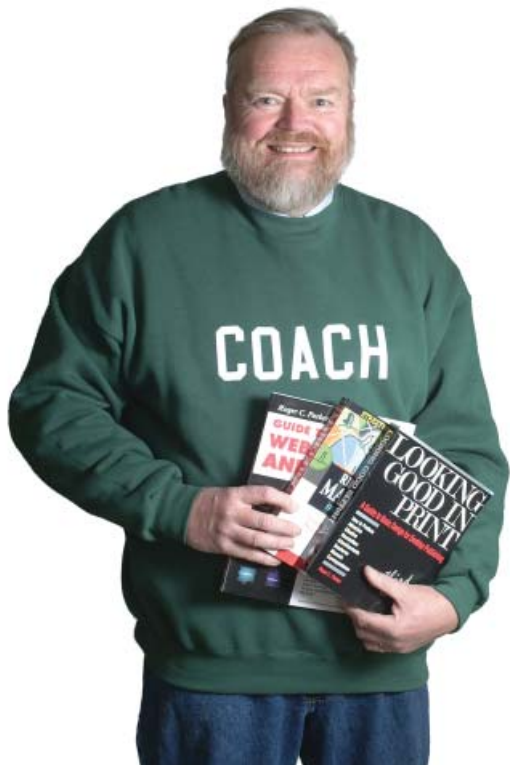


ROGER C. PARKER'S  
Author of Design to Sell

# White paper tips

7 important layout and design for writers



**Michael Stelzner interview**  
**February 13, 2008**

Roger C. Parker  
[www.designtosellonline.com](http://www.designtosellonline.com)

# Line length

## Layout

The layout, or placement of text and graphics on each page, of your white paper, plays a major role in its image and readability. Here are some layout tips that prepare the foundation for the success of your white paper.

### 1. Provide generous margins

White space along the top, bottom, and sides of each page helps create “open,” attractive pages. Generous margins project an inviting, easy-to-read image that invites readership.

Margins also provide space for reader to hold your white paper while reading it, without hiding any of the text or graphics.

The “default,” or “automatic,” margins created by most software programs when you open new documents are often too narrow. To address this problem, use your program’s “page setup,” or “document set-up,” commands to increase the margins, adding extra white space along the edges of each page.

### 2. Choose a 2-column layout

Long lines of type extending from the left-hand to the right-hand margins create white papers that project a dull, hard to read, image.

A better alternative is to base your white papers on a 2-column design. Use a narrow column to the left and a wider column to the right. This adds visual interest to each page and focuses your prospect’s eyes on the text to the right. A 2-column layout also reduces the line length of your body copy, so your readers’ eyes don’t have to make as many left-to-right “jumps” across each line of text.

Shorter lines also means that there will be less chance that readers will get lost making the transition from the end of one line to the beginning of the next. “Doubling” occurs when prospects inadvertently reread the same line.

Place graphics, short text elements, and quotations, in the narrow, left-hand column, as I’ve done in the publication you’re reading.

## Type

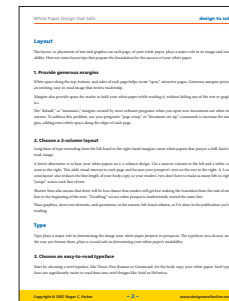
Type plays a major role in determining the image your white paper projects to prospects. The typefaces you choose, and the way you format them, plays a crucial role in determining your white paper’s readability.

### 3. Choose an easy-to-read typeface

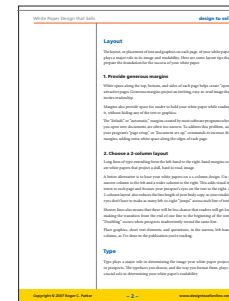
Start by choosing a serif typeface, like Times New Roman or Garamond, for the body copy your white paper. Serif typefaces are significantly easier to read than sans-serif designs like Arial or Helvetica.

## Margins and columns

The difference that a 2-column layout adds to white papers is shown by the illustrations below.



A single column of type extending the full width of each page, above, creates a boring, hard-to-read white paper.



This 2-column layout is more attractive, makes reading easier, and creates space for placing additional text or graphics.

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# Font choice

sage (sans serif)    sage (serif)

Arial    Some fonts are more readable than

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Times Roman    Some fonts are more readable than other

---

Minion    Some fonts are more readable than other

---

Utopia    Some fonts are more readable than

---

Bookman    Some fonts are more readable th

---

New Century Schoolbook    Some fonts are more readable than

# Type size

## 14 point

Avoid setting body copy type too large or too small. Either extreme slows readers down and can cause them to put your white paper down. Type set too large slows down readers because it interferes with their rhythmic, left-to-right, eye scans. Type set too small causes squinting and eye strain.

Begin by examining your software program's default, or automatic, "normal" or "body text" type size. Type is measured in points. There are about 72 points per inch. The default type size is often wrong for the line length you're using. Choose type size based on the typeface you're using and the column width (or line length).

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## 28 point

Avoid setting body copy type too large or too small. Either extreme slows readers down and can cause them to put your white paper down. Type set too large slows down readers because it

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# Line Spacing

## Automatic leading (20 pt)

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---

## Extra leading (24 pt)

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# Upper Case Type

## TYPOGRAPHY Typography

Town Turns

Town turns

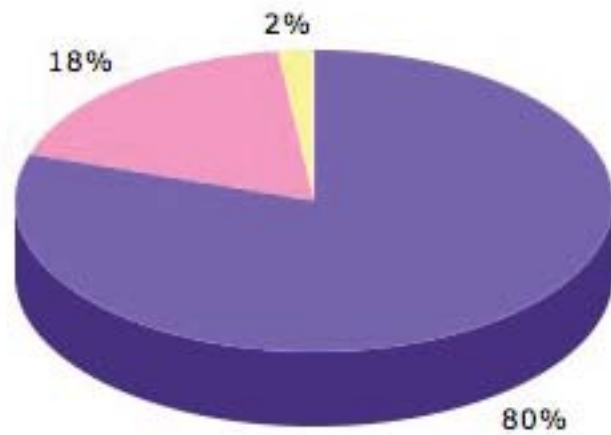
Out to Hear

out to hear

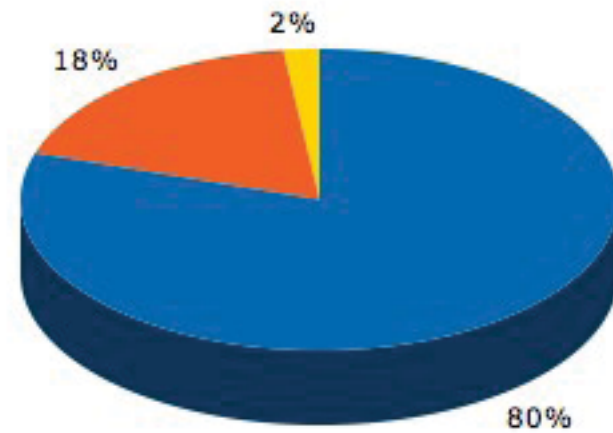
Major Speech

major speech

# Color



■ Orange Juice ■ Grapefruit ■ Prune



■ Orange Juice ■ Grapefruit ■ Prune

# Avoid Interruptions

Write Your Way to Success

Published & Profitable

## The power of commitment

...the moment one definitely commitments oneself, then providence moves, too. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings, and material assistance, which no man could have dreamt would have come his way.<sup>1</sup>

ute audio, video, and printed files around the world at virtually no cost. Equally important, the Internet makes it feasible for individuals to promote their book online to readers and reviewers around the world.

- **Digital print-on-demand.** Until recently, book publishing was limited by economies of scale. The cost of printing books rapidly declined as the number of books printed increased. Authors had to print thousands of copies before they sold their first copy. Now, however, books can be printed *as they are sold!* This eliminates the need for major up-front investment and the possibility of garages filled with unsold books.

## Getting started

The secret to becoming profitably published is to follow a system, or process, that breaks what should be done into a series of tasks, each of which—by itself—is easily accomplished.

### Step 1: Planning

Planning is crucial. Without careful planning, even the ideas and best-written books are unlikely to succeed. Planning involves answering questions like the following before you move forward.

**What are your goals and expectations?** Why are you interested in writing a book? How will your book contribute to your success?

**Is there a market for your book?** Who will buy it? Why should they buy it? What are the characteristics of your market?

**What's your book about?** What problems will your book help readers solve? What will set it apart from the competition?

**Which publishing alternative makes the most sense?** What are the pros and cons of the alternatives available? What's required?

**What can you expect from literary agents and publishers?** What do agents and publishers want from you? How do you locate and approach them?



<sup>1</sup> William Hutchison Murray's, *THE SCOTTISH HIMALAYAN EXPEDITION* As quoted in Sarah Susanka's *THE NOT SO BIG LIFE: MAKING ROOM FOR WHAT REALLY MATTERS*, 2007.

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ute audio, video, and printed files around the world at virtually no cost. Equally important, the Internet makes it feasible for individuals to promote their book online to readers and reviewers around the world.

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More books fail to achieve their goals because of a lack of planning than a lack of writing ability.

The biggest mistake first-time authors often make is to write a book before they have done the proper planning. Writing without planning is like driving from Atlanta to Los Angeles without a map. You may arrive at the right location, but—chances are—you won't!



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# Free Examples

ROGER C. PARKER'S  
**design to sell**

## White paper design that sells

16 EASY-TO-IMPLEMENT BEST PRACTICES

The design of your white papers play a major role in their success. White paper readership is never guaranteed—no matter how well they are written. Design can easily get between your words and your prospects.

Design pre-sells the importance of your words and sets your white paper apart from others. Design also determines readability—the measure of how easy it is to read your white paper.

White paper writers must use design to convert a prospect's initial curiosity into extended reading.

**Readers in a hurry**

Prospects are always in a hurry. If your white paper doesn't present a pleasurable reading experience, puts up obstacles to easy reading, your prospects—and your client's prospects—are likely to put your white paper down or press Acrobat's "close" button.

**About the author**

Roger C. Parker has introduced millions of readers to graphic design since 1985. His books, newsletters, and training resources include *Looking Good in Print and Design to Sell*.

**The Magic of Reading**

The design techniques described below are based on extensive research into the psychology of reading, as described in *THE MAGIC OF READING*, by Bill Hill.<sup>1</sup> Bill studied over 12,000 pages of books, articles and research papers. His research indicates there are no "readers," there are only "recognizers."

Reading is based on *serial pattern recognition*. Rather than "sounding out" individual letters, readers scan groups of words and their brains translate word shapes into meaning. This happens instantaneously, over and over again.

Serial pattern recognition has major implications for white paper design.

1 1999, Microsoft Corporation.

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**Published & Profitable**

## How to Write your way to success

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO GETTING PUBLISHED

Few tasks are as widely misunderstood as writing a book to promote your business and transform your career.

What should be—and can be—an energizing process of accomplishment and deep satisfaction is often viewed as an insurmountable task by those who could most profit from a published book.

*Are you one of them?*

**Have you considered writing a book?**

Writing a nonfiction book that helps your market achieve its goals or solve its problems has traditionally been recognized as one of the best ways to jump-start your career—especially if you are self-employed and own a service business.

As Harry Beckwith, author of numerous books, including *THE INVISIBLE TOUCH*, wrote: "If you want to change your life, write a book!" He continued: "When I wrote *SELLING THE INVISIBLE*, most of my clients were located within view of my office. Now, clients search me out from around the world!"

**About the author**

Roger C. Parker is a \$32 million dollar author. Over 1.6 million readers around the world own copies of his 38 books. Roger helps firms launch new products and individuals re-launch their careers.

**What can a book do for you?**

Beyond the satisfaction of watching your ideas develop and appear in printed form at your local bookstore, there are 6 "pure business" reasons to write a book. These include:

- 1. Credibility.** A published book enhances your reputation and sets you apart from the competition. A published book is proof you are an expert in your field. Nothing else you do can equal the credibility value of a published book that prospects can hold in their hands.
- 2. Visibility.** Each book, and each mention of your book, promotes you and the services you offer. Your photograph on the cover of your book introduces you to tens of thousands of prospects who will recognize you when they visit your website or when you speak to their group.

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## Membership Site Content & Design Start-up Planner

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO MEMBERSHIP SITE SUCCESS

By Roger C. Parker with Maria G. Nozza

Congratulations on your decision to use a membership site to share your knowledge and expertise with others.

This report is based on the lessons we've learned creating our own membership sites and helping clients set up their sites.

We have prepared this report to help you move forward as efficiently as possible. We've identified a sequence of steps to help you *build* your prospect list, *launch* your site, and *create* new profit opportunities, all as quickly as possible.

**Assumptions**

When writing this report, Maria and I made the following assumptions:

- 1. Status.** You know your site's topic, market, and mission. You've selected your site's URL.
- 2. Software.** You have already purchased the software you will be using to manage the content, subscriptions, and billing. We have written this planner with MemberGate software in mind, but our advice is applicable to all options.
- 3. E-mail and billing.** You have also chosen an e-mail vendor to manage your mailing list and a merchant account for billing.

**So, let's get started!**

Before going further, you may want to review your goals in order to evaluate the content and design decisions you've made so far.

When you began your site, you targeted a specific market. In most cases, you not only chose a market (i.e., corporate lawyers), but you also chose a niche within that market (e.g., "rainmakers"—law firm partners responsible for attracting new business).

**Membership Site Success**

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[www.membershipsiteplanner.com](http://www.membershipsiteplanner.com)

Questions? [roger@designtosellonline.com](mailto:roger@designtosellonline.com)