

AMERICAN EXPRESS

# HOME PAGE GUIDELINES

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MARCH 2013

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## Objective

All our communications support a single brand objective: to drive the growth of American Express with a consistent, engaging identity that conveys the power of membership and our legendary commitment to superior service.

Among all the channels people use to interact with us, the home page is uniquely important. It establishes our tone, pace and visual expression in the digital world—and it has to do it nearly instantaneously.

These guidelines provide comprehensive information and useful tools for making an immediate, lasting first impression that supports our masterbrand objective.

# Ten Principles of the Home Page

## 1. BE A BRAND AMBASSADOR

Follow the American Express Global Corporate Identity Guidelines (available on the iGuide and Brand Site), along with these home page guidelines, to ensure a positive and consistent Cardmember experience.

## 2. KEEP IT SIMPLE

Communicate a single message using focused imagery and the approved layout (type, actionable and easy-to-locate CTA, negative space, etc.) that allows for legibility within a 3-second window.

## 3. AIM FOR CONSISTENCY

Each hero is unique, but type treatment and button style will be the thread of consistency that allows Cardmembers to easily locate CTAs.

## 4. LEAVE AN IMPRESSION

Use brand approved photography and color blending to create a dynamic background and ensure a unique, authentic home page experience. Imagery must always relate to the message and be customized or unique to American Express. Avoid staged or stock photography, unless exclusive rights are secured.

## 5. AVOID FLAT COLOR

Create an engaging hero by eliminating large areas of flat color.

## 6. BALANCE THE COMPOSITION

Consider fixed assets like iNav and the login when creating balanced compositions. Keep the focal point of the layout slightly off-center to the right to accommodate the left alignment of the login.

## 7. BE EXPANSIVE

Extend imagery or texture out to infinity on both sides. When the page is viewed on large monitors, the hero should always span the space.

## 8. BE TASTEFUL

There should be a consistent tone of sophistication to the visual direction of each hero.

## 9. MAKE IT SCANNABLE

Make a big impact in as few words as possible. All copy must be readable within a 3-second window. Subheadings should be clear, concise and support the headline message.

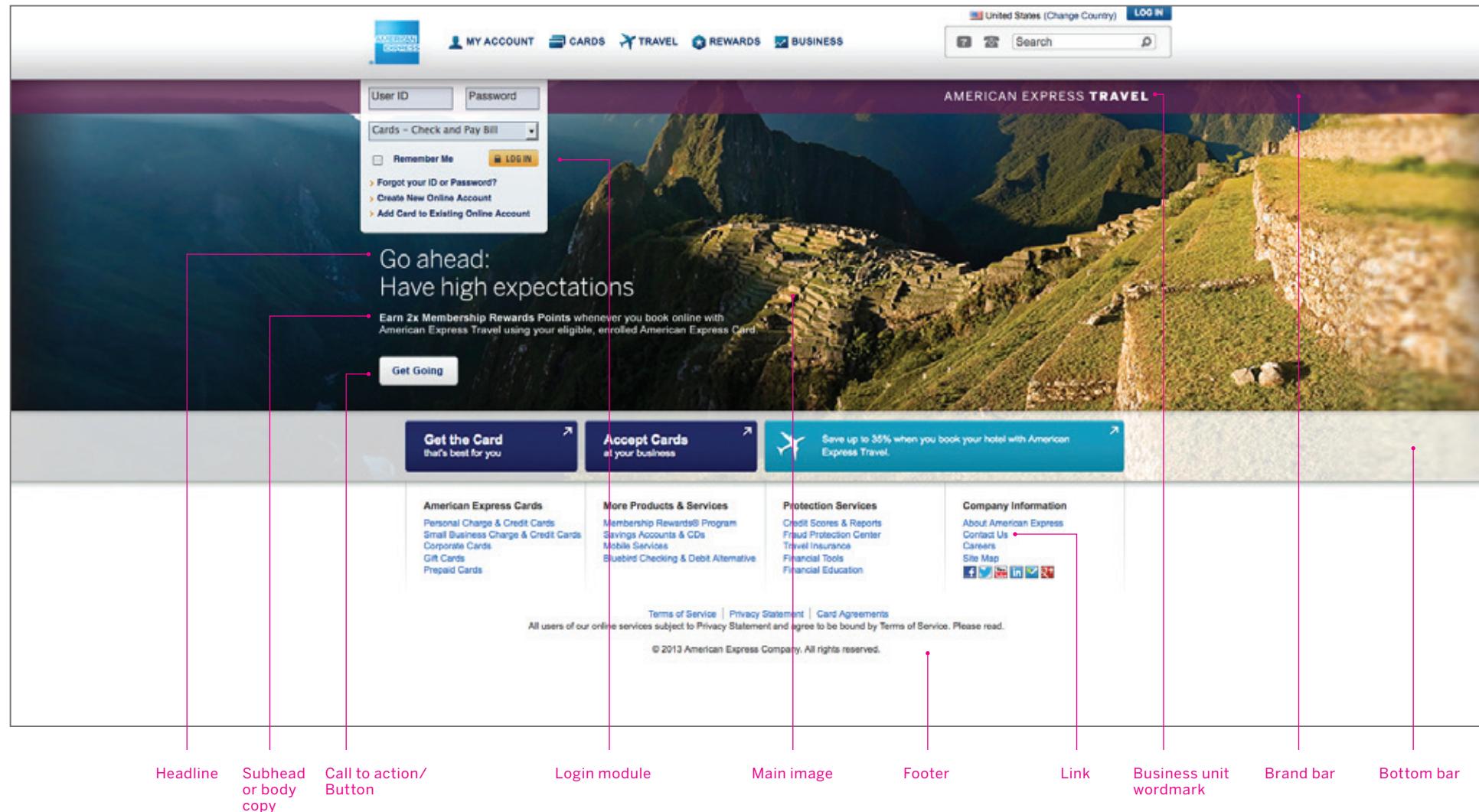
## 10. SAY ONE THING WELL

Tone should always be warm and direct. Avoid superfluous "markety" language. Multiple calls to action may only be used when supporting usability (e.g., "Download iPhone App" & "Download Android App"). Keep character counts to a minimum by focusing on a clear message.

# SECTION 1

# Layout

# Anatomy of the Home Page



Headline

Subhead or body copy

Call to action/ Button

Login module

Main image

Footer

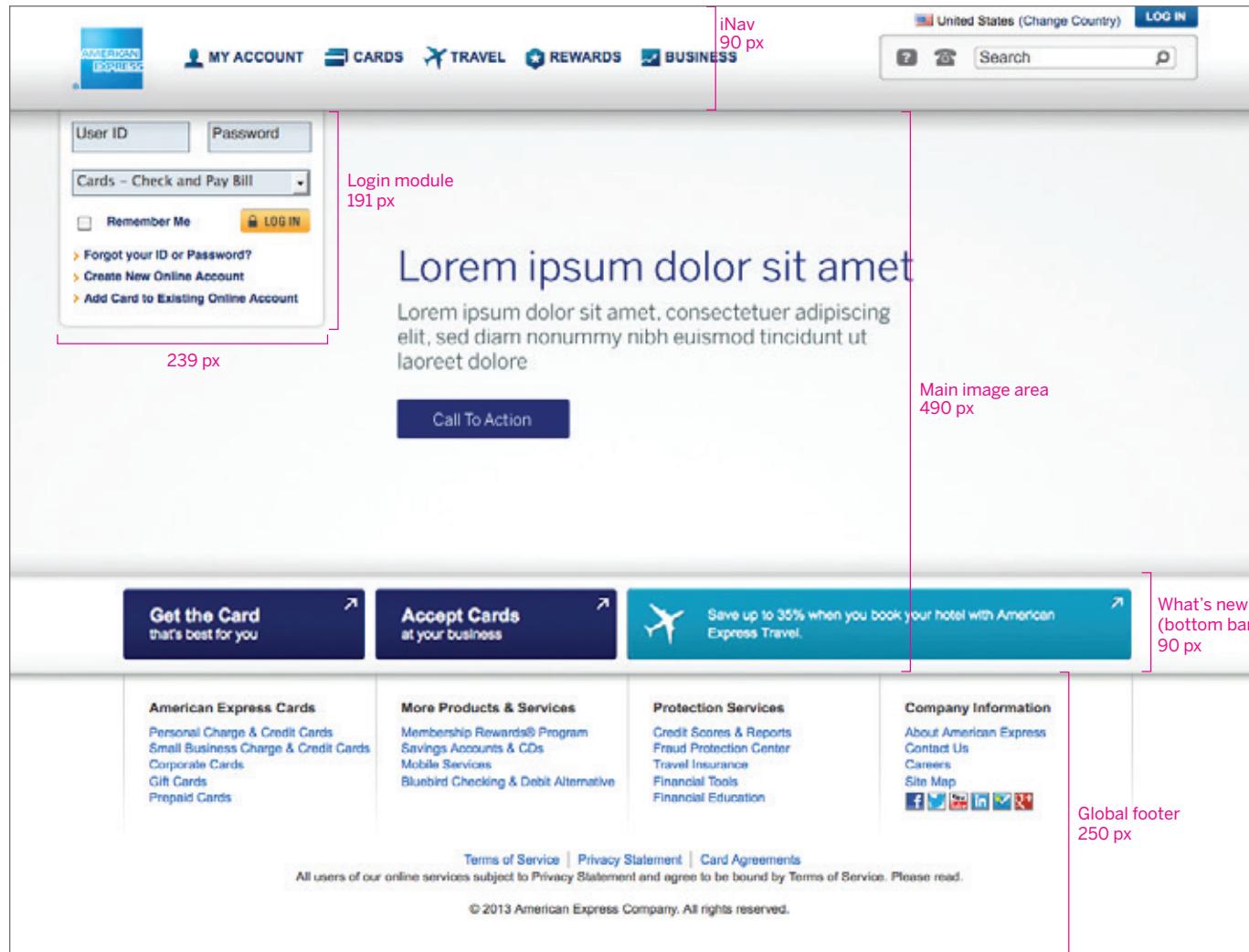
Link

Business unit wordmark

Brand bar

Bottom bar

# Home Page Layout



The American Express home page comprises five parts:

**The main image area**—The main image area contains all promotional messaging (headlines, sub-headlines, calls to action) as well as the supporting imagery or graphics.

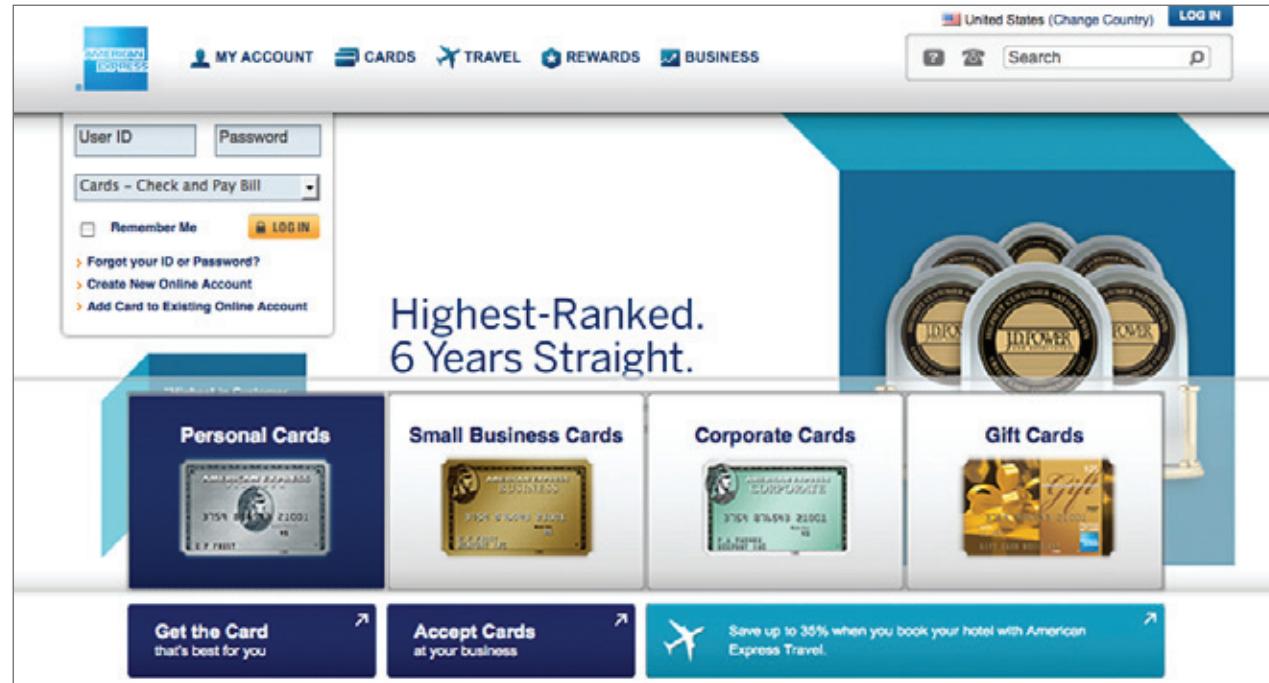
**The login module**—The login module always layers over the main image area on the upper-left side of the home page. Dimensions include the drop shadow. Always follow the clear space guidelines on page 9.

**What's new (bottom bar)**—The bottom bar contains persistent call-to-action items and promotions, and always layers over the main image area.

**The iNav**—The iNav is always present and should never be modified.

**The global footer**—The global footer is always present and should never be modified.

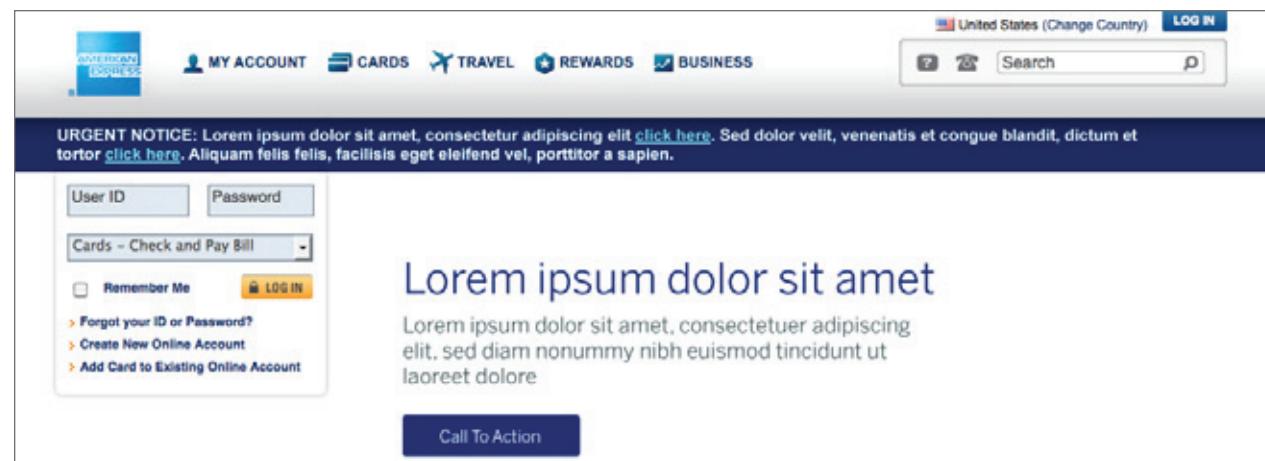
## Home Page Layout Expanded View



The expanded bottom bar is a semi-transparent layer across the bottom of the main image area. It contains pop-out buttons to get cards, accept cards (merchant services) and to see a scrolling list of current promotional offers. At rest, the bottom bar's height is approximately 90 pixels. When expanded, its height is 265 pixels.

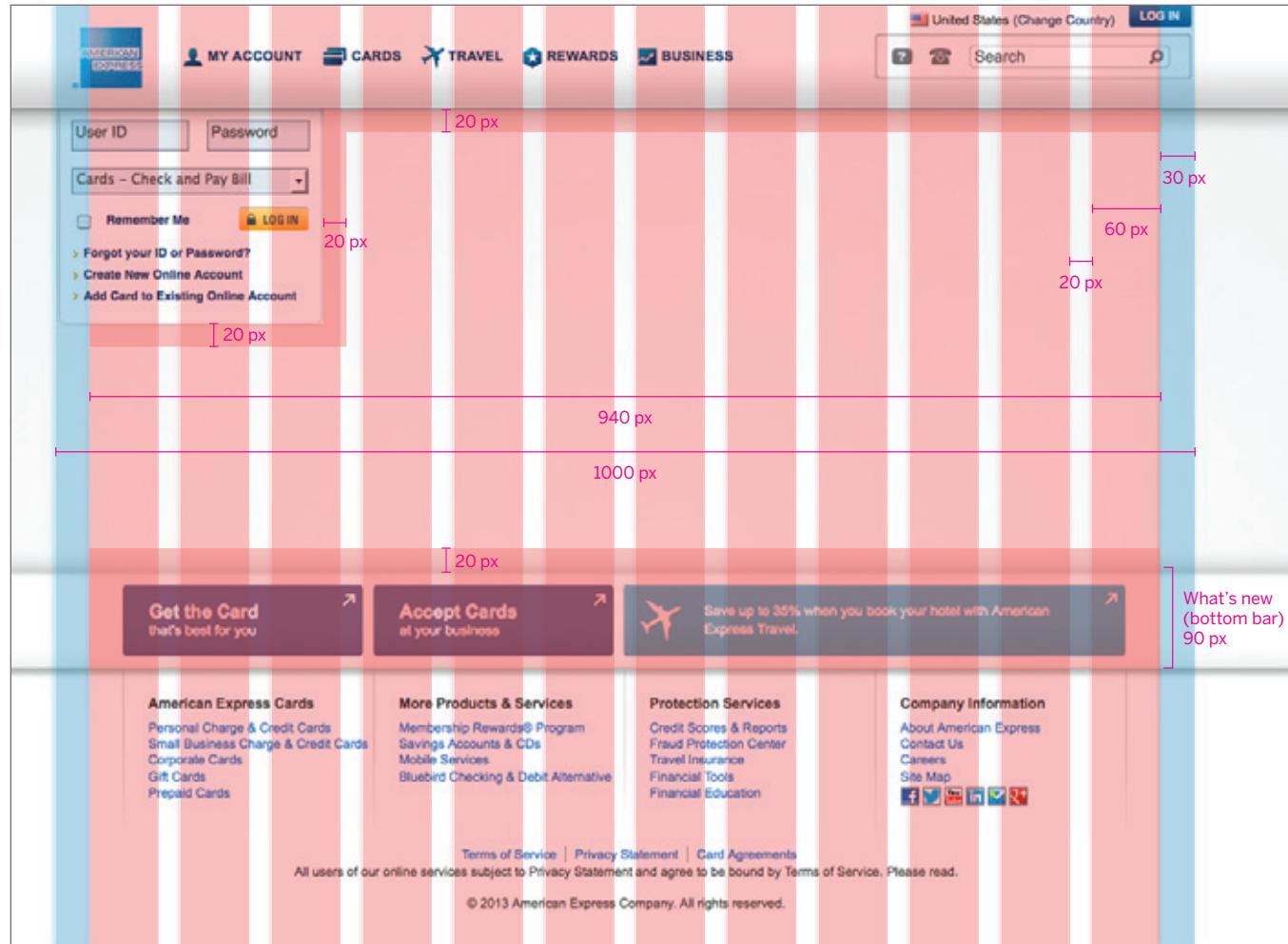
Expanded bottom bar  
265 px

What's new  
(bottom bar)  
90 px



The alert bar is a solid layer that appears between the iNav and the top of the main image area when emergency alerts need to be posted on the home page. The main image area, login, bottom bar and footer shift down by 47 pixels to accommodate the alert bar.

# Grid and Clear Space



## GRID

All content adheres to a 12-column grid, which is centered to the iNav. The grid organizes elements on the page, simplifies design and creates continuity with interior pages. The total width of home page content is 1000 pixels, divided into 12 60-pixel columns with 20-pixel gutters and 30-pixel outer margins.

## CLEAR SPACE

To ensure clarity and legibility on the page, maintain sufficient clear space around iNav, calls to action and the login box.

Only the brand bar and full-bleed imagery and graphics may overlap the defined clear space. Headlines, copy, calls to action and the main image focus should not violate the clear space.

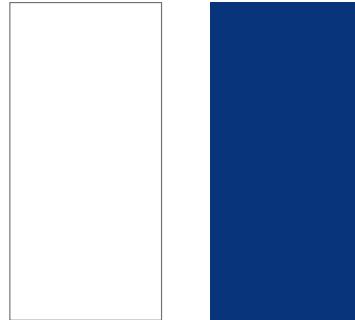
Login module may expand down to accommodate alerts or additional links. Try to avoid placing important information below the login module as it may be covered.

SECTION 2

# Visual Elements

# Primary Color Palette Overview

## PRIMARY COLORS



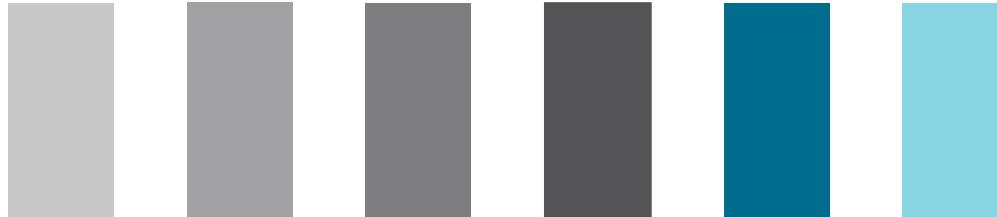
Usage	Primary background color	Headlines
Palette color	White	AE Core Blue
HTML color	#FFFFFF	#002663

Home page creative represents the American Express enterprise and its specific business units. To maintain consistency, the home page's primary color palette is limited to Core Blue, white and grays. For text on light backgrounds, use Core Blue for headlines and Text Gray for copy.

Use Dark Aqua for links only. Light Aqua is for limited use on dark backgrounds only.

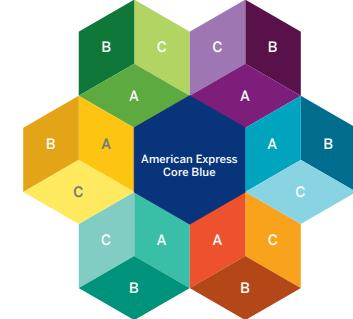
Colors from individual business unit or partner placement palettes may be used as accents to Core Blue and gray. Do not use business unit or partner colors for headlines, subheads, body copy or calls to action.

## SECONDARY COLORS



Usage	Icons and buttons	Icons and buttons	Icons and buttons	Text	Links	Links (only on dark backgrounds)
Palette color	Light Gray	Gray	Dark Gray	Text Gray	Dark Aqua	Light Aqua
HTML color	#ADAFAF	#8B8D8E	#4D4F53	#222222	#006890	#90D7E7

## BUSINESS UNIT ACCENT COLORS



For specific guidelines on which colors are available for a particular business unit, refer to that business unit's individual sub-identity guidelines.

# Color and Accessibility

## 12 PT AND BELOW (TEXT)

Backgrounds	Typography on backgrounds					
	White	AE Core Blue	Text Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Aqua	Light Aqua
White #FFFFFF		#002663	#222222	#4D4F53	#006890	
Digital Gray #EAEBEB		#002663	#222222	#4D4F53	#006890	
AE Core Blue #002663	#FFFFFF					#90D7E7

## 18 PT AND ABOVE

Backgrounds	Typography on backgrounds						
	White	AE Core Blue	Text Gray	Dark Gray	Gray	Dark Aqua	Light Aqua
White #FFFFFF		#002663	#222222	#4D4F53	#8B8D8E	#006890	
Digital Gray #EAEBEB		#002663	#222222	#4D4F53			
AE Core Blue #002663	#FFFFFF						#90D7E7

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires a high visual contrast between typography and backgrounds. In addition, American Express requires accessibility compatible contrast ratios for typography. To maintain adequate accessibility:

- Use Core Blue for headlines on light backgrounds.
- Use Text Gray for body copy on light backgrounds.
- Use Dark Aqua for links on light backgrounds only.
- Use Light Aqua for links on dark backgrounds only.

Only the color combinations shown are approved for use for typography on the American Express home page.

Always refer to individual business unit toolkits and partner guidelines for color accessibility specifications.

For specific guidelines on which colors are available for a particular business unit, refer to that business unit's individual sub-identity guidelines.

# Typography

## PRIMARY TYPEFACE

Use for headlines and subheads

**Benton Sans Medium**

Benton Sans Regular

Benton Sans Light

## SYSTEM FONT

**Arial Bold**

Arial Regular

Benton Sans is our primary typeface. It is the approved font for all headlines, subheads, body copy and calls to action on the American Express site. When Benton Sans is unavailable, specify Arial as the substitute font.

Use of all caps is limited to approved headline treatments that are part of a sub-branded business unit identity. Limit to two lines of copy.

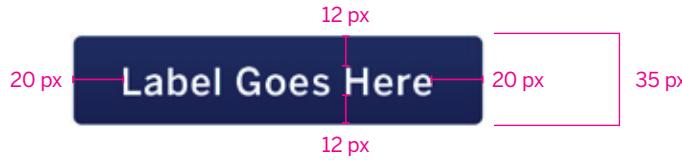
Each agency is responsible for purchasing the 6 weights of Benton Sans that are outlined in the Global Brand Guidelines. Please go to [www.fontbureau.com](http://www.fontbureau.com) to purchase.

	EXAMPLE	COLORS	TYPE SPECS
HEADLINE/TITLE	<b> Lorem ipsum dolor</b>	AE Core Blue #002663	Benton Sans Light, Book, Regular 20–28 pt
SUBHEAD/ BODY COPY	<b> Lorem ipsum dolor sit</b>	Dark Gray #4D4F53	Benton Sans Regular or <b>Bold</b> 12–18 pt
CALL-TO-ACTION BUTTON	<b> Lorem Ipsum Dolor Sit Amet</b> <b> Lorem Ipsum Dolor Sit Amet</b>	AE Core Blue #002663  White #FFFFFF	Benton Sans Medium 14 pt
LINKS	<b> Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet conse</b>  <b> Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet conse</b>	Dark Aqua #006890  Light Aqua #90D7E7	Benton Sans Regular or <b>Bold</b> 12–18 pt
LEGAL TEXT	<b> Lorem ipsum consectetur adipis</b>	Text Gray #222222	Benton Sans Regular or <b>Bold</b> 10 pt

# Call-to-Action Buttons

## STANDARD CALL-TO-ACTION BUTTONS

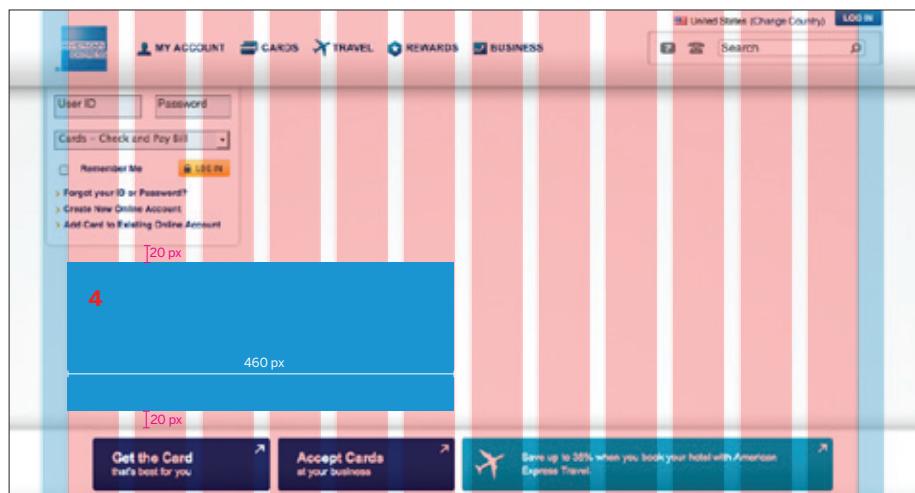
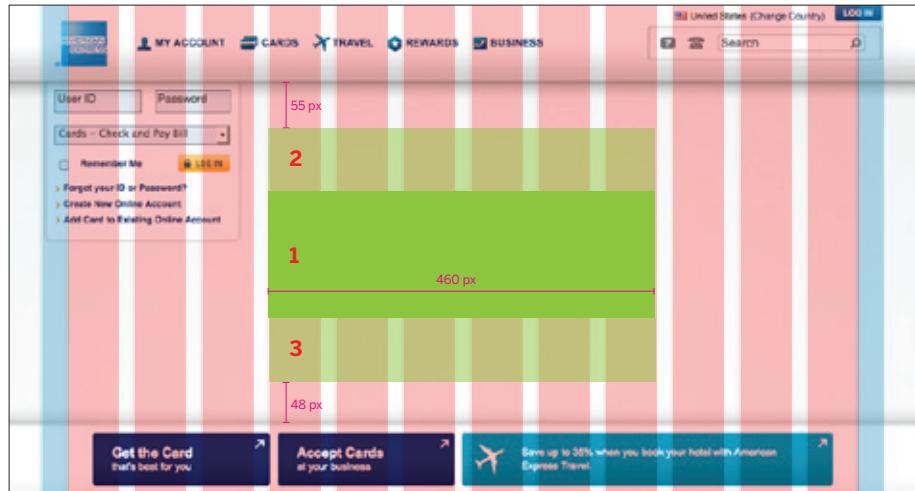
	EXAMPLE	TYPE	GRADIENT, NORMAL STATE	GRADIENT, PRESSED STATE
PRIMARY ACTION ON LIGHT BACKGROUND	<b>Label Goes Here</b>	Benton Sans Medium, 14 px, #FFFFFF	Linear, 90°, align with layer 0%, #063682— 100%, #002663	Linear, 90°, align with layer 0%, #002464— 100%, #033384
PRIMARY ACTION ON DARK BACKGROUND	<b>Label Goes Here</b>	Benton Sans Medium, 14 px, #002663	Linear, 90°, align with layer 0%, #DEDfdf— 100%, #F7F7F7	Linear, 90°, align with layer 0%, #EAEBEB— 100%, #FFFFFF
SECONDARY ACTION	<b>Label Goes Here</b>	Benton Sans Medium, 14 px, #FFFFFF	Linear, 90°, align with layer 0%, #6F7173— 100%, #222222	Linear, 90°, align with layer 0%, #4D4F53— 100%, #8B8D8E



Buttons are most impactful when they convey a message that ties them to headlines. For consistency, only two colors are available for primary action buttons: the Core Blue gradient for light backgrounds, and the Gray gradient for dark backgrounds. Button copy should always appear in title case.

See the voice and messaging section for guidance on button language.

# Copy Alignment



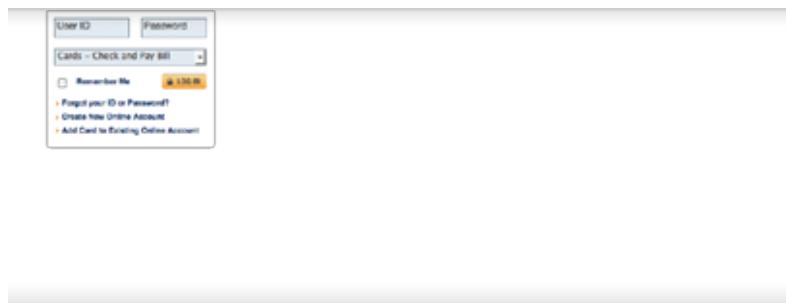
Placement of home page copy (headlines, subheads, body copy and calls to action) must align to the grid and adhere to clear space specifications. To provide flexibility on the page, there are 4 approved copy placement options:

- Option 1 (preferred): Copy is vertically centered and left-aligned to the grid's 4th column. The layout can adjust to accommodate content, but copy is always centered
- Option 2: Copy is top-aligned, 55 pixels below the bottom of iNav, and left-aligned to the grid's 4th column. Copy should never sit above this point
- Option 3: Copy is bottom-aligned, 48 pixels above top of the bottom bar, and left-aligned to the grid's 4th column. Copy should never sit below this point
- Option 4: Copy begins 20 pixels below the login box and is left-aligned to the grid's 1st column

Login module may expand down to accommodate alerts or additional links. Try to avoid placing important information below the login module as it may be covered.

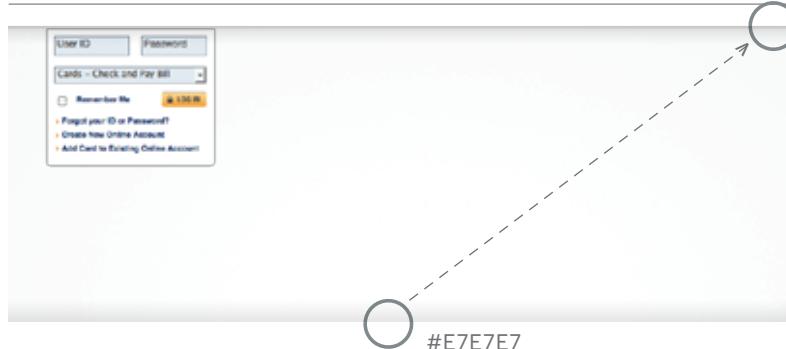
# Background and Color

## WHITE BACKGROUND



White  
#FFFFFF

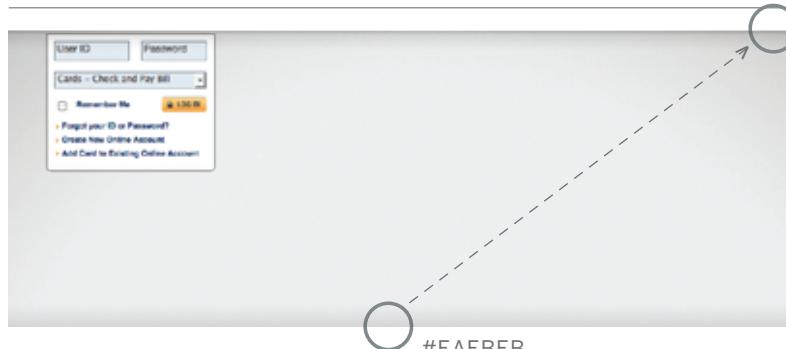
## LIGHT GRAY GRADIENT



#EAEBEB

Light Gray gradient:  
Location: 100% #EAEBEB  
Location: 57% #F7F7F7  
Style: Radial, 90°  
Scale: 115%

## DARK GRAY GRADIENT



#ADAFAF

Dark Gray gradient:  
Location: 100% #ADAFAF  
Location: 57% #EAEBEB  
Style: Radial, 90°  
Scale: 115%

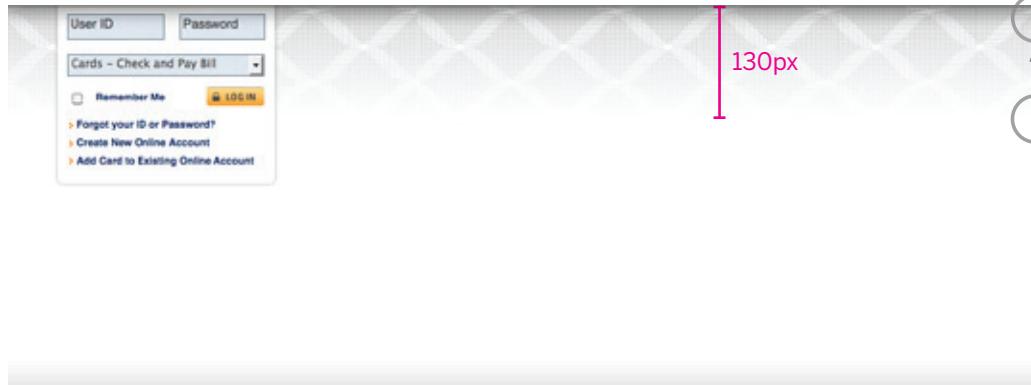
## BACKGROUND

As an alternative to using a background image, use 1 of 3 approved color backgrounds (white, Light Gray gradient, Dark Gray gradient). When using grays, gradation moves diagonally from the bottom center (lightest) toward the top-right corner (darkest) of a 1000-pixel grid.

To ensure accessibility compatible layouts on a Dark Gray gradient, place typography in only the approved layout areas. See page 16.

# Backgrounds and Patterns

## ENTERPRISE NEUTRAL GRAY PATTERN FADE AND DIMENSIONS



- #D6D7D7  
(50% tint of Light Gray  
#ADAFAF)
- #FFFFFF  
White

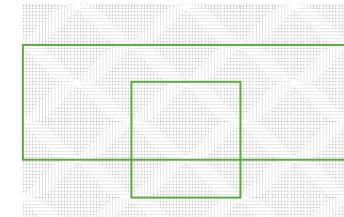
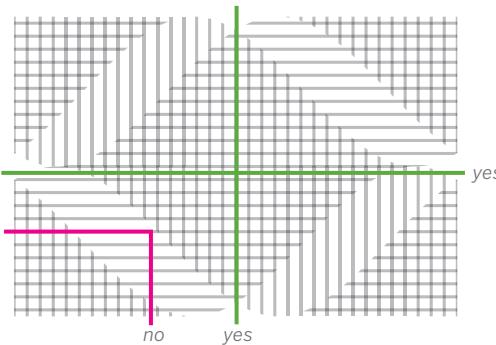
The Enterprise pattern is approved for background use on the home page. A business unit should always use its approved pattern, however, business units without an individual pattern may use the Enterprise pattern.

Color patterns are approved for home page use, although the Gray Enterprise pattern is preferred for its subtlety. Patterns may be paired with photography, but should never interfere or compete with the focus of an image.

Always use approved pattern art and do not alter the art (color or scale).

Refer to the Examples section for usage (see page 38).

## CROPPING THE ENTERPRISE PATTERN



Always crop on the seam between the repeating elements (the center of the "X") and not in the middle of the pattern. The above shows acceptablecroppings.

## ALTERNATE PATTERN OPTIONS



ENTERPRISE MULTICOLOR PATTERN

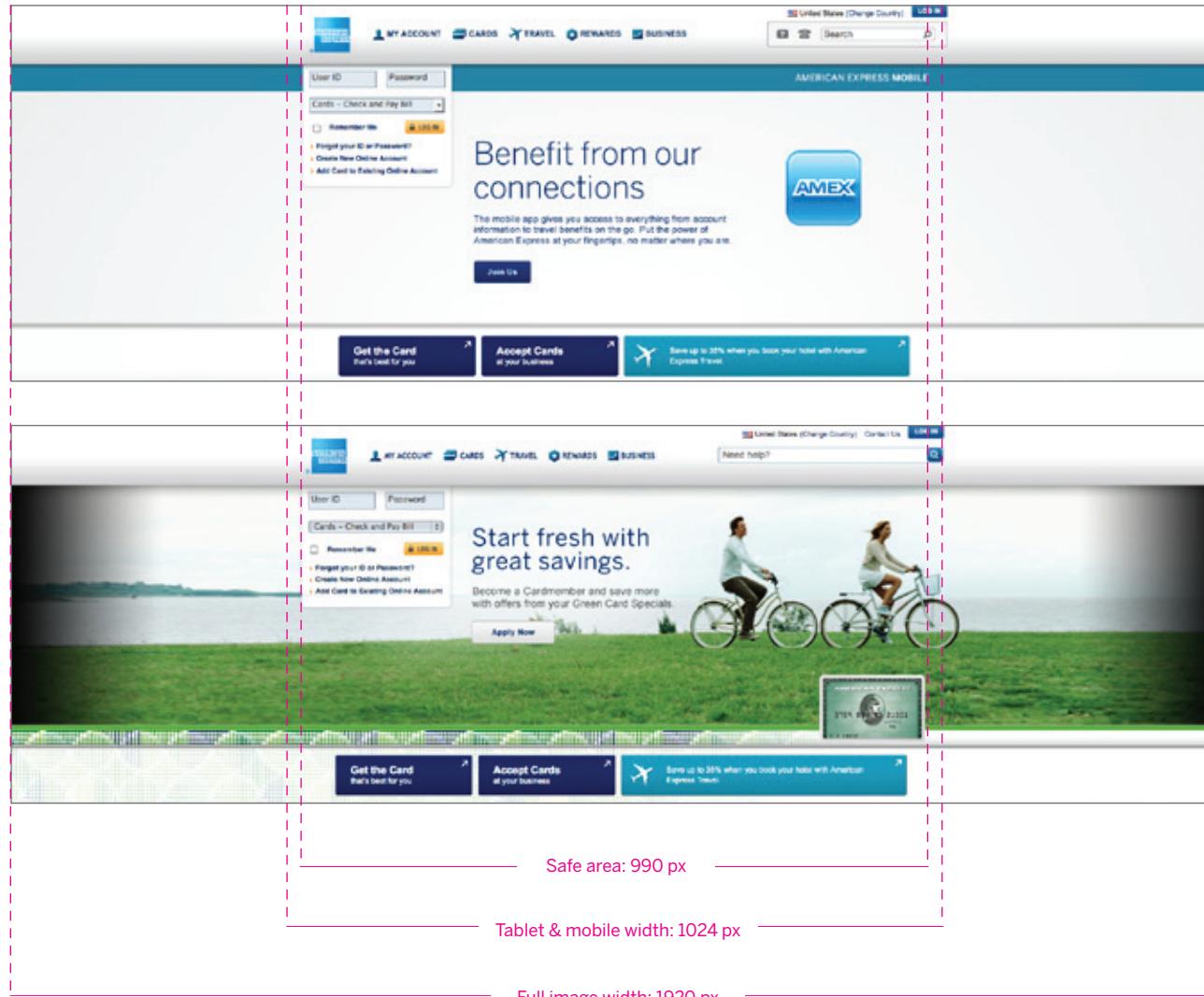


ENTERPRISE GRAY & BLUE PATTERN



ENTERPRISE BLUE PATTERN

# Expanding the Background Pattern



Pattern art should repeat to extend horizontally across the full width of the browser window. When layering a pattern over an image, the scale should remain consistent as the browser window expands, and the pattern should always span the full width, even as the image fades.

## Pattern Don'ts



Don't use the Enterprise pattern at diagonal angles. The pattern should only be used at horizontal and vertical angles.



Don't turn the Enterprise pattern at a 90-degree angle.



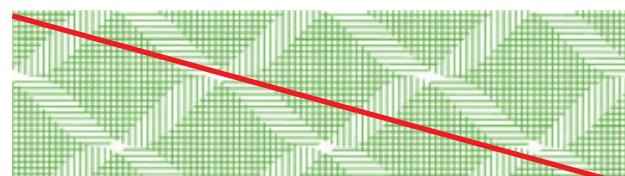
Don't crop the pattern in the wrong place.



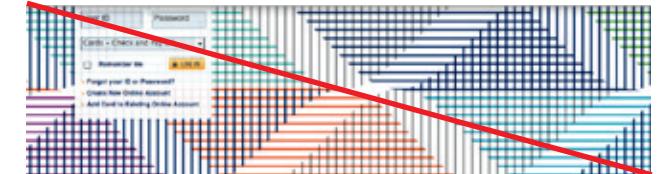
Don't place type over the Enterprise pattern.



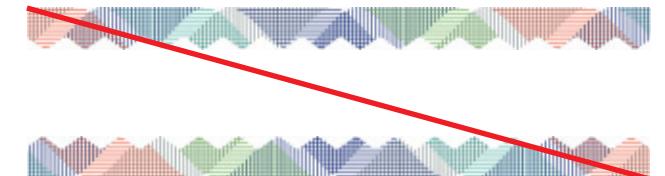
Don't tint the pattern in the digital space so much that it appears pastel.



Don't use the Enterprise pattern in any other color combinations than specified, even if the color exists in the American Express color palette.



Don't fill the entire main image area with the pattern.



Don't use a shape to mask the pattern.

## Photography Overview

The home page is our window to the world. As such, it should feature unique imagery that supports messages and enhances the reader's engagement with headlines and copy. If stock images are used, they should be cropped in a new and interesting way, and never look staged or cliché. Cropping should always place focal points right of center. Homepage photography should represent our audience's diversity. Never select images that foster stereotypes.

Exclusivity rights must be purchased for the duration of a stock photograph's appearance on the home page.

SPONTANEITY	CROP	DETAIL	SELECTIVE FOCUS
			

Photographs should feel candid, unposed and immediate, capturing people engaged in real-life activities, not looking at the camera.

Framing a photograph in unexpected and unusual ways can make an image feel more engaging by playing with scale and negative space.

Focusing in on a specific element of an image draws the viewer in and puts emphasis where you want it.

Selective focus accentuates depth and dimension to help a straightforward image feel active and balanced.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE PHOTOS ARE USED HERE FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY; AMERICAN EXPRESS DOES NOT OWN EXTERNAL USAGE RIGHTS. TO USE ANY OF THESE SPECIFIC IMAGES, PLEASE CONTACT THE BRAND IDENTITY TEAM TO PURCHASE THE RIGHTS FROM THE STOCK PHOTO AGENCY THAT HOLDS THEM.**

## Photography Do's



Aim for a balance of male and female images.



Use simple compositions with a clear subject.



Use selective focus to ensure quick recognition of the image's subject.



Use imagery that illustrates concepts in everyday life. This approach uses situations or objects to illustrate the symbolic meaning behind them.



Use imagery that supports the home page hero's message (e.g., a food image to enhance a restaurant description).



Use images which highlight a sense of self-discovery and new experiences.

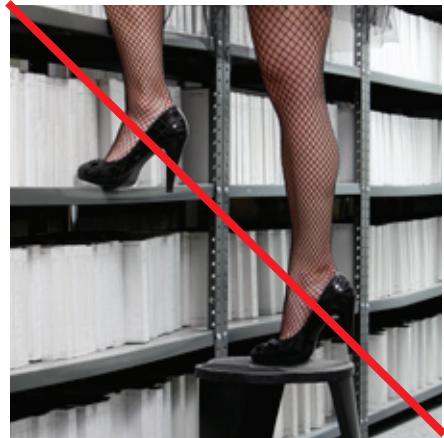


Use unexpected cropping to create tension within the photograph and immerse the viewer in it. This encourages the viewer to imagine something greater, outside the boundaries of the frame.



Do capture moments through individuals and groups, painting an enticing picture of the environment and lifestyle of American Express Cardmembers.

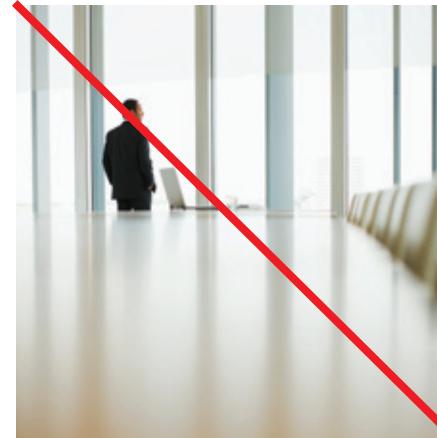
## Photography Don'ts



Don't choose photography that crops people in a suggestive manner.



Don't pick photography that does not tell a story or relate to the product or screen.



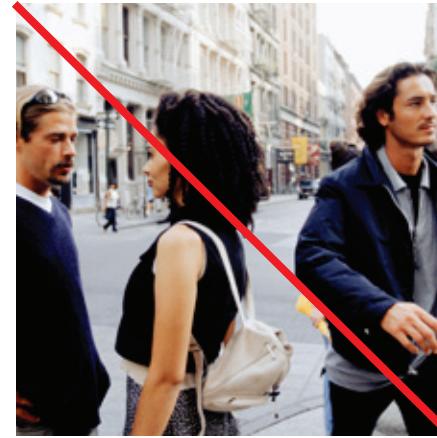
Don't use photography where the subject is too small to see clearly.



Don't use images that show outdated technology.



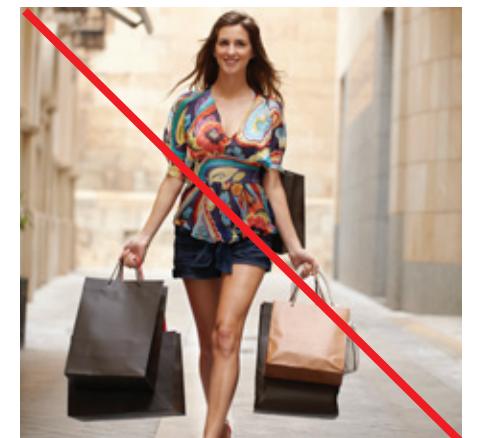
Don't choose photography that is obvious, banal or overused.



Don't choose photography that has multiple points of focus or a busy background.



Don't overuse travel photography. Only use it in applications where the story is based on travel.

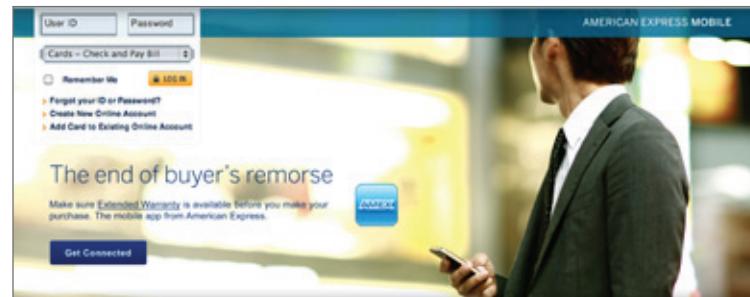


Don't use stereotypical or frivolous images such as a woman shopping, lounging or stretching.

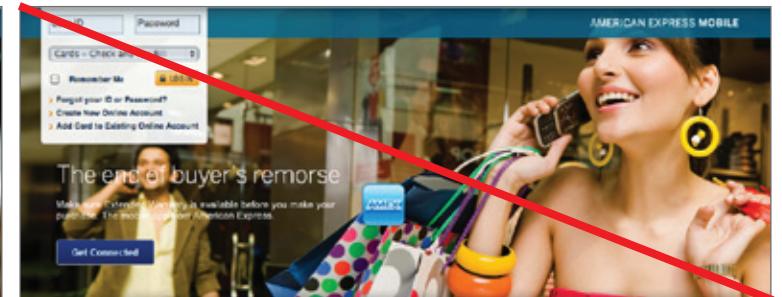
## Photography Before & After

- Emphasize diversity when selecting photography
- Backgrounds should be simple to ensure the legibility of headlines and subheadings
- Avoid images portraying stereotypes of women

**Try:**



**Instead of:**



- Photography should feature objects and people in natural settings and real life situations
- Never choose photography that feels staged or looks like free stock photography

**Try:**



**Instead of:**



- Photographs should be framed in unexpected and engaging ways
- Don't select photography that has unnatural lighting or reflections

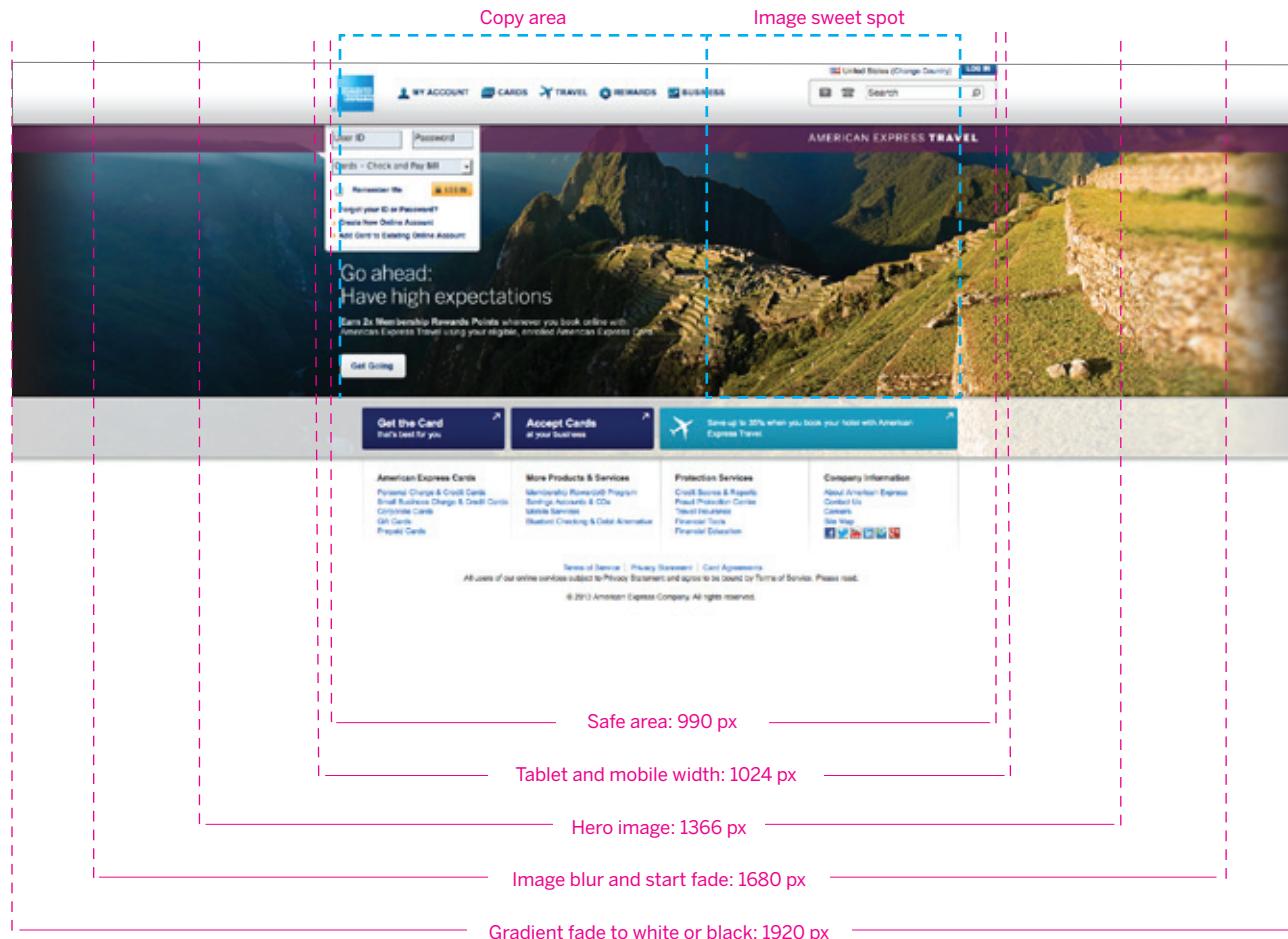
**Try:**



**Instead of:**



# Anatomy of the Hero Image



The “hero” image visually anchors the home page. When using a full-bleed, panoramic hero image, blur light images to white and dark images to black, to create a sophisticated, expressive image with a subtle sense of movement.

**Hero image area**—the original image must fill this area.

**Image sweet spot**—the image’s focus sits right of center to draw the viewer’s eye away from the login box and to allow enough clear space for typography.

**Image blur**—created in Photoshop, this effect keeps the focus on the hero image area and softens transitions.

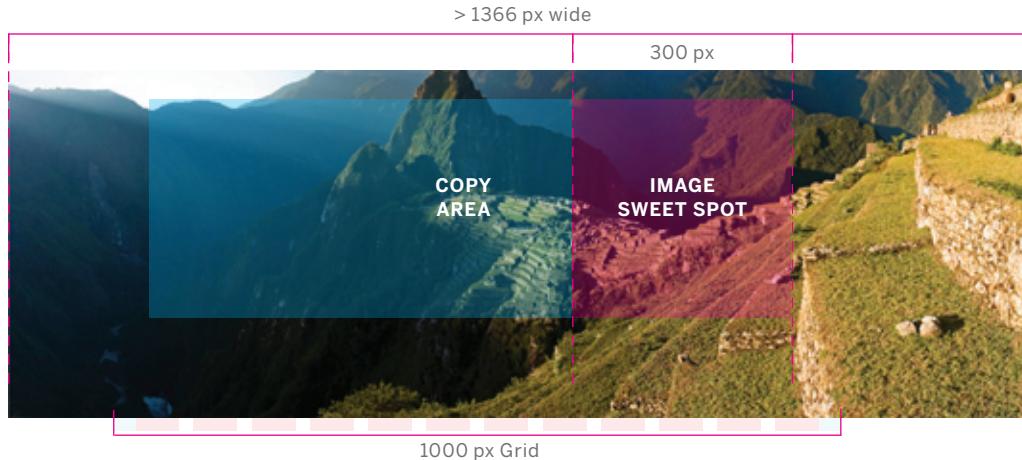
**Gradient fade**—for light images fade to solid white, and for dark images fade to solid black.

**Copy area**—a simple area within the hero image that allows for maximum legibility.

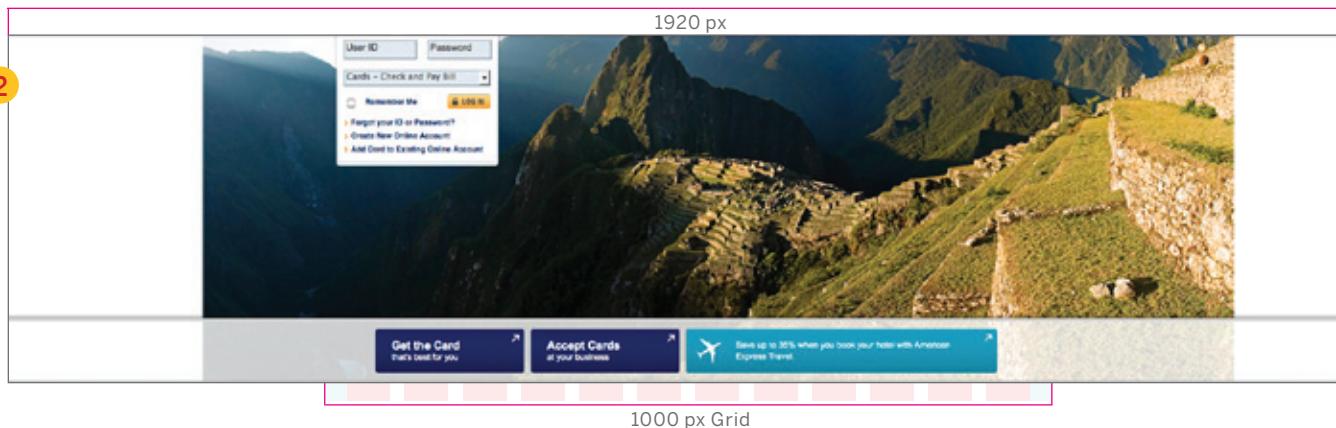
**Tablet and mobile**—the area of the home page that is visible on small screens. The hero image will be cropped to a width of 1024 px in tablet and mobile experiences.

# How to Create a Hero Image Image Selection

1



2



## STEP 1

Select an image that meets American Express photography or illustration criteria. Make sure that:

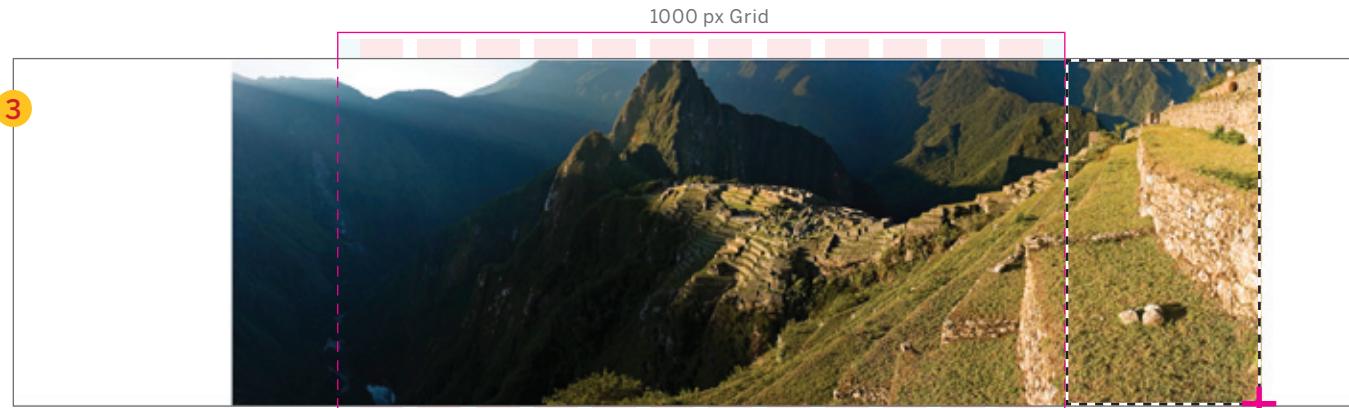
- The original photo is at least 1366 pixels wide and 490 pixels high (crop to 490 pixels high if necessary)
- The subject falls in the image's sweet spot (centered in the 5 right-most grid columns)
- The image must be simple enough to ensure that the headline, body copy and calls to action are legible

## STEP 2

Set the image on the 1920-pixel-canvas. Image placement should be informed by the alignment of the bottom bar and login module. For headline placement guidelines, see page 16.

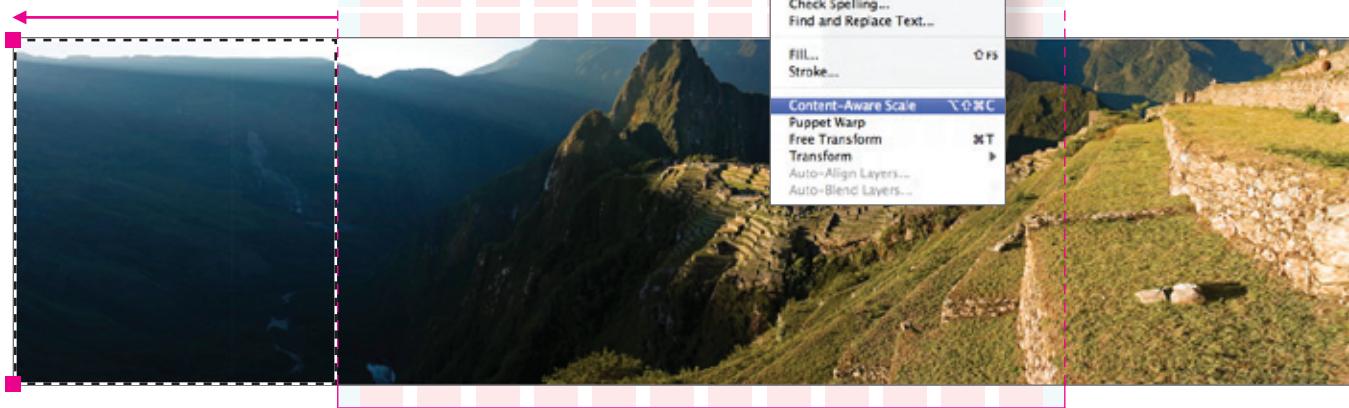
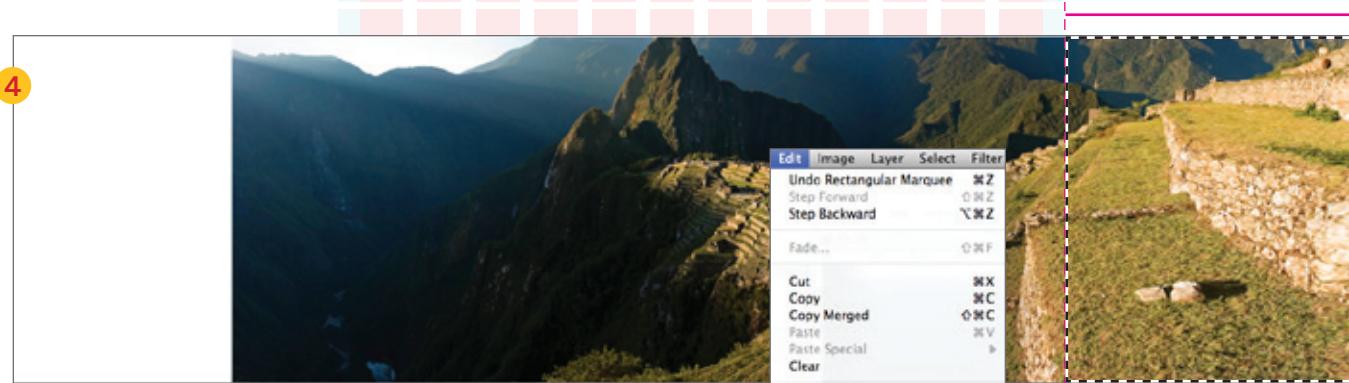
If the image fills the entire 1920 px canvas, you may skip steps 3–4 (see page 27).

## How to Create a Hero Image Extending the Background



### STEP 3

Using the rectangular marquee selection tool, select the right-hand part of the background image from the edge of the 1000 px grid to the end of the image. Make sure that you only select background areas of the image, not the subject. The larger the background area is, the more natural the end result will be.

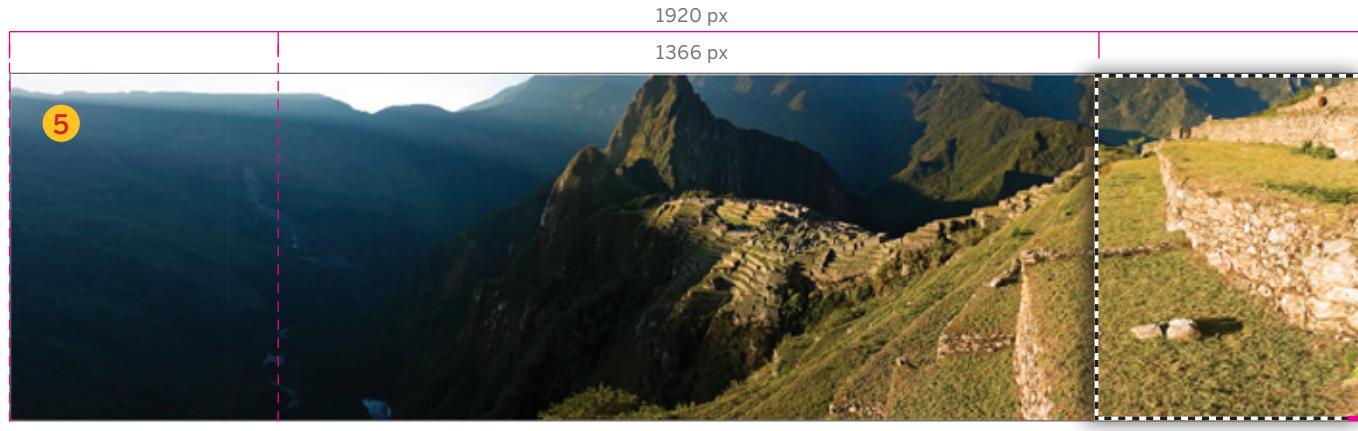


### STEP 4

Select edit>Content Aware Scale. Pull the anchor points until the image becomes elongated without looking distorted, preferably to the end of the 1920 px image area. The image should look natural and not edited. Use the cloning tool to remove objects in the background that may get distorted.

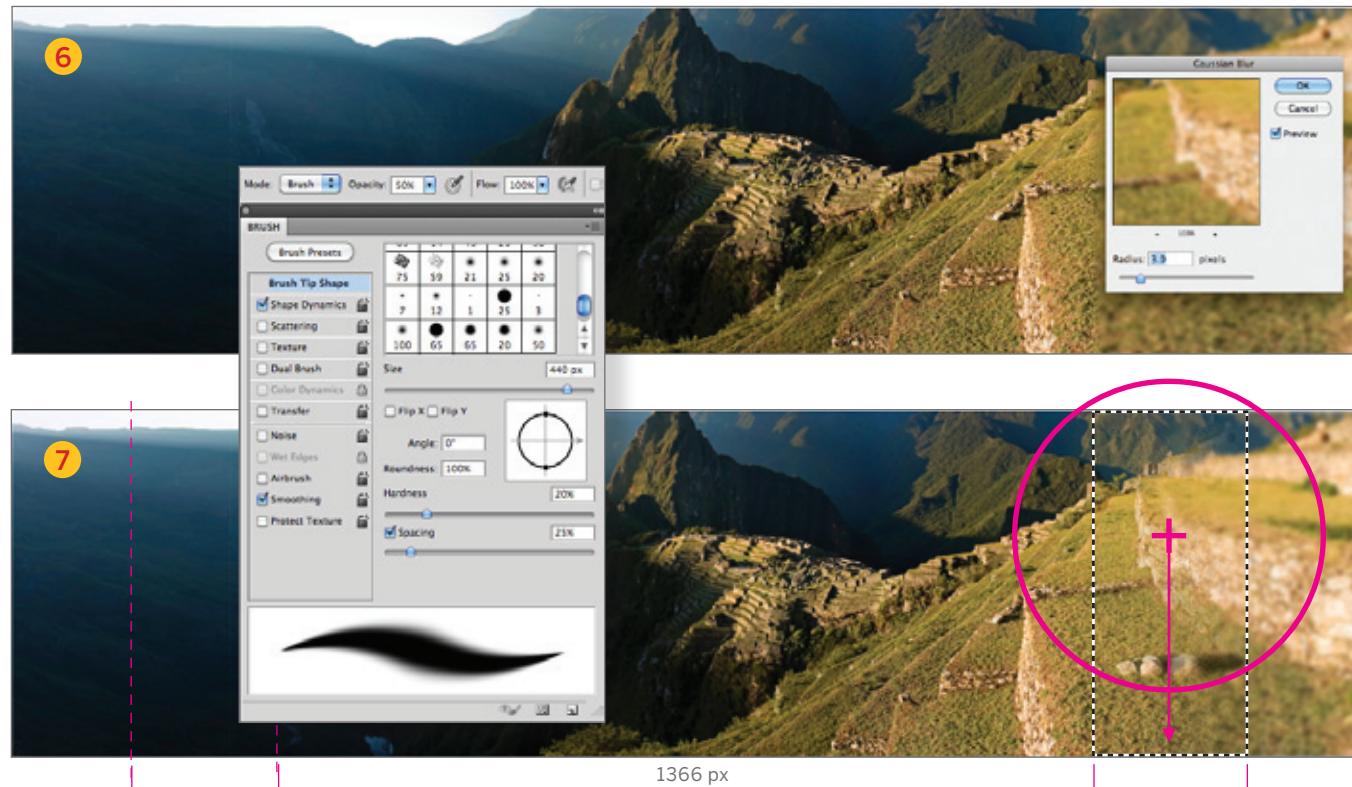
**REPEAT STEPS 3 AND 4**  
on the left side of the image.

## How to Create a Hero Image Blending the Image Edges



### STEP 5

Select from the edge of the 1366 px area to the 1920 px area of the image and duplicate the selection onto a new layer.



### STEP 6

With the new layer selected, select Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Choose a radius of 3.0 px and apply it to your selection.

### STEP 7

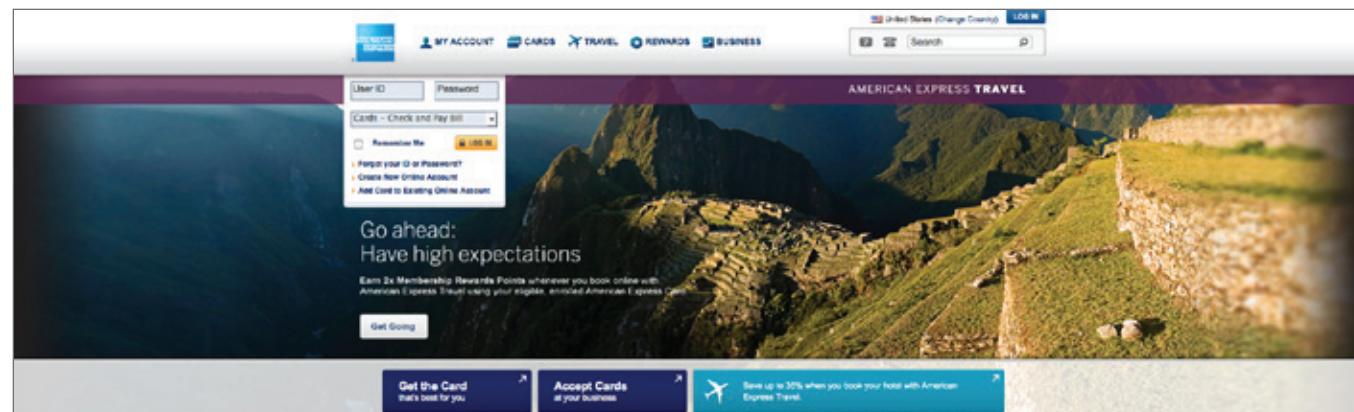
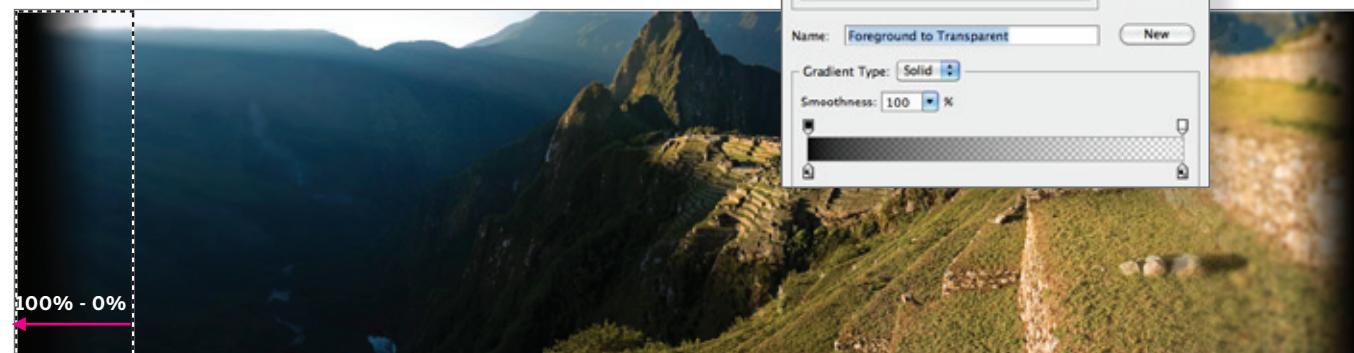
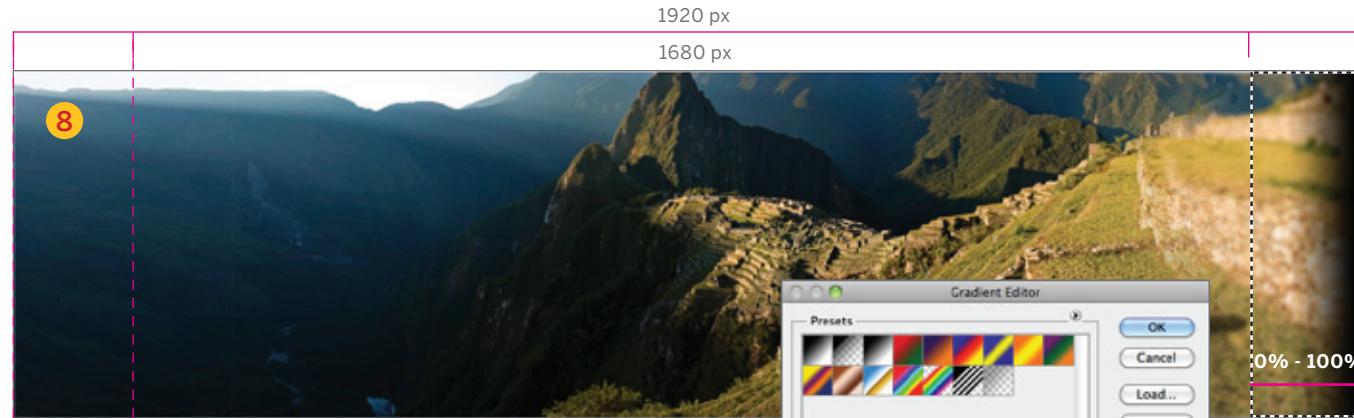
With the new layer selected, select the eraser from the tool palette. Using a 440 px brush set to a 20% hardness and 50% transparency, erase from 1366 px to 1680 px. (This should take one or two strokes.)

This softens the line between the original image and the blurred selection.

### REPEAT STEPS 5–7

on the left side of the image.

## How to Create a Hero Image Fading the Image Edges



### STEP 8

Create a new layer. Create a 0%–100% opacity gradient starting at the edge of the 1680 px area to the edge of the 1920 px canvas area.

Use white for an image with a light background.

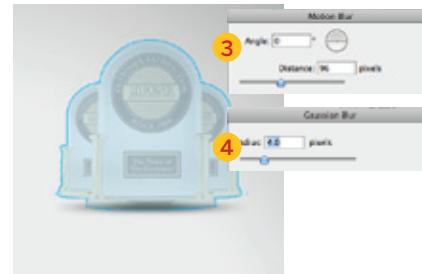
Use black for an image with a dark background.

### REPEAT STEP 8

on the left side of the image.

### FINAL HERO IMAGE IN CONTEXT

# Creating a Puddle Shadow



Shadows create dimensionality that helps distinguish objects from the background. Card images should never feature shadows unless they have been built into approved, angled Card art. Shadows should never appear as reflections.

## HOW TO CREATE A PUDDLE SHADOW

### STEP 1

Place the object or group of objects at their final size and position in layout.

### STEP 2

For the first object, create an ellipse the width of the object (fill #000000).

### STEP 3

Select the ellipse layer and apply motion blur (distance: 96 pixels/Angle: 0°).

### STEP 4

Select the ellipse layer and apply the Gaussian blur (radius: 4 pixels). Make sure the shadow aligns with bottom of object.

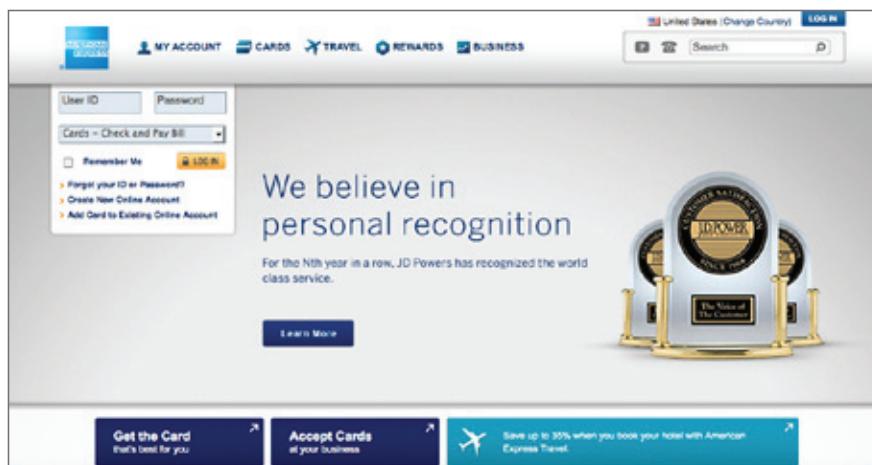
## REPEAT STEPS 2–4 FOR EACH OBJECT

### STEP 5

Create a blend shadow by drawing an ellipse the width of the entire group (#000000, opacity: 10%).

### STEP 6

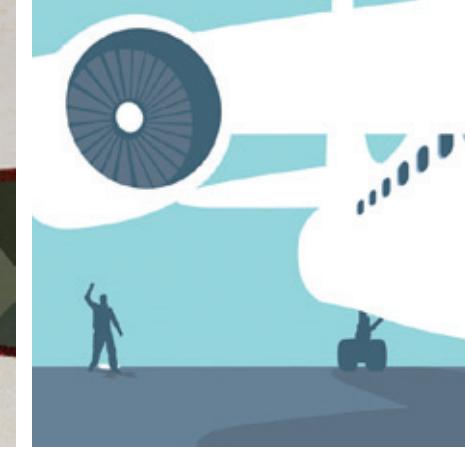
Select the ellipse layer and apply the Gaussian blur (radius: 4 pixels).



## Illustration Overview

As an alternative to photography or no imagery, the home page may feature illustrations. We use illustrations that are modern and simple and adhere to the Global Brand Identity color palette. Consider illustrations when a fresh visual is needed to communicate our message, or when photographs are too generic or low quality. As a general rule, always work with professional illustrators.

For full illustration guidelines, see the Global Brand Guidelines, located on the Brand Site and iGuide. For illustration questions, consult the Global Brand Identity team.

GRAPHIC	LINWORK	TEXTURE	DEPTH
			

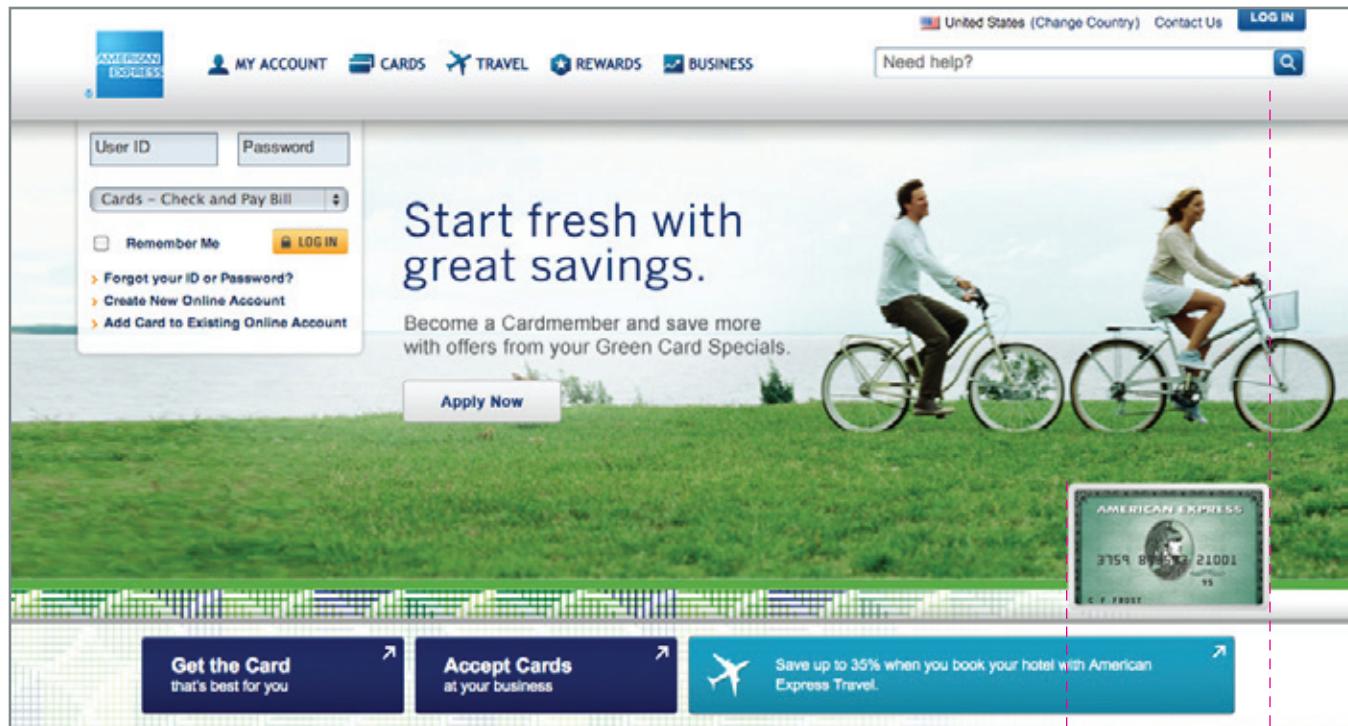
Illustrations should incorporate large areas of color, bold shapes and dynamic silhouettes of people in motion or recognizable objects at the heart of the story.

Simple linework and repeat elements draw the viewer in and evoke the energy and movement in our family of patterns.

A sense of texture adds richness and detail to otherwise straightforward compositions. Color variation and shading can suggest surfaces that feel authentic.

Illustrations that depict a perspective and depth of field engage the audience, creating a balance between the foreground and background.

## Card Products

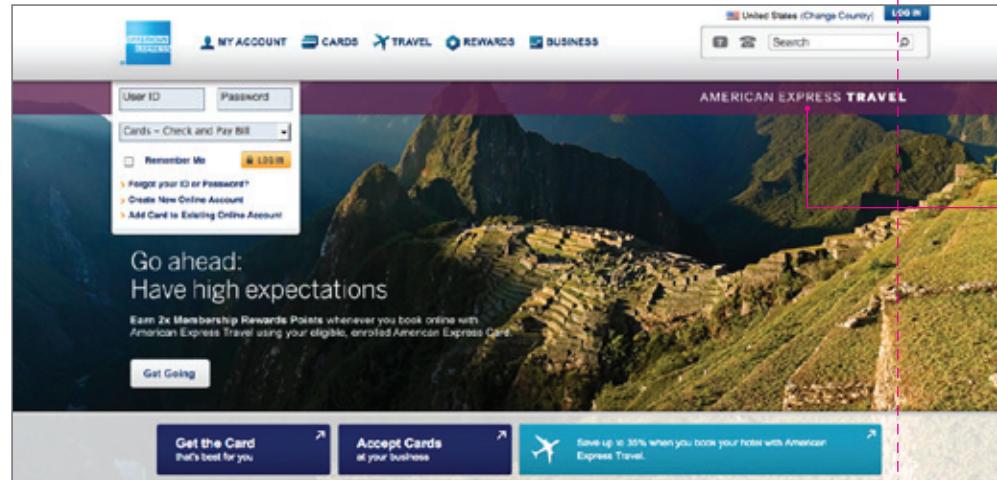


160 px wide.  
Edge of cards  
right align with  
the grid.

The preferred placement for Card art is the lower-right corner of the hero image, but placement ultimately depends on the selected photography. Card art is right-aligned to the grid. Before placing Card art, make sure to:

- Always use approved digital Card art found on the Brand Site
- Place a maximum of two Card art images side by side
- Card art may overlap an approved pattern or photography—it should be layered over a simple or faded image background, not over the main subject matter
- Opt for flat Card art. If angled Card art is needed, refer to the approved angled art located on the Brand Site
- Pattern should never cover Card art

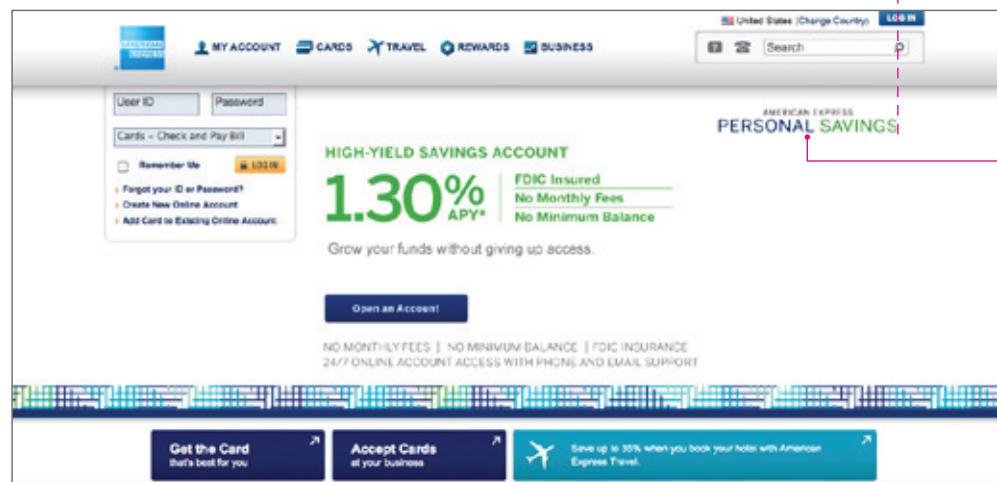
# American Express Business Unit Placement



42 px

Approved wordmark OR  
14 pt Benton Sans Regular/  
Bold ALL CAPS  
#FFFFFF

Right align  
with the grid



Approved wordmark  
maximum height 40 px  
minimum height 25 px  
maximum width 200 px  
minimum width 130 px

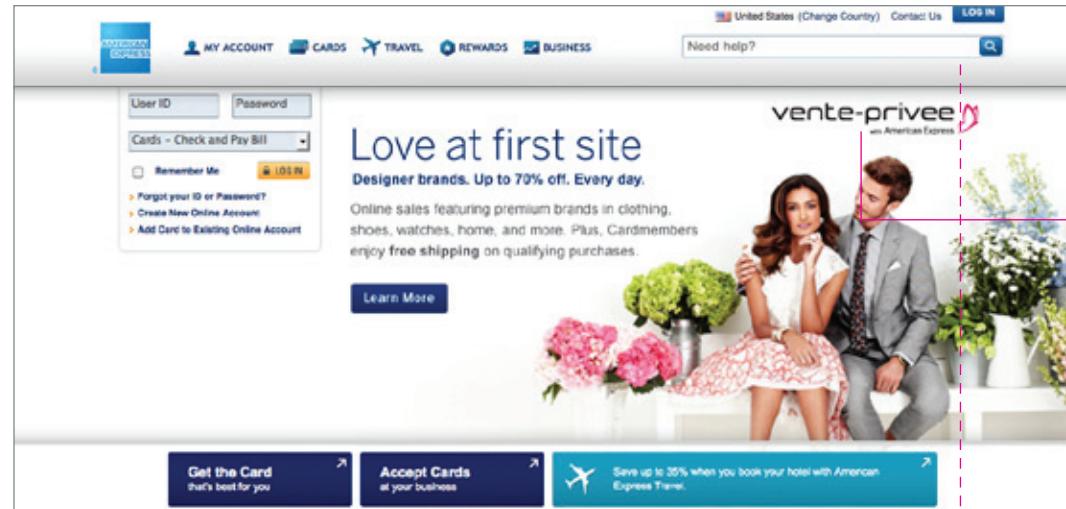
The home page often features business unit placements. The masterbrand identity drives the home page, while incorporating elements of the partner brand's tone and imagery. The brand bar is layered across the top of the hero image, beneath the login box. The particular business unit's wordmark appears within the brand bar, right-aligned with the grid. The semi-transparent bar extends with the browser window.

- Hero images should follow the defined home page standards for buttons, headlines and image treatment
- Business units with a branded visual identity may incorporate their color palette, patterns and photography (found in the Brand Identity toolkit)
- Business units must use approved wordmarks, however, a business unit without a visual identity should set its name in Benton Sans medium, in all caps
- The brand bar uses a color from the business unit's color palette

Make sure that GABM approves all home page image placements.

For specific guidelines on which colors are available for a particular business unit, refer to that business unit's individual sub-identity guidelines.

# Partner Branding



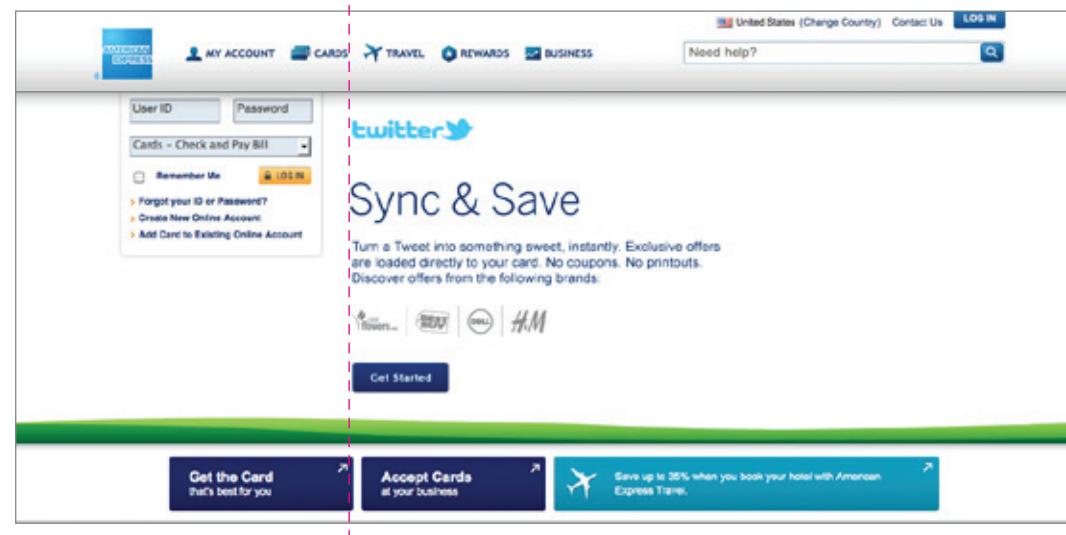
maximum height 40 px  
minimum height 25 px  
maximum width 200 px  
minimum width 130 px

As with business units, the masterbrand identity drives the home page, while incorporating elements of the partner brand's tone and imagery.

Partner logos can sit in the upper-right corner of the main image area, or left-aligned with headlines and messaging.

Partner brand illustration uses a white or gray gradient background. Photographs are always full-bleed backgrounds. Headlines and subheads should use only Core Blue or white, while call-to-action buttons should always appear in Core Blue or Gray, in the approved button styles. See the home page typography guidelines for color, size and font specifications.

Even when partnering with another brand, home page imagery and messaging should convey a unified story.



maximum height 40 px  
minimum height 25 px  
maximum width 200 px  
minimum width 130 px

SECTION 3

# Voice and Messaging

# Voice and Messaging

Voice is how we sound and messaging is what we say. Together voice and messaging create a distinctive and real personality for home page visitors to connect with.

## How we sound

Our home page voice supports the tone of the hero image, drawing visitors into the site with its warmth, sophistication and energy. Our voice makes a personal connection with visitors, letting them know we can help make their lives better.

## What we say

Messaging encourages visitors to click deeper into our site. Through clear and succinct word choice, our messages build on the hero image, so visitors can interpret the benefit in a single glance.

Image and copy should always support each other to tell a unified story.

The home page banner headline should be clear, transparent and straightforward. The headline should address a customer need or insight.

## Voice and Messaging Tactics

Every word on the home page, from body copy to buttons, has to do two things at once: impart information and express our brand. These guiding principles can help you accomplish that in the limited space available.

### General

- Use wordplay to capture attention
- Communicate specific, high-level benefits
- Relate copy directly to images to create a story
- Be clear, transparent and straightforward
- Address a customer need or insight

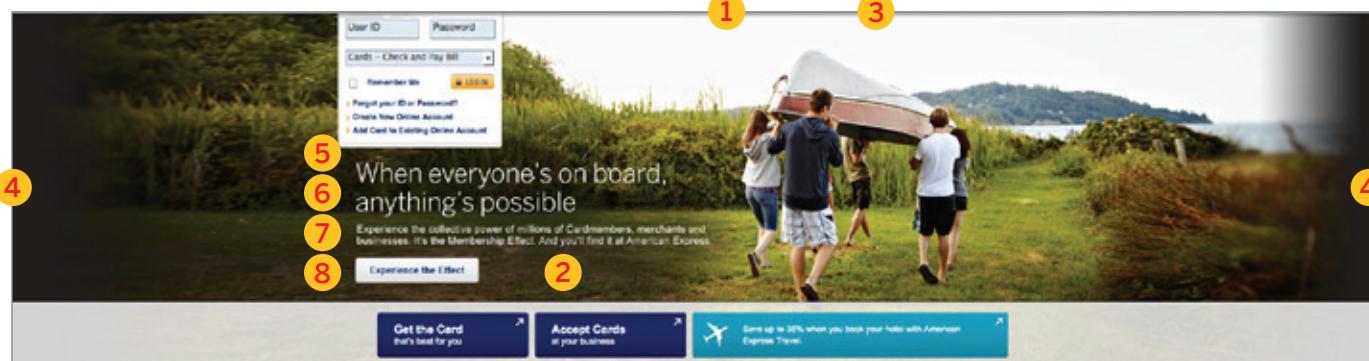
### Links and buttons

- Where possible, use language that creates a connection with the user instead of just naming an action
- Ex: Instead of “Sign up,” try “Join us”

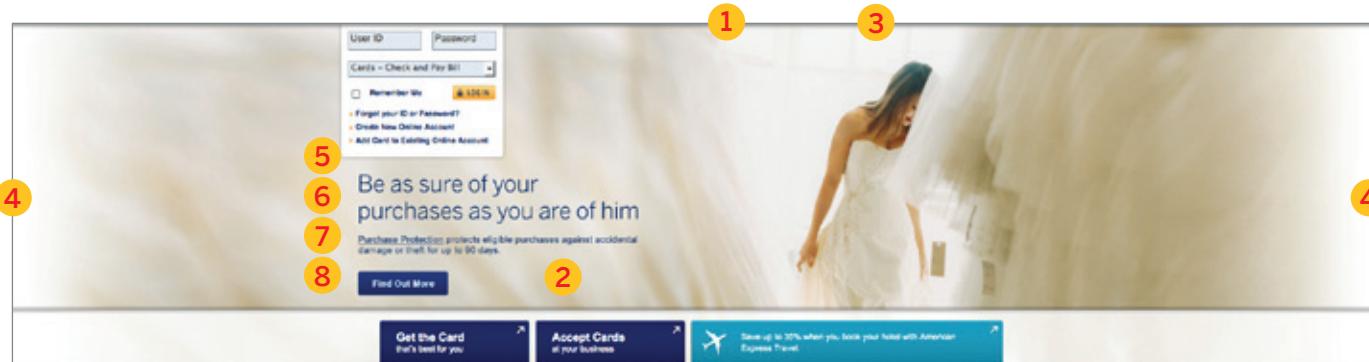
## SECTION 4

# Examples

## General Messaging

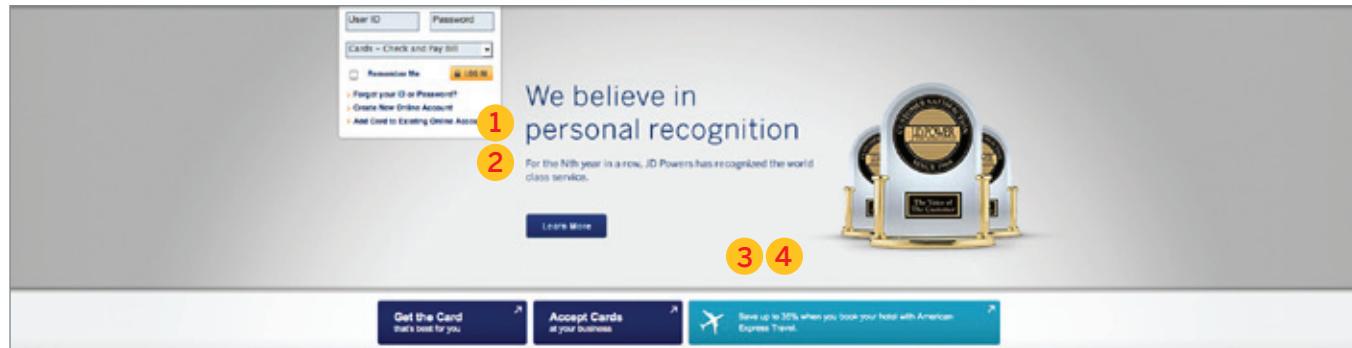


The home page is our window to the world. General messaging should communicate the higher benefit of a product or service, by saying what it does, not how it works. The headline should connect to the image, while the subhead should provide an explanation. Images and copy should tell a cohesive and clear story that engages readers and encourages them to find out more.

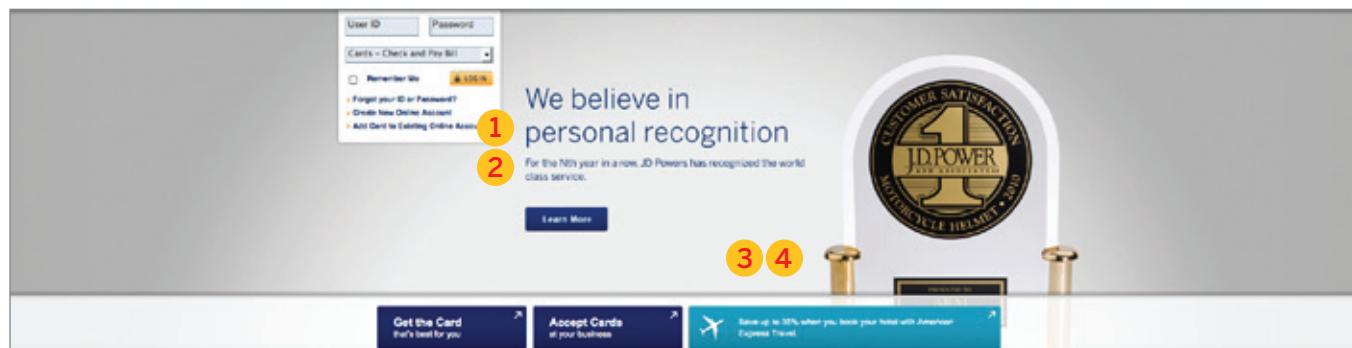


- 1 Full-bleed photograph looks natural, not overly retouched
- 2 The area of the image directly behind the copy is simplified by either darkening or lightening, and slightly blurring, to provide enough clear space for typography
- 3 Image focal point is right-aligned to allow room for copy
- 4 Dark images fade to black; light images fade to white
- 5 Only use Core Blue or white for headlines
- 6 Copy focuses on making the Cardmember's life better or tells a personal story
- 7 The headline relates to the image, engaging readers
- 8 Call-to-action buttons are warm and inviting and evoke an exciting future

## Awards and Recognition

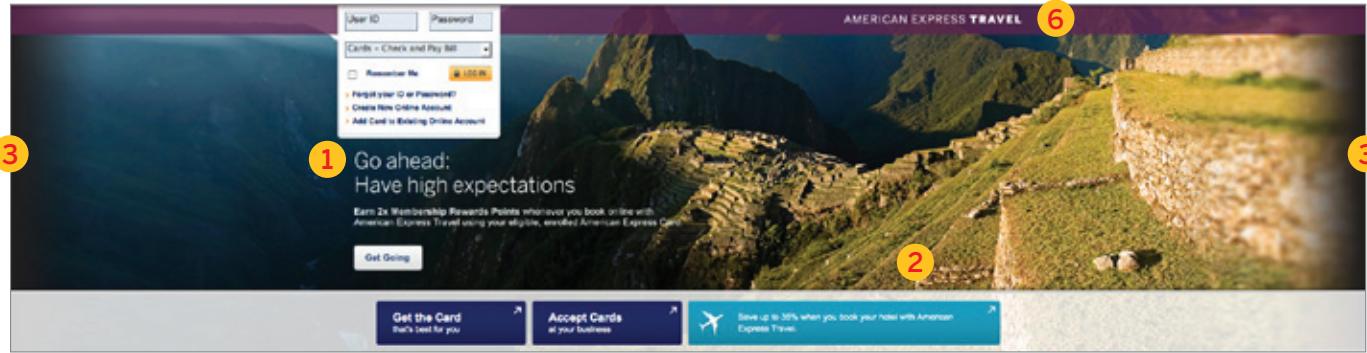


We're proud to provide world-class service to people around the world. When using the home page to announce an achievement or recognition we've received, we showcase images of the actual award, such as the iconic JD Power & Associates trophy. Headlines and subheads focus on the higher-level achievement—accomplishing things we believe in—not how great we are.

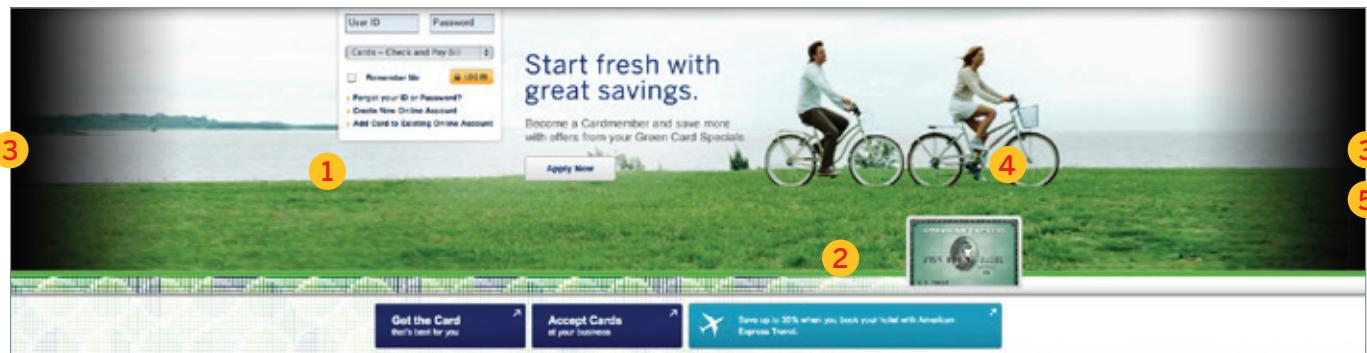


- 1 Copy uses warm and inviting language (not a sales pitch), evoking the benefits of membership without saying it explicitly
- 2 Headlines, body copy and calls to action are left-aligned to the grid and adhere to clear space specifications
- 3 The J.D. Power award right aligns to the grid, either as a full object with a shadow or a cropped object
- 4 A radial gradient background creates a backdrop for the content

# Business Unit Placements

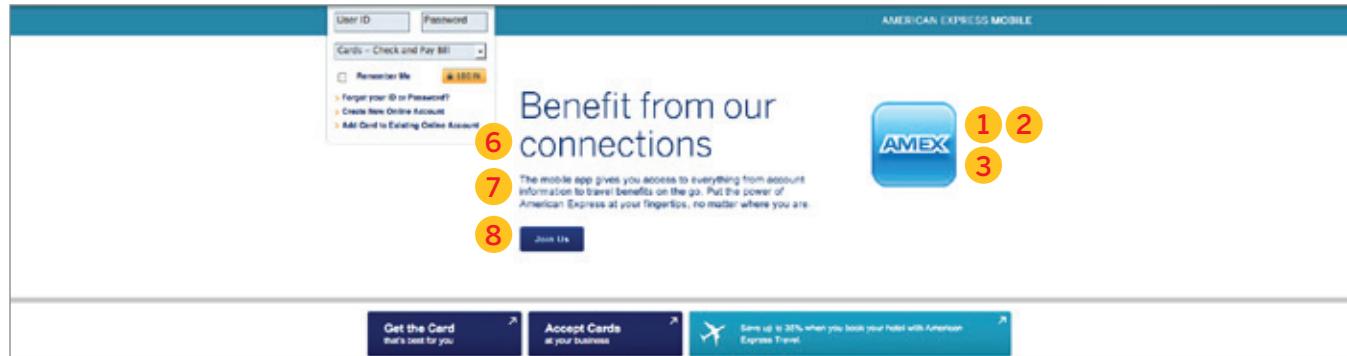


The masterbrand identity always drives the home page design. When featuring business unit placements, the home page should incorporate elements of that business unit's unique tone, colors and imagery within a consistent framework.



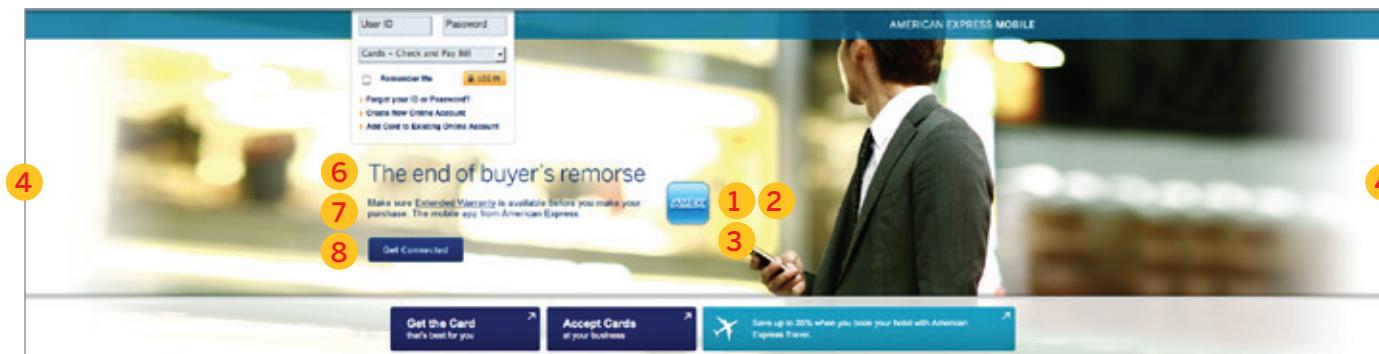
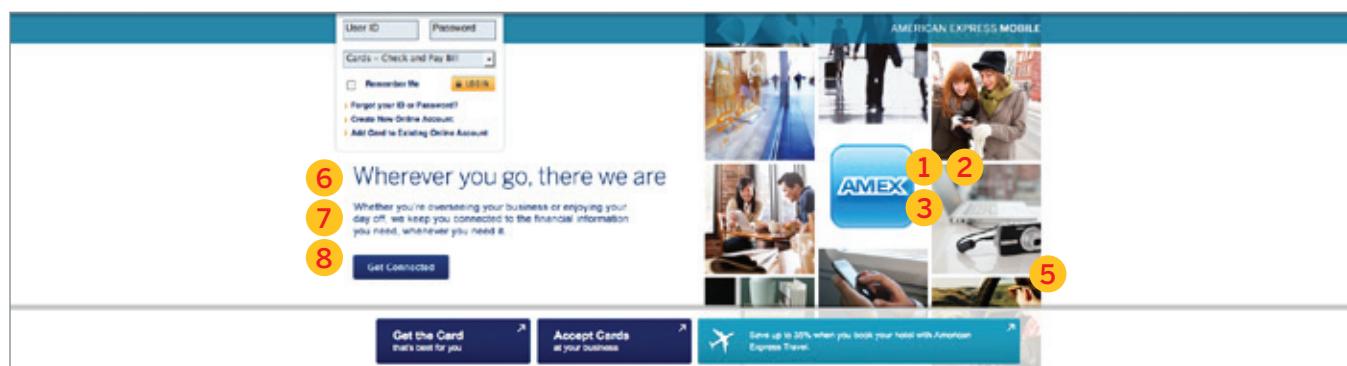
- 1** Copy refers to the image and creates a conversation with the reader
- 2** Image focal point is right-aligned, creating an asymmetrical layout and clear space for messaging
- 3** The image fades on either side to a solid color
- 4** The pattern from an individual business unit identity is incorporated and overlays the photograph
- 5** The pattern extends to the edge of the browser window
- 6** The business unit wordmark appears in the defined brand bar in the top right of the layout. The brand bar uses a color from the business unit palette at 80% opacity

# Mobile

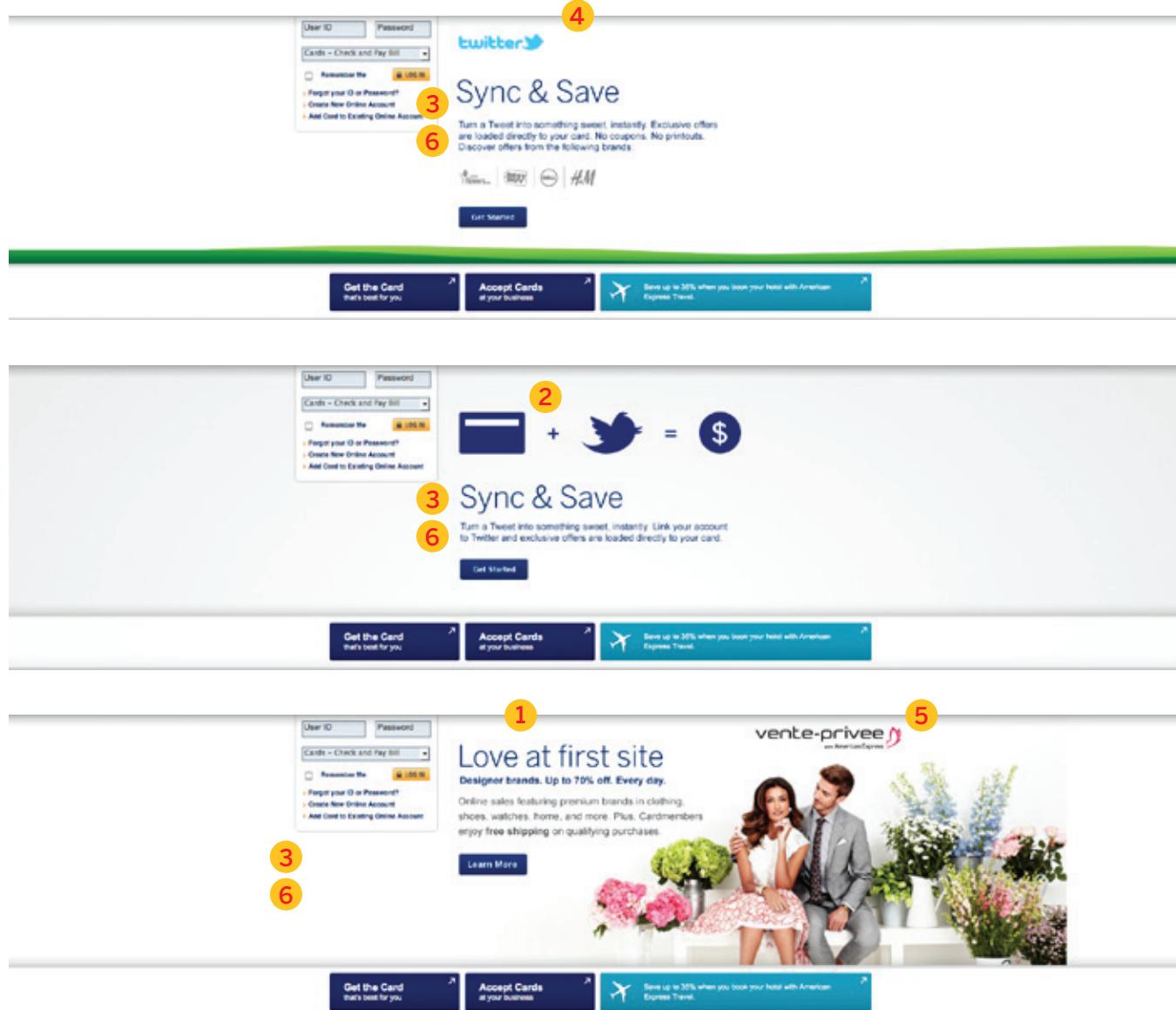


Convey the versatility of our mobile app through graphics, icons, photography and typography. Treatment of the app icon should remain consistent across all platforms.

- 1 The app icon identifies the product and is positioned as a focal point in the image area, or locked up with the copy area
- 2 Treatment of the app icon remains consistent across all mobile creative examples
- 3 Use of a white background highlights the app icon and typography
- 4 Use of full bleed photography combined with messaging tells a story and engages the member
- 5 Using multiple images depicts the varied benefits of the mobile experience
- 6 Copy evokes the “membership effect” without directly using those words
- 7 Copy uses active language and wordplay around the idea of mobile connectivity
- 8 Copy focuses on the higher emotional benefit and also communicates specific benefits to Cardmembers



## Co-branded Partner



We bring co-branded partners to life on the home page by incorporating elements of their tone and imagery into the masterbrand framework. Partner brand imagery and messaging should always convey a unified story.

Use a white or gray gradient background to highlight typography or illustration

- 1 A natural looking, full-bleed partner image follows American Express photography guidelines
- 2 Illustration is used in a minimal way that follows American Express illustration guidelines
- 3 Only Core Blue is used for headlines, and only approved button styles are used
- 4 Promotional partner logos can left align with headlines and messaging, preferably in the upper-left corner of the image area
- 5 Legal partner logos sit in the upper-right corner of the main image area
- 6 Copy communicates specific benefits of the co-brand partner to the Cardmember

