Design System Guidelines v3.0

Introduction

This document outlines the design principles, components, and patterns for building consistent user interfaces across all company products. Following these guidelines ensures a cohesive user experience and efficient development process.

Design Principles

1. Clarity

Every element should serve a clear purpose. Avoid unnecessary complexity and prioritize user understanding.

2. Consistency

Use established patterns and components throughout the product. Consistency reduces cognitive load and improves usability.

3. Efficiency

Design for speed and ease of use. Minimize steps required to complete common tasks.

4. Accessibility

Build inclusive experiences that work for all users, including those with disabilities. Follow WCAG 2.1 AA standards.

5. Feedback

Provide clear, immediate feedback for user actions. Users should always know the system's current state.

Color Palette

Primary Colors

Brand Blue - Primary: **#0066CC** (RGB: 0, 102, 204) - Light: **#4D94E6** - Dark: **#004999** - Usage: Primary actions, links, active states

Brand Gray - Neutral 900: **#1A1A1A** - Neutral 700: **#4A4A4A** - Neutral 500: **#808080** - Neutral 300: **#CCCCCC** - Neutral 100: **#F5F5F5**

Secondary Colors

Success Green: #00A86B **Warning Orange: #FF9500** **Error Red: #E63946** **Info Blue: #2196F3**

Usage Guidelines

- Use primary blue for interactive elements
- Limit color to functional purposes
- Ensure sufficient contrast (minimum 4.5:1 for text)
- Use semantic colors consistently (green for success, red for errors)

Typography

Font Family

Primary: Inter (system-ui fallback) **Monospace:** JetBrains Mono (for code)

Type Scale

Display - Size: 48px / 3rem - Weight: 700 (Bold) - Line Height: 1.2 - Usage: Hero headlines

Heading 1 - Size: 36px / 2.25rem - Weight: 700 - Line Height: 1.25 - Usage: Page titles

Heading 2 - Size: 28px / 1.75rem - Weight: 600 - Line Height: 1.3 - Usage: Section headers

Heading 3 - Size: 22px / 1.375rem - Weight: 600 - Line Height: 1.4 - Usage: Subsection headers

Body Large - Size: 18px / 1.125rem - Weight: 400 - Line Height: 1.6 - Usage: Emphasized body text

Body - Size: 16px / 1rem - Weight: 400 - Line Height: 1.5 - Usage: Default body text

Body Small - Size: 14px / 0.875rem - Weight: 400 - Line Height: 1.5 - Usage: Helper text, captions

Caption - Size: 12px / 0.75rem - Weight: 400 - Line Height: 1.4 - Usage: Labels, timestamps

Spacing System

Use consistent spacing based on an 8px grid system:

- **XS:** 4px (0.25rem)
- **SM:** 8px (0.5rem)
- **MD:** 16px (1rem)
- **LG:** 24px (1.5rem)
- **XL:** 32px (2rem)
- **2XL:** 48px (3rem)
- **3XL:** 64px (4rem)

Components

Buttons

Primary Button

```
background: #0066CC;
color: #FFFFFF;
padding: 12px 24px;
border-radius: 6px;
font-weight: 600;
```

States: - Hover: Darken by 10% - Active: Darken by 15% - Disabled: 50% opacity - Focus: 2px outline with 2px offset

Secondary Button

```
background: transparent;
color: #0066CC;
border: 2px solid #0066CC;
padding: 10px 22px;
border-radius: 6px;
```

Ghost Button

```
background: transparent;
color: #4A4A4A;
padding: 12px 24px;
```

Forms

Text Input

```
border: 1px solid #CCCCCC;
border-radius: 4px;
padding: 10px 12px;
font-size: 16px;
```

States: - Focus: Border color #0066CC, 2px width - Error: Border color #E63946 - Disabled: Background #F5F5F5, 50% opacity

Labels

- Position above input
- Font size: 14px
- Font weight: 600
- Margin bottom: 4px

Helper Text

- Font size: 12px
- Color: #808080
- Position below input

Error Messages

- Font size: 12px
- Color: #E63946
- Icon: Alert circle
- Display immediately on validation failure

Cards

Standard card component for content grouping:

```css
background: #FFFFFF;
border: 1px solid #CCCCCC;
border-radius: 8px;
padding: 24px;
box-shadow: 0 2px 4px rgba(0, 0, 0, 0.1);
```

Interactive Card: - Add hover shadow: `0 4px 8px rgba(0, 0, 0, 0.15)` - Add cursor: pointer - Smooth transition: 0.2s ease

Modals

Structure

- Backdrop: `rgba(0, 0, 0, 0.5)`
- Container: White background, centered
- Max width: 600px
- Padding: 32px
- Border radius: 12px

Header

- Title: H2 typography
- Close button: Top right corner
- Optional icon or illustration

Body

- Body typography
- Scrollable if content exceeds max height

Footer

- Actions aligned right
- Primary and secondary buttons
- 16px spacing between buttons

Navigation

Top Navigation Bar

- Height: 64px
- Background: `#FFFFFF`
- Border bottom: 1px solid `#CCCCCC`
- Logo: Left aligned
- Menu items: Centered or right aligned
- User menu: Far right

Sidebar Navigation

- Width: 240px
- Background: `#F5F5F5`
- Active item: Blue indicator bar (4px)
- Hover: Lighten background by 5%

Data Tables

Table Structure

- Header: Background `#F5F5F5`, font weight 600
- Rows: 1px bottom border `#CCCCCC`
- Cell padding: 12px 16px
- Hover row: Background `#F9F9F9`

Sorting

- Sortable columns show sort icon on hover
- Active sort: Bold header, visible icon

Pagination

- Position: Bottom right
- Show: Items per page, current range, total items
- Navigation: Previous, page numbers, next

Icons

Icon Library

Use **Feather Icons** or **Heroicons** for consistency.

Sizing

- Small: 16px
- Medium: 20px
- Large: 24px
- XLarge: 32px

Usage

- Pair icons with text labels when possible
- Maintain consistent stroke width (2px)
- Use semantic meaning (trash for delete, pencil for edit)

Layout

Grid System

12-column responsive grid with 24px gutters.

Breakpoints

- Mobile: < 640px
- Tablet: 640px - 1024px
- Desktop: 1024px - 1440px
- Wide: > 1440px

Container Widths

- Mobile: 100% (16px padding)
- Tablet: 100% (24px padding)
- Desktop: 1200px
- Wide: 1400px

Motion & Animation

Principles

- Use animation to provide feedback and guide attention
- Keep animations subtle and purposeful
- Duration: 150ms - 300ms for most transitions
- Easing: `cubic-bezier(0.4, 0.0, 0.2, 1)` for standard transitions

Common Animations

- **Fade In:** 200ms, opacity 0 to 1
- **Slide In:** 250ms, translate + fade
- **Scale:** 150ms, scale 0.95 to 1
- **Loading Spinner:** Continuous rotation

Accessibility

Keyboard Navigation

- All interactive elements must be keyboard accessible
- Visible focus indicators (2px outline)
- Logical tab order
- Support Escape key to close modals

Screen Readers

- Use semantic HTML elements
- Provide ARIA labels for custom components
- Include alt text for images
- Announce dynamic content changes

Color Contrast

- Text: Minimum 4.5:1 contrast ratio
- Large text (18px+): Minimum 3:1
- UI components: Minimum 3:1

Focus Management

- Set focus on first interactive element in modals
- Return focus to trigger element when closing
- Skip links for main content

Responsive Design

Mobile-First Approach

Design for mobile screens first, then enhance for larger screens.

Touch Targets

- Minimum size: 44x44px
- Spacing between targets: 8px minimum

Content Priority

- Stack elements vertically on mobile
- Show critical information first
- Use progressive disclosure

Best Practices

1. **Component Reusability:** Use design system components; avoid one-off designs

2. **Documentation:** Document deviations from the design system
3. **Testing:** Test on multiple devices and browsers
4. **Performance:** Optimize images and animations
5. **Collaboration:** Involve designers early in development

For questions or contributions to the design system, contact the Design Team at design@company.com