



Making Fonts Work for You

In today's overcrowded marketplace, it's more important than ever that your marketing pieces easily convey both who you are and what you do. No one element contributes more to this than the font you use. A Hawaiian themed restaurant wouldn't use a fancy old-English font on their sign nor would they be well served to go with an old western font. Both of these fonts create a disconnect for anyone reading the sign. Seeing The Tiki Room in a more appropriate font that easily conveys who they are and what to expect from them.

The Tiki Room

The Tiki Room

The Tiki Room

Similarly, you probably wouldn't feel all that good about putting all your hard earned money into The First National Bank but you'd probably be ok putting it into The Second National Bank.

THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK

THE SECOND NATIONAL BANK

The first bank looks fun, but for banking you want stability and strength, which the second font easily conveys with its very conservative style.

Fonts can be broken down into four very broad categories: Serif Fonts, Sans Serif Fonts, Script Fonts and Display Fonts. The majority of your copy in a marketing piece should be in a Serif or Sans Serif font.

Serif fonts are easier to read. Serif fonts have serifs - non-structural details on the ends of some of the strokes that make up letters or symbols. Studies have shown that serif fonts are easier and faster to read and comprehend because of the inter-letter spacing. On the whole, Serif fonts tend to be more classic looking.

Serif Fonts

Palatino
Garamond

Sans Serif Fonts
Helvetica
Futura

Sans Serif fonts, as the name implies, have no serifs, making them sleeker and more modern looking. It also makes them harder to read for large quantities of type. Rarely do you see books laid out in a Sans Serif font. Sans Serif fonts are considered more legible on a computer screen.

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Script fonts are exactly what they say - script or similar to handwriting.

Display fonts are used primarily for headlines and banners and work as a way to call attention to your copy as well as to set the mood and emotion for your piece. You would never set a full newsletter or brochure with a display font, especially if you had a lot to say or you wanted to make your message easy to read.

Script
Handwritten
Display

Knowing the four main types of fonts allows you to make a thoughtful decision about what kind of font will work best with your message. Four or five different fonts competing for attention

BIG NEWS STORY

With lots of details

None of which mean a lot.

But all of which are
confusing.

on the front of newsletter ensures that no one font gets the most attention. (See example at left). Our eyes go from one font to the next because there is no hierarchy for us to follow. Simplifying the number of fonts used and establishing a hierarchy to the type of font used, will make your newsletter or marketing piece easier to read and comprehend.

A good rule of thumb is to use no more than two fonts for the main body of your layout. Some good combinations that could be used are: Helvetica for the headlines and sub-heads and Times Roman for the body copy; Futura and Palatino; Avant Garde and Berkeley. All of these combinations come from large "Families" of fonts, which give you multiple options within your layout while still maintaining a two-font hierarchy. Families can offer you light, medium, italic and condensed versions of each font, and more.

Helvetica
Times Roman
Futura
Palatino
Avant Garde
Berkeley

By standardizing what font is used to delineate heading and subheadings, your reader can easily navigate your marketing piece and know when they have located pertinent information. Standardizing the font used for the main text brings a unified look and feel to the body of your piece.

Using fonts in your marketing materials that correspond with your business will enable your potential customers to immediately relate to what you have to offer.



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