Graphic Design for Non-Profit Organizations
This guide is divided into two parts. "Basic Guidelines" discusses use of graphic components available to the designer. "Two Prototypic Organizations" illustrates how these guidelines can be applied to a broad range of communications by two very different non-profit organizations.

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The publication of this volume was prompted by a seminar on communication and design for non-profit institutions which was organized by the AIDA in 1979. At that time, it became apparent that a great amount of effort and talent had been applied to the design programs of a broad spectrum of institutions, but that an even greater amount of waste resulted from a lack of design coordination and consistency. I suggested that the AIDA publish a manual to help these institutions improve the efficiency and economy of the process of communication.

The main purpose of this manual is not to generate sameness or fade, but to provide tools to develop individual programs that fit individual situations. It is also intended to support the efforts of designers dealing with management to illustrate the necessity of investing in a coordinated graphic design program.

I am grateful to the Design Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts for their support of this project from its inception; to Caroline Nightewer, Executive Director of the AIDA, for her continuous efforts to publish this guide; and especially to Peter Laundy, whose insightful collaboration has made it possible for this project to come to fruition.

Massimo Vignelli

Basic Guidelines

An organization's image is extremely important. It is the sum of the impressions made on the public in a variety of ways. An art gallery, for example, will be judged on such elements as the quality of its collection, the care with which shows are hung and catalogues are presented, the character of the exhibition spaces and overall physical environment, and the demeanor of the museum staff. Of course, the collection is all-important and everything else is secondary, but the other elements add up to a whole, rather than remain isolated and just as opportunities to communicate an appropriate image, as well as an organization's impression of efficiency and care.

Printed communications are supporting items that are relatively easy to upgrade. They are necessary ongoing costs that might as easily be done well or poorly, and are relatively important as primary contacts with the public.

Consistency and appropriateness are two yardsticks by which communications should be judged.

Consistency has many advantages, the primary one being a strong visual identity. By appearing "in uniform," an organization's printed matter instantly becomes part of a team that stands out from the crowd. Newsletter, brochures, letterhead, envelope, letter, and newsletter each reinforce and add to the impact of each other. They add up to a whole, rather than remaining isolated and lost as opportunities to communicate an appropriate image, as well as an organization's impression of efficiency and care.

Consistency also avoids unnecessary customizing; certain attributes of all communications are established. They need not be rethought for every communication, and time and money are saved. A designer, working within guidelines established to maintain consistency, is free to focus on the most important part of design making each communication right for its task. This search for what the communication should be is a search for appropriateness, the second yardstick by which communications should be judged.

The combination of a search for both consistency and appropriateness results in a meaningful diversity of printed items. Without consistency, meaningless changes camouflage those that are purposeful. Just as a writer should not change the style or pattern of the Times, so, too, the designer should not arbitrarily change such things as typeface, type size, color, changes or spatial organization, the spacing in order to be consistent with the needs of each communication. Consistency avoids arbitrary changes, allowing the meaningful cues to stand out in clear relief.

The first part of this guide discusses the means available to achieve consistency. The second part gives examples of consistent graphic standards as appropriately applied to a variety of items for two prototypic organizations.
Shown below are format sizes suggested for use in printed communications. This wide range of possibilities can meet every need. All can be printed with minimal paper waste on the American standard 8½ x 11” sheet. Most fit standard 9” x 12” and #10 business envelopes. The exceptions are indicated below with an asterisk (*).

Always consult a printer as early as possible when deciding on a format to be sure he has the press and can acquire the paper to print it economically. Since paper deliveries are often slow, allow your printer as much time as possible to order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8½ x 11</td>
<td>8½ x 11*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5½ x 8½</td>
<td>5½ x 8½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8½ x 11*</td>
<td>8½ x 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 x 17</td>
<td>11 x 17*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weight is an important factor in the design of a piece to be mailed. Have a paper supplier or printer make up a blank “dummy” to the exact size and number of pages contemplated, to make sure it isn’t too heavy.

European paper sizes are entirely different from the American ones. With the United States conversion to the metric system, these sizes may become increasingly available.
The grid is the most important tool that can be used by the layout designer. It is an invisible structure that provides a disciplined and consistent look while increasing production efficiency and maintaining the flexibility needed to solve a wide range of layout problems.

Shown below is the same grid applied to every suggested format. Its basic unit is the 2 x 2 square subdivided into three modular units. The square and the 3/4 x 3/4, respectively, of 2 x 2 square are 5/16 and 1/4 inch, respectively, of 8 x 11 x 11 sheet. The repetition of the module for both font sizes is the same as for the grid beneath it. The grid allows photographs shot with either of these popular cameras to be reproduced at a variety of scales without cropping. This guide and the prototype layouts it contains were based on this grid. Other grids would also be effective. We have selected this system to demonstrate why they are useful.

A grid achieves a disciplined look with a minimum of restrictions. Nevertheless, the designer will, at times, feel constrained by the grid. Occasional, unusual layout problems will be difficult to handle and the designer must do his best. The more talented he is, the better he will succeed.

If on a particular occasion, however, the grid seems in some way inappropriate, the designer should be encouraged to articulate the problems and modify the grid. For example, the grid below would not work well for a 11 x 11 sheet to be 3-hole punched; since a large margin on the punched side of this page would be desirable.

Considerable efficiencies are realized with the use of a predetermined grid. The designer is not facing a blank page; some decisions have already been made for him. Text can be set, for example, only in three possible widths: one, two, or three 2 x 2 module columns. Moreover, at least two grids can be used; one already been established. Not only is design time saved, but typing errors are simplified, both of which increase efficiency.
The selection of a typeface to be used whenever typewriting is involved is another tool to achieve visual consistency. All the typefaces shown below have established themselves as classics through years of use. They are available in roman and italic in at least two weights, regular and bold, and are commonly available throughout the country in photo and hot metal type. Some are also available in transfer type.

The selection of one typeface, in addition to providing visual consistency, affords considerable economy. Designers need not spend time deciding which typeface to use and typewriting jobs can be gathered and set on one machine without change of font.

If typewriting is too expensive in general or for one specific project, typeface type can be effectively eliminated. The quality of typewriter type varies enormously. An example of a high-quality face is IBM Selectric Elements Large Elite 72. Where photo reproduction is involved, as in all publishing, the importance of an even, sharp line is increased. Copy should, therefore, be produced on an electric typewriter. Reduced 25%, it becomes separable in size to normal text type and achieves a more "typeset" appearance.

Typewriters now coming on the market with computerized editing capabilities may prove economical for such applications. Also, different weights of typeface type may become available on type halls, eliminating one of its disadvantages.

Unlike the other, more traditional typefaces shown below, Helvetica is a "sans serif" typeface; it does not have thin finishing lines, called serifs, at the ends of letterstrakes. Sans serif typefaces are appropriate for technical texts or for organizations that want a contemporary look.

The typefaces shown are only a portion of those that could sensibly be used. They are the most commonly available, however, and represent every category of typeface that has been proven appropriate for both text and display (headings, titles, etc.). Should a typeface other than one shown here be chosen, it is highly recommended that it be a face that has stood the test of time. A recently drawn face may date quickly and should, therefore, be avoided.
A grid organises columns of type through the alignments of left and right edges. "Justified" typography is, therefore, not recommended. For most applications, a ragged right setting is best because it has the advantage of uniformity of line length. Shorter lines are not lengthened by increasing the point size. Justified settings can be used to achieve a more tightly packed appearance, often appropriate for newspapers, newsletters and magazines, although erratic word-spacing results.

Typography is closely allied to the fine arts, always reflected the taste or feeling of their of the early Italian types has perhaps never and the like is true of the Renaissance which they were based — and of many other art in that same wonderful time. Note, too, the French manuscripts and types.

In spite of the increasing interest in the history and the attention paid in many quarters to famous typographers, a knowledge of the rank and file of printers is still greatly average printer of to-day, type is type, printing it is all about alike, and he concerns hims

Because of the importance of an aligned appearance along column edges, paragraphs can be indicated by a. If a text consists of many short paragraphs evenspacing above the main room, paragraphs can be indicated by an indentation without skipping a line. The disadvantage is that the consistent indentation point takes away from the perceived crispness of the left edge of a column of type. There is no need to skip space before the quotation aligns with the column edge.

A common way to treat quotations is to "hang" the opening quote out into the gutter so that the first letter of the quotation aligns with the column edge. This is a clear signal that tends to reinforce the quote as a quotation.

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Typed highlighted with a typographer's “bullet” (as dots) or embossed can also be handled as the oriness of the column edge is maintained. Bullet can be “outlined” and numbers or letters can be either outlined or placed in the line above the entry.

As with quotations, the use of one clear signal, rather than two or more, is recommended. So, for example, make a subheading bold (one signal), not bold, linespacing, and a different size (three signals). If one signal does the job, there’s no need to use more and the risk of adding clutter is minimised.

Letterspacing will appear excessive if text type of normal letterspacing is enlarged to display sizes. As type increases in size, space between letter must be decreased to maintain the appearance of normal letterspacing.

Light linespacing is recommended so that stripped lines can be used to make directly visible groupings. If linespacing is excessive, stripped lines will not stand out as clearly. Display type should be set without leading.

To be safe, one should limit to two the number of type weights used. In fact, in many situations, more than two are difficult for the eye to distinguish. This is especially true for light type printed on a dark background, and both typesetters and printers can further confuse the issue by heavying or lightening a given type weight through exposure or the amount of ink run on press. Make sure the two weights chosen are dramatically different from each other.

The use of a maximum of three distinctly different typefaces on a communication is a good rule of thumb. Besides making the typesetter's job easier, it displays decisive and clearly drawn priorities, reflecting well on the organization and making the task of reading easier.

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Renaissance In spite of the increasing interest in the history and the attention paid in many quarters to famous typographers, a knowledge of the rank and file of printers is still greatly average printer of to-day, type is type, print it is all about alike.
An organisation's name is its most important and most ubiquitous identification element; necessary on practically all communications. One can take advantage of the opportunity to increase the name's identity by always presenting it in the same typeface. Such a consistently created name is called a logotype.

The most common formula for the creation of a logotype is to custom-design the component letters, hoping to create a unique and compelling word-form. This customisation can be expensive and dangerous - expensive because logotypes require a lot of design and execution time, and dangerous because the temptation to simplify can lead to mannered, difficult-to-read logotypes.

A less expensive and safer solution is to choose an existing typeface, such as those shown on pages 12-13. The classic nature of the typefaces ensures that a logotype will have connotations appropriate to a cultural institution, and their availability in text and display sizes allows greater consistency with supporting typography than is possible with a custom-designed logotype.

If you decide you need a custom-designed logotype, hire a reputable design firm which will report to the person who has final authority to accept or reject. Instruct the firm to explain why the symbol is of practical value and to show you how it would be applied to various communications.

Symbols are different from logotypes in that they do not spell out the organisation's name. They are abstract and generally more compact than logotypes. If well known, they are good communicators because of the bold impact possible with compactness.

Symbols, however, because they are abstract are much harder than logotypes for the public to learn. They are also more difficult to design than logotypes and, therefore, often more expensive. If an organisation uses both logotype and symbol, less exposure for each results. Should you decide to use one, however, heed the advice given in relation to logotype design: hire professionals, make them justify their recommendations and show examples of the implementation of the logotype.

Logotypes and crests are generally different from symbols in that they are not more detailed. They have an inherent historical quality and are, therefore, very appropriate for many non-profit organisations. If your organisation has a seal or crest, it can be used effectively in many situations, especially on pieces such as devices and awards, where a sense of ceremony is appropriate. Think twice before deciding to modernise a seal or crest through eliminating scroll or sharpening edges, as its character may be diminished in the process.

Color can help to build a visual identity. A color, for example, can be specified for use with a logotype, increasing the consistency of the logotype's appearance. An organisation with an easily associated color (i.e., a botanical garden with green) should strongly consider this option.

Another possibility is the use of color to code a set of communications. Within a university department, for example, a specific color for forms, signage, brochures, etc., could be established. Layout of many departments' communications could be standardised, with color providing the necessary departmental distinctiveness. Consistency is maintained without the loss of sensible and helpful differentiation.

Horizontal lines (called rules) can also help to build a visual identity. When used in a consistent way, rules become part of a distinctive and organised-looking visual style that also happens to be very functional. Type and images grouped into horizontal bands of information separated by rules is a simple and effective format strategy. When used with large amounts of text, heavy rules can add a contrasting boldness that helps alleviate the bland textures of a page of unrelieved type.
Two Prototypic Organizations

City Historical Society
No seal or symbol had established itself over the years as standing for the Historical Society and it was decided that a new symbol was not advisable. It would take money to be designed and a period of time before it became recognized without the accompanying "City Historical Society." Instead, a typeface (Century Bold) and a consistent arrangement (stacked, flush left) on a square field were chosen to compose the logotype. The square field was suggested by the highly visible on-site plaques used by the Historical Society to designate important buildings and other landmarks. The typeface, Century Bold, an American face designed in 1894, had the appropriate national and historical connotations. A rich, dark red was chosen as the Historical Society color, warm, relatively bright, and appropriately reminiscent of brick, it will be used as the logotype color to enhance association with the Society. The combination of typeface, color, stacked arrangement, and surrounding text identifies the society without incurring the expense of line-drawn letterforms.

State Central University has a seal that dates from its origin which can be used whenever desired. Especially appropriate on official documents, such as diplomas, awards and legal contracts, it can also be used on communications where a sense of history is appropriate. The combination of the historical seal with a logotype set in the modern sans serif face, Helvetica Black, accurately reflects the dual nature of the University; a reservoir of history and culture, as well as a contemporary experimental research center.

Horizontal lines (rules) are useful elements that can be used to divide a form, provide emphasis, and create a graphic style. The Helvetica Black "State Central University" always appears within a band, adding to the distinctiveness of the logotype and relating to the format below. It is divided, often by thin horizontal lines, into horizontal picture and information bands.

A university is a complex organisation with many divisions, many of which need separate identification. Where desirable, a department or division name can be linked with the university logotype, as shown below. The logotype thereby retains its autonomy through its unique position within the band, yet can be easily combined with more specific division identification.
Business cards, letterheads, envelopes, and other stationery items should look as much alike as possible to increase their combined impact. Layouts should be devised so that they will work on many different items with minimal changes, as demonstrated here.

"City Historical Society" is dropped out of a red square with all other type appearing in gray 9-point Century expanded to differentiate it from and make it subordinate to the typewritten message. Bolded typewriter type could also have been used.

All type (including the typewritten message) conforms to the grid. The typewriter appearance on wide left margin are consistent with the style governed by the use of the grid and have some practical advantages. The typist's job is simplified with the elimination of indentations. The wide margin is handy for jotting notes and the limited line length for typing improves legibility; long lines of single-spaced typewriter type are difficult to read.

Layouts of State Central University's stationery items are similar to those of City Historical Society, but color is used differently. On the business card, letterhead and envelope, the bold top hand is printed in gray with the seal (on the letterhead) and all 9-point Helvetica type in the school color, blue. The understated use of blue gives a dignified, reserved appearance and clearly differentiates these pieces from bright, color-coded internal stationery items.

The infirmary memorandum, for example, is printed in one color, a bright "red cross" red. Color coding should be used only on internal communications to facilitate handling. External communications would use blue whenever possible to build recognition of the school color. Be careful about choosing light colors, especially light blue, as many copy machines cannot reproduce the
The Historical Society Calendar of Events and its Newsletter fold down to 5½ x 11" and are self-mailers. The unfolded 11" x 11" square format is distinctive and relates to the square logo type. All text type is reduced typewriter type and all display type in Century Old.

If desirable, the Calendar can be redesigned to be inserted into the Newsletter and mailed with it.

State Central University produces a monthly Calendar of Events that is enclosed in its Newsletter, as well as distributed separately to University bulletin boards. The layout most clearly differentiates the days of the week, appropriate since academic schedules vary significantly from day to day but not from week to week.

In the Newsletter, horizontal bands of white space one-grid unit high run above articles and serve as titling bands. Headlines are set in only two clearly different type sizes.
The City Historical Society announcement folds at the top rather than the side. Not only does the horizontal photo fit better in the horizontal format, but the fold at the top reinforces the impression that this is an announcement, not a small brochure. It fits perfectly into the standard Historical Society business envelope.

Invitations often contain a number of separate pieces: an invitation, a form to be filled out and returned, and an envelope and enclosed return envelope. All items should be coordinated to create a distinctive package. Use ink and paper color, as well as layout, for this purpose.

In the example below, the invitation above, as well as the form to be returned, are all coordinated by their letter size, type size and layout. A picture found in a book of 1920-century printers marks serves as illustration. A public library is an inexpensive source of wonderful images created by skilled artists and craftsmen over many centuries.

The cover photograph of the Art Deco Building Tour program is printed "full-bleed." (If "bleeds off" all four edges of the page.) This is the most prominent way to display a photograph or illustration. Not only is it reproduced as large as possible, but it also has no surrounding border that competes for the eye's attention, especially one in a strongly contrasting color. Printing with a "bleed" requires that the piece be trimmed down to size after printing, since printing processes cannot print up to the edge of a sheet of paper.

Programs for a series of events can be printed at the beginning of the season with information that remains constant. The cover of the orchestra program notes is printed at the beginning of the season and program notes are printed, copied or mimeographed on the opposite side of the sheet before each concert. The expense of printing the cover is incurred only once per season, at a relatively low cost, since printing is more economical in larger quantities.
Flexible poster formats can be devised to handle a variety of needs. Shown below are two, vertical, one-color posters for the Historical Society. One poster uses a photograph, the other a typographic design. Silhouetted photographs or photograms of objects shot on a white background are effective. They present objects in a straightforward manner, eliminating potentially distracting backgrounds.

Also shown is a less vertical, two-color approach that could be used in a poster series that always has illustrative material. The logotype and image frame could be pre-printed in large quantities in red. Type and image specific to each event could be printed in black on the desired number of posters. Two-color posters are thereby printed at a cost not significantly greater than one-color posters.

Black is used as a background on the craft poster, providing a more dramatic effect than obtainable with white, but with the same advantage of eliminating background distractions. It is more difficult to print than the poster above it, however, because greater and more even ink coverage is required.

Type can be used illustratively, as shown in the Bach poster, where the decorative qualities of the German black letter typeface are displayed in a large scale.

Recruitment posters, shown on the right, follow a strict organization into which both illustrations and photographs can be plugged. The sun images were found in a book.

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American Furniture
From the Huntington Collection

Join us on
Saturday,
July 3 from
2:30 to
4:30 p.m. for
our
Annual House
Tour.

It will begin
and end at the
Historical
Society
Building, 1625
Main St.

The price is
$2 for members
and $5 for
non-members.

Reservations
can be made by
calling 255-1433.

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Traditional Japanese Crafts

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Summer Language Institute
June 16—August 8

Engineering at State Central
Colonial Silver
The Work of Early American Silversmiths

State Central University

State Central University is committed to the education of students, not in isolation, but in a situation that permits them to take themselves seriously: above all, as persons.

Mary Patterson
Dean of the Undergraduate College
A series of brochures can be given a strong identity through the use of similar cover layouts. Here, the consistent placement and size of type and logotype over full-page images achieve a strong identity.

Six-panel brochures are economical and useful. Their overall size, 8" x 11", is the most standard printing size in the country.

The three brochure covers below demonstrate that diversity can be achieved without the loss of identity. Type with photograph, type with the University seal, and type used alone provide strong individual brochures, identities, while consistent use of the band, of the format, and of type style and size provides ample identity for the University.

The table of contents is printed on the cover of the Parking Regulations, saving space and increasing access to the information inside.
Type and image areas are separated to avoid the difficulties that often arise when attempting to print type over image. The square image area relates to the square logotype. The area surrounding the image is printed in black and white. Image material is to be isolated from the main text or emphasized with a prominent headline in the first column. Inside spreads are also organized into horizontal bands of information. The cover layout of Alumni Monthly also separates text and image. At the top is the University identification band, followed by a masthead band and featured article band. The cover can be printed in one, two or four colors, depending on the image material and the importance of the issue. The variability makes each issue more distinctive, so that the date need not be so prominently displayed as on the Historical Society's publication.
As with other communications, book covers can be composed of type alone or with photographs or illustrations. If a cover is needed for an exhibit, it makes sense to make them as related as possible, as shown here in the Colonial Silver catalogue.

Spreads should be laid out as simply as possible. Avoid clutter; it’s better to show the more important things well than to try to cram everything in. The block-on-white/white-on-black treatment of the bicycle book is a simple way to add to a spread’s impact.

A series of catalogues represented by the “Undergraduate Life” and “Social Sciences” covers have an increased dose of identity. The combination of photography, identical format division, and identical typographic treatment establishes them as components of a series — reinforcing their identifyingness as coming from State Central. This furthers the impression of organization and efficiency on an important audience: potential students and their families.

The cover of the “Crafts” catalogue, while not identical to the exhibition poster, repeats an important component, the square black image area, creating an elegant oversized 11” x 17” format.

Traditional Japanese Crafts
This sign offers the opportunity to present the logotype in the same elegant and durable materials used for other Society plaques. It clearly establishes the link between the plaques and the square logotype used on printed communications.

Individual freestanding letters can also be fabricated for outdoor signs. When made a perceivable thickness, as shown below, they become threedimensional objects, not merely flat letters applied on a surface. This often enhances a sign’s character and sense of permanence.

Negative photostats slipped into clear plexiglas holders provide a relatively inexpensive and changeable method of room identification. If photostats are unavailable, pres type applied to paper of any color can be substituted.

As on the exhibition signs for the Historical Society, directly applied die-cut vinyl, silkscreened or presstype letters can be used for indoor signs. A 3/4" capital letter height is a clearly legible, yet discreet typesize for such signs.

City Historical Society

Building Preservation Dept.
B. Thompson

State C

213 3/4"
Captions are also set in Century Bold. Applied directly to the wall, die-cut vinyl adhesive, silkscreened or press-type letters provide the cleanest, simplest looking solution. Directly applied borders, captions lose their "objectness" as they would if they appeared on plaques, reducing the clutter of perceived pieces on the wall by one part, and subconsciously suggesting to the viewer that he look at the object itself, captions second. When objects are displayed behind glass, letters can be applied to the glass case. With eyes focused on the object, the viewer is not distracted by the caption. Focused on the caption (which is on a different focal plane), he can easily read the caption no matter what is behind it.

Establish a standard typewriter for captions, especially if using die-cut or press-type letters. One set of dies can be prepared, or a single size of press type can be purchased, that can be used for all exhibitions.

These plaques are the most important and visible Society communications. They were the basis for the design of the inspecting Century Bold on a square field. Plaques, then, should be square and contain Century Bold type. In addition, they should be made of durable and elegant material such as bronze that, over many years, will add distinction to both the landmark it identifies and the Historical Society it represents.

Established international traffic symbol signs, recognized throughout the world can be used. Avoid spelled-out phrases such as "Parking," as they take much larger sign to be reproduced at the same scale as the international traffic sign counterpart (in this case, a "P" on a size). Look at U.S. Department of Transportation document "Symbol Signs - P" (DOT-DT-60-94) for further information about officially recognized symbols.

Photostats slipped into clear plastic holders can be used for each changeable indoor signs. Again, horizontal bands separate categories of information. Signs, or contact the AGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts) for reproduction proofs.

Horizontal information bands are useful when used on campus signposts. A map, coordinated with such signposts, would be a help to visitors.

Rembrandt Peale (1778-1860) Portrait of Jane White Galaher Circa 1825 Oil on Canvas 20 x 24 inches

Benson House

Benson House

State Central University

Music Administration

Library Humanities

Dormitories Visual Arts

Natural Sciences Social Sciences

Main Hall

Natural Science Building

4 Faculty Offices
Auditorium
Biology Labs

3 Library
Dean's Office
Chemistry Lab

2 Physics Lecture Hall
Classrooms

1 Mathematics Dept.
Planetarium