

September 2005

PRINTtips

Simple Steps to Upgrade Your Printing



MacMillan Graphics, Ltd.

Park 50 TechneCenter
2002 Ford Circle
Milford, OH 45150

(513) 248-2121

Fax (513) 248-5141

Web site:

www.macgra.com

FTP site:

[ftp.macgra.com](ftp://ftp.macgra.com)

Email:

info@macgra.com

How long has it been since you've taken a critical look at your business's or organization's printing? Business stationery (letterheads, envelopes, business cards), marketing materials, forms – chances are that it has been more than a few years since these were originally designed, they may benefit from an upgrade.

In this case, we're not talking about a complete makeover. Rather, we are thinking of simple steps to refresh the look or improve functionality. You may be surprised to learn that some upgrades can be undertaken without any increase in the cost of your printing, while others may add minimally to cost.

So here we go – simple steps to upgrade your printing.

Fonts

Because so many of our customers use Word to design their printed materials, we see a lot of Times Roman and Arial, often used exclusively and in one point size only. While there is nothing wrong with this use of the fonts, a significant improvement can be made by changing the fonts themselves or by using a different font for headlines than for body type.

Explore the possibility of using another serif font in place of Times Roman. For something very similar but with a rounded, more elongated look, try Century Schoolbook. Garamond, Bodoni, Goudy Old Style, and Palatino are some of our favorites. Here is what they look like:



This is a font sample in Times Roman.

This is a font sample in Century Schoolbook.

This is a font sample in Garamond.

This is a font sample in Bodoni.

This is a font sample in Goudy Old Style.

This is a font sample in Palatino.

The differences are subtle, but will make a real difference in the appearance of your document. Another trick with fonts is to use a sans serif typeface for headlines, paired with a serif face for body copy. Here is an example:

Would you like more tips?

Try our weekly email newsletter – Tuesday Tips. To be added to the mailing list, send any email message to tuesdaytips-on@macgra.com

Simple Steps to Upgrade Your Printing (continued)

“If you are preparing your own document, try changing fonts – a no-cost way to make an upgrade.”

“...the benefit of increased readability and eye-catching highlights will be worth it.”



This is a headline in Arial

This is body copy in Garamond.

Doesn't it provide a nice contrast to the headline? These kinds of changes will simply and easily improve the look of your documents.

Many designers consider Helvetica to be overused. Therefore, you might consider some of these notable sans serif fonts: Lucida Sans, MS Comic Sans, Verdana, Myriad, Avant Garde, Arial, and Century Gothic.

If you are preparing your own document, try changing fonts – a no-cost way to make an upgrade. If you don't have a good selection of Postscript fonts, then ask us to make the change for you when we prepare your document for press.

Use of color

Color is one of the most effective ways to update the look of your documents. If you are already printing in color, consider updating to a fresh color palette. Color styles change each year (as you can tell from looking at clothing, household appliances, and other consumer goods.) Certain colors, such as reflex blue, are very traditional and therefore timeless. But if you are preparing a document that does not have to match your corporate colors, then consider using a modern or contemporary palette. Ask to see our Pantone® color swatch book as an idea starter.

Adding color, either by changing from black to a color or by adding a second color, is another effective way to upgrade your printed materials. Adding a second color to a newsletter or other publication gives you the opportunity to put headlines, pull quotes, or screens in a second color. This technique draws the reader's attention and provides an appealing highlight to the publication.

Changing from black to a color or adding a second color will increase the cost of your printing. However, the benefit of increased readability and eye-catching highlights will be worth it.

Size and shape

For the best economy in printing, we have always advised designing your printing so it will fit on a standard sheet size – 8 1/2 x 11, 8 1/2 x 14 or 11 x 17. But if you want to upgrade your printed materials and make them stand out from others, do consider an unusual size.

People are intrigued by printed pieces that are either super-sized or miniature. Think of a telephone message pad printed as an 8 1/2 x 11 sheet instead of 4 1/4 x 5 1/2. Wouldn't it catch your eye? This can be an especially effective technique for promotional items you may be giving to prospects and customers.

Another possibility to consider is shape. A square can be cut from a standard sheet size, or a folded piece printed on a standard sheet size and trimmed into a square. Please be aware, though, that square shapes incur extra postage costs when mailed.

Grid

If your company brochure or newsletter was designed without using a grid, then this is an effective way to upgrade its look. A grid is probably the most important aspect of any overall design. The grid dictates how many columns appear on a page and where key elements are placed. No matter how many columns are in your grid, do keep this simple rule in mind: readers feel most comfortable with 35-45 characters per line.

For an 8 1/2 x 11 page, the grid may contain from one to five columns or more. However, a one-column grid is not always advisable because it will likely exceed the 35-45 characters-per-line that a reader is comfortable with. Likewise, if you are working with a five to seven column grid on

Simple Steps to Upgrade Your Printing (continued)

an 8 1/2 inch page width, then the line lengths will be too small, characters per line too few, and the reader will be challenged.

Offset vs. digital

Finally, it may be possible to upgrade your printing by lowering the quantity and switching from offset to digital toner-based printing.

Today's high-speed digital color laser printers produce remarkable color fidelity without the need (and associated costs) of press plates and makeready. Switching to digital printing may allow you to include a color photograph when it

will add appeal to your printed piece.

We want you to look good!

If you are interested in some of the ideas we've presented in this issue of *Printips* but are unsure about which ones might apply to your printing projects, give us a call at (513) 248-2121, and we will be happy to analyze your printed materials and make suggestions. And of course we will provide a price estimate to you so you will be fully informed about the cost of the upgrade you are considering.

"...lowering the quantity and switching from offset to digital toner-based printing."

The Importance of White Space

While you're examining your printed materials and thinking about upgrade ideas, consider how you are currently using white space. Large blocks of unbroken text may be intimidating to your reader and, consequently, are less likely to be read than shorter paragraphs.

Separate your paragraphs visually by using headings, illustrations, or photos. Even letters

can be separated by using crossheads or pull quotes.

Remember that white space can be a very effective design element. Visually it imparts a lighter look and draws more attention to the information you want to convey.



"Visually it imparts a lighter look..."

Q. *My company newsletter is four solid pages of text. What can I do to make it look better without deleting any of the information?*

A. There are several things you can do to lighten type-heavy layouts:

- *Create headlines for each new section.* These are called *subheads*. Subheads break up the text into manageable portions. They also enable a reader to enter the article at several points.
- *Separate columns by printing a line in between.* The line is called a *rule* and should be one or one-and-a-half points wide.
- *Print key words in a contrasting color.* This also calls attention to the key word.
- *Use drop caps.* Drop caps are oversized letters that begin a paragraph. The first few lines of the paragraph then wrap around the drop cap.
- *Use a screen tint behind text.* Box one or more articles in a tinted area. This adds interest to the page while stressing an important part of the text.



"This adds interest to the page while stressing an important part of the text."

September 2005 PRINTtips

The Magic of Postcards

Get the most bang for your ad buck...

With a postcard there's no envelope to open, so your message is seen instantly. Postcards stand out. They are highly visible and most people find them almost irresistible.

Because it's in the open, a postcard's headline or offer grabs attention right away. Therefore it is likely to get immediate action, instead of being shelved or tossed out with the unwanted mail.

Postcards are simple to write, easy to print, and relatively inexpensive to mail. We can help you take full advantage of the ever-changing postal rates.

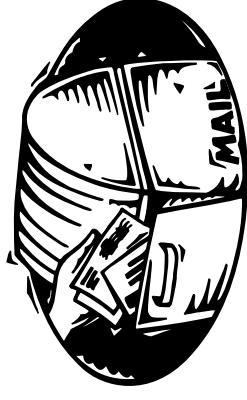
Give us a call at MacMillan Graphics at 513-248-2121 to find out how we can work with you to design, print, and mail postcards that will boost your business.

Please Route to the Printing Buyer

Park50 TechnoCenter
2002 Ford Circle
Milford, OH 45150
513-248-2121
Fax 513-248-5141
www.macgra.com
Info@macgra.com



Simple Steps to
Upgrade Your
Printing



Postcard Benefits

1. Postcards are the most cost effective direct mail tool.
2. Messages are instantly read, not concealed in an envelope.
3. According to the USPS, seven people will view a postcard before the addressee.
4. Oversized postcards really stand out in the mail.
5. Postcards are perfect for advertising a new location or a new product or service.