

Sample Style Guideline

What is a Style Guideline

While style guides can differ significantly from one website to another, a style guide is essentially a document that individual users can reference for determining stylistic decisions, proper terminology and warnings of common errors in regards to individual web pages being produced. This document typically sets standards for how to employ headlines, bolding, underlining, images and may include rules for grammar, punctuation, and other specialized terminology and brand names.

Why Utilize Style Guidelines

Since Empoweren is designed to allow multiple people to edit one's site, a Style Guide can help your designers, writers, editors, and proofreaders ensure that editorial choices are applied consistently throughout the site.

Large organizations often use Content Management Systems to control the look, feel, and brand image of a website while still decentralizing the editing and publishing functions related to keeping the site up to date. Empoweren employs a WYSIWYG editor that can be configured to provide for these controls.

Sample Style Guideline

Body Copy Font/Color

We typically recommend using a very reader friendly and web friendly font like Verdana or Georgia and in a bold color that contrast well with your background so it is easy to read.

Example: Verdana, 11 Point Black #000000

Primary Headline (H1)

The primary headline should stand out on your page so that visitors to your site know exactly what the page is about. We typically recommend using a different color than your body copy and in larger font and bold. For sites less concerned with utilizing SEO friendly headlines, graphic text can be used, but this is not recommended for sites where SEO is a priority.

Example: Verdana, 24 Point Dark Blue #003366

Sub Headline (H2)

Secondary Headlines are used to help separate major concepts on a page and users may utilize many of them on each page.

Example: Verdana, 18 Point Dark Orange #CCFF00.



Secondary Sub Headline (H3)

Secondary sub headlines are employed after primary sub headlines or when certain text needs to be distinguished in a more subtle manner than with a sub headline.

Example: Verdana, 11 Point Black #000000 in Bold

Image and Chart Caption Font

Many times, image captions will utilize a smaller font, italics, bold or possibly even a different color to differentiate them from other content on the site.

Example: Verdana, 11 Point Black #000000 in Italics

Link Treatment

Usability studies indicate that people often associate blue and underlined text to be links. While this is not a hard and fast rule, using one of these two common elements is recommended.

Example: Verdana, 12 Point Dark Blue #003366 Underlined

Underlining

As a general rule, underlining text on a website implies that the content is a link. Unless absolutely required, we do not recommend underlining text.

Custom Header Images

Some Empoweren sites are designed in a manner so that unique header images can be applied to every page. If this option is selected, guidelines should be prepared so that the graphic designers will know the specifications for the header image area.

Examples: All header images should be 800 pixels wide by 188 tall.

File Name Creation

For larger sites, you may want to set up some guidelines for what file names to apply to individual pages.

Example: All pages in the Support Section should start with the word "Support."

- Support-FAQs
- Support-Customer-Service
- Support- Users Manuals

Terminology

To help those adding new content to your site, it is helpful to include guidelines for any issues related to spelling, capitalization, and abbreviations as well as your desired nomenclature.

Example:

Spelling, Capitalization, and Nomenclature

- WYSIWYG – Always show in all caps
- Empoweren – Always capitalize first letter
- eCommerce – always show with lower case “e” followed by capital “C”
- Website – Always use as one word
- Module Names - always capitalize first letter of all words (i.e. News Manager or Careers Manager)
- internet - do not capitalize unless first word in sentence
- CPC - Use this abbreviation instead of PPC
- Search Engine Marketing - refers to the combination of SEO and CPC
- Online – Use as one word; do not hyphenate
- System – Do not refer to system as software

Punctuation

- Places commas before “and” when listing 3 or more items

Bulleted Lists

- Put in sentence case vs. headline case. (i.e. Search engine friendly. vs Search Engine Friendly)
- For large lists, add one line break (Shift + Enter) after each point.

Images

- All stand alone images should be centered on page
- Largest images should be 670 wide.
- Images next to text should be right aligned.