

# Design a catalog of rectangles

Segway's catalog motif is simple,  
handsome and versatile. *Continued* ►

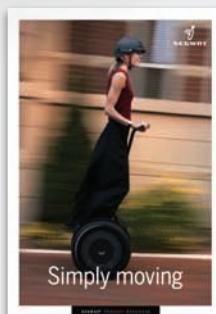
# Design a catalog of rectangles

Segway's catalog motif is simple, handsome and versatile.



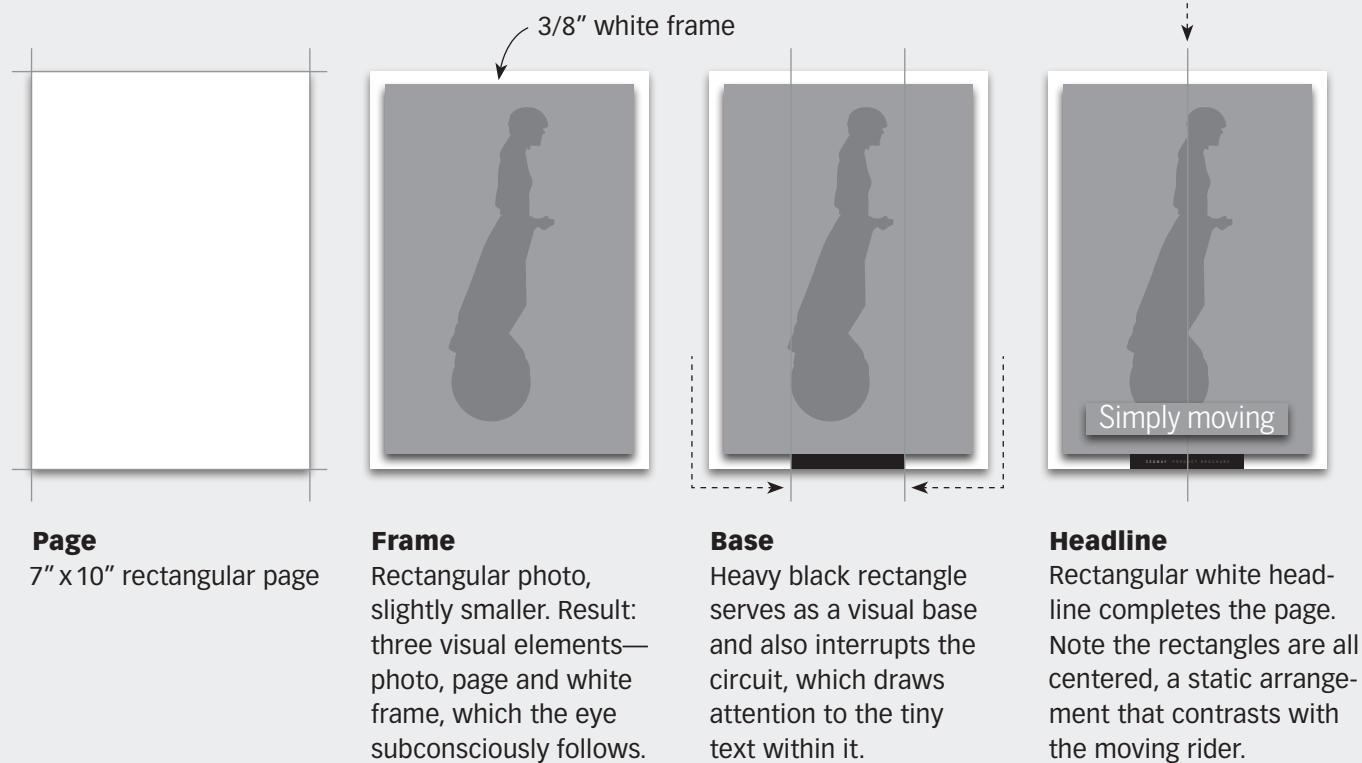
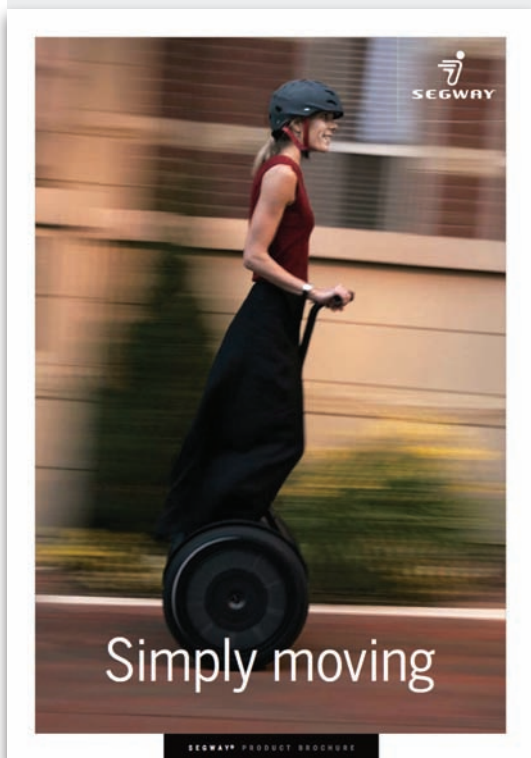
It's a good thing the Segway Personal Transporter costs as much as it does (\$5,000-ish), or we'd be out riding instead of writing—this thing is a *hoot*. Ahead of its time when it was introduced in 2001, the self-balancing, ride-about platform is almost magically intuitive; it runs silently indoors and out, and has become popular with urban commuters, tour groups and others who need to get places that would be too far or too slow to walk. A 28-page catalog presents the machine in tried-and-true fashion; it's an attractive synthesis of text and images in a simple, rectangular format. What we like about the rectangles is how easy they make it to blend different elements into a uniform whole. That'll be our focus:

**Rectangular simplicity** can be seen in shapes, borders and lines throughout the catalog. It allows the designer to easily meld different photos and varying amounts of text into a uniform whole.



## Build it in blocks

As we work through the catalog, you'll see that rectangles are a *deliberately visible* part of the design. This begins on the cover, where the elements are stacked in blocks.

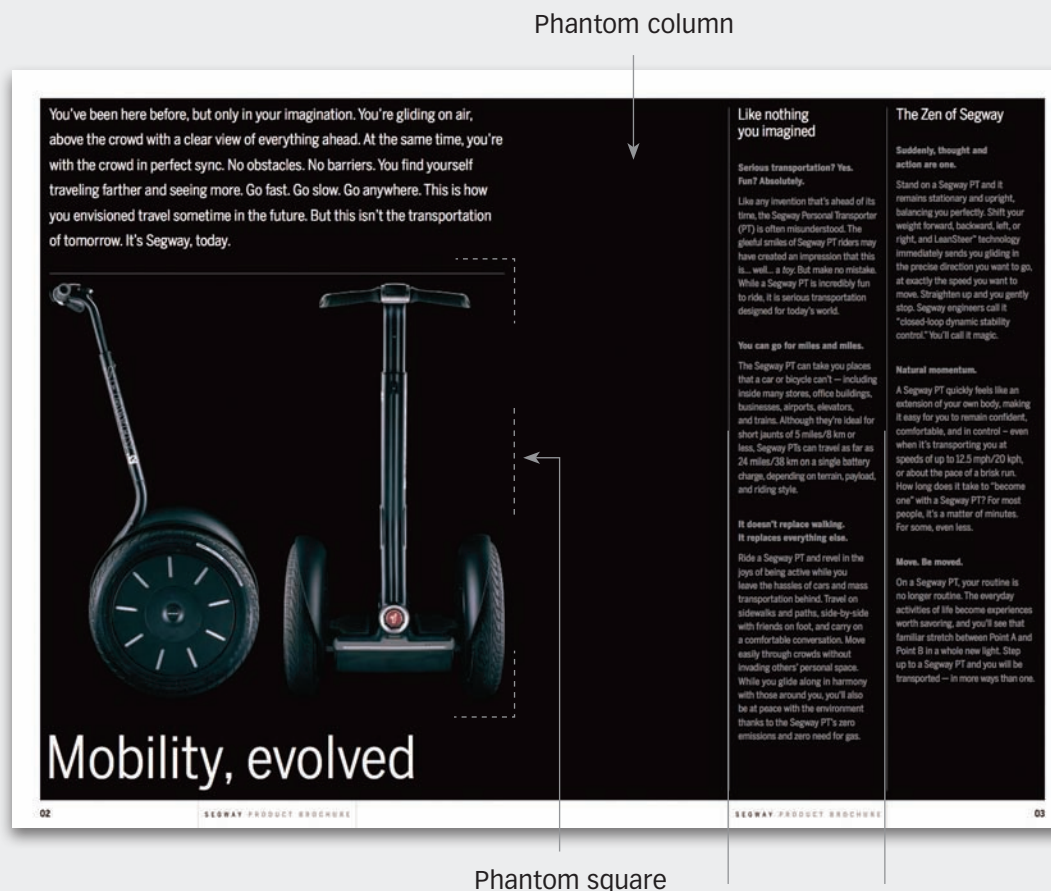


## Two-level design

Inside, the catalog is designed in two levels, one to browse and one to read. A big photo and a short block of big type are for browsing. Regular text columns are for detailed reading. Massive black sets the visual theme.

**Oversize text** and a large photo make an easy-to read focal point that will be repeated throughout the catalog. Against black, the paragraph adds visual texture; its long, white lines are a contrasting counterpoint to the narrow, gray columns on the right.

Headline at the bottom is opposite the normal position, yet it “reads” naturally. Cool.



The spread is made of rectangles both tall and wide. Note the product photos are inside a *phantom* square, a negative space defined by nearby positive elements. The columns on the far right, tinted gray, recede.

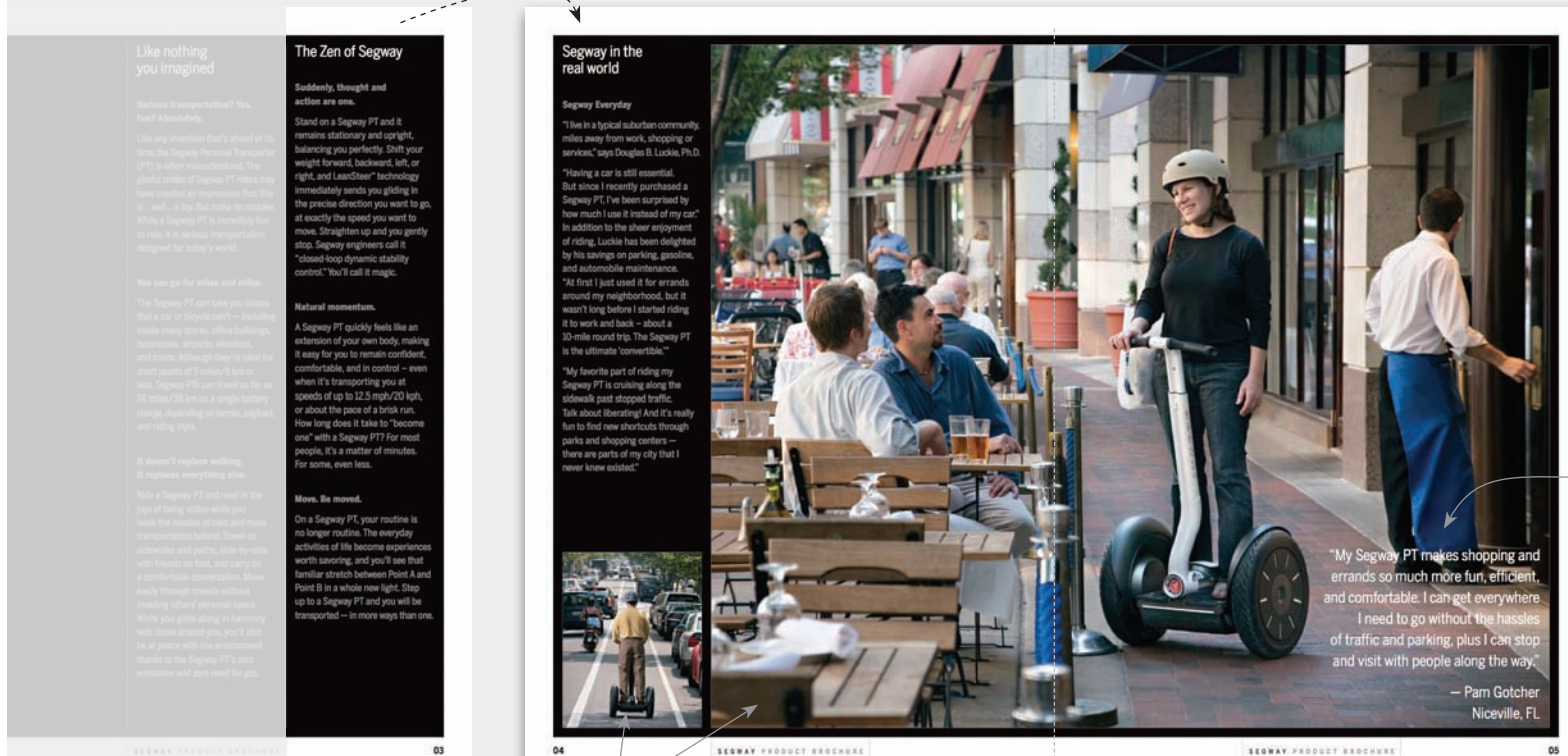


## Immersive imagery

A huge, nearly wall-to-wall photo illustrates the product in its environment. This technique is effective because it's *immersive*; it's how we experience real life.

**Text-on-black** theme from the opening spread is brought forward . . .

. . . and onto subsequent spreads.



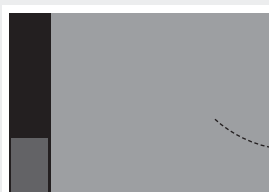
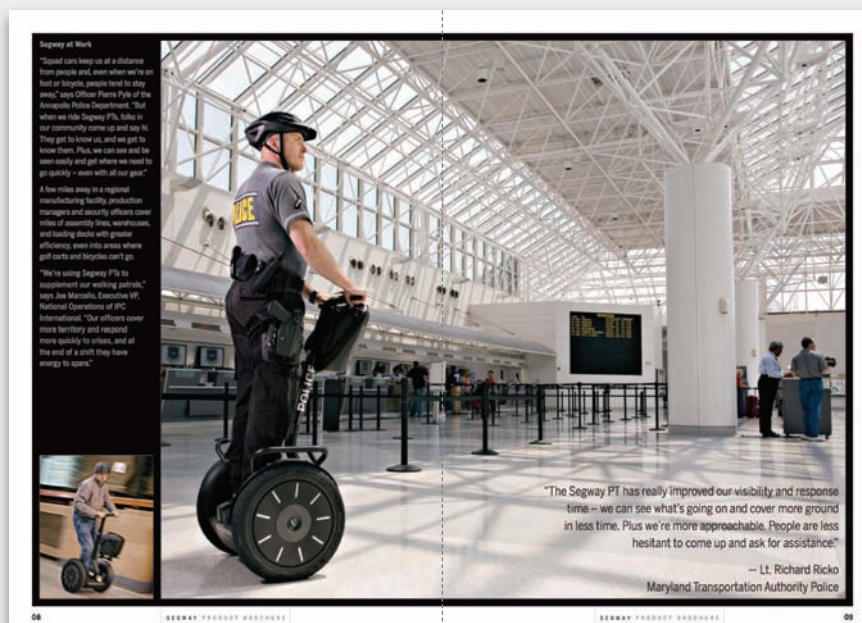
**Small and big** The huge photo does the heavy work; the small, side image is an extra.



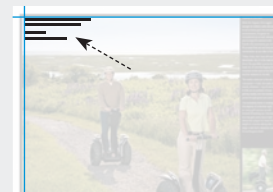
**Oversize text** serves here as a caption, aligned right to tuck into the corner. Type like this is valuable because it's visible and brief, so most readers will read it first. With careful editing, these captions can carry a theme—even a second story line—throughout the catalog.

## Big viewing, light reading

Repetitive spreads—big photo and caption, small text—present life-size vignettes of Segway's world. In this section, the catalog is setting up the reader by helping him visualize using—and enjoying—the product.



**Reverse the layout**  
Black text column can change sides without changing the look. The small photo size should stay constant.



### Place oversize text in the corner

The caption can go in any corner; look for the smoothest, clearest backdrop. Its distance from the edges should remain constant, too. The caption can be black or white, whichever has the more pleasing contrast.



## Show the product

Product pages show the machine in detail. Pure white field removes all distractions, then descriptive callouts take the reader on an item-by-item tour.



**Big and clear** Shoppers like to touch stuff, look it over, think about it, so the more lifelike a product appears, the more successful it will be. Photograph an angle that shows everything well, then make the picture BIG. Here, gray type and cool, rectangular hairlines are beautifully *minimal*. Note the complete absence of adornment—no fills, shadows, italics, colors, nothing to take away from the product. Shadowed against pure white, the black **i2** rectangle stands out with startling clarity.

**Light typeface** Oversize paragraph is low-key gray. Only the headline is black. Sublime.

**Minimalist design, multitude of uses.**

The perfect synthesis of form, function and fun, the i2 lets you glide through your daily commute or zip from errand to errand without worrying about parking. The i2 can take you 24 miles/38 km or up to 480 city blocks on a single charge\*, powering itself smoothly up or down stairs and curbs, and keeping you in control as it handles steep grades. Need to use more than one form of transportation? The versatile i2 can be easily stowed in the trunk of a car or carried onto many modes of public transit with permission. It's only fair to warn you, though: life on an i2 is highly addictive. Once you've experienced it, you'll find yourself constantly looking for opportunities to sail along the sidewalks.

**i2**

InfoKey Controller

Handlebar

Lean/Steer Frame Height Adjust

Available in:  
Gloss White  
Anodized Black

Balance Indicator Lights

Charge Indicator Lights

Charge Port

Non-marking Tires

\*24 miles/38 km is the maximum range for the i2 with lithium ion batteries. Actual range depends on terrain, payload, and riding style. Refer to and follow all instructions in the User Materials.

Weight	Tires	Footprint	Max Speed	Range
105 lbs. / 47.7 kg	19" / 48 cm	25" x 25" / 63 cm x 63 cm	12.5 mph / 20 kph	Up to 24 mi / Up to 38 km

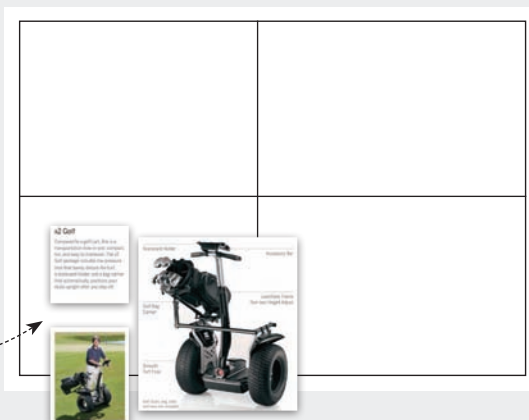
14 SEGWAY PRODUCT BROCHURE 15

The i2 takes up about the same amount of surface area as an average adult, and has plenty of ground clearance for most urban and suburban settings.

**Caption size** of the half-spread photo is smaller to retain its proportions to the others.

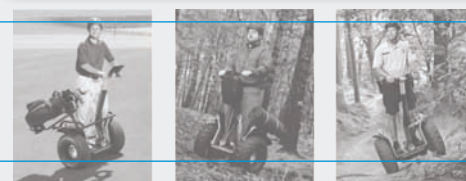
## The look in triplicate

“Packages” spread shows three products; each small module contains all the elements of the large ones. Lead paragraph and mid-page headline—this time on white—recall the design of the opening spread.



### Same three elements, smaller space, same look

Once you've established a look, stay with it. In this section, the catalog restructures and reduces the look of full-size sections into smaller spaces—lead paragraph, environmental photo, product photo and rectangular callouts all are here. Type styles, sizes and colors remain the same as before. Very strong continuity, beautifully done.



**Crop uniformly** Left, photos that are almost the same should always be cropped the same. Here, heads and wheels align.

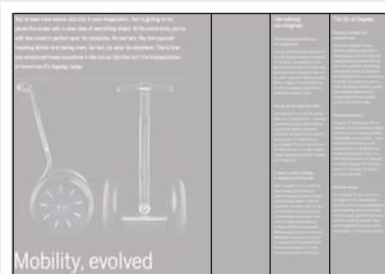


## Versatile rectangles

Accessories section contains products of varying sizes, shapes and caption lengths. Rectangles do a good job of holding it all together. Careful alignment is key.

Even columns

Uneven columns



### Bend the rules

Photos of uneven proportions require uneven columns, which is not ideal, but rectangles make it fairly easy to sustain the look. Wherever possible, align your images all the way across or all the way down a page, as shown at right in blue. For flexibility, captions can go beneath or beside their photos.

Across the page

Down the page



Captions beneath

Captions beside

## Mind the details

Consistent typography, irregular “interrupters” and gray space fillers keep the spread lively and the design flexible. Gray type recedes, keeping the products center stage.

C

H

### Reverse the value

Rectangular gray bars neatly head each subsection. Continue the same typeface; just reverse its value to white on gray. Note the larger head is in the lighter typeface.

Across →

Across →

Down ↓



### Visual interrupter

The irregular shape of the shirt provides visual relief from the rectangles. Note its differences—it interrupts the border, bleeds to the edge, and is shadowed for depth.

### Space filler

White text in a gray field is both space filler and advertisement. These can go anywhere.

## Article resources



### Typefaces

Four styles of [Benton Sans Condensed](#) are used in this product catalog:

Benton Sans Condensed Book

Benton Sans Condensed Regular

Benton Sans Condensed Medium

Benton Sans Condensed Bold

### Credits

Segway, Inc. & Saltworks, Inc., Designers

Bob Carey, Photographer

**Special thanks** to Segway dealer Norris Rancourt of Carmichael Honda in Carmichael, California ([www.carmichaelhonda.com](http://www.carmichaelhonda.com)) for giving us the extended demonstration.



### Subscribe to Before & After

Subscribe to Before & After, and become a more capable, confident designer for pennies per article. To learn more, go to

<http://www.bamagazine.com/Subscribe>

### E-mail this article

To pass along a free copy of this article to others, [click here](#).

### Join our e-list

To be notified by e-mail of new articles as they become available, go to

<http://www.bamagazine.com/email>

### Before & After magazine

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

### Before & After magazine

323 Lincoln Street, Roseville, CA 95678

**Telephone** 916-784-3880

**Fax** 916-784-3995

**E-mail** [mailbox@bamagazine.com](mailto:mailbox@bamagazine.com)

**www** <http://www.bamagazine.com>

**Copyright ©2007 Before & After magazine**

**ISSN 1049-0035. All rights reserved**

You may pass along a free copy of this article to others by clicking [here](#). You may not alter this article, and you may not charge for it. You may quote brief sections for review; please credit Before & After magazine, and [let us know](#). To link Before & After magazine to your Web site, use this URL: <http://www.bamagazine.com>. For all other permissions, [please contact us](#).

## Before & After is made to fit your binder

Before & After articles are intended for permanent reference. All are titled and numbered.

For the current table of contents, [click here](#). To save time and paper, a paper-saver format of this article, suitable for one- or two-sided printing, is provided on the following pages.

### For presentation format

[Print:](#) (Specify pages 1–12)



### Print

Format: Landscape  
Page Size: Fit to Page

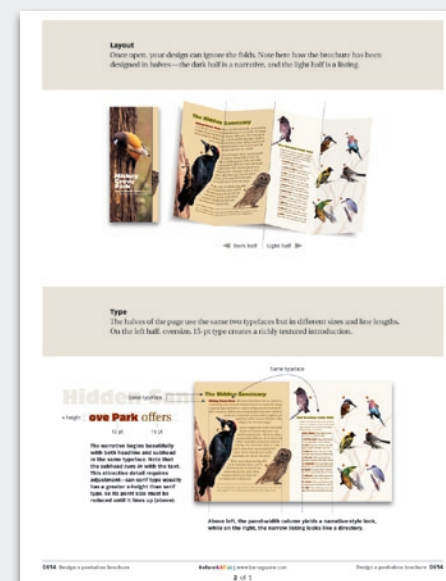


### Save

Presentation format or  
Paper-saver format

### For paper-saver format

[Print:](#) (Specify pages 14–19)





# Design a catalog of rectangles

Segway's catalog motif is simple,  
handsome and versatile.



It's a good thing the Segway Personal Transporter costs as much as it does (\$5,000-ish), or we'd be out riding instead of writing—this thing is a *hoot*. Ahead of its time when it was introduced in 2001, the self-balancing, ride-about platform is almost magically intuitive; it runs silently indoors and out, and has become popular with urban commuters, tour groups and others who need to get places that would be too far or too slow to walk. A 28-page catalog presents the machine in tried-and-true fashion; it's an attractive synthesis of text and images in a simple, rectangular format. What we like about the rectangles is how easy they make it to blend different elements into a uniform whole. That'll be our focus:

## Rectangular

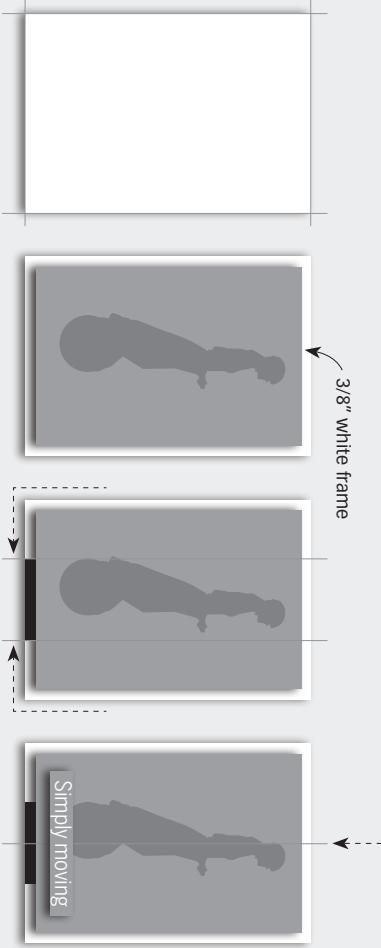
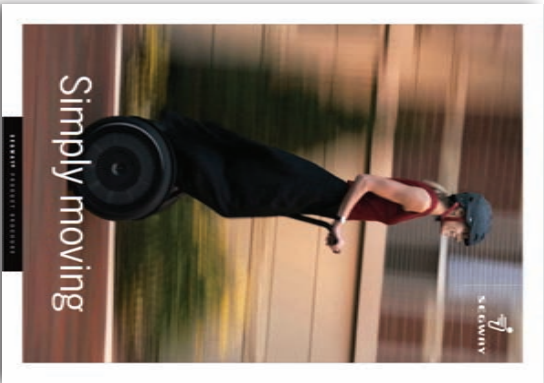
**simplicity** can be seen in shapes, borders and lines throughout the catalog. It allows the designer to easily meld different photos and varying amounts of text into a uniform whole.





**Build it in blocks**

As we work through the catalog, you'll see that rectangles are a *deliberately visible* part of the design. This begins on the cover, where the elements are stacked in blocks.



**Two-level design**

Inside, the catalog is designed in two levels, one to browse and one to read. A big photo and a short block of big type are for browsing. Regular text columns are for detailed reading. Massive black sets the visual theme.



The spread is made of rectangles both tall and wide. Note the product photos are inside a *phantom* square, a negative space defined by nearby positive elements. The columns on the far right, tinted gray, recede.

Headline at the bottom is opposite the normal position, yet it “reads” naturally. Cool.

## Immersive imagery

A huge, nearly wall-to-wall photo illustrates the product in its environment. This technique is effective because it's *immersive*; it's how we experience real life.

Text-on-black theme from the opening spread is brought forward . . .

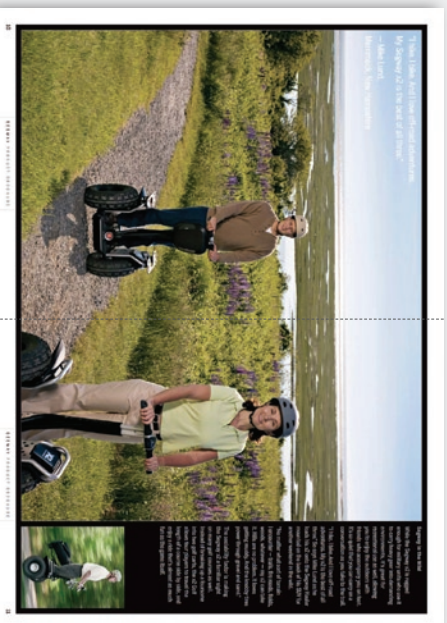
. . . and onto subsequent spreads.



Small and big The huge photo does the heavy work; the small, side image is an extra.

## Big viewing, light reading

Repetitive spreads—big photo and caption, small text—present life-size vignettes of Segway's world. In this section, the catalog is setting up the reader by helping him visualize using—and enjoying—the product.



### Reverse the layout

Black text column can change sides without changing the look. The small photo size should stay constant.



### Place oversize text in the corner

The caption can go in any corner; look for the smoothest, clearest backdrop. Its distance from the edges should remain constant, too. The caption can be black or white, whichever has the more pleasing contrast.





Show the product

Product pages show the machine in detail. Pure white field removes all distractions, then descriptive callouts take the reader on an item-by-item tour.



**Big and clear** Shoppers like to touch stuff, look it over, think about it, so the more lifelike a product appears, the more successful it will be. Photograph an angle that shows everything well, then make the picture BIG. Here, gray type and cool, rectangular hairlines are beautifully *minimal*. Note the complete absence of adornment—no fills, shadows, italics, colors, nothing to take away from the product. Shadowed against pure white, the black i2 rectangle stands out with startling clarity.

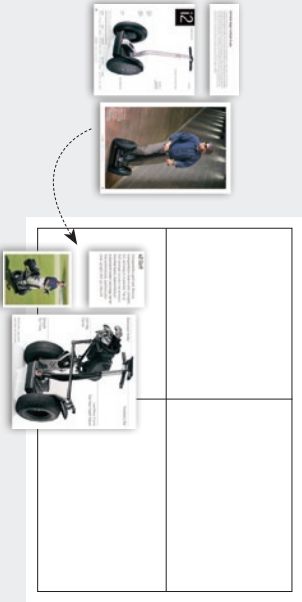
**Light typeface** Oversize paragraph is low-key gray. Only the headline is black. Sublime.



**Caption size** of the half-spread photo is smaller to retain its proportions to the others.

The look in triplicate

“Packages” spread shows three products; each small module contains all the elements of the large ones. Lead paragraph and mid-page headline—this time on white—recall the design of the opening spread.



Same three elements, smaller space, same look

Once you've established a look, stay with it. In this section, the catalog restructures and reduces the look of full-size sections into smaller spaces—lead paragraph, environmental photo, product photo and rectangular callouts all are here. Type styles, sizes and colors remain the same as before. Very strong continuity, beautifully done.



**Crop uniformly** Left, photos that are almost the same should always be cropped the same. Here, heads and wheels align.





## Versatile rectangles

Accessories section contains products of varying sizes, shapes and caption lengths. Rectangles do a good job of holding it all together. Careful alignment is key.



## Mind the details

Consistent typography, irregular “interrupters” and gray space fillers keep the spread lively and the design flexible. Gray type recedes, keeping the products center stage.





## Typefaces

Four styles of [Benton Sans Condensed](#) are used in this product catalog:

- Benton Sans Condensed Book
- Benton Sans Condensed Regular
- Benton Sans Condensed Medium
- Benton Sans Condensed Bold

## Credits

Segway, Inc. & Saltworks, Inc., Designers  
Bob Carey, Photographer

## Special thanks to Segway dealer

Norris Rancourt of Carmichael Honda in Carmichael, California ([www.carmichaelhonda.com](http://www.carmichaelhonda.com)) for giving us the extended demonstration.

## Subscribe to Before & After

Subscribe to Before & After, and become a more capable, confident designer for pennies per article. To learn more, go to

<http://www.bamagazine.com/Subscribe>

## E-mail this article

To pass along a free copy of this article to others, [click here](#).

## Join our e-list

To be notified by e-mail of new articles as they become available, go to <http://www.bamagazine.com/email>

## Before & After magazine

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

## Before & After magazine

323 Lincoln Street, Roseville, CA 95678

Telephone 916-784-3880

Fax 916-784-3995

E-mail [mailbox@bamagazine.com](mailto:mailbox@bamagazine.com)

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

## Copyright ©2007 Before & After magazine

ISSN 1049-0035. All rights reserved

You may pass along a free copy of this article to others by clicking [here](#). You may not alter this article, and you may not charge for it. You may quote brief sections for review; please credit Before & After magazine, and [let us know](#). To link Before & After magazine to your Web site, use this URL: <http://www.bamagazine.com>. For all other permissions, [please contact us](#).