

Picture your presentation

Photographs give your audience an emotional connection to your words.

Continued ►



Continued ►

Picture your presentation 0668

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Better than charts and bullet points, photographs will give your audience an emotional connection to your words. Here's how.



We *love* data! Fifty-two base hits, 23 abandoned children, Class 3 hurricane. We track data, we analyze it, we graph it—and we cheerfully present it to snoozing audiences everywhere. What's funny is that data alone has no value. Only in the context of real life does it have meaning. And real life is conveyed best not with data but with *story*. So put away your text and graphs. To tell a story, you need the help of photos. Photos communicate on many channels. They wordlessly *draw the audience into your world*, make emotional connections, and prepare your listeners for what you have to say. Let's see how.



It's easy to find generically happy images, but the unseen sadness that everyone bears will rattle your audience's soul. When pitching a program like the proposed shelter above, think first not in terms of dollars or "social units" or other statistical data but about *who you're helping and why*, then find an image to express it.

You are the show

The first thing to understand is that *you are the show*; your audience has come to hear you, not read slides. Use a slide to fill your listeners' minds with an image, then fill in the details orally. It's fun!

Before



Too much stuff (Above) This slide is basically your notes and visually useless. The information is fine, but it should come from you (right), where it can be accompanied by your personality, body language and nuance. The correct use of a slide is to make a visual statement that words alone can't.

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Use a metaphorical image Many topics—federal insurance regulations, say—don't have literal imagery that can be photographed. In these cases, you might try using visual metaphors. Think of your talk as having chapters, and use an image to introduce each one. The image provides a visual "hook" for the audience, who will relate everything you say back to it. Avoid corny images. Keep text to a bare minimum, and use natural sentences.

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Before

Traffic Management Systems

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Planes, trains, buses, taxis, 589,000; 377,800; 320,900; 218,600—quick! got all that? It’s useful information, but who will be moved by it, much less remember it? Put the data on four slides, one topic per slide, each accompanied by a descriptive, full-screen photo. This gives your viewer room to think and own what you’re saying.



Use surprise

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Before

Meaningful Difference

The strongest, most well-positioned brands have a distinct **Meaningful Difference** that is clearly communicated to the consumer in many different ways:

- Maytag:	Dependability
- Michelin:	Safety
- Disney:	Wholesome family entertainment
- Nordstrom's:	Better shopping experience
- Jack Daniel's:	Badge of American masculinity

Not engaging The companies may be different, but this slide is only a fancy list of notes. Visual effects cannot substitute for creativity; the multicolor rectangles and shadowed type add only busy-ness, not communication value. Time to start thinking about that nap.

After

What makes you different?

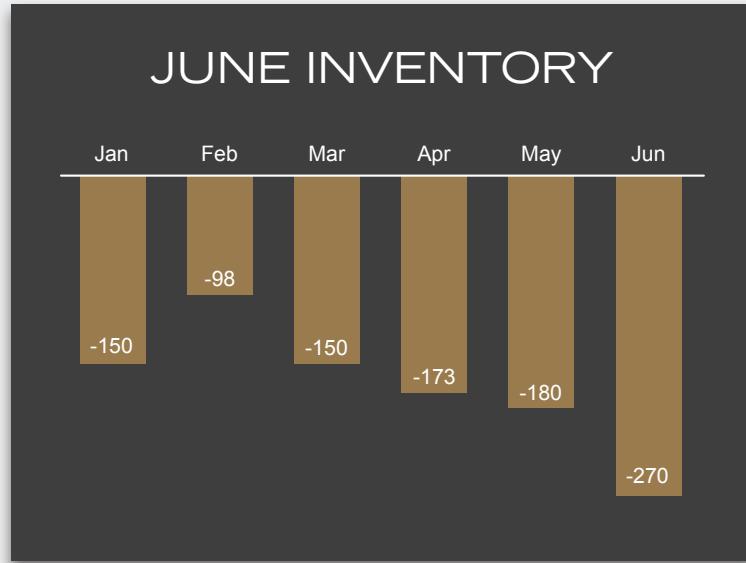


Engaging Orange inside the apple is surprising and familiar at the same time. The simple question—not a statement—gets the audience thinking and ready for what you'll say next. Familiarity is important; merely weird or off the wall doesn't work. Surprise is in giving the familiar an unexpected twist.

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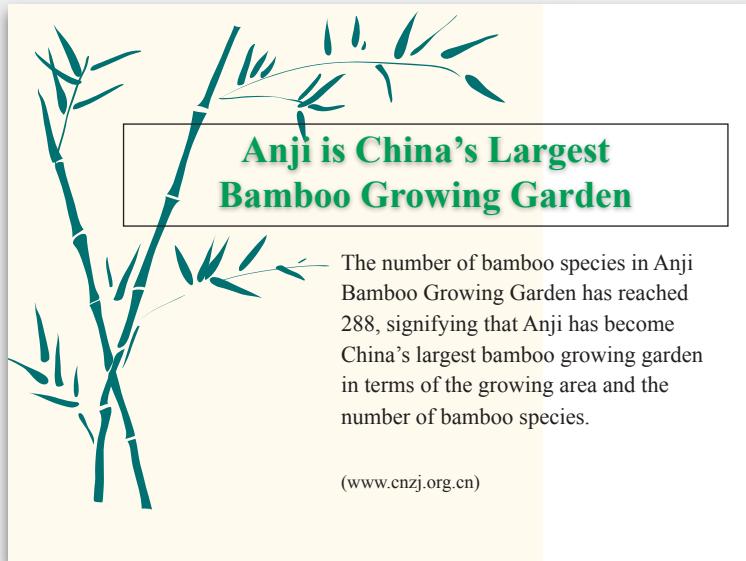


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Find beauty

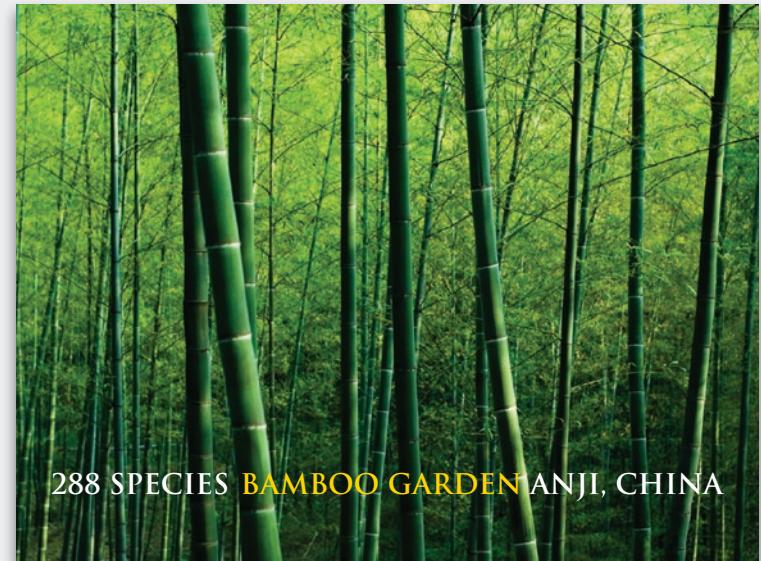
Beauty can convey our deepest aspirations. *All by itself*, a beautiful image can lift the audience out of the daily humdrum and into worlds rich with wonder, inspiration, *possibilities*. No matter what your topic, look for ways to use beauty.

Before



Trying too hard It's an artistic image on an asymmetric, two-tone background, but it would make a better page layout than a slide. Before doing all this work, remember: *story, not data*. Rather than talk about your topic, find a way to show it.

After

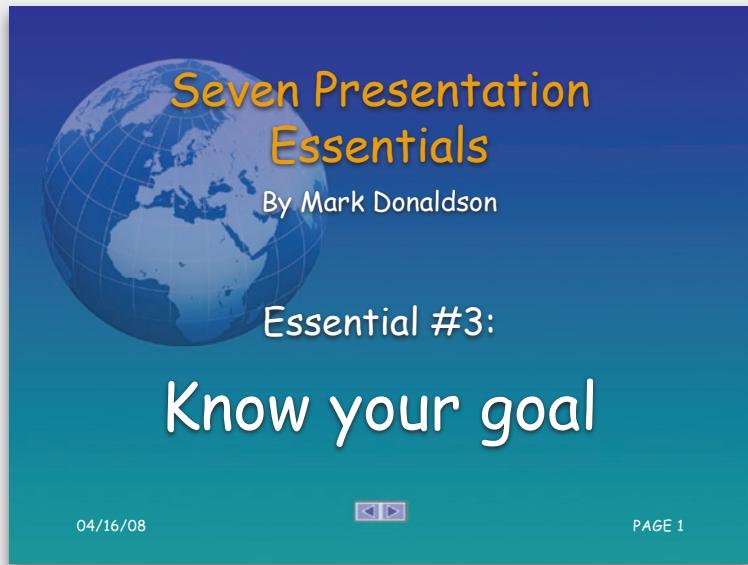


Beautiful The photo alone conveys a world of sensory information, and it's easier to design, too! The lush image immerses your audience in the presence and feel of the forest ("So *this* is bamboo!"). A single line of beautiful type labels simply.

Dramatize

Drama is *theater*. It's an image intended to create an effect—exciting, unexpected, impressive. To dramatize is to *project*—make the motions grander, the contrasts sharper, the differences greater.

Before



After



Gratuitous graphics The problem with a stock template should be obvious here. The globe and sky gradient may look nice—by themselves—but on your slide they're like stagehands who wandered in front of the cameras; they distract everyone's attention. Lost in the graphics, your point is barely visible.

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The screenshot shows the iStockphoto Advanced Search interface. On the left, there are various search filters like 'Photographs', 'Illustrations', 'Plastic', and 'Videos'. In the center, there's a 'Search with CopySpace™' feature. It includes a grid of nine squares (three green, three grey) where users can click to mark areas they want to remain blank. Below the grid are buttons for 'Sensitivity' (checkboxes), '+', and 'Clear'. A 'Search' button is at the bottom right of the grid. To the right of the search bar, there are 'Sort' options ('Best Match') and a 'Reset to site settings?' link. At the bottom left, there's a 'Need help?' link. On the far left, there's a sidebar with 'Search by categories' and 'Detailed Categories' sections.

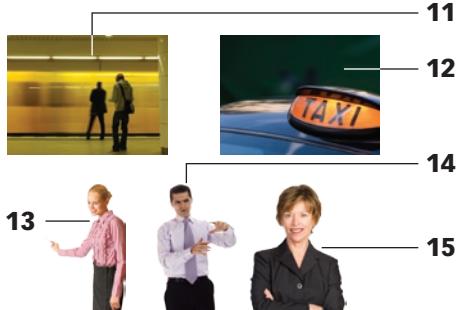
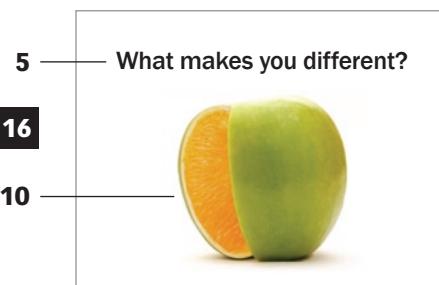
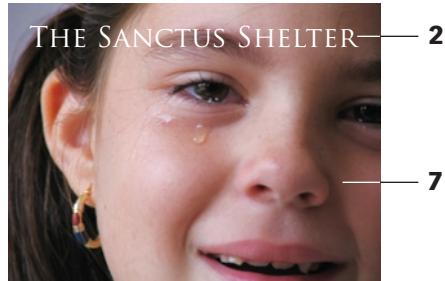
Green is blank

In iStockphoto (you'll need an account; it's free), call up Advanced Search, then in *Search with CopySpace* click grid squares to specify areas of the photo to remain blank; clicked squares turn green. Enter a keyword (near upper left in the window)—try "face"—and watch what happens (right). It's cool.

The main area displays nine images demonstrating the 'Search with CopySpace' feature:

- Image 1: A yellow tulip against a solid yellow background. The top-left square of the grid is green, indicating it's designated as a blank area.
- Image 2: A woman smelling a rose. The bottom-right square of the grid is green.
- Image 3: A speed limit sign reading 'SPEED LIMIT 55' against a blue sky. The bottom-left square of the grid is green.
- Image 4: A corn cob on a red surface. The middle-left square of the grid is green.
- Image 5: A bright, colorful 'TICKETS' sign against a dark background. The top-left square of the grid is green.
- Image 6: A red wagon in a field of yellow flowers. The bottom-right square of the grid is green.
- Image 7: A close-up of a Buddha's face. The top-left square of the grid is green.
- Image 8: A person rock climbing. The bottom-left square of the grid is green.
- Image 9: A lit candle with a question mark shape. The bottom-left square of the grid is green.

Article resources



Typefaces

- 1 [Franklin Gothic No. 2 Roman](#) (adobe.com/type)
- 2 [Trajan Pro Regular](#) (adobe.com/type)
- 3 (a-b) [Trade Gothic Light](#) (adobe.com/type)
- 4 [Trade Gothic Condensed No. 18](#) (adobe.com/type)
- 5 [ITC Franklin Gothic Medium](#) (adobe.com/type)

Colors

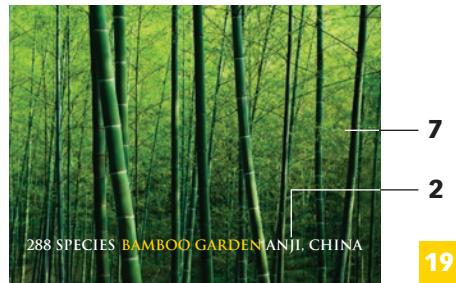
- 16 C0 M0 Y0 K100
- 17 C0 M0 Y0 K80

Images

Images: iStockphoto

- 6 ([5012748](#))
- 7 ([855854](#))
- 8 ([4289321](#))
- 9 ([3302463](#))
- 10 ([3694952](#))
- 11 ([3435466](#))
- 12 ([4718833](#))
- 13 ([5400589](#))
- 14 ([4016944](#))
- 15 ([5348420](#))

Article resources



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- 1 [Myriad Pro Semibold](#) (adobe.com/type)
- 2 [Trajan Pro Bold](#) (adobe.com/type)
- 3 [Futura Extra Bold](#) (adobe.com/type)
- 4 [Minion Bold](#) (adobe.com/type)
- 5 [Myriad Pro Bold](#) (adobe.com/type)

Colors

19 C0 M15 Y100 K0

Images

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- 6 ([4639111](#))
- 7 ([4747897](#))
- 8 ([4003080](#))
- 9 ([3312023](#))
- 10 ([403471](#))
- 11 ([5234339](#))
- 12 ([3748632](#))
- 13 ([3929084](#))
- 14 ([4678919](#))
- 15 ([3826016](#))
- 16 ([3859721](#))
- 17 ([3083861](#))
- 18 ([3089010](#))

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Before & After has been sharing its practical approach to graphic design since 1990. Because our modern world has made designers of us all (ready or not), Before & After is dedicated to making graphic design understandable, useful and even fun for everyone.

John McWade Publisher and creative director

Gaye McWade Associate publisher

Dexter Mark Abellera Staff designer

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Page Size: Fit to Page

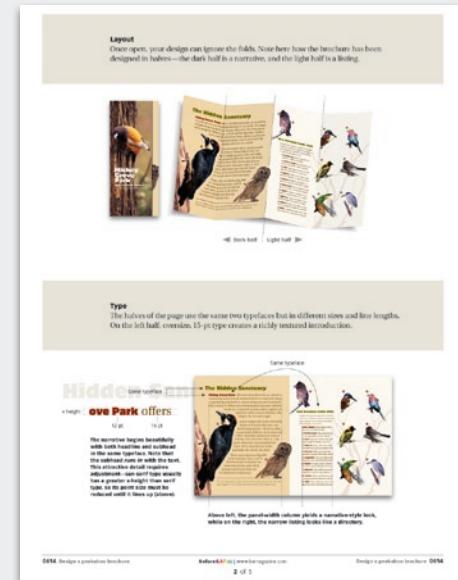


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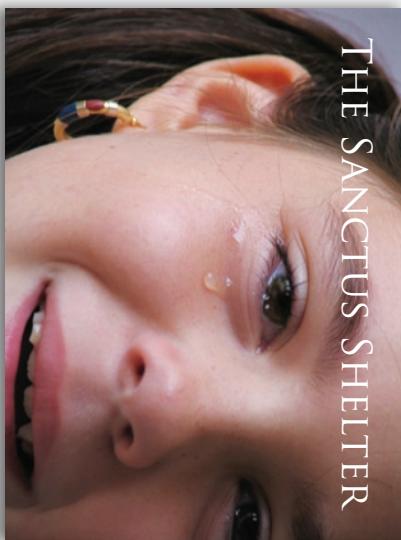


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THE SANCTUS SHELTER



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Before

**Trax, Inc. acquisition
by Thompson Group**

Trax at a glance:
• \$2.3 million annual revenue
• Operations in three countries
• 40 non-redundant clients
• Mature corporate structure

By Jim Stipek, MPA



We're off to a pretty hot start this year. We acquired Trax in January for \$6.4 million, and it immediately improved both companies. The creative staffs . . .

After



We acquire Trax in 2008

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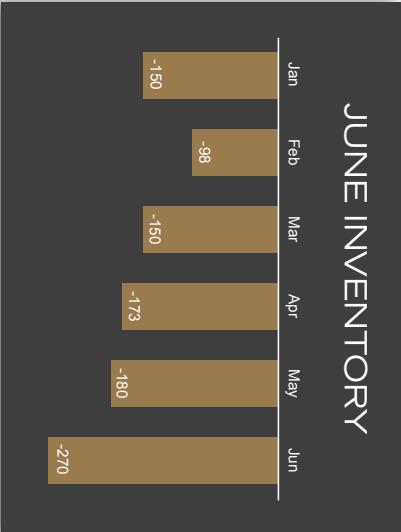
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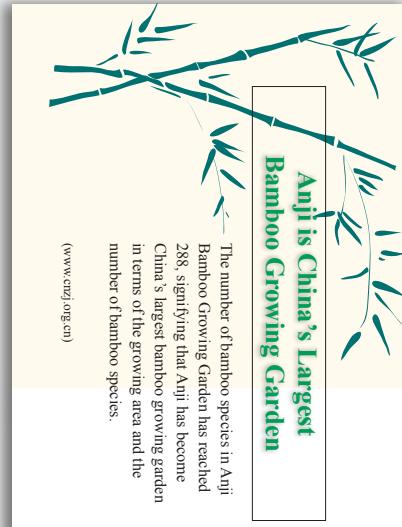
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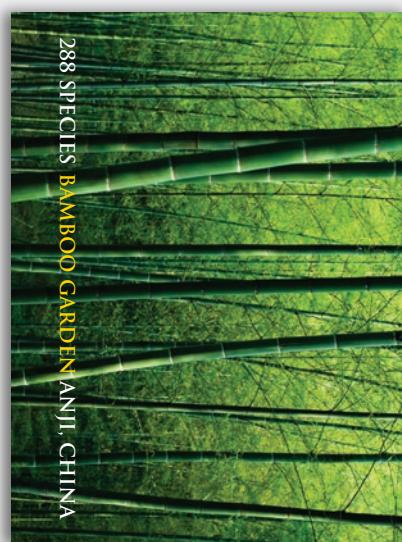
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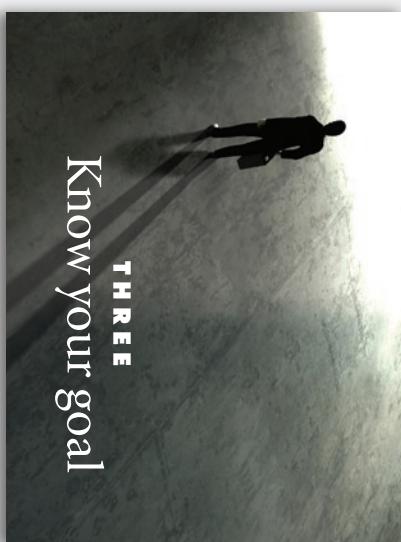
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SPCA PET ADOPTION PROGRAM



1,220 dogs adopted in 2007.

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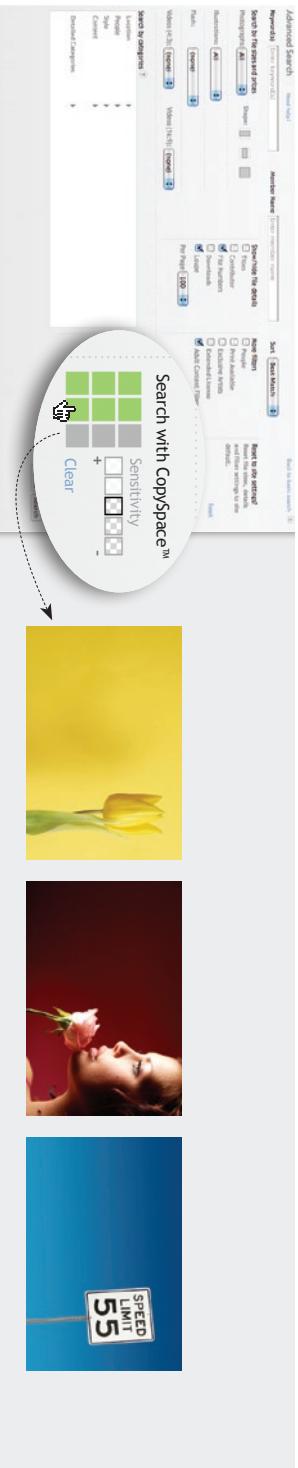
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Advanced Search Need help?

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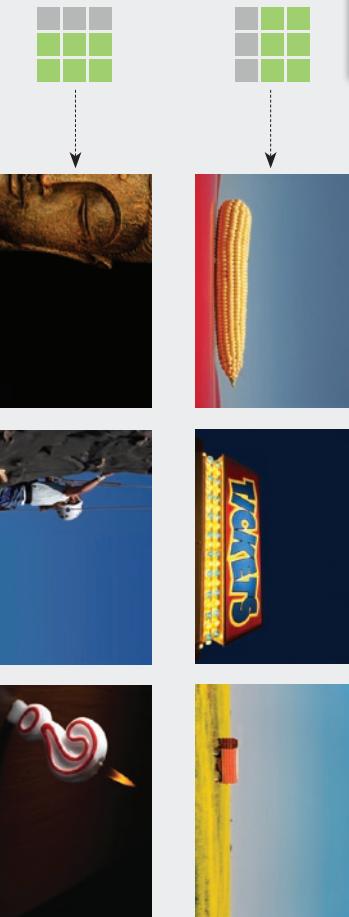
Sensitivity

Clear

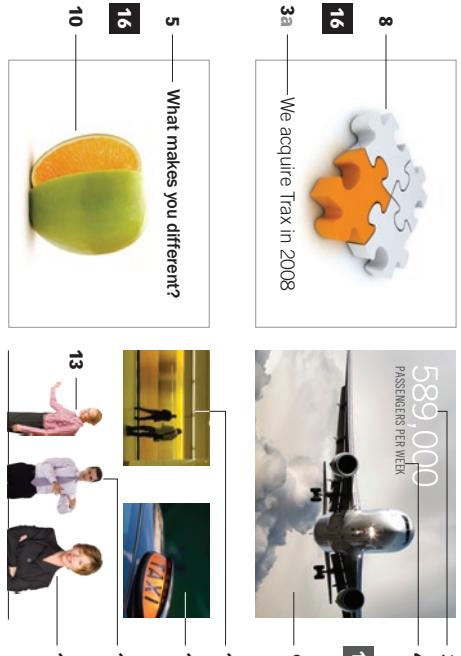


Green is blank

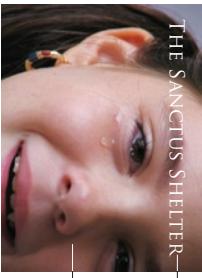
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Article resources



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2 Italian Pro Regular (adobe.com/type)	17 C0 M0 Y0 K80
3 (a-b) Trade Gothic Light (adobe.com/type)	
4 Trade Gothic Condensed No. 18 (adobe.com/type)	
5 ITC Franklin Gothic Medium (adobe.com/type)	



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18 (30892010)	

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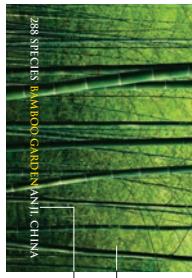
1 **June Inventory**



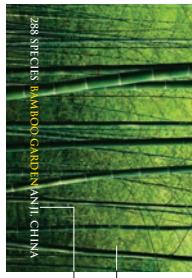
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16 (3859721)	
17 (30833861)	
18 (30892010)	

1 **1,220 contented customers.**



5 **THREE**



8 **Know your goal**



10 **11**



12 **13**



13 **14**



14 **15**



15 **16**



16 **17**



17 **18**



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Gaye McWade Associate publisher
Dexter Mark Abellera Staff designer

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