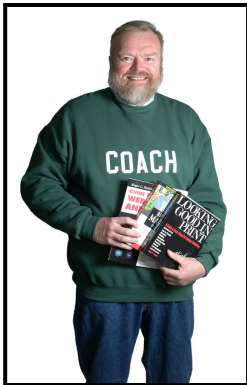


Roger C. Parker's Design to Sell

Using design as a strategic marketing tool Issue 36

Make Design Your Marketing Partner

Everyday documents deserve as much attention as fancy ads, brochures, and newsletters



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Your reputation is on the line every time you communicate with your market. Clients and prospects begin to judge you and your message before they even start reading!

Within a second, irreversible “accept” or “reject” decisions are made solely on the basis of your publication’s appearance.

If your designs don’t *pre-sell the importance of your message*, or if your design projects a *hard-to-read image*, your message is likely to go unread. Here are some tips to help you easily produce “everyday” publications that will simultaneously *sell the importance of your words*.

Headlines

Headlines play a major role in determining the success of your publication. If your headlines do not attract your reader’s attention, or are hard to read, the rest of your message is likely to be ignored...and the your effort creating and distributing your message has been wasted!

Tips

- *Typeface.* Use a sans serif typeface like Arial, Helvetica, or Frutiger, or Gill Sans. When available, choose the *black* or *heavy* options, which are considerably darker than the bold version.

- *Case.* Avoid setting headlines entirely in upper case characters. Headlines set in upper-case are harder to read than headlines set in both upper and lower case.

- *White space.* Draw attention to headlines by framing them with white space.

- *Line breaks.* Use line breaks (created by holding down the Shift key while pressing the Enter key) to equalize line lengths and break lines at logical points.

Subheads

Use subheads to maintain reader momentum. Add a short, keyword, subhead each time a new topic is introduced.

Avoid full sentences and two-line subheads. Limit subheads to short *keywords*. Format them using a smaller version of the same typeface used for headlines.

Never underline subheads. Instead, emphasize them by adding extra space above them, or set them in a second color.

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Body copy

Use a serif typeface, like Times New Roman, Century, Minion, Stone Serif, or Palatino. The serifs

Prospects judge your

competence by your

marketing

guide your reader’s eyes from character to character.

Line length. Avoid long lines of type extending from margin to margin. Shorter lines are easier to read.

Line spacing. In general, default, (or automatic), line spacing is too narrow. Adding extra line spacing, or *leading*, makes your lines much easier to read.

Widows and orphans. Avoid sentences, and sentence fragments, isolated at the top or bottom of columns or pages. Paragraphs should contain at least two lines.

Watch out for *overset text*. When there are more words than can fit in the last text frame, the text is cut off. Often, only a tiny icon indicates missing text!

Page numbers

Always number your pages. Page numbers help readers track their progress through your publication. Numbers also help those who print your publications to