

ESW National **Branding Guide**



“Design is the application of intent -
the opposite of happenstance,
and an antidote to accident.”

Robert L. Peters,
notable graphic designer and conservationist

Dearest Reader:

You might be wondering why this guide even exists. After all, all this branding stuff is a lot of work and it would be easier if we just all agreed to use the default styles in Microsoft Word and called it a day.

But ESW has never settled for the default.

We fight to create something better than the default. This isn't easy. Creating something better than the status quo takes inspiration, research, consideration, resolve, and trust in the outcome, but we do it. We do it because it's something we believe in, because it's why we exist as an organization, and maybe even why we exist as individuals. I believe it is vital that this ideology pervades our communications efforts as much as it does everything else we do if we are to be taken seriously as an organization.

In the case of branding and communications, we should all seek to produce documents, articles, posters, merchandise, and websites that are distinct, intentional, user-friendly, and consistent. Lucky for you, dear reader, much thought has already been put into how to do these things, and this guide is the culmination of that thought. I encourage you to use this guide both for the advice contained in it, and as an example itself of that advice applied to a real document.

When you need help, the Branding Committee and Branding Director are there to help you- do not hesitate to contact them. By doing so, you'll improve not only whatever it is you're working on, but also future iterations of this guide and thus future things created by ESW.

Thanks for reading this and taking it seriously. Now, read up and spread the ESW brand far and wide!

Quick Reference

Logos



Information Conveyed/"Googlability"

There are multiple variations on our logo. Choose the simplest one you can that conveys the information you need it to for your use case.

Diagram 1.1 Logo spacing



The space around logos is there for a reason- don't crop it out!

Make sure to give the logo adequate space in your designs- don't crop down the whitespace included in the logo files.

Opt to use vector formats (.ai, .pdf, .svg) over bitmap ones (.jpg, .png, .gif) when possible. If you're using bitmap formats, choose the highest resolution file that makes sense and scale it down, rather than scaling it up.

Diagram 1.2 Resizing logo images



"Remixes" of the logo are permitted for special events, collaborations, and individual chapters. Read more [here](#).

Typography

Use the [font selection flowchart](#) to determine which fonts you should use in your design.

All fonts are available for free download at eswusa.org/drupal/brand and are quick to install.

If you're working on a Google Drive document, Source Sans is the only member of our font family currently available. If additional fonts are needed, we recommend finishing formatting for your document in Microsoft Word, Apple Pages, or Adobe InDesign.

For external documents, **use the PDF format** to ensure consistent formatting across all computers.

Color

The ESW color palette contains 8 colors which should cover the vast majority of use cases.

See rules of thumb on color use [here](#).

Tints

Pale Gray
230,240,235
#e6f0eb

Pale Blue
159,244,245
#9ff4f5

Midtones

Gray
173,184,177
#adb8b1

Turquoise
0,177,184
#00bec4

Shades

Dark Gray
31,33,32
#1f2120

Midnight
23,26,43
#171a2b

Accents

ESW Green
33,191,39
#21bf27

Orange Red
208,44,6
#d02c06

Brand DNA

How do we want to portray ourselves as an organization?

How do we make decisions about our brand?

Brand DNA

How do we describe ESW?

Our vision is the future we want to create as an organization.

Our mission is how we're going to achieve that future.

Our brand DNA is how being a part of ESW (whether as a member, leader, alumni, or sponsor) should make you feel. It's how you would describe the ESW experience to someone who has never heard of us before.

At the 2013 ESW National Team retreat, members of the ESW National Team worked together to define this DNA. They managed to compact it down to 6 simple ideas, in no particular order:

purposeful

Our work is constructive and impactful. Being part of ESW means contributing to society.

empowering

We inspire, excite, and engage everyone who touches our organization.

DYNAMIC

We are an agile and creative group that tries new things and provides our members with new, eye-opening experiences.

responsible

We are an organized and dependable group that acts conscientiously in all our endeavors.

optimistic

We are ever hopeful that our vision of a sustainable world can be attained.

community

We work, have fun, and bring people together in our chapters and beyond.

Fitting the fabric of an organization into 6 words is near impossible, but these can serve as useful ideals when making decisions.

Does the newsletter you're making promote a spirit of community?

Does the sponsorship packet you're putting together feel dull and corporate, or dynamic and empowering?

Is the blog post you're writing done in a purposeful, responsible manner, or is it disorganized and unresearched?

Is the picture you're posting on our Facebook page depressing and inflammatory, or optimistic and empowering?

The creation of our Brand DNA



The ESW National Team, brainstorming brand DNA at the 2013 NT Retreat.

• • •

Remember, if you're having trouble making your branded materials live up to these ideals, ask the ESW National Team Branding Director for help- that's what they're there for!

Logos

How do we symbolize ESW?

The Gear Symbol

The future of our planet is at the center of everything we build.

Circular and compact, this logo can be used decoratively and for applications where simplicity is key, but keep in mind this version of the logo isn't "Googlable", so it's best suited for applications where people either already know who we are or don't need to. Fun fact: it also looks really cool when blown up to preposterous size and set off the corner of a page.

Figure 3.1 The blow-up and offset technique

Whoa.

Look at that gear. Sweet.



The gear should be all one color (green, dark gray, or white) unless you're making a logo remix for an event, chapter, or collaboration (See the "Remixes" page in this section for details)

Note that using the logo with a transparent center over a background color is fine- in fact, it looks quite handsome on dark colors. Read more about [do's and don'ts of color](#) in the Color section.

Compact Logos

The Goldilocks versions

This version of the logo comes in two orientations and is great when you need something that's compact and simple but also allows people to at least have a name to ask about or search for online. Ideal for merchandise, and as a base to build chapter or event logos off of.



Full Logo

The whole kit and caboodle

This is the full monty- our logo, name and tagline elegantly balanced to tell people who we are and what we do. Good for letterhead, websites, and anywhere where the logo needs to say it all. It comes in a 1-line and 2-line version- choose the one which fits in your design better.



**Engineers for a
Sustainable World**

DESIGN • EDUCATE • BUILD



Engineers for a Sustainable World

DESIGN • EDUCATE • BUILD

Remixes

Put your our own spin on it

The existing logos should cover most use cases, but you may want a specialized logo for your chapter, or a special collaboration or event. That's totally cool, make it! Here are some pieces of advice to ensure what you make jives well with the ESW brand:

- **Don't reinvent the wheel. Or more specifically, the Gear.** For consistency's sake, try to build off of the existing Gear Symbol rather than drawing a new one from scratch. If you do decide to draw your own, remember; the ESW Gear always has 8 teeth!
- **Consider using the type and color guidelines from this guide.** They're there

for a reason- the fonts and colors work well together and can make your life easier.

- **Don't struggle in silence.** If you want help or approval from the National Team, reach out to the Branding director; it's their job to help you!

Figure 3.2 The ESW-RPI Logo



The ESW-RPI chapter logo is a great example of a successful logo remix.

Color

How do we use color in our designs?

Using Color

for fun and profit!

Using color aptly requires practice and a trained eye. If you know what you're doing, by all means break the rules. If not, this section is a good place to start.

Opposites Attract

wow!	look	at	these	color	pairs!
they	sure	are	sharp	aren't	they?



Tints/white and shades go together- using one for a background and the other for your text is a safe bet.

You Don't Need Both



There's often no need to use both colors from a color class (e.g. don't mix midnight and dark gray, pick one or the other). This is less true for accents, but don't put them right up against each other.

Green Hates Midtones



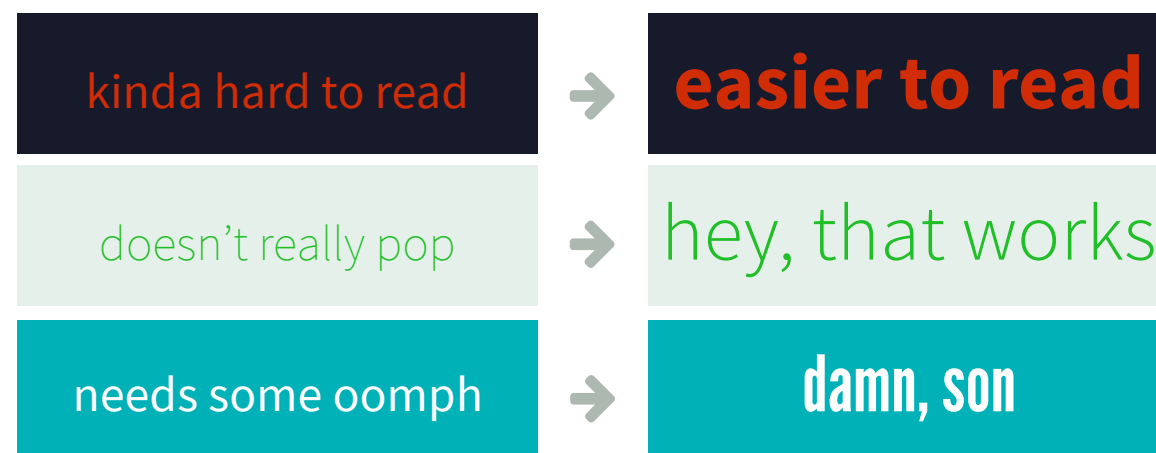
Avoid putting our green right up against the midtones. Red can also be tricky with them, but it's doable- just use caution.

Accents Are Potent



Accents can add pop to a design, but they shouldn't make up the majority of it.

Bulk Up When Contrast Is Low



When contrast isn't particularly high (red on dark colors, green on light ones, midtones on anything), compensate by using heavier font weights, larger font sizes, or a combination of the two.

Shades Are The New Black

Black is generally unneeded (and not part of our palette). Opt for dark gray or midnight instead. Shadows? Go gray. Text on slides? Try out midnight. These dark colors provide the necessary contrast without being as harsh as black, and can provide your designs with more character. Not convinced? Read more [here](#).

Don't Overdo It

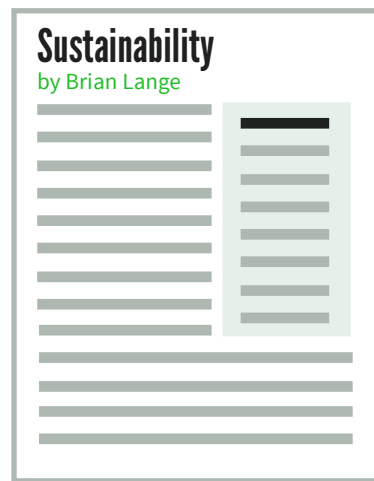
In general, show restraint when it comes to color. A little color goes a long way, and things won't look "boring" if they're not blanketed in it, as long as you're also following our other guidelines on typography and layout.

Up next: More about the ESW Palette...

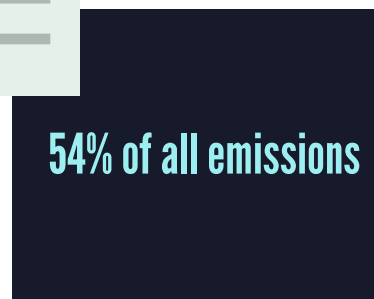
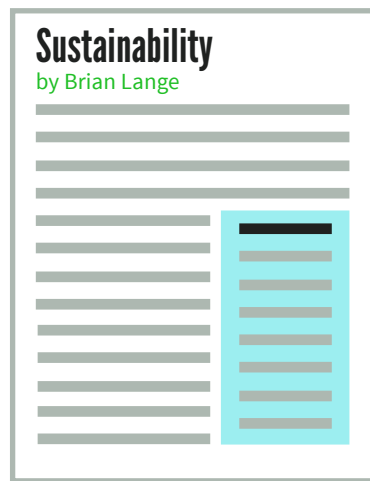
Tints

Our tints are for when you need or want a color that isn't white, but still provides nice contrast with darker shades.

Suggested Use



Callout boxes/sidebars



Slide backgrounds/text

Both can act as backgrounds for black or one of our dark shade colors, and both can act as text colors on those colors as well.

Pale Gray

rgb: 230, 240, 235

hex: #e6f0eb

Pale Blue

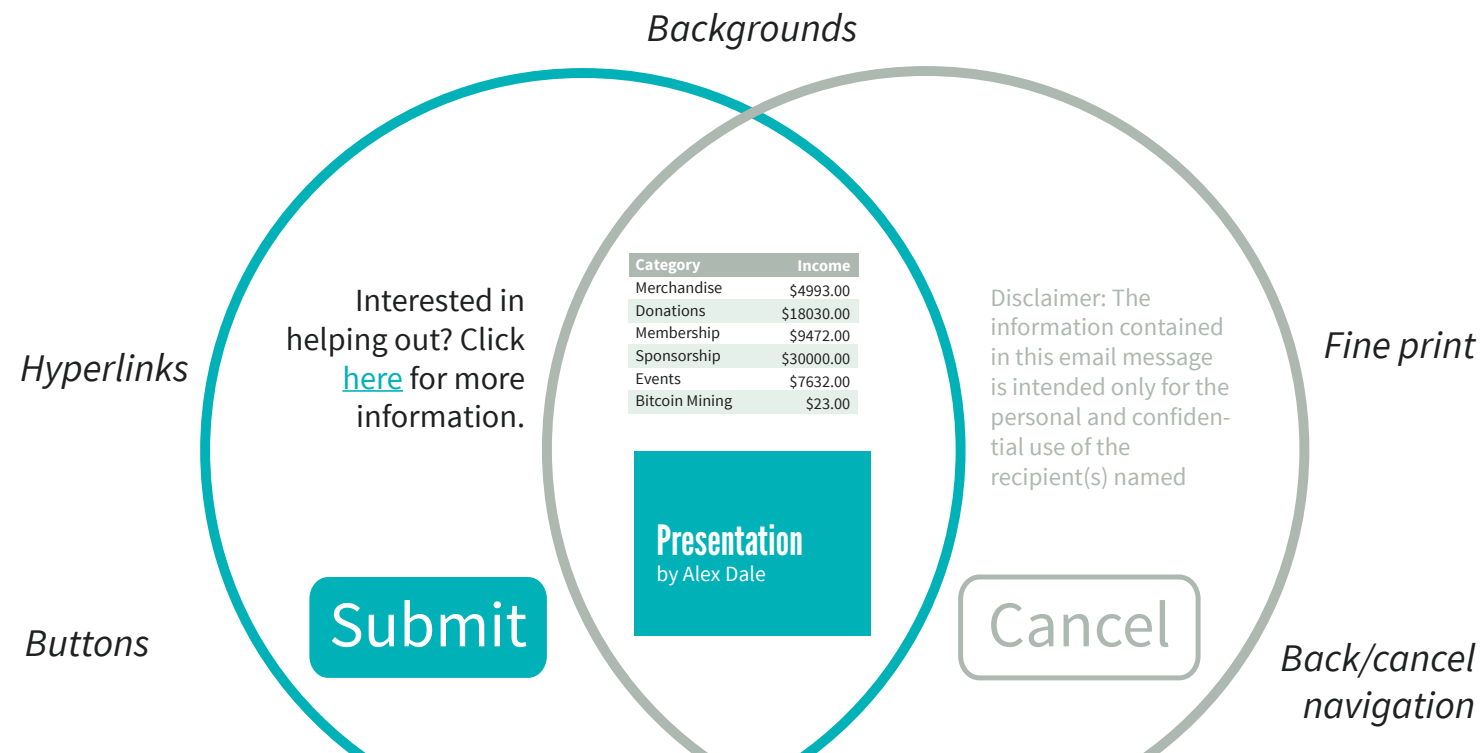
rgb: 159, 244, 245

hex: #9ff4f5

Midtones

Fun midtone facts: our turquoise is derived from photos of Earth taken from deep space, while the gray contains some green and blue to jive with the rest of our colors.

Suggested Use



Use the turquoise for things like buttons and links to draw some attention to them without resorting to bright green or red. Use the the gray on white to de-emphasize elements in a design. Both colors also work as background colors for slides or table headers.

Remember to avoid green with these colors and increase font size or weight when things are hard to read.

Gray

rgb: 173, 184, 177

hex: #adb8b1

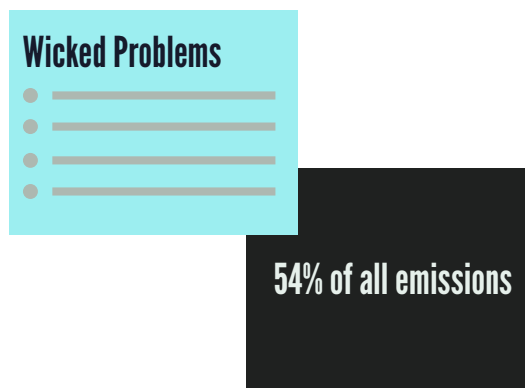
Turquoise

rgb: 0, 177, 184

hex: #00bec4

Shades

Suggested Use



Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Suspendisse placerat vestibulum elit, sed tempor justo hendrerit eu. Curabitur turpis erat, semper eget sodales vitae, varius id lorem. Sed dolor risus, pellentesque at aliquam et, tincidunt et ipsum. Sed vel lorem risus. Nullam urna nulla, commodo eu aliquam aliquet, placerat eu sem. Phasellus semper laoreet neque, sit amet auctor mi rhoncus a. Vivamus dictum tempor adipiscing. Suspendisse ac sem lectus. Donec neque diam, scelerisque sed iaculis a, lobortis sit amet turpis. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique

Slide backgrounds/text

Body text

Both as text colors (with white or tint backgrounds), or as backgrounds (with white or tint text colors). For short bits of text or graphic designs, the blue also goes wonderfully with our accent colors. Both can also be used in gradients over photographs to make light text more readable.



Gradients over photos

Beyond that, use them [almost anywhere you'd ordinarily use black](#).

Dark Gray

rgb: 31,33,32

hex: #1f2120

Midnight

rgb: 23,26,43

hex: #171a2b

Accents

Our accents are bold and bright. Like cayenne pepper or 5 Hour Energy, a little bit makes things awesome, but too much can make you want to puke, so [use responsibly](#).

Suggested Use



Logos

Continue

Register now!

Buttons

Color
whoa, meta

Accent Text

✖ Uh-oh! Looks like your information is incorrect.



Icons/Errors

Small graphic elements, buttons or links you want to draw attention to. The green is more optimistic and looks good as part of the logo, or set on dark shade backgrounds. The red is more urgent and works well for buttons and error messages.

ESW Green

rgb: 33,191,39

hex: #21bf27

Orange Red

rgb: 208,44,6

hex: #d02c06

Typography & Layout

How do we organize our designs?

What fonts do we use and how?

Typography & Layout

“Endowing human language with a durable visual form.”

-Robert Bringhurst, The Elements of Typographic Style

The foremost purpose of typography and layout in a design is to make it easy for people to extract the information they need. It can also communicate strength, order, and our brand DNA, but more important than any of that is readability.

Layout

Visual layout makes a big difference in the impression a design makes and the efficiency with which it conveys information. We highly recommend you check out the guide at

<http://www.visualmess.com/> to pick up the basics, and run things by the Branding Director if you feel you need help or feedback.

Our Fonts

ESW has a few nice fonts we go to for different purposes. By using these instead of system defaults like Times New Roman or Calibri, we can have a distinct look to our communications.

The following sections will go into more details on the fonts we use as an organization, and the flowchart above can help you decide which one to employ.

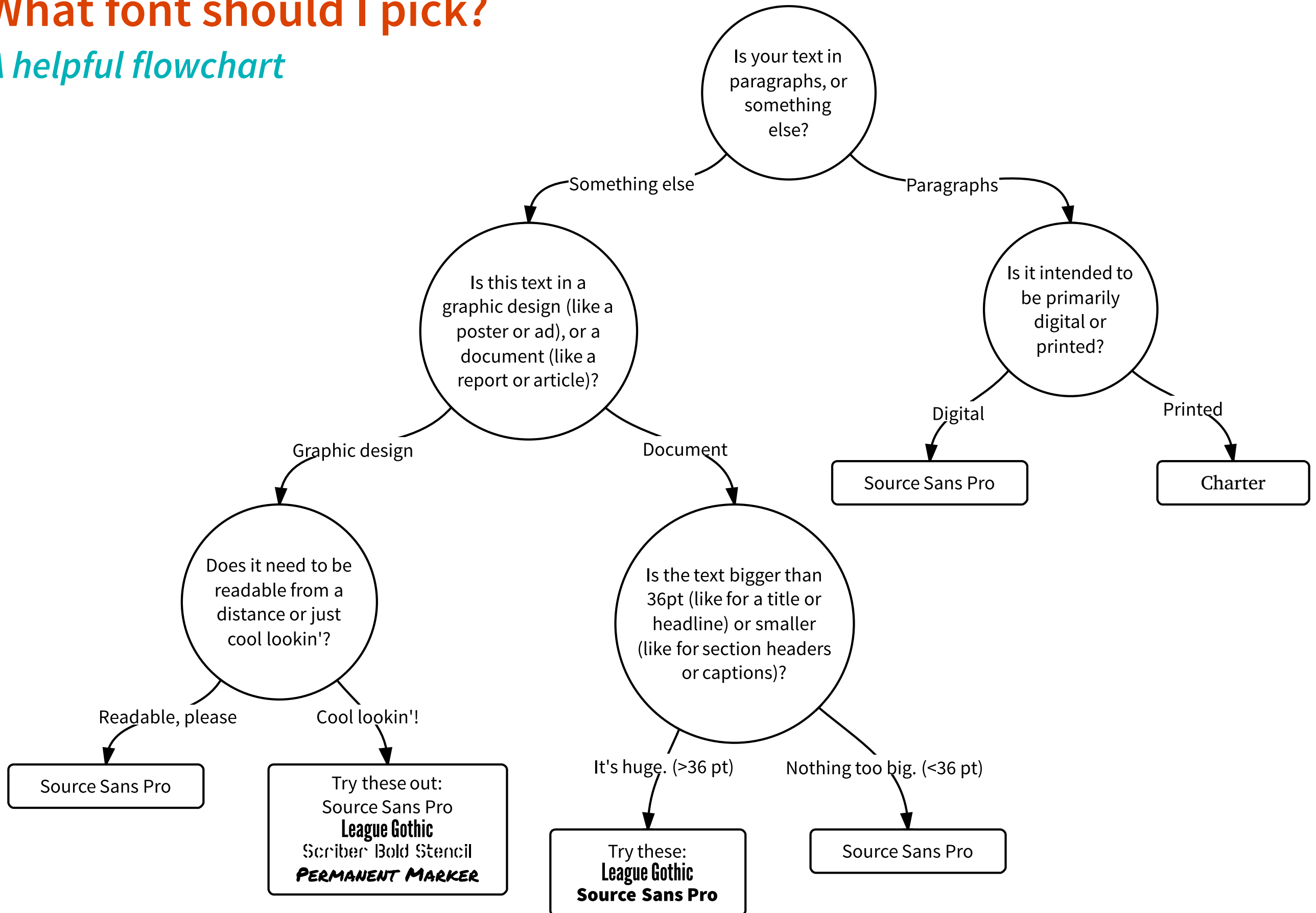
Further reading

If this section happens to spark an insatiable thirst for typographic knowledge, we recommend these online supplements:

- [Butterick’s Practical Typography](#)
- [Thinking with Type by Ellen Lupton](#)

What font should I pick?

A helpful flowchart



Source Sans Pro

Our workhorse typeface

Source Sans Pro is ESW’s primary typeface. It’s professionally designed, highly legible, and available for use on your computer, on the web and in Google Drive documents.

Background

Source Sans Pro was released by Paul Hunt in 2012 as Adobe’s first open source typeface. It was originally designed to be used in user interfaces, meaning it was optimized for clear readability on screen at small sizes and low resolutions. To achieve this, Hunt drew inspiration from classic Morris Fuller Benton “grotesque”¹ sans-serifs like News Gothic and Franklin Gothic. The result is a typeface looks great at a variety of sizes and even in print.

Use it for:



precise distinct digital professional
new tactful unique human available open-source modern
flexible legible **friendly**
functional
with you through thick and thin

- Body text, especially web or short-form print like articles, press releases, 1-pagers, etc.
- Document headers, titles, subtitles
- Labels and captions for charts, figures, and pictures
- Presentations
- UI text for websites, apps, etc.

¹ “Grotesque”/“Grotesk” (sometimes also called Realist) is a classification of sans-serif typefaces. Grotesques fall in the middle of the spectrum between humanist sans-serifs which take cues from calligraphy (example: Gill Sans) and geometric sans-serifs which favor symmetry and geometry (example: Futura).

Grotesques tend to be neutral, legible from distance, and communicate stability. Examples you may know include Helvetica, Arial, and Highway Gothic (used on US traffic signs).

League Gothic

The attention getter

League Gothic is our headline typeface. It's heavy and attention getting while being horizontally compact thanks to its tall, condensed shape. It can look good in all caps, but this also makes the font appear heavier and less readable, so exercise restraint when using it this way.

Background

League Gothic is an open source revival of Morris Fuller Benton's 1903 sans-serif Alternative Gothic, created by The League of Movable Type. It pairs well with Source Sans Pro thanks to their shared heritage- both are modernizations inspired by turn-of-the-century grotesques by Morris Fuller Benton.

HI. I'M LEAGUE GOTHIC.
What's your name?

Use it for:

- Headlines/titles
- Striking statistics
- Other large text

Charter

Our serif font for long print documents

Source Sans Pro is great, but when you're working on long-form or highly formal documents intended for print, you'll want to use our serif font, Charter. Charter is modern and distinct while being comfortable to read at length.

Background

Charter, sometimes also called Bitstream Charter, was designed in 1987 by Matthew Carter, a respected digital type designer who later went on to design Georgia, Tahoma, and Verdana. It was designed to maintain legibility when being used by fax machines and low resolution printers, and as a result, it also performs well when used on screen (which tends to be lower-resolution than print).



The ESW Branding Director who picked Charter as our serif once read all of *Brothers Karamazov* set in it, so he can personally vouch for its superior performance in long reading sessions.

Use it for:

Body text, sparingly. Most times Source Sans Pro works superbly and suits our brand better, but for very long reports, legal documents, books, or other situations where Source Sans Pro seems inappropriate, default to Charter.

Accent Fonts

Spice up your designs

Fully automated
100% off-grid

Scriber Bold Stencil

If you need a stencil font for painting or chalking, or are looking for an industrial/technical display font, check out Scriber Bold Stencil. The Scriber family is inspired by text in early CAD programs and speaks to our roots as an engineering group. It should go without saying, but don't ever set body text in this.

Permanent Marker

If you're looking to impart a more guerrilla or activist aesthetic, check out Permanent Marker. Frequently used by 350.org, it screams grassroots/call-to-action. It technically has lowercase and uppercase letterforms, but the only difference is size- anything you type will look all caps. Again, don't ever use this for extended strings of text.

STICK IT TO
THE MAN, MAN!

Credits

Initial version created by Brian Lange, ESW
Branding and Technology Director

First released: January 2014

Most recent revision: February 2014

Full edit history available on [Github](#).

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