cornerstone tile for internal communications)

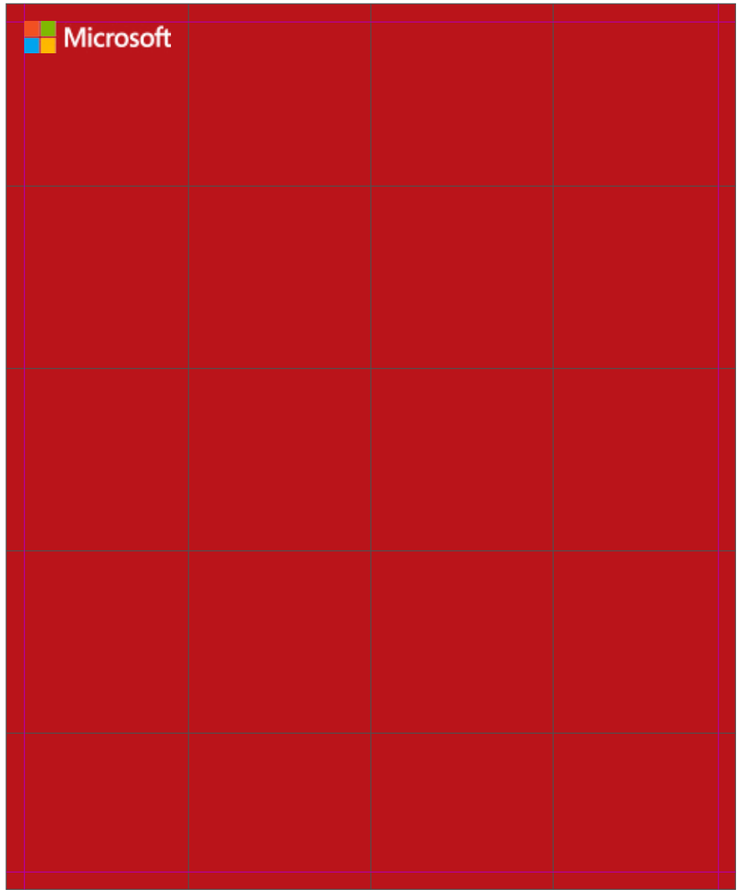
The logo is generally placed in one corner of the layout. Regardless of where it's placed on the page, it should be left-aligned within the text grid.

If your communication will contain a cornerstone tile, it may be placed in any corner of the layout. Whichever corner you select will become the singular point from which all other layout elements emanate.

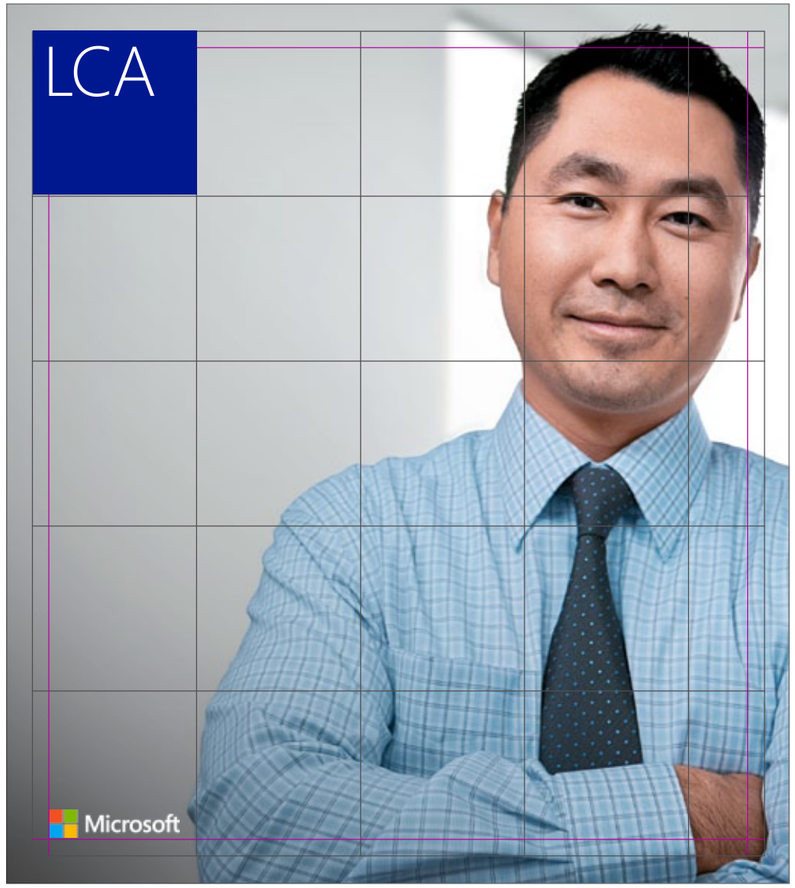
The cornerstone tile occupies exactly one full unit of the base grid (shown here as blue lines).

If there is an outer border around your layout, the cornerstone tile aligns inside the border.

External communication



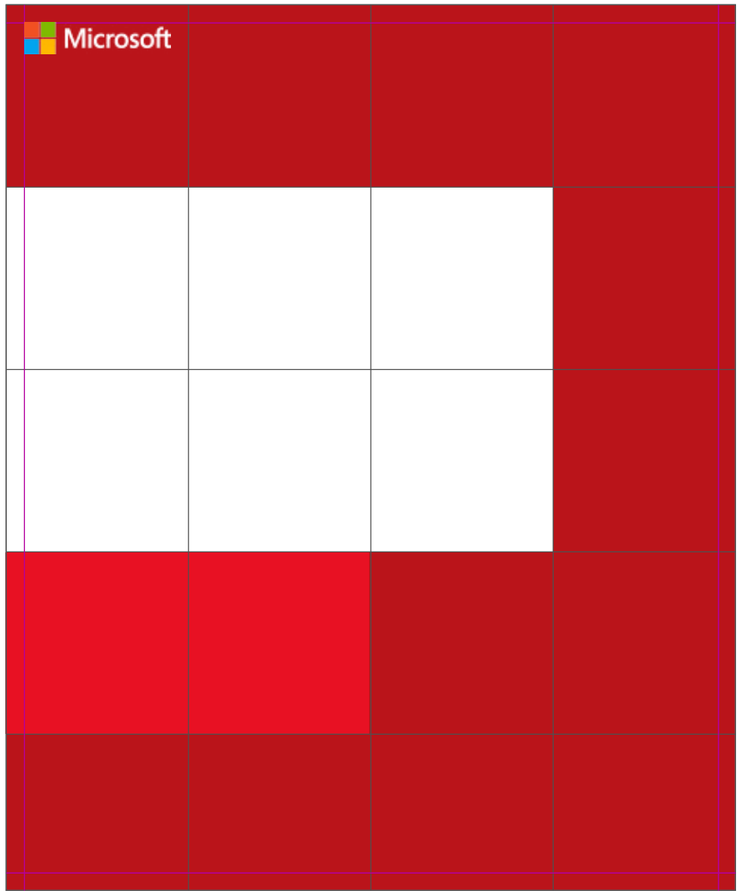
Internal communication, including cornerstone tile



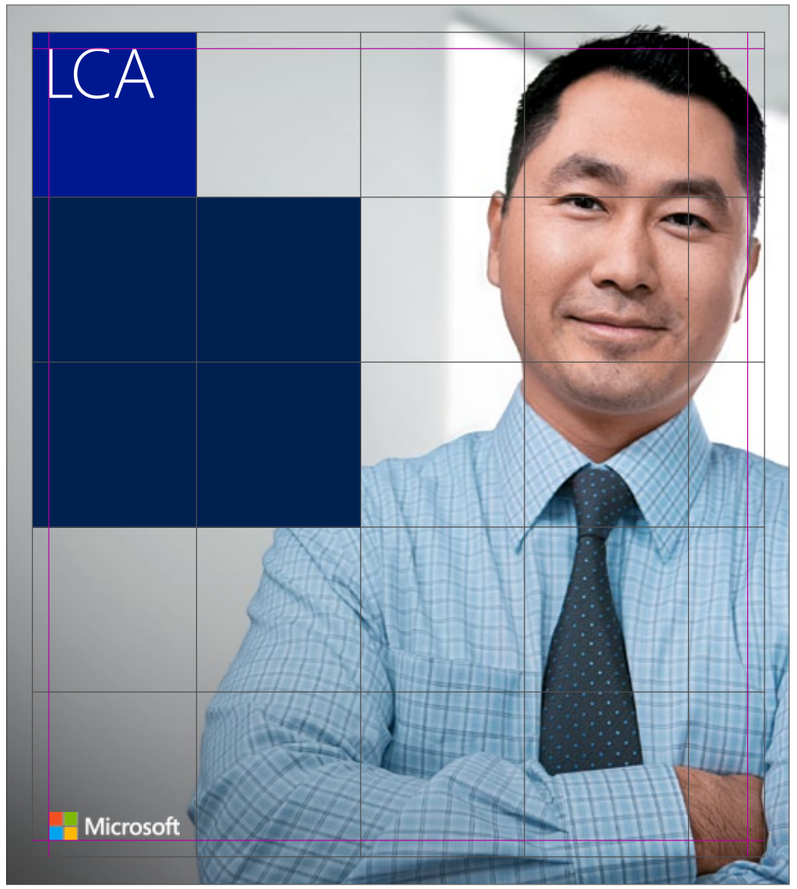
Step 6: Add content tiles

Content tiles align to the document grid (blue lines) and may be any whole number of grid units in size. The first one must be adjacent to the cornerstone tile. Additional tiles are added adjacent to one another.

External communication



Internal communication, including cornerstone tile

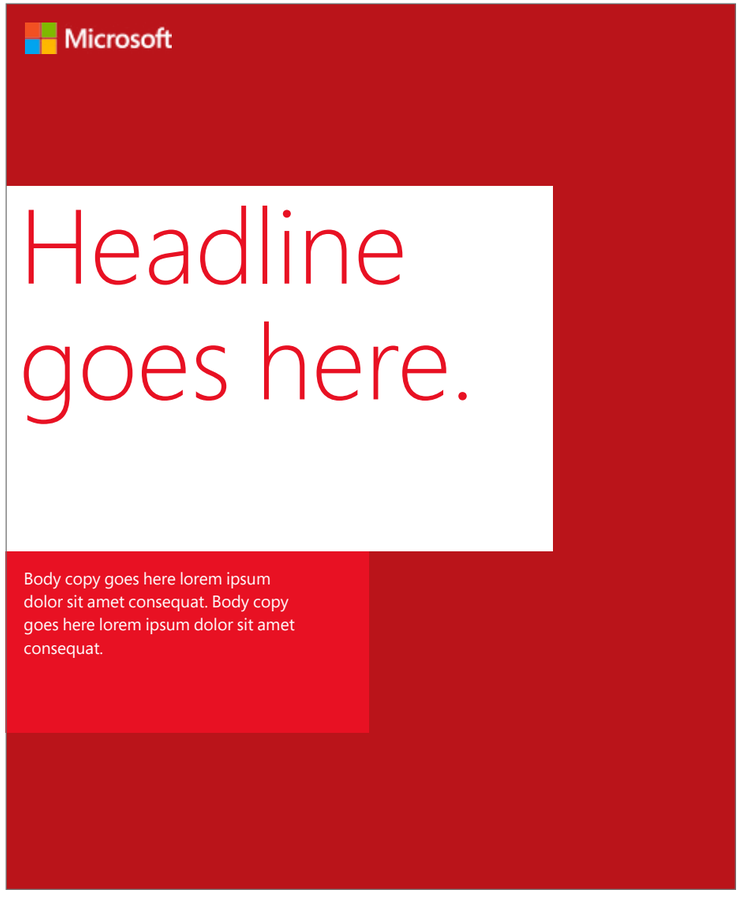


Step 7: Add headlines and text

Align blocks of text to the interior margins that you established when building the grid (shown here in magenta). Text blocks may span multiple columns and rows, but they should always align in the upper-left corner of established margin lines.

Remember to limit the number of type sizes to three whenever possible, and keep type flush left.

External communication



Internal communication, including cornerstone tile



Tips for type and hierarchy

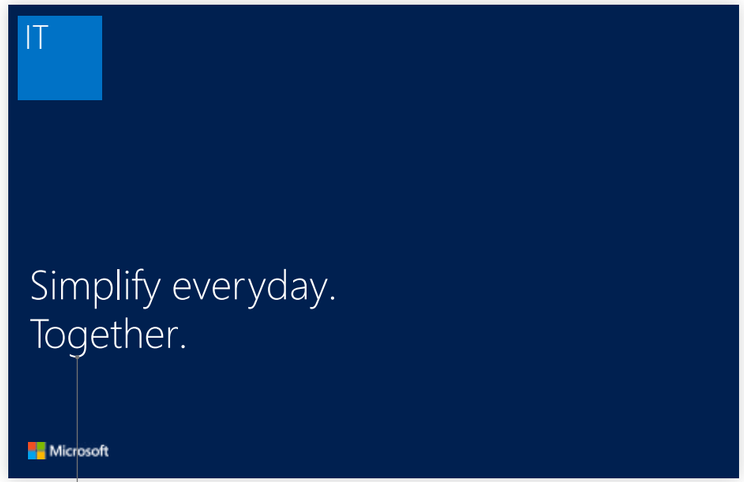
There are three primary categories of messaging that we use in the layouts in addition to the group name:

1. Headlines
2. Subheads
3. Copy

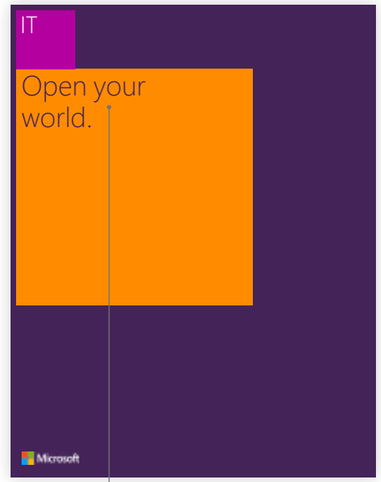
When the cornerstone tile is the same height as a second color field, the subhead should be the same type size as the logo or group name.

When two or more categories of messaging are used, there should be a clear type size hierarchy.

Cornerstone tile + headline or subhead



Headline

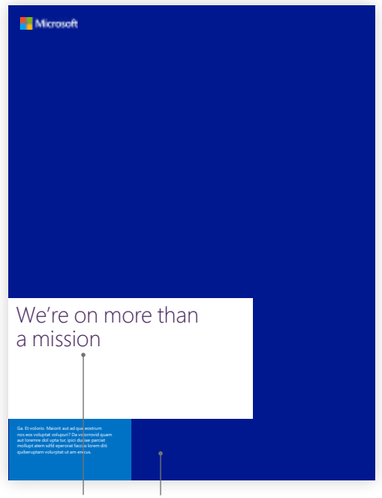


Headline



Subhead

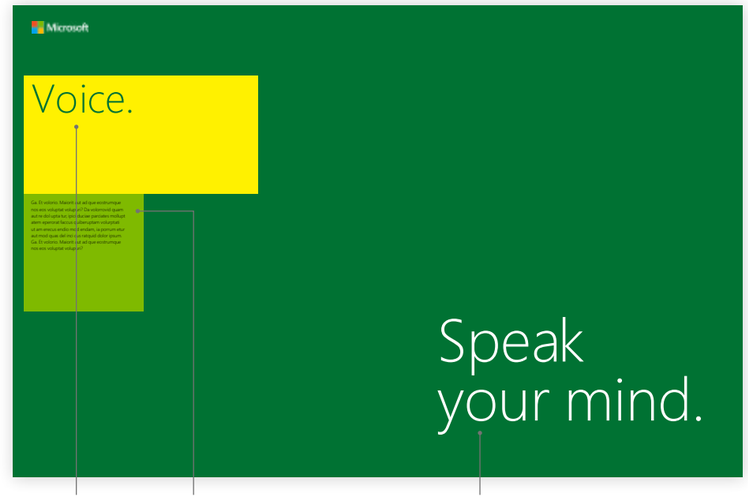
Tiles + headline + body copy



Headline Copy



Headline Copy



Subhead Copy Headline

Showcase: some examples of what's possible with our visual identity system.

What we want people to think:

It's fresh

It's simple and easy

It's helpful

It's beautiful—I want it

It feels like Microsoft

Internal PowerPoint



External web page

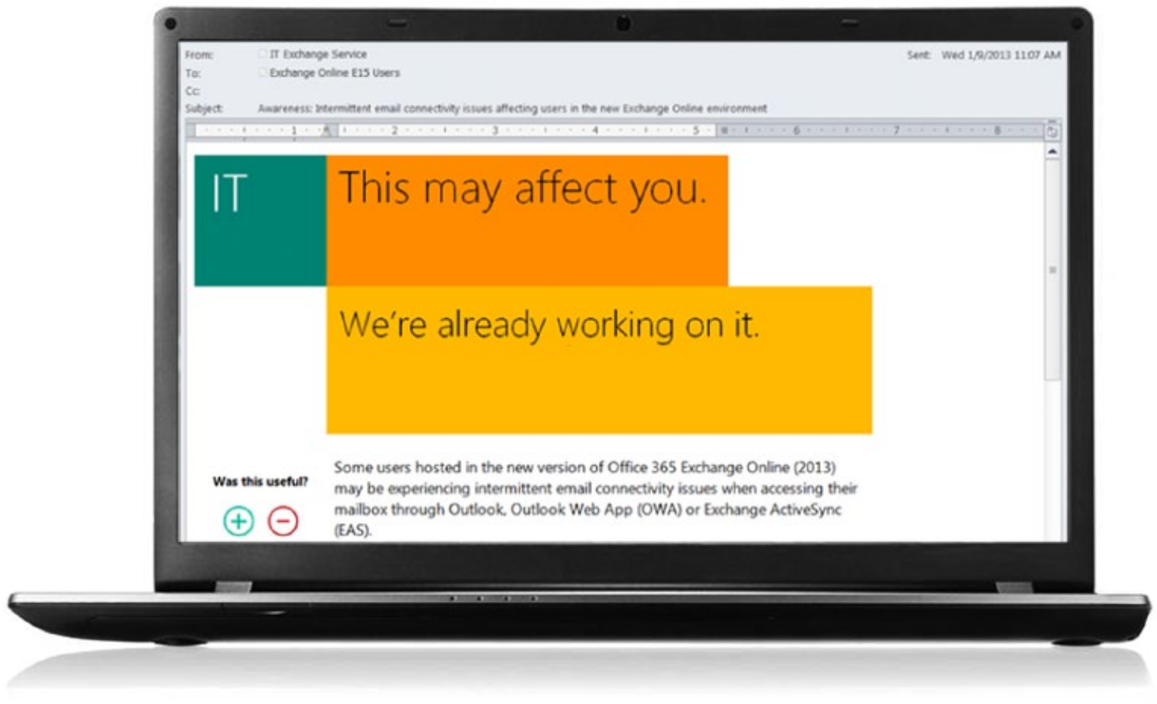


Internal email banner

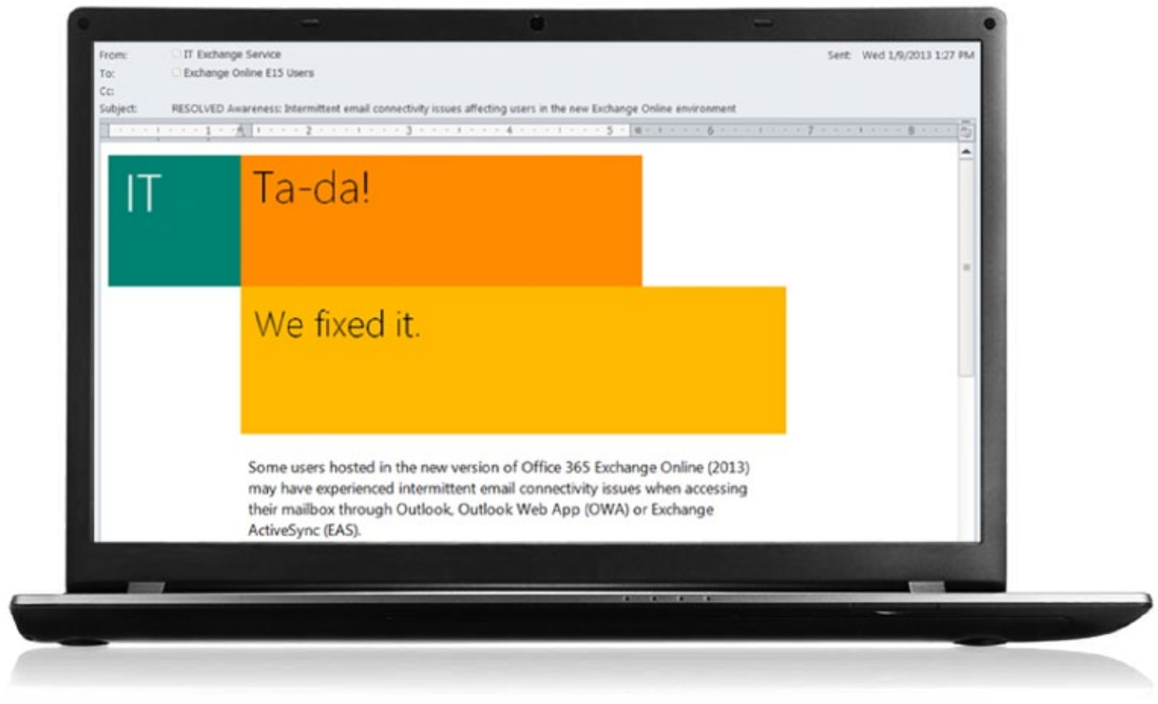


Internal email communication

11:07 am



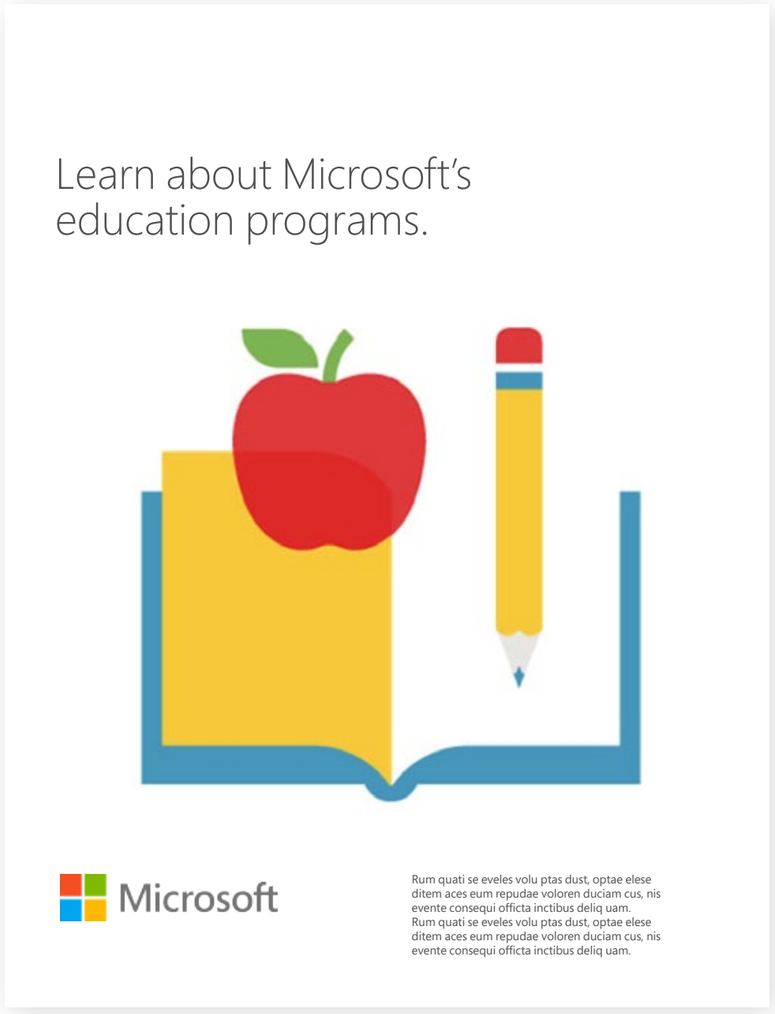
1:27 pm



Our visual identity works together with our voice to create communications that are both friendly and powerful.

Posters


Microsoft
We move forward together.
Rum quati se eveles volu ptas dust, optae elese ditem aces eum repudae voloren duciam cus, nis evente consequi officta inctibus deliq uam.


Learn about Microsoft's education programs.
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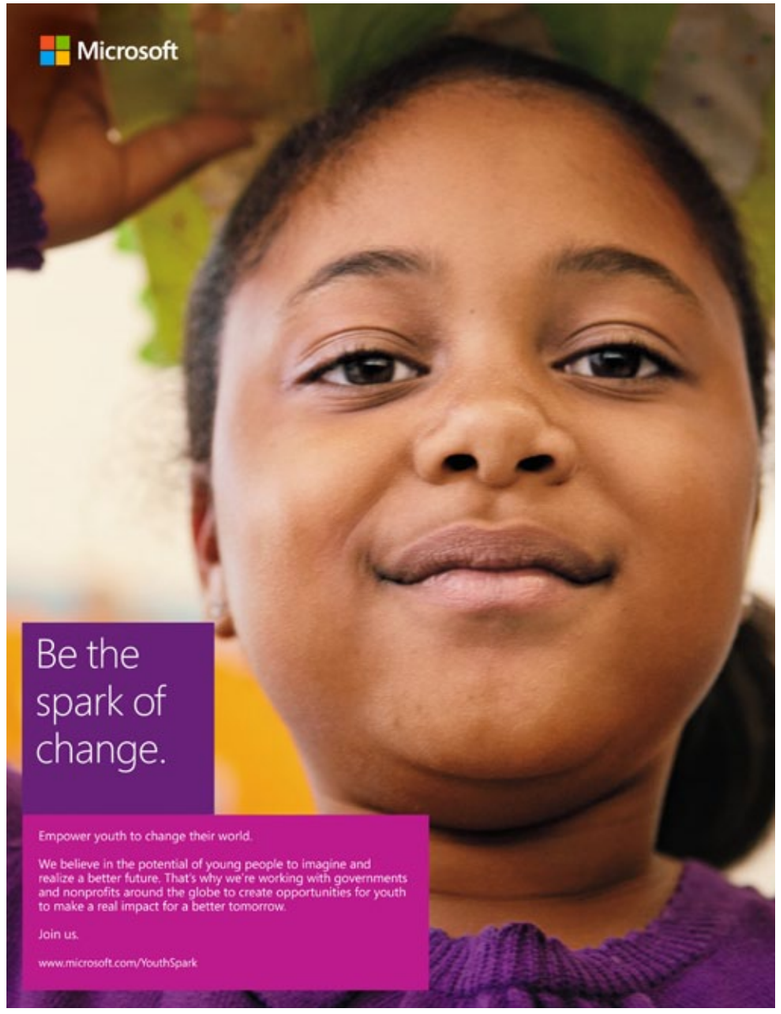
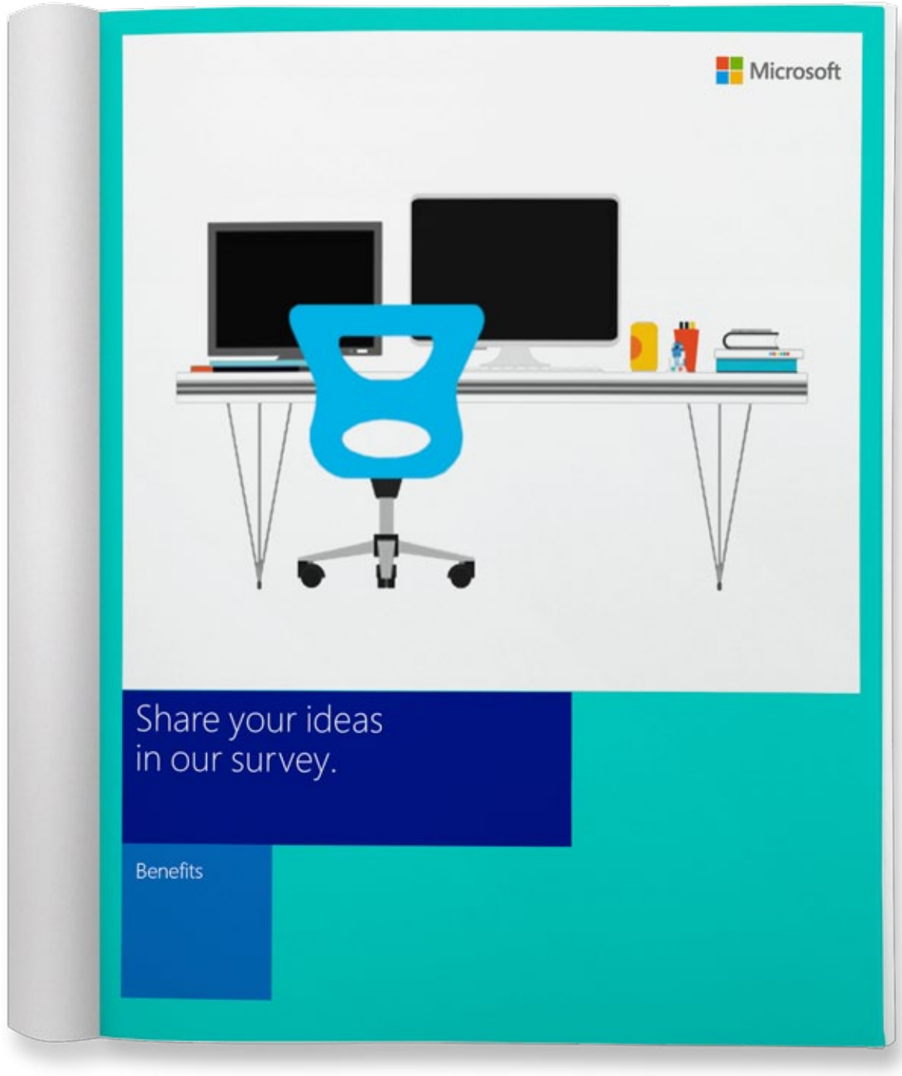
Rum quati se eveles volu ptas dust, optae elese ditem aces eum repudae voloren duciam cus, nis evente consequi officta inctibus deliq uam. Rum quati se eveles volu ptas dust, optae elese ditem aces eum repudae voloren duciam cus, nis evente consequi officta inctibus deliq uam.


Microsoft
Be the spark of change.
Empower youth to change their world.
We believe in the potential of young people to imagine and realize a better future. That's why we're working with governments and nonprofits around the globe to create opportunities for youth to make a real impact for a better tomorrow.
Join us.
www.microsoft.com/YouthSpark

Print ads



External communication



Internal communication

Print ad


Your stuff.
In the cloud.
If you plan to buy five or more software licenses, Microsoft offers price advantages for volume purchasing. Discover how Microsoft Volume Licensing can help your organization realize its goals and read what customers and analysts have to say.
Microsoft

External brochure



Report covers










Visual Studio
Not for resale
Office
Home & Business 2013
Office 365
Home Premium
Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, Outlook
Plus:
Use on mobile devices
Skype world minutes
SkyDrive +20 GB storage
Version upgrades included
Product Key inside • No disc
Non-commercial use
Office:mac 2011
HOME & BUSINESS
Product Key inside • No disc
Windows 8 Pro
Windows 8 Pro Pack
Windows 8
Upgrade
Windows Server 2012
Standard
Streets & Trips 2013
with GPS Locator
PowerPoint 2013
Made Simple

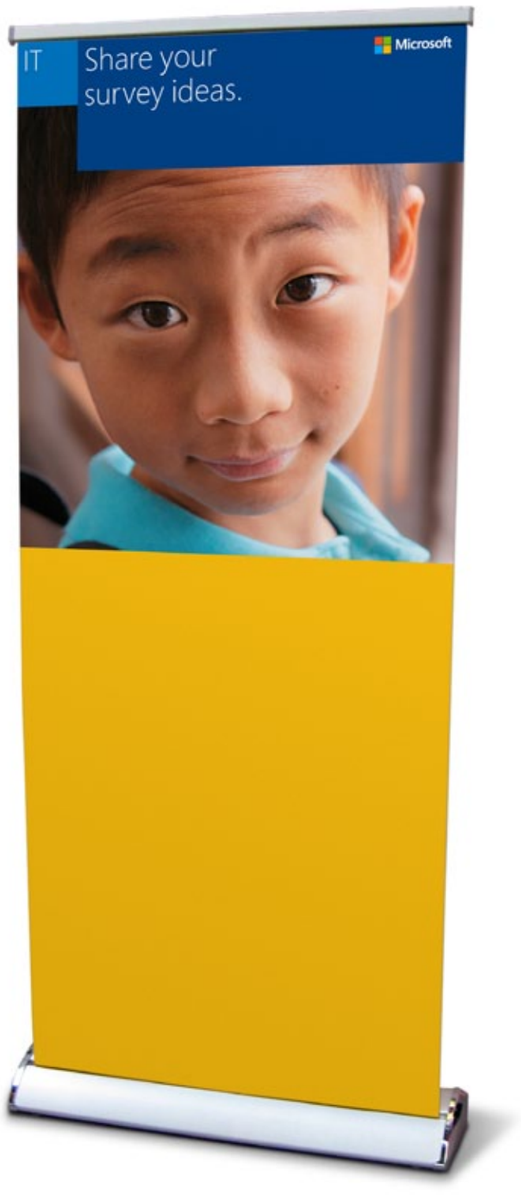
Billboard


Microsoft
Make every minute count by getting more done every day—whether you're in the office, at home, or on the go. With technology that helps you simplify tasks, connect with others, and make smarter decisions, you can get more done in less time.
Your business is our business.
microsoft.com/business
EXIT

External banner



Vertical event banners



Internal Event Banner



External Event Banner

Signage





Signage

Apparel



Embroidered t-shirt



Embroidered bag



Silkscreened t-shirt



Hat



Knit cap



Athletic cap

Promotional items

If you are creating promotional items or giveaways, please contact Promotional Product Requests.



Umbrellas



Silkscreened pens



Cable organizers



Cable adapter



Carabiner



Key Chain



Embossed leather folio



Etched aluminum sign



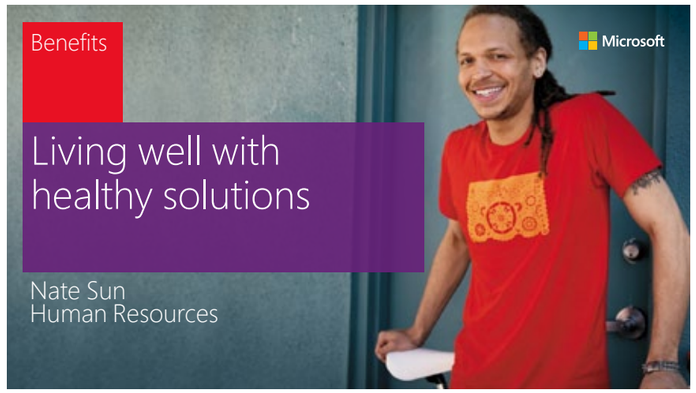
Etched glass award



Flashlight

Templates

Please visit Brand Tools to view and download templates.



Powerpoint presentation (internal)



Powerpoint presentation (external)



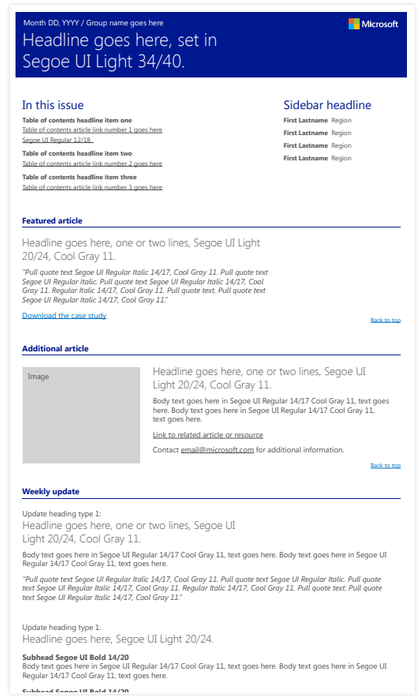
Email signature



Datasheet



Whitepaper



Newsletter

Design matters

If you've just read these guidelines, you have our appreciation. It means you share our belief in details and quality. We know applying these principles takes time and effort, but the stories we tell in all our Microsoft communications will be stronger for it.

Brand Tools has additional resources and guidance on the entire Microsoft brand. If you ever have additional questions about our visual identity and its application in design, don't hesitate to contact Help Center.

https://brandtools.microsoft.com

Microsoft

Back to Contents

Thank you

Microsoft confidential.