Microsoft visual identity guidelines

August 2012

Microsoft

The Microsoft visual identity system capitalizes on our next wave of product offerings. It helps us be simple, clear, and direct. It elevates the content that matters most. It creates delightful connections.

The Microsoft logo celebrates our heritage and our future. It highlights the role we play in many consumers' lives today, and the increasing breadth of unexpected and innovative products we are delivering.

The identity elements—logo, typography, color, grids, tiles, imagery, and icons—make it easier to create memorable internal and external communications.

Contents

Our visual elements express our brand

These guidelines are your introduction to how we can use the visual identity as a thread that ties Microsoft-branded offerings and groups together. They are a call to action to align our creative work and bring a new focus on our connected visual identity system.

Our shared elements unite the things we offer, and when they're used together—again and again—they become the foundation for the stories that we want our brand, our products, and our services, to tell.

For questions regarding the new visual identity system, please see Brand Tools or contact the Microsoft brand team at corbrand@microsoft.com.

What brand should I use, and how does this guide fit in?

At Microsoft, we have a portfolio of world-class product brands. Through our shared design elements and principles, these brands communicate a united vision to our audiences.

When we create communications which are not associated with any one product brand (e.g., Windows or Office), or which are associated with more than one product brand, Microsoft becomes the lead brand.

These guidelines cover both the shared design elements that are used by all Microsoft brands and product brands, as well as the elements used only for Microsoft led communications.

Shared elements across the entire Microsoft portfolio

Logo   Color   Type   Imagery

| Microsoft	Bing	Office	Skype	Windows	Visual Studio	XBOX

Microsoft and product brands

Logo

Tile

Layout grids

Punchy headline
goes here

Body text goes here. Body text
goes here. Body text goes here.
Body text goes here. Body text
goes here. Body text.

Content tiles

Body text goes here. Body text
goes here. Body text goes here.
Body text goes here. Body text
goes here. Body text.
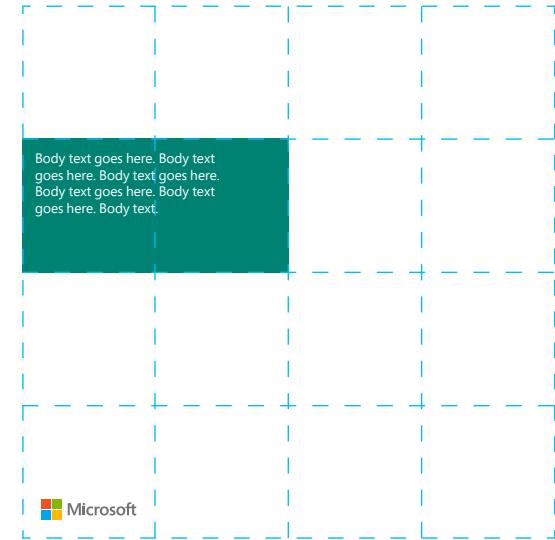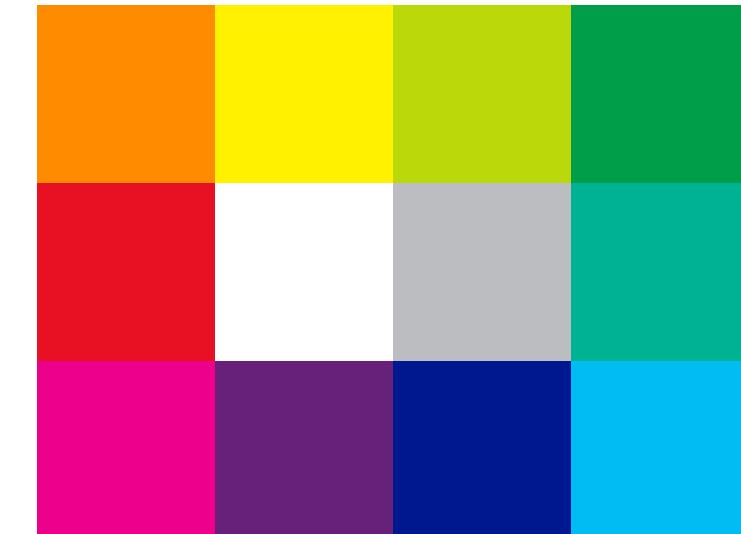
Color

Type

Segoe Light
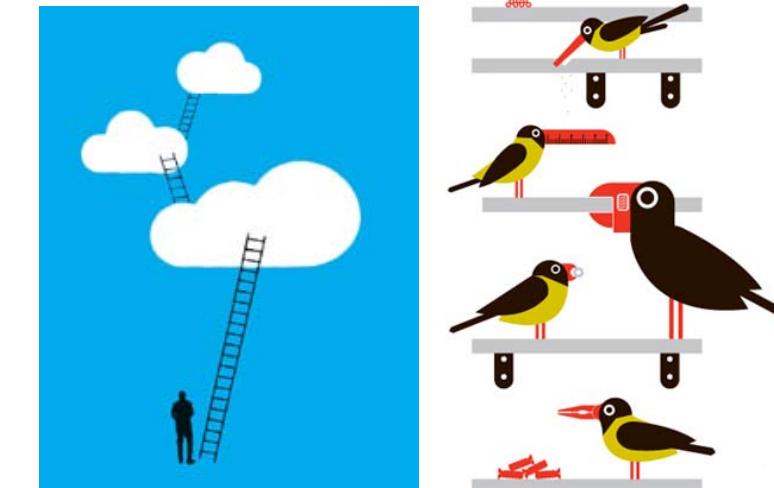
Segoe Regular

Segoe Bold

Photography
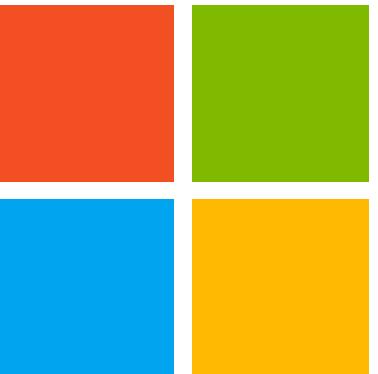
Illustration

Perfect time for a new logo.

As Microsoft prepares to release an unprecedented wave of new products and connected experiences across PCs, phones, tablets, and TVs, we felt our logo should evolve as well, visually accentuating this new era.
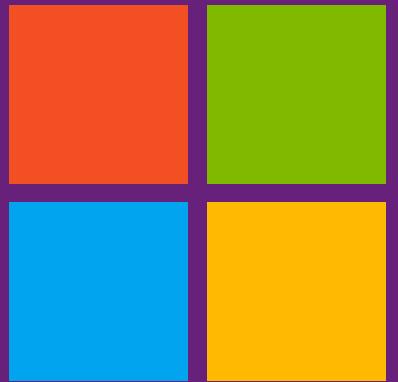
The new Microsoft logo is familiar and welcoming, drawing upon the heritage of our brand values, typeface, and colors. The symbol is built for the digital world, supporting the diversity of our businesses, representing and endorsing our products and services.

All Microsoft branded marketing communications must use the full color logo

The Microsoft logo must be used on 100% of internal and external communications. The logo is intended for use by corporate organizations and facilities; certifications and subscriptions; programs and events; competitions; corporate solutions (multiproduct); hardware; and Microsoft technologies, services, and products.
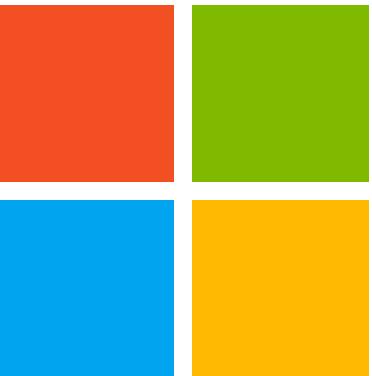
The logo = symbol + logotype

The logo has two components – the symbol with multiple squares of color intended to symbolize the company's diverse portfolio of products, and the logotype that uses the Segoe typeface used in our products and marketing communications.

The symbol must be used as part of the logo in all communications. The symbol alone is only used as a favorites icon by MSCOM, Microsoft Store, and for corporate sites: Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. No other use is allowed. If you have questions, contact corbrand@microsoft.com.

Symbol

Logotype

Microsoft

Logo

Let the logo breathe

Clear space
We respect the logo by giving it some space. The minimum clear space that must surround the logo is equivalent to the height of its capital M.

Minimum size
In print, the logo should never appear smaller than 1" (25 mm). On-screen, it must appear at least 70 pixels wide.

Registration marks
In marketing, registration marks on the logo are no longer necessary, except in consumer packaging applications.

Clear space

Minimum size
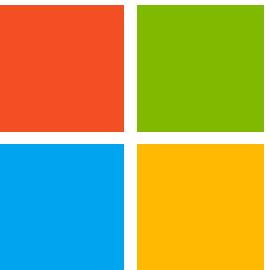
On-screen: 70 px
Print: 1" (25 mm)

Color variations

Use the full-color logo. Use the positive version (logotype in gray) on light or white backgrounds. The full-color reverse logo may be used on dark color backgrounds, as well as dark areas within photographs.

1-color white, black, gray-scale or vertical version of the logos are available for limited use. Please contact corbrand@microsoft.com for guidance on use of this artwork.

Full-color positive

Full-color reverse

Acceptable backgrounds for the full-color logo

The full-color logo may be shown on any of the colors shown here or on simple areas of photographs. See page 33 for color values.

White

Cyan 300

Blue 660

Blue 286

Blue 288

Purple 526

Purple 269

Red 1807

Orange 144

Green 348

Teal 3295

Cool Gray 7

Cool Gray 11
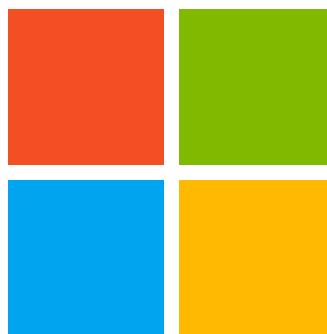
Black

# Use the display version of the logo for very large applications
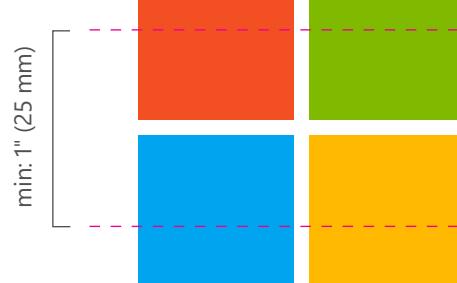
The standard version of the logo is optimized for use at small sizes, making it the best choice for most marketing applications. Subtle adjustments have been made to the standard logo to help it reproduce cleanly and clearly at small sizes. However, these adjustments—called ink traps—are distracting and unnecessary when the logo is enlarged.

If the logo will be displayed at a size where the M in the logotype is more than 1 inch (25 mm) tall, use the display logo artwork. Contact corbrand@microsoft.com to request display logo files.

Standard logo

with ink traps

Display logo

min: 1" (25 mm)

without ink traps
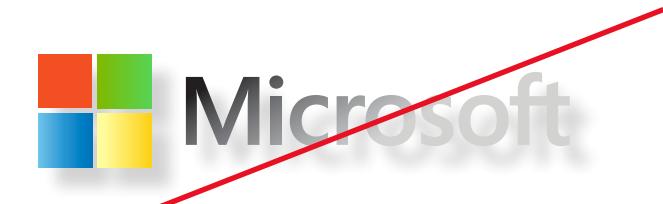
Do not change the size relationship of the symbol to the logotype.

Don't place the logo on backgrounds that provide insufficient contrast.

Don't add effects like shadows, dimensions, and gradients to the logo.

Don't create logo "lockups" by adding text in close proximity to the logo.
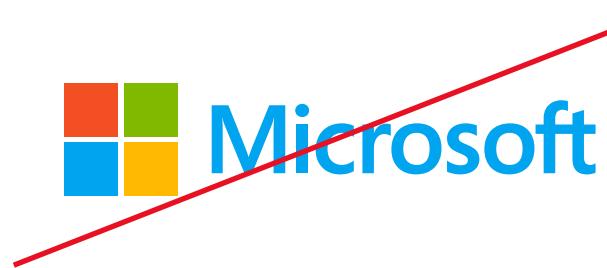
Don't stretch the logo.

Don't compress the logo.

Don't place the logo over busy photographic backgrounds.

Don't alter the color specifications within the symbol or the logotype.
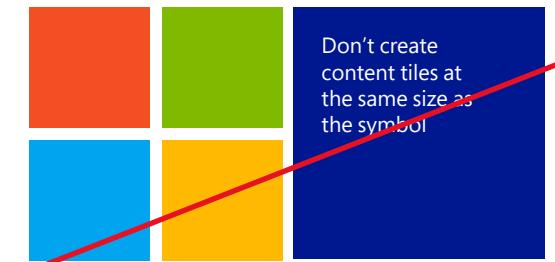
Do not attach text of any kind to the symbol
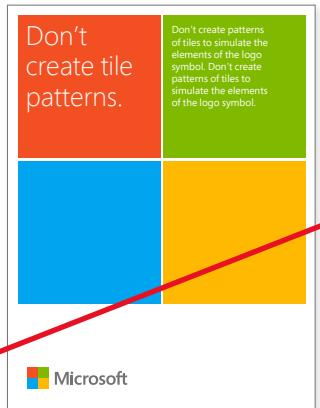
Don't create multi-color logos for
any sub-brand, business group or
division. Only the master brand may use
multiple colors.

First Lastname
Marketing Manager
f.lastname@microsoft.com

Don't use the symbol by itself in email
signatures. Refer to page 83 for the
approved email signatures.

Don't create
content tiles at
the same size as
the symbol

Don't create content tiles at the same size
as the symbol

Don't
create tile
patterns.

Don't create patterns
of tiles to simulate the
elements of the logo
symbol. Don't create
patterns of tiles to
simulate the elements
of the logo symbol.

Microsoft

Don't create patterns of tiles to simulate
the elements of the logo symbol.

Sometimes Microsoft leads, sometimes it endorses

In cases where the full color Microsoft logo cannot be used or where Microsoft is endorsing a featured product brand (such as Office, Windows, or Xbox), use the logotype only.

The Microsoft logo or logotype must appear on 100% of all communications.

For use in broadcast advertising or animation please contact corbrand@ microsoft.com

Microsoft branded communications

Microsoft endorsed communications

All Microsoft endorsed communications must use the logotype.

When Microsoft is the endorser, we use the logotype only. This lets people know the message is from Microsoft, while allowing the lead brand to occupy the spotlight.

The Microsoft logotype must be used as the endorser on all print and digital communications including online, print, and TV advertising; promotional materials and event signage; videos and animations; packaging and collateral, etc.

Microsoft

Let the logotype breathe

Clear space
We respect the logotype by giving it some space. The minimum clear space that must surround the logotype is equivalent to the height of its capital M.

Minimum size
In print, the logo should never appear smaller than 0.7" (18 mm). On-screen, it must appear at least 44 pixels wide.

Clear space

Minimum size

On-screen: 44 px
Print: 0.7" (18 mm)

The logotype is colorful

The Microsoft logotype is available in the core brand colors and dark tints, as well as Cool Gray 9, black and white. The selected logotype color should be present elsewhere in the composition, such as in the lead brand logo, an illustration, or a headline.

Use a color logotype on white backgrounds and a white logotype on color backgrounds. To maintain sufficient contrast when the logotype is used on a photo background, use a color logotype on light images and a white logotype on dark images.

Microsoft **Microsoft** **Microsoft**

Microsoft **Microsoft** **Microsoft**

Microsoft **Microsoft** **Microsoft**

Microsoft **Microsoft**

Microsoft **Microsoft**

Use the display version of the logotype for very large applications

The standard version of the logotype is optimized for use at small sizes, making it the best choice for most marketing applications. Subtle adjustments have been made to the standard logotype to help it reproduce cleanly and clearly at small sizes. However, these adjustments—called ink traps—are distracting and unnecessary when the logotype is enlarged.

If the logotype will be printed at sizes larger than 1 inch tall, use the display logotype artwork. Contact corbrand@microsoft.com to request logo files.

Standard logotype

Microsoft

with ink traps

Display logotype

minimum: 1" (25 mm)

Microsoft

without ink traps
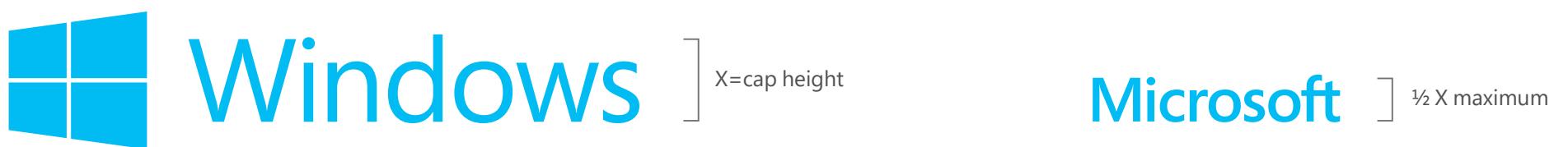
The logotype complements the brands it endorses

This is important because both the product brand and Microsoft benefit by being used together. Therefore it is paramount that all product branded communications use the Microsoft logotype as an endorsement.

Shown here is the ideal color and scale relationship to use when placing the logotype in a layout together with another brand.

Consult the guidelines for the brand you are working with for additional details on scale and color.

Windows   X=cap height

Microsoft   ½ X maximum

Office   X=cap height

Microsoft   ½ X maximum

Visual Studio   X=cap height

Microsoft   ½ X maximum

Place the logotype so it aligns with other elements in the layout

The logotype should be placed in an area at the periphery of the layout, away from the focal point of the layout. Placing the logotype in one corner of the layout is a good way to signal that it is an endorsement, rather than the lead brand. Regardless of where it's placed, use care in positioning the logotype so it aligns with the layout grid or with other graphic elements in the design.

See the guidelines for the brand you're working with for details on logo placement and alignment.

Windows

Stay even closer to the things you care about the most.

Microsoft

Make it great with Office 2012.

Office
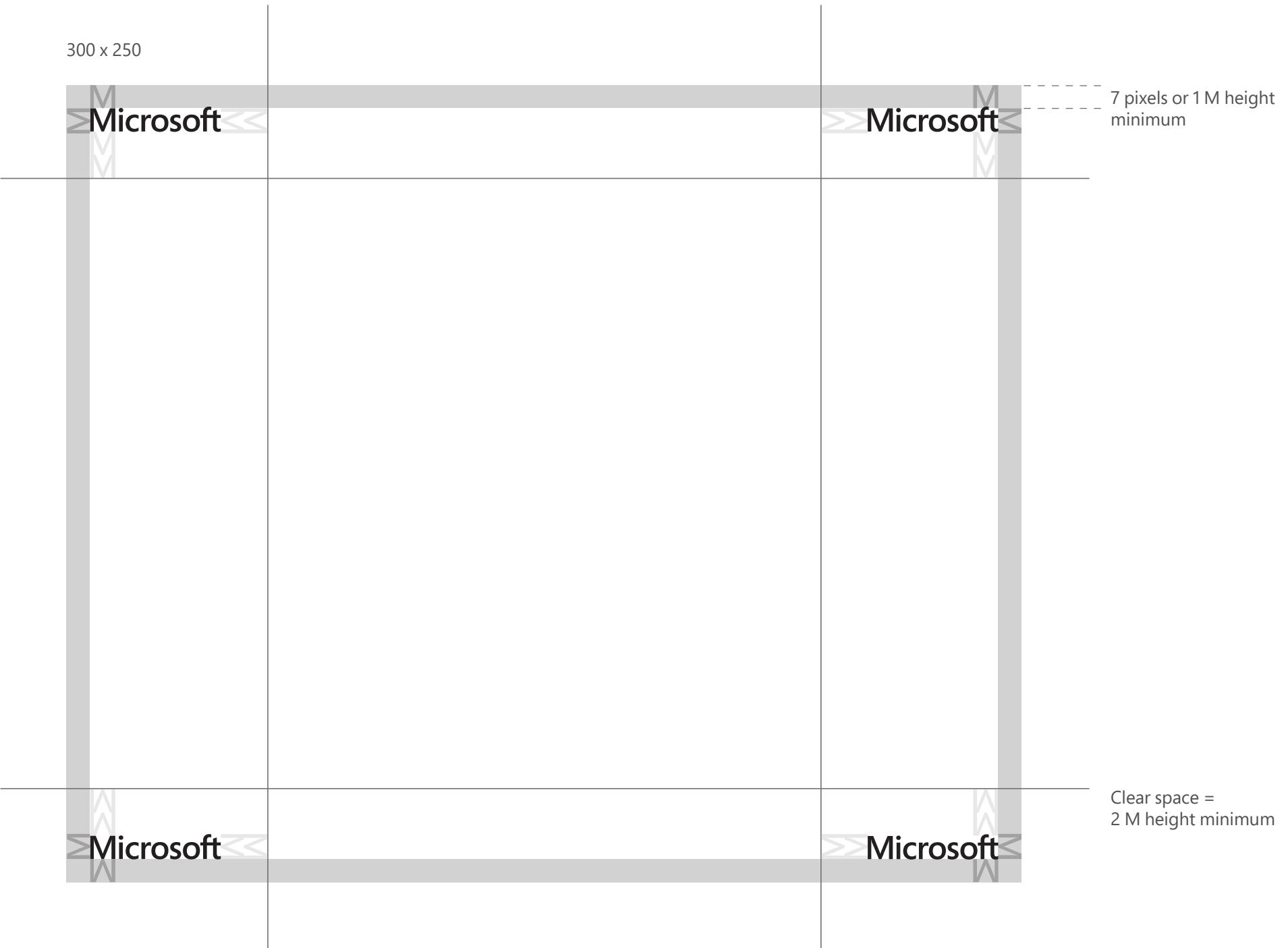
Microsoft

Logotype placement in digital communications

The Microsoft logotype must appear in one of two positions for a minimum of one second in all digital communications (e.g. ads, banners, etc.):

1. Call-to-action end-panel (shared)
2. Alone on the end-panel

The Microsoft logotype should be placed in one of the 4 corners of the ad, equal distance from two edges in space constrained communications. Accompanying subbrand logos should be placed no closer than two (2) "M" spaces next to the logotype.

300 x 250

Microsoft

Microsoft

7 pixels or 1 M height minimum

Microsoft

Microsoft

Clear space = 2 M height minimum
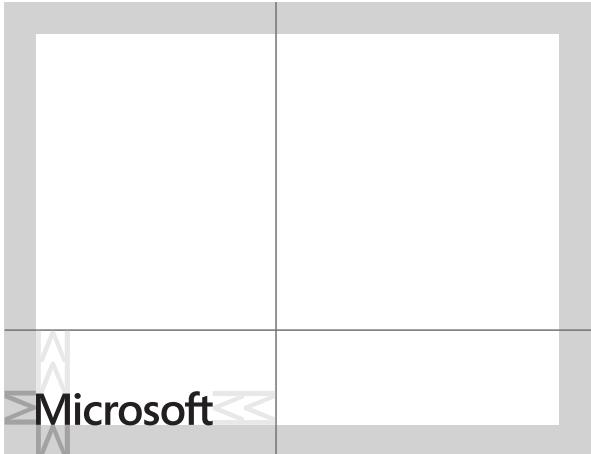
Small space banners

The Microsoft logotype must appear in all banner advertising, with a few exceptions. The Microsoft logotype may be dropped when the ad sizes are smaller than 120 x 90 and using the Microsoft logotype would prohibit appropriate subbrand sponsorship and messaging.

In the rare instance when the Microsoft logotype is not used, it must appear on the "call-to-action" (CTA) landing page.

Logo placement for 120 x 90 ad

120 x 90 ad with proper clear space

120 x 60 ad does not allow proper clear space.

Dont' stretch or extend the logotype

Don't compress the logotype

Don't use light colored logotype artwork on white or light backgrounds.
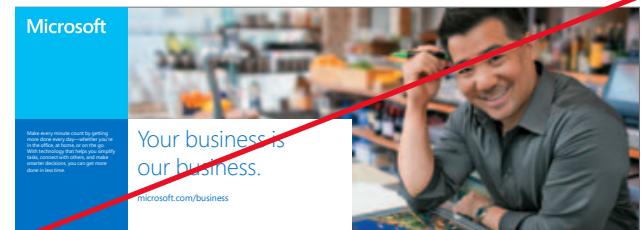
Don't group the logotype with other text, product names, or product logos

Don't use legacy logotype artwork on new materials

Don't place the logotype over busy backgrounds

Don't place the logotype within a cornerstone tile

Don't apply gradients, dropshadows or other effects to the logotype

dont create the logotype by typing "Microsoft" in Segoe font. Use the provided artwork.

Type is beautiful, and it matters

Type is more than a design element. It articulates our message, expressing both what we say and how we say it. Modern, easy to read, and humanist, the Segoe type family is closely aligned with the Microsoft brand personality. We use it within products and in communications across brands.

Segoe is straightforward, allowing our messages—from the enthusiastic to the practical—to be easily understood.

Use Segoe
Keep it simple
Limit type sizes to three
Keep it flush left
Use sentence case

Segoe is our type family

We use Segoe, a completely custom type family created for Microsoft that has become a longstanding core element of our visual identity.

Segoe Pro is the brand font used for print and graphic executions. Segoe UI is the Windows OS font, and the font that is used for on-screen and digital executions.

To download the Segoe Pro font family, visit Media Bank: https://mediabank.partners. extranet.microsoft.com

Segoe Pro

Use for all print applications.

Segoe Pro Light

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe Pro Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe Pro Semibold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe Pro Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe UI

Use for on-screen applications like PowerPoint, email, and websites.

Segoe UI Light

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe UI Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe UI Semibold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Segoe UI Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890@#$%&*

Size and weight

- Limit type to no more than three sizes.
- Use Light for large headlines.
- Use Regular or Semibold for increased legibility at small sizes or over backgrounds.
- Use Semibold or Bold for subheads, but not for headlines.
- Segoe Black or Condensed weights should be used sparingly.

Case

- Sentence case is our standard for all communications.
- Use all-uppercase sparingly—for titles, short headings, or subheadings, and never for full paragraphs.
- Do not use all-lowercase type.

Line spacing

- Line spacing refers to the space between lines of type. See the chart at right for line spacing guidelines.

Letter spacing

- Letter spacing (also known as tracking) is the space between letters.
- Segoe is designed so that letter spacing and word spacing are set by default to 0. In some cases, spacing may need to be adjusted. Make sure that letters never touch one another. See the chart at right for tracking guidelines.

Justification

- Type should always be set flush left, ragged right.
- Segoe should never be justified or centered.
- Avoid widows, orphans, and lines that end with hyphens

|	Leading	Tracking
Body text (<8~14pt)	120% (minimum)	0
Subhead text (14~36pt)	110% (minimum)	–15
Headline text (36~72pt+)	120% (maximum)	–15

Our international fonts align with our visual identity system

We recommend specific fonts for use around the world. If subsidiaries have identified alternate third party fonts they feel align better with Segoe please contact corbrand@microsoft.com.

Language	Print	On Screen
Latin, Greek, Cyrillic	Segoe Pro	Segoe UI (Win 8 version)
Hebrew, Armenian, Georgian	Segoe UI (Win 8 version)	Segoe UI (Win 8 version)
Arabic	Segoe UI (Win 8 version) Majalla "Traditional"	Segoe UI (Win 8 version)
Indian languages	Nirmala UI	Nirmala UI
Thai	Leelawadee	Leelawadee
Indiginios American	Gadugi	Gadugi
China (simplified)	YaHei	YaHei UI
China (traditional)	JhengHei	JhengHei UI
Korea	Malgun Gothic	Malgun Gothic
Japan	Meiryo	Meiryo UI
Lao	Lao UI	Lao UI
Khmer	DaunPenh	Khmer UI
African languages	Ebrima	Ebrima

Non-English language layouts

When designing for non-English communications, it may be necessary to mirror the layout guidance, with right-alignment replacing left-alignment.

Subhead   Copy   Headline

Headline   Copy   Subhead

Subhead   Copy   Headline

Keep type aligned with the grid

Clear, organized messages are easier for our audiences to read and respond to. Align all type, regardless of messaging category or whether it appears inside a color block, to the same grid.

Internal SharePoints (exhibits for layout only)

Type size and relationships

While there are many possibilities in the size and style of type, here are some proven relationships for using Segoe in composition.

▪▪ Microsoft

Headline set in Segoe Light, two units tall.

Body copy is one grid unit tall or less, set in Segoe Regular. Body copy is one grid unit tall or less. Body copy is one grid unit tall or less.

▪▪ Microsoft
Microsoft

Headline twice logo height.

Body copy is one grid unit tall or less, set in Segoe Regular. Body copy is one grid unit tall or less.

▪▪ Microsoft

Headline is same height as logo, set in Segoe Light.

Body copy is 75% of the subhead height, or less, and set in Segoe Regular. Body copy is 75% of the subhead height, or less, and set in Segoe Regular.

HR

Subhead is one grid unit tall and set in Segoe Semibold.

Body copy is not more than 75% as tall as the subhead. Body copy is not more than 75% as tall as the subhead. Body copy is not more than 75% as tall as the subhead. Body copy is not more than 75% as tall as the subhead.

Body copy is not more than 75% as tall as the subhead. Body copy is not more than.

▪▪ Microsoft

This is Segoe Regular with a shadow.

Don't add drop shadows to type.

Don't leave widows in text.

Avoid widows (words by themselves on a line) shorter than 7 characters.

This headline is hy- phenated.
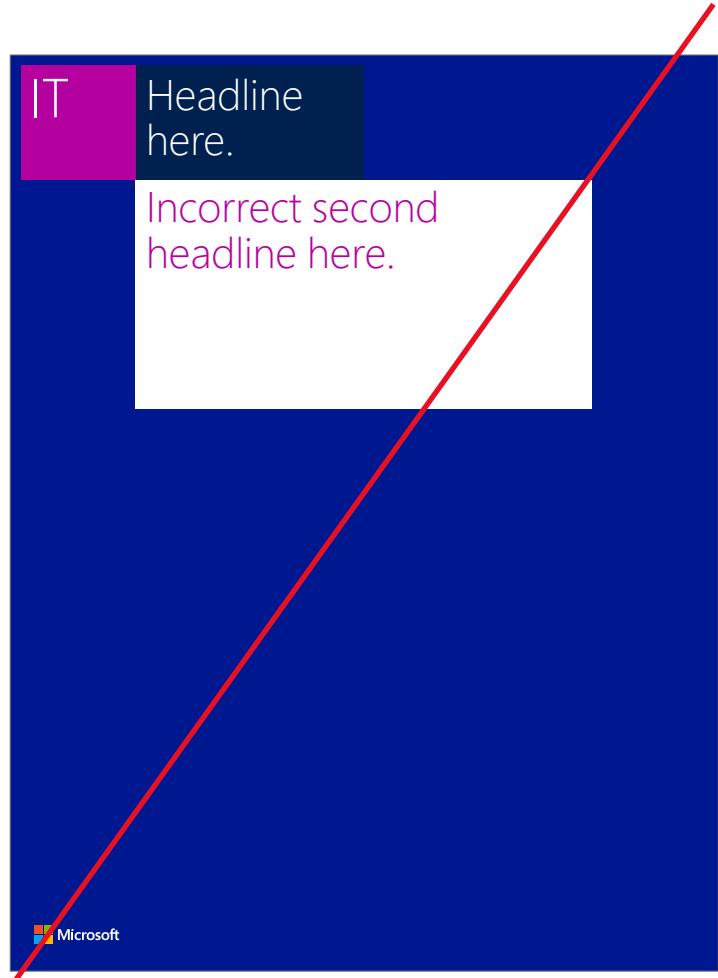
Avoid hyphenation in general, and especially in headlines.

This text is kerned at negative 100.

Don't kern text too tightly or loosely.

This text is right aligned.

Avoid right-aligned type.

This type is stretched.

Don't stretch type horizontally or vertically.

The line spacing on

this text is 200%.

Avoid loose line spacing measures.

Too Many
TYPE *styles*
in one layout

Don't use more than 1 or 2 type styles in close proximity, and try to follow the rule of 3 type sizes per page layout.

This two-column layout leaves an orphan.

Don't leave orphans in your text. (An orphan is a lone word at the top of a page or column—the last word in a sentence carried over from the prior text block.)

IT

Headline here.

Incorrect second headline here.

Microsoft
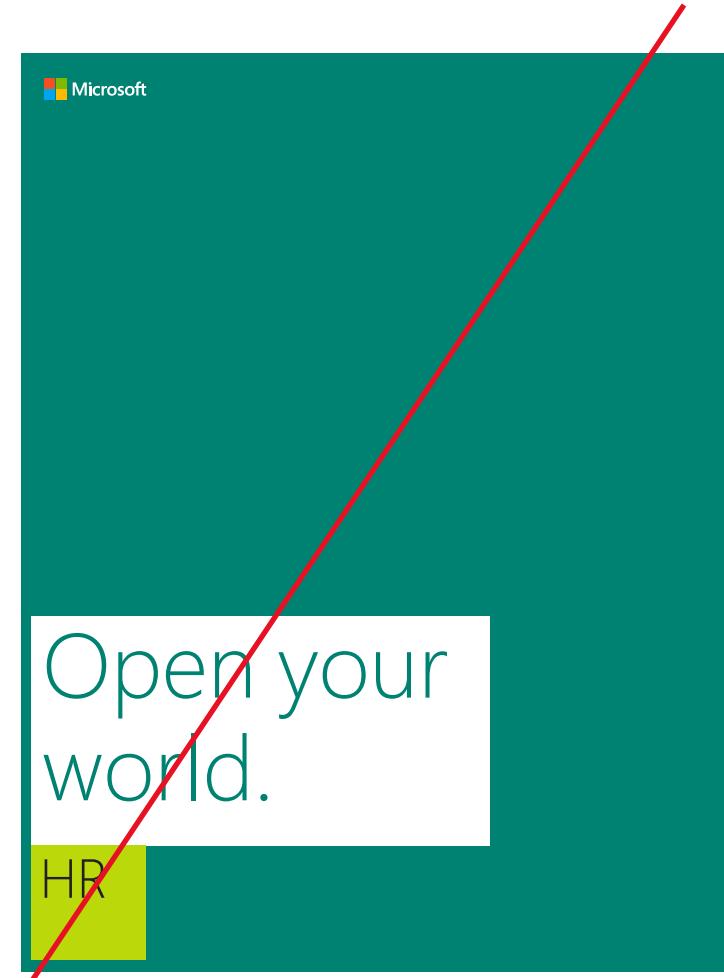
Internal communication

Don't use more than one headline per layout. Always maintain a clear hierarchy when there is more than one level of information.

Microsoft

Entil aut eos cor aut porro id exerup fugia dicatur? Kuiae pliscid quod quia doluptatur modiscidem volup taque aboresequis nihicim comnis cus qua mil ex et es aut et

Headline here.

Sentis aut eos cor aut porro id exerid fugia dicatur? Quiae pliscid quod quis soluptatur modiscidem voluptaque por aboresequis nihicim comnis cus duam mil ex et es aut et

External communication

Don't place body copy in more than one tile. Body copy within a single tile may be arranged into multiple columns.

Microsoft

Open your world.

HR

Internal communication

Don't set type too large within a tile. Generally, headline text no larger than 75% of the tile width will provide the best results.

We are colorful

Life happens in color. Color captures passions, inspires emotions, and connects people. Bright and energetic, pure and beautiful, the Microsoft colors add vibrancy to communications and are among the most recognizable and unifying elements in our visual identity.

Choose one of the 10 core colors (the labeled ring in the color wheel shown here) as the primary color in your layout. The lighter and darker tints may be used as highlights and accents.

Yellow

Orange

Lime

Red

Green

Magenta

Teal

Purple

Cyan

Blue

Use the 10 core colors in the right places

Use RGB and HEX formulas for on-screen and digital use. CMYK builds and PMS colors are for print applications.

Please note that each color has been optimized for on-screen (RGB) or print (solid or 4CP) reproduction. The specific RGB color formula, PMS color, and CMYK color formula are provided here and must be specified individually for each color. Do not use the automated color conversion tools in your software.
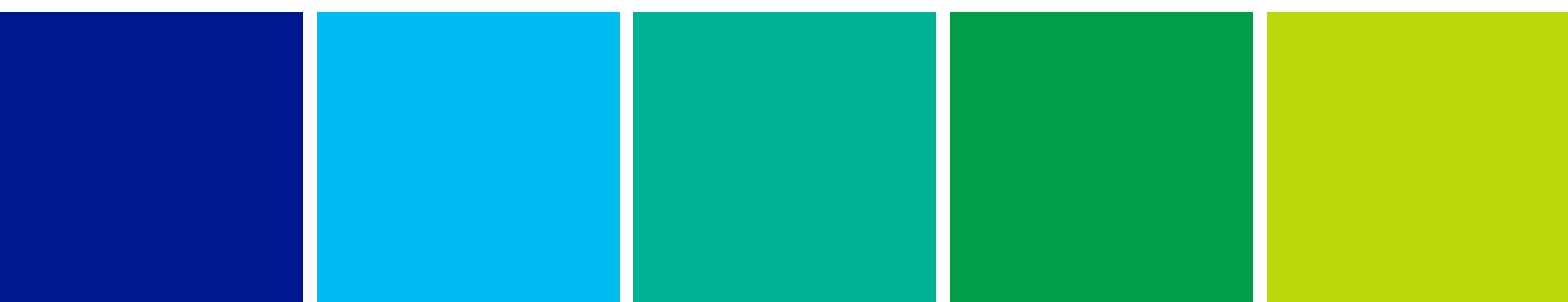
Process Yellow
C0 M0 Y100 K0
R255 G241 B0
HEX #FFF100

Orange 144
C0 M50 Y100 K0
R255 G140 B0
HEX #FF8C00

Red 185
C0 M100 Y100 K0
R232 G17 B35
HEX #E81123

Process Magenta
C0 M100 Y0 K0
R236 G0 B140
HEX #EC008C

Purple 526
C75 M100 Y0 K0
R104 G33 B122
HEX #68217A

Blue 286
C100 M75 Y0 K0
R0 G24 B143
HEX #00188F

Process Cyan
C100 M0 Y0 K0
R0 G188 B242
HEX #00BCF2

Teal 3275
C100 M0 Y50 K0
R0 G178 B148
HEX #00B294

Green 355
C100 M0 Y100 K0
R0 G158 B73
HEX #009E49

Lime 382
C25 M0 Y100 K0
R186 G216 B10
HEX #BAD80A

Our 10 core colors have lighter and darker tints

Layouts should utilize the 10 core colors most frequently. Our secondary palettes of lighter and darker tints provide a wide range of supporting colors.

White, gray, and black are additional supporting colors, used for copy. White may also be used as a background color.

These colors have been optimized for on-screen (RGB or HEX) or print (PMS or CMYK) use. Use the color specifications provided here. Do not use the automated color
conversion tools in your software.

Yellow 100
C0 M0 Y50 K0
R255 G252 B158
HEX #FFFC9E

Orange 124
C0 M25 Y100 K0
R255 G185 B0
HEX #FFB900

Red 1665
C0 M85 Y100 K0
R221 G89 B0
HEX #DD5900

Magenta 218
C0 M75 Y0 K0
R244 G114 B208
HEX #F472D0

Purple 258
C60 M85 Y0 K0
R155 G79 B150
HEX #9B4F96

Yellow 116
C0 M13 Y100 K0
R252 G209 B22
HEX #FCD116

Orange 166
C0 M75 Y100 K0
R235 G60 B0
HEX #EB3C00

Red 1807
C0 M100 Y100 K25
R186 G20 B26
HEX #BA141A

Magenta 241
C25 M100 Y0 K0
R180 G0 B158
HEX #B4009E

Purple 269
C75 M100 Y0 K25
R68 G35 B89
HEX #442359

Blue 660
C80 M60 Y0 K0
R70 G104 B197
HEX #4668C5

Cyan 2985
C60 M0 Y0 K0
R109 G194 B233
HEX #6DC2E9

Teal 325
C65 M0 Y30 K0
R0 G216 B204
HEX #00D8CC

Green 7480
C70 M0 Y85 K0
R85 G212 B85
HEX #55D455

Lime 586
C15 M0 Y60 K0
R226 G229 B132
HEX #E2E584

Blue 288
C100 M75 Y0 K25
R0 G32 B80
HEX #002050

Cyan 300
C100 M50 Y0 K0
R0 G114 B198
HEX #0072C6

Teal 3295
C100 M0 Y50 K25
R0 G130 B114
HEX #008272

Green 348
C100 M0 Y100 K25
R0 G114 B51
HEX #007233

Lime 376
C50 M0 Y100 K0
R127 G186 B0
HEX #7FBA00

Black
C0 M0 Y0 K0
R0 G0 B0
HEX #000000

Cool Gray 11
C0 M0 Y0 K80
R80 G80 B80
HEX #505050

Cool Gray 7
C0 M0 Y0 K50
R150 G150 B150
HEX #969696

Cool Gray 3
C0 M0 Y0 K20
R210 G210 B210
HEX #D2D2D2

White
C0 M0 Y0 K0
R255 G255 B255
HEX #FFFFFF

Our colors are accessible

The appropriate use of color helps make sure all of our customers can access and understand Microsoft communications, regardless of their abilities.

Avoid relying on color alone to convey information. Always provide text or other graphical cues to guide customers to our message.

Note: Type reversed to white, or black type over a colored background, should exceed the minimum 4.5:1 contrast ratio for accessibility. Examples at right demonstrate correct color use for on-screen (RGB) applications.
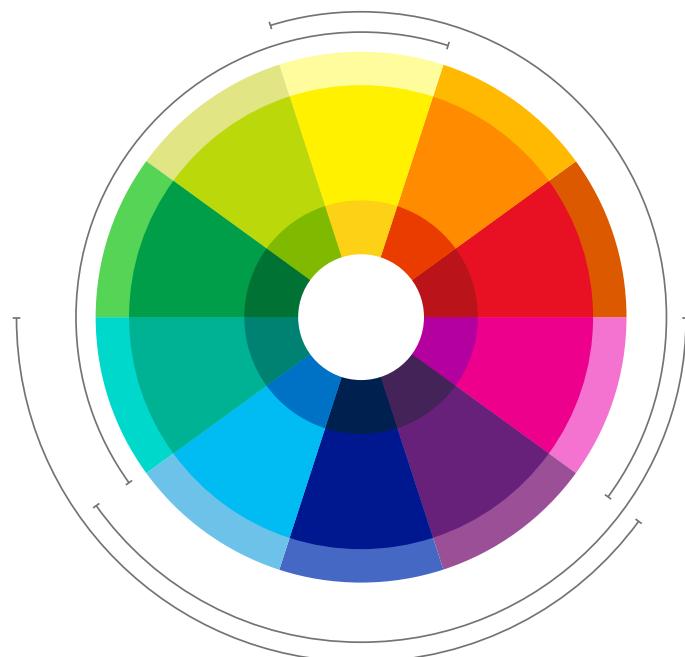
Yellow 100 R255 G252 B158	**Orange 124** R255 G185 B0	**Red 1665** R221 G89 B0	**Magenta 218** R244 G114 B208	**Purple 258** R155 G79 B150
Process Yellow R255 G241 B0	**Orange 144** R255 G140 B0	**Red 185** R232 G17 B35	**Process Magenta** R236 G0 B140	**Purple 526** R104 G33 B122
Yellow 116 R252 G209 B22	**Orange 166** R235 G60 B0	**Red 1807** R186 G20 B26	**Magenta 241** R180 G0 B158	**Purple 269** R68 G35 B89

Blue 660 R70 G104 B197	**Cyan 2985** R109 G194 B233	**Teal 325** R0 G216 B204	**Green 7480** R85 G212 B85	**Lime 586** R226 G229 B132
Blue 286 R0 G24 B143	**Process Cyan** R0 G188 B242	**Teal 3275** R0 G178 B148	**Green 355** R0 G158 B73	**Lime 382** R186 G216 B10
Blue 288 R0 G32 B80	**Cyan 300** R0 G114 B198	**Teal 3295** R0 G130 B114	**Green 348** R0 G114 B51	**Lime 376** R127 G186 B0
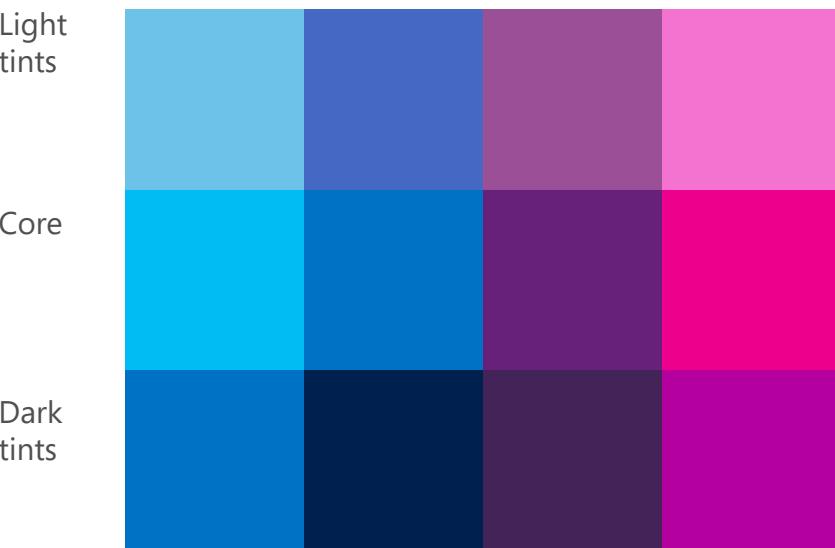
Black R0 G0 B0	**Cool Gray 11** R80 G80 B80	**Cool Gray 7** R150 G150 B150	**Cool Gray 3** R210 G210 B210	**White** R255 G255 B255

# Powerful color combinations
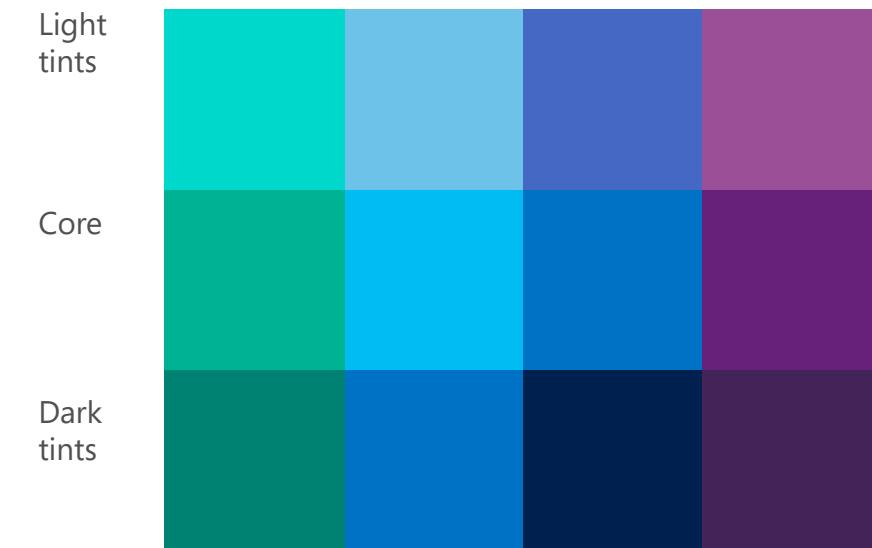
These sample analogous color groups demonstrate the use of color pairings derived from relationships in the Microsoft color wheel. Pick a minimum of one and a maximum of four colors from your chosen group per application (not including white, gray, and black). Its recommended that you choose no more than one light tint per application to maintain vibrancy.

Group 1

Light tints			
Core			
Dark tints			

Group 2

Light tints			
Core			
Dark tints			

Group 3

Light tints			
Core			
Dark tints			

Group 4

Light Tints			
Core			
Dark tints			
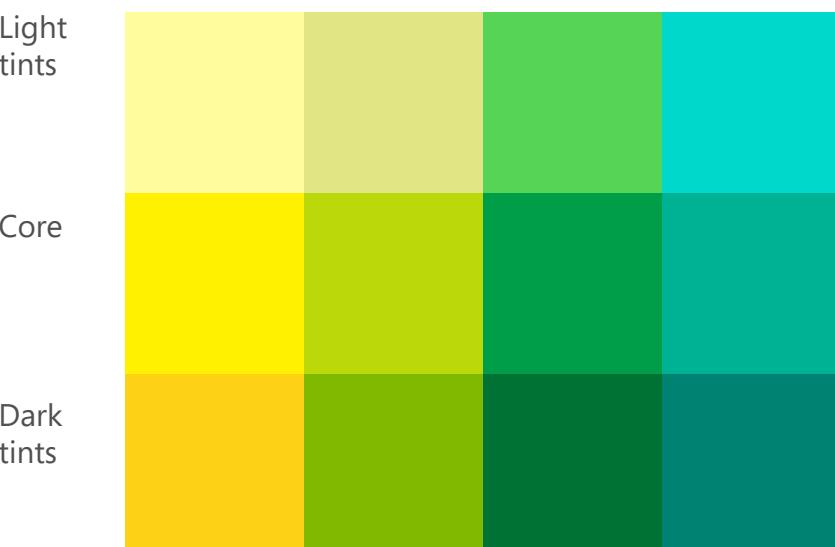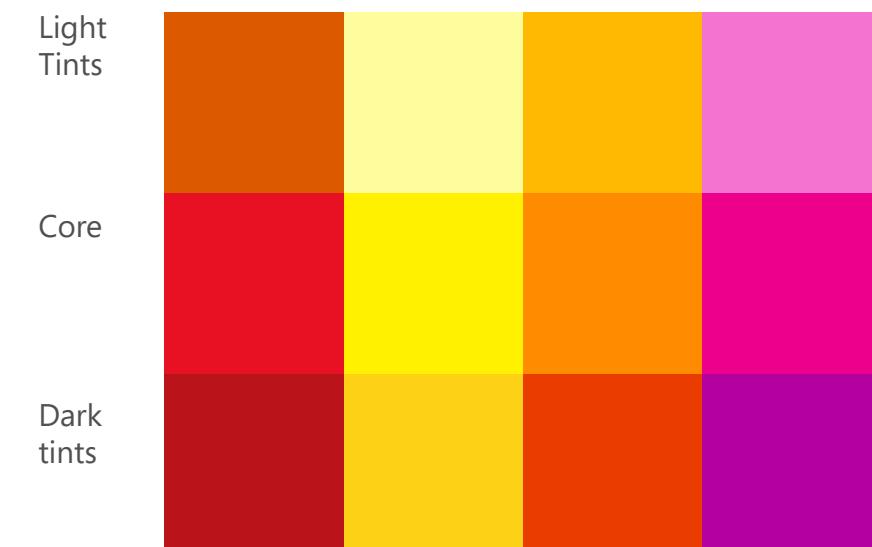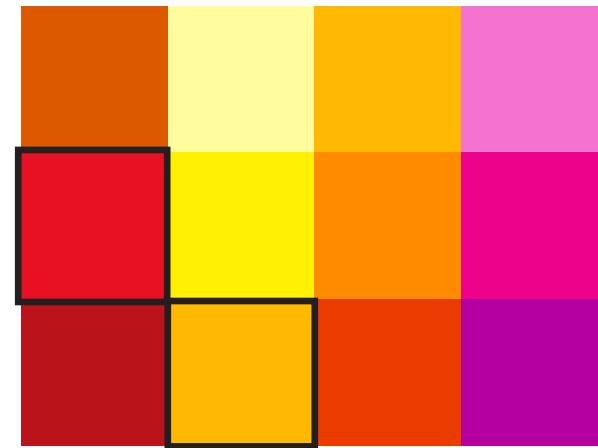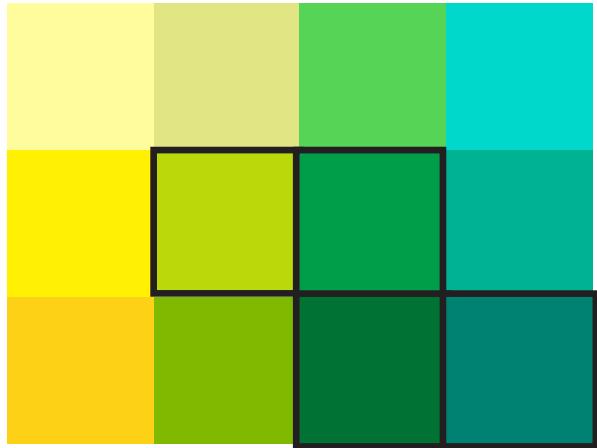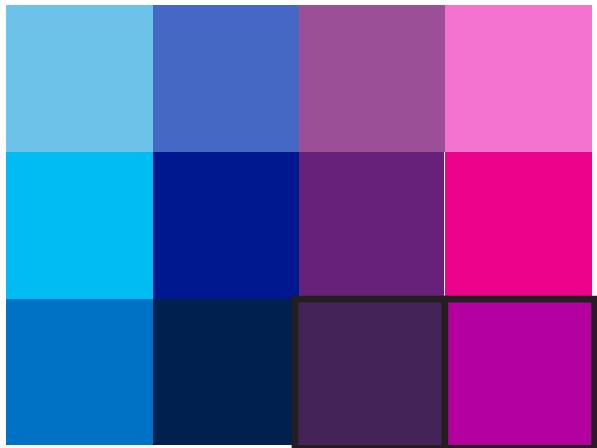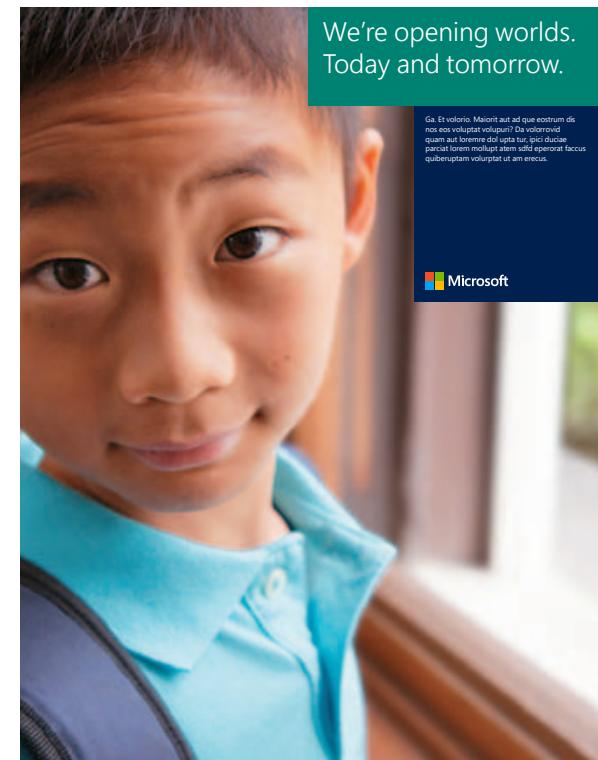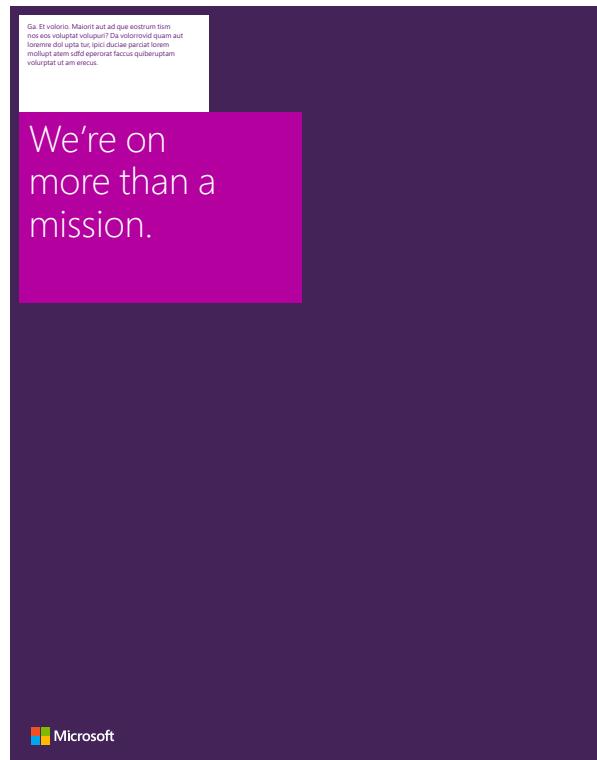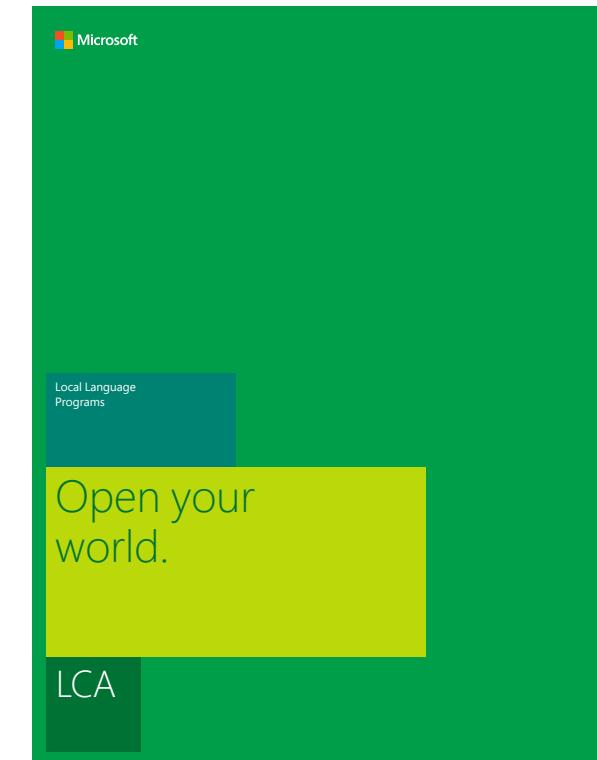
Colored type can be used against a white background as long as the color is represented somewhere else in the composition.

You can as few as one or two colors from the group.
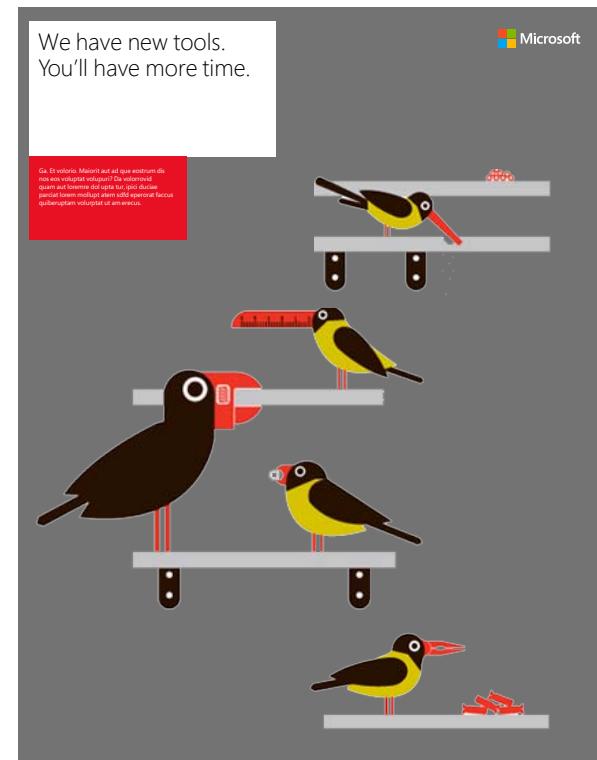
Multiple colors from the dark or mid-range zones can be used in one composition.

Black or gray type can be used on white or light colored backgrounds.

We're opening worlds.
Today and tomorrow.

Open your world.

LCA

We have new tools.
You'll have more time.

External communication

External communication

Internal communication

External communication

This text is hard to read.
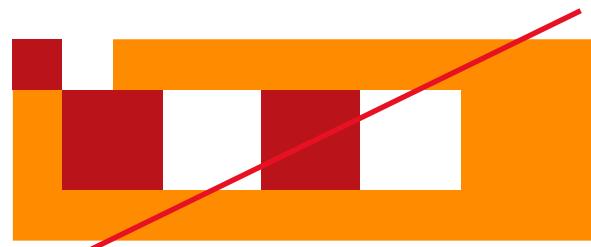
Avoid low-contrast color combinations.

Don't repeat colors in ways that create a "checkerboard" effect.

There are too many colors in this design.

Avoid using more than three colors in a tile layout.

Too many colors in one text area

Don't use more than two colors in a single text grouping.

This is a 20% tint of Red 185.

Don't tint the brand colors. Choose a color from the secondary palette—or white, black, or gray—if the core colors aren't sufficient.

Microsoft

Don't place the logo over any color or background that provides insufficient contrast.

Grids: invisible but critical

Even when you can't see it, the grid is the most important organizational tool in the visual identity. It's what every layout is built on. It helps deliver our messages in a clean, simple, and direct way. It makes our communications feel like they come from Microsoft. Starting with a well-defined grid will give your design a solid foundation.
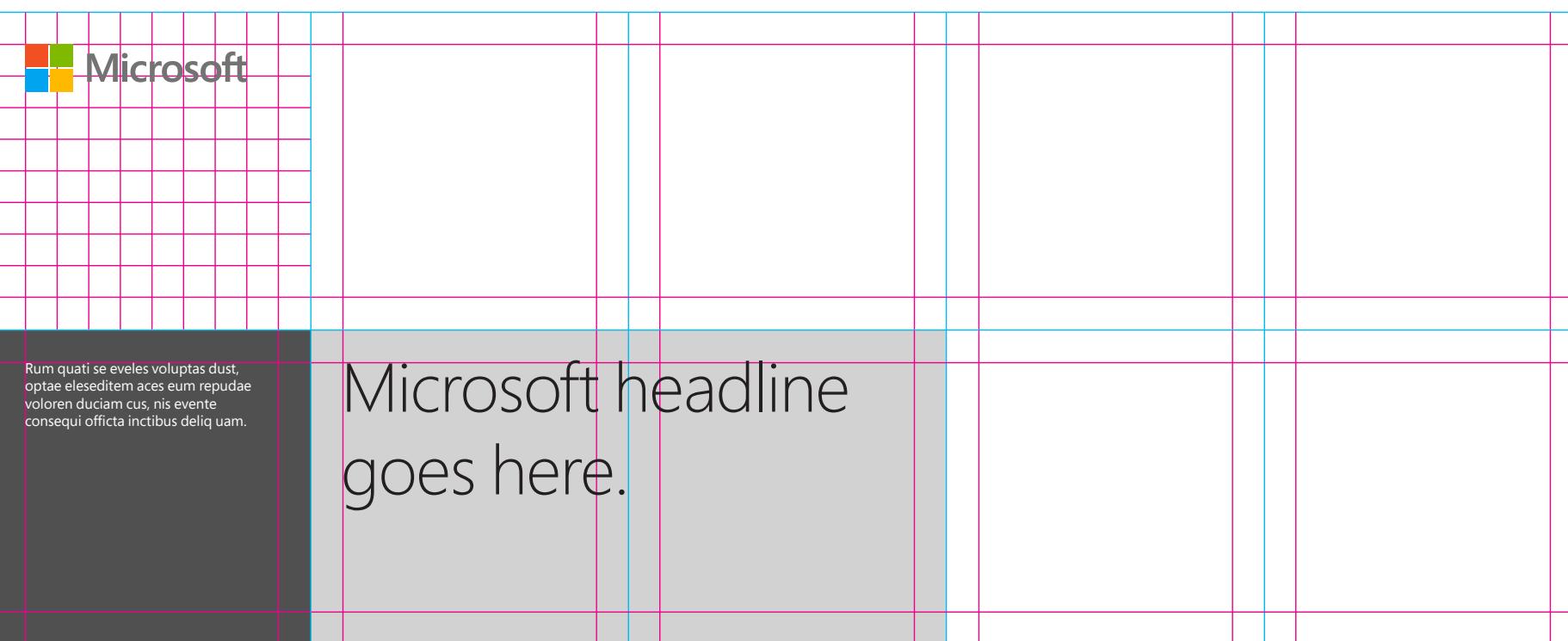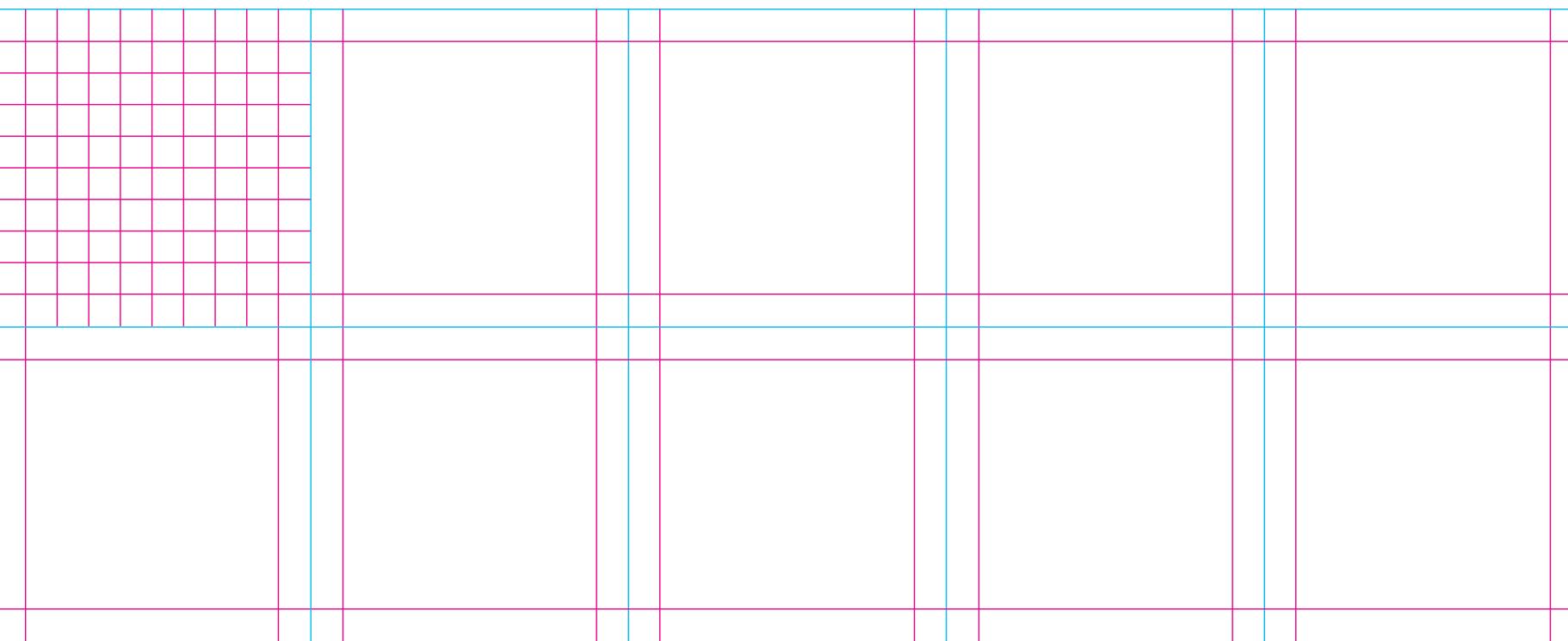
The underlying grid brings structure to simplicity. It creates the spaces where we tell our stories.

Grids provide organization, with or without tiles

The underlying structure of all Microsoft design, grids help balance your layout, creating the spacing and information organization that will guide customers to the most important visual elements and messages.

Blue lines = grid columns and rows

Magenta lines = margins within the grid

Microsoft

Rum quati se eveles voluptas dust, optae eleseditem aces eum repudae voloren duciam cus, nis evente consequi officta inctibus deliq uam.

Microsoft headline goes here.

Tiles: a defining design element

A new part of the Microsoft visual identity system and a connection to our product experience, tiles bring a fresh, captivating element to layouts, and are our primary vehicle for sending messages with type or identifying the author of internal communications.

Tiles provide a colorful starting point for a conversation. They contain important wayfinding information, letting the reader know who's talking.

What is a content tile?

Content tiles provide an opportunity for interesting and bold color combinations, and create strong areas in which to place type.

A content tile may contain the primary communication information—headline, subhead, body copy and call to action. It may also identify who the communication is from, contain illustration, photography, and color.

■■ Microsoft

Be heard!

Et volorio. Maiorit aut ad que eostrumque nos eos voluptat volupuri? Da volorrovid quam aut re dol upta tur, ipici duciae parciates mollupt atem eperorat faccus quiberuptam volurptati ut am erecus endio mod endam, ia porrum etur aut mod quas del inci cus ratquid dolor ipsum. Ga. Et volorio. Maiorit aut ad que eostrumque nos eos voluptat volupuri? Da volorrovid quam aut re dol upta tur, ipici duciae parciates mollupt atem eperorat faccus quiberuptam.

■■ Microsoft   Real Estate and Facilities

Punchy headline goes here.

Internal e-mail banners

Content tiles align to the layout grid

Content tiles align to the layout grid (shown as blue lines in this example) in at least one dimension (height or width). It is preferable that they align to both.

Microsoft

Punchy Microsoft headline belongs right here.

→ www.microsoft.com/url

External communication
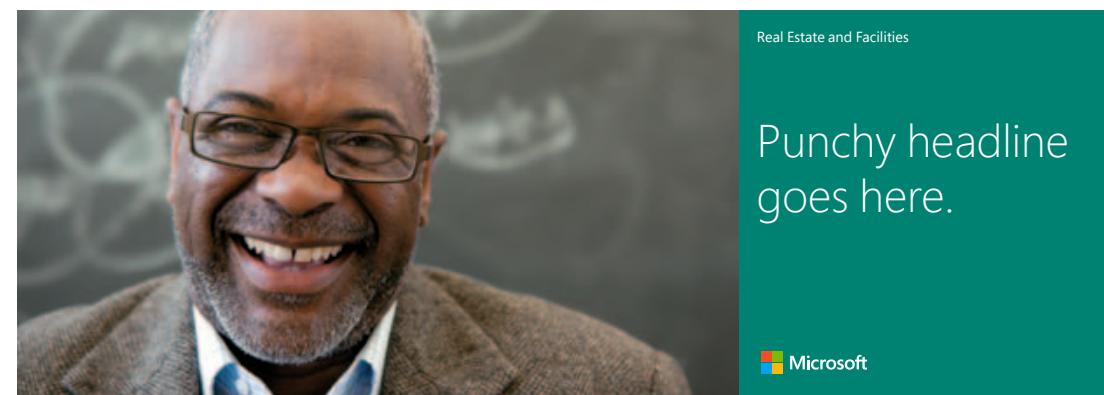
Placing the logo
inside a content tile

It is not necessary to place the logo within a
tile. Content tiles must be at least two tiles wide
if they will contain the logo.

Punchy Microsoft
headline belongs
right here.

Microsoft

External communication

Content tile must be at least two tiles
wide if it will contain the logo

Real Estate and Facilities

Punchy headline
goes here.

Microsoft

Internal banner

Placing the logo outside a tile
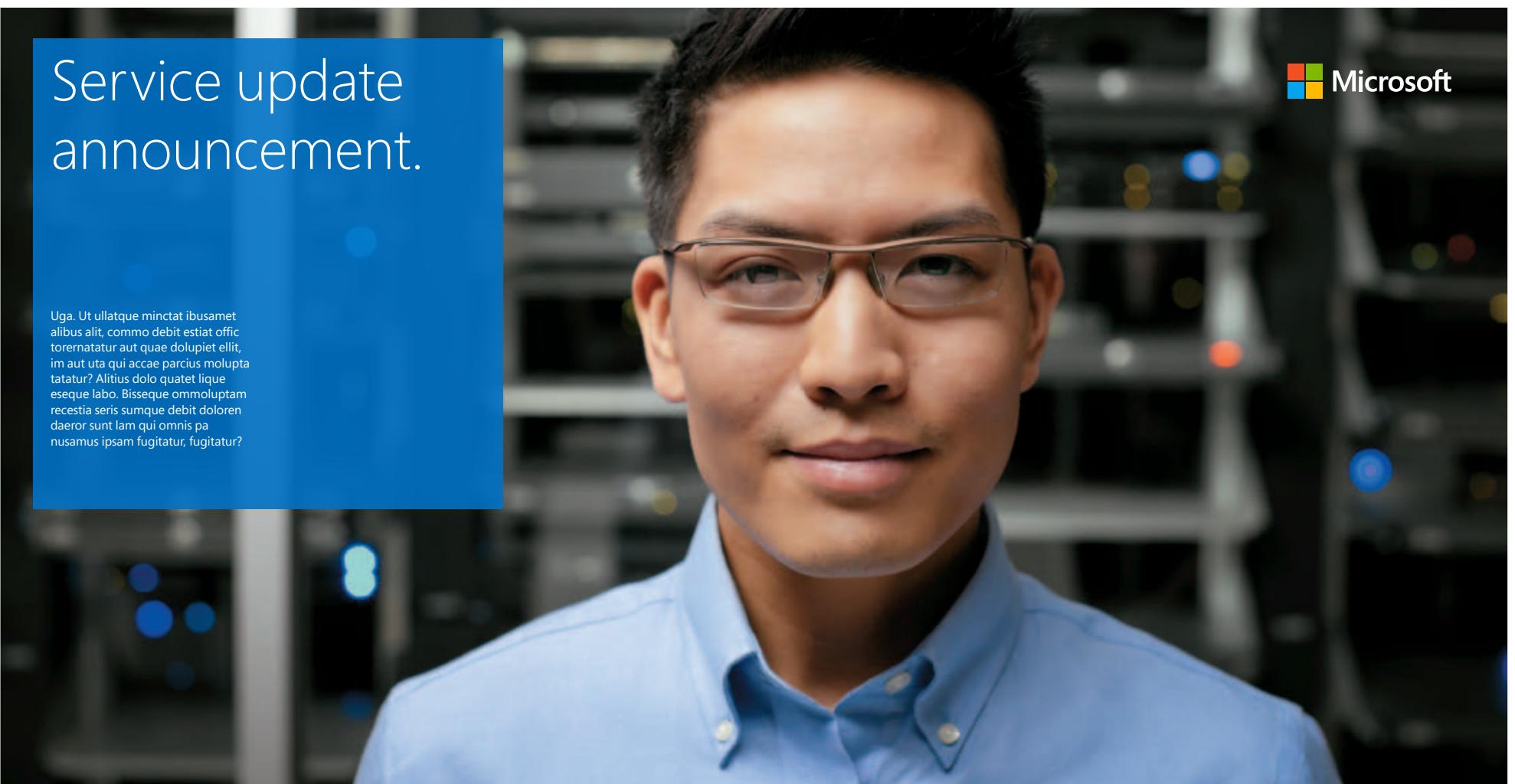
If you choose to use tiles in your layout but wish to place the Microsoft logo outside of the tile, be sure it aligns to the grid, and try to align it with other typographic elements in the layout. This simplifies the composition.

Punchy Microsoft headline belongs right here.

Uga. Ut ullatque minctat ibusamet alibus alit, commo debit estiat offic torernatatur aut quae dolupiet ellit, im aut uta qui accae parcius molupta tatatur? Alitius dolo quatet lique eseque labo. Bisseque ommoluptam recestia seris sumque debit doloren daeror sunt lam qui omnis pa nusamus ipsam fugitatur, sequam volupti osseque cus am acerovid et lame erae quist, comnist lam fugitium verum fugitatur?

Os et magnate pel moluptate eos earciet id qui te occullaturit quo experch ilibus necaborepe ea naturis itatur, consectium laut ma sum que evelectio quid estorro exceped ipsamet apelent, vel in pro corpost, cum quis modis utaquiate ilit unt fugia dollacc atinimusanda nos re voluptatur sequibu sciatem utatesse maximilitae nus quis coriorescia que necatur as eum dolupti beatibus, eosseris si nia estrumquodi assiti ame se dollor rest a doluptatur.

Microsoft

External publication spread

Using transparency when content tiles interact with photos

While cornerstone tiles must always be 100% opaque, content tiles may be set to a variety of transparency levels when applied over imagery. Colors will react differently in combination with different photos, but transparency levels should generally fall between 80 and 100 percent opaque. The goal is to maintain the color's vibrancy while creating a softening effect as it interacts with the image.

Service update announcement.

Uga. Ut ullatque minctat ibusamet alibus alit, commo debit estiat offic torernatatur aut quae dolupiet ellit, im aut uta qui accae parcius molupta tatatur? Alitius dolo quatet lique eseque labo. Bisseque ommoluptam recestia seris sumque debit doloren daeror sunt lam qui omnis pa nusamus ipsam fugitatur, fugitatur?
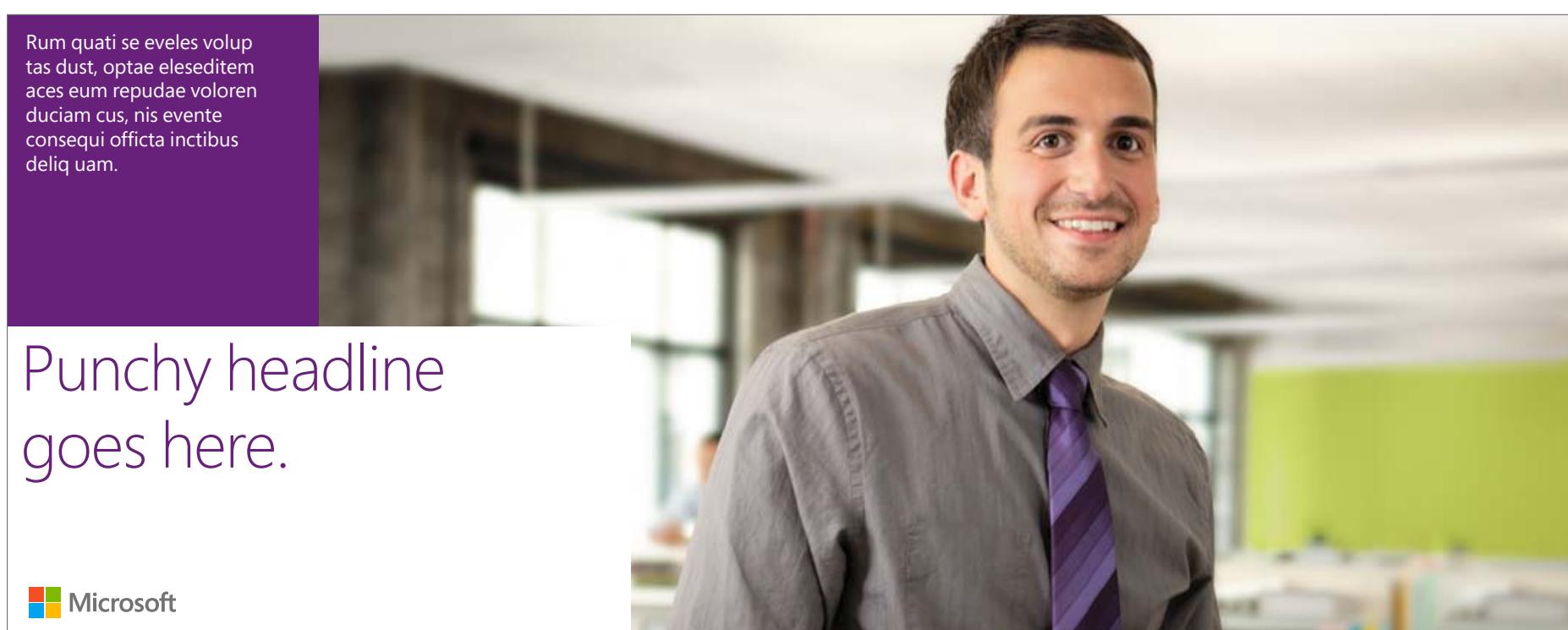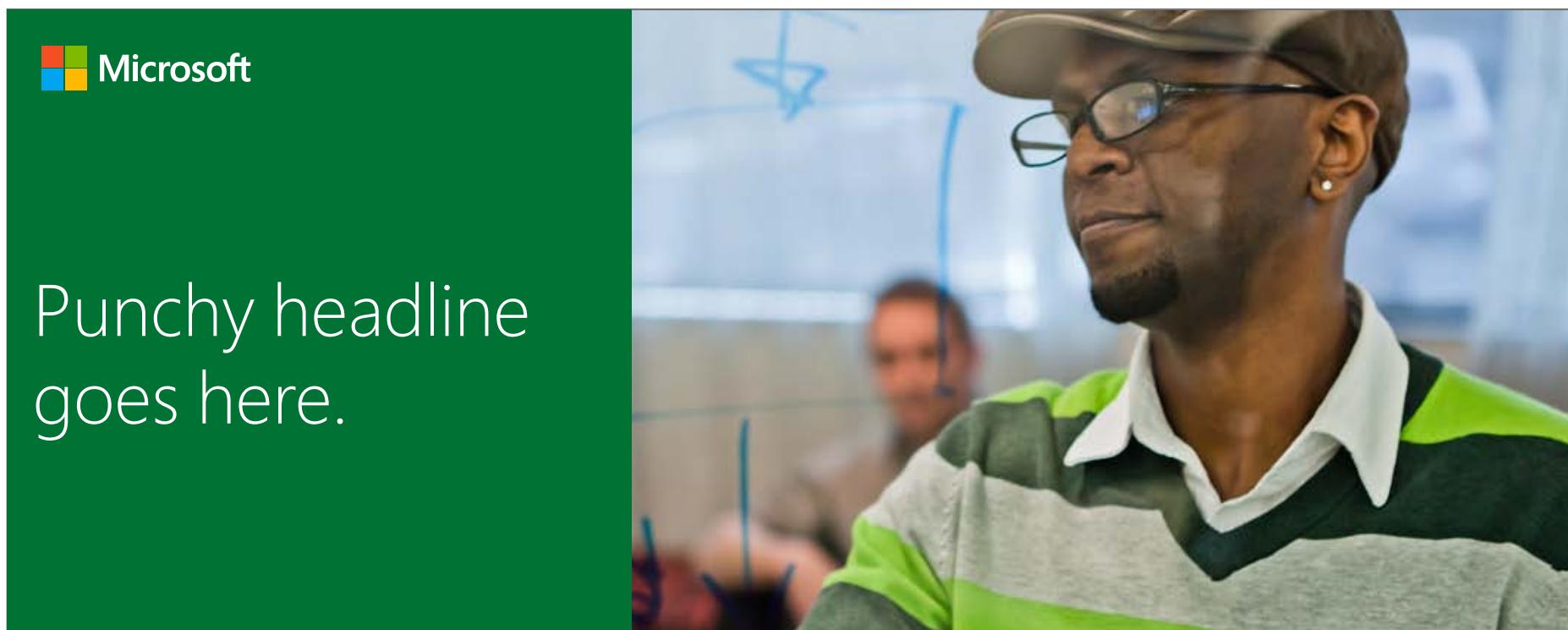
Internal banner
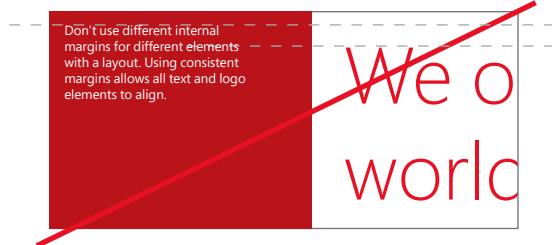
The fewer tiles the better

Tiles establish a consistent visual language across all Microsoft brand communications. Tiles form natural structures for placing type, especially on photographic backgrounds, giving us an opportunity to start meaningful conversations with customers.

As useful and memorable as tiles can be, overusing them can dilute their impact and crowd your layout.

Limit the number of tiles to as few as possible. A good rule of thumb is to incorporate two tiles, including the cornerstone tile, if applicable. Add a third tile only if needed.

Microsoft

Punchy headline goes here.

Rum quati se eveles volup tas dust, optae eleseditem aces eum repudae voloren duciam cus, nis evente consequi officta inctibus deliq uam.

Punchy headline goes here.

Microsoft

External web banners
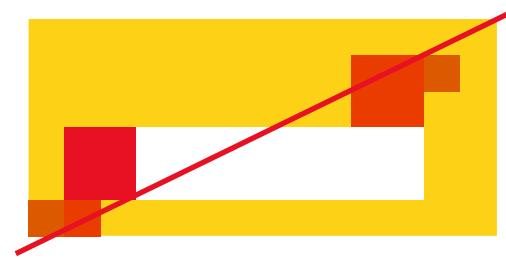
Don't use different internal margins for different elements with a layout. Using consistent margins allows all text and logo elements to align.

Avoid excessive use of tiles. Use them sparingly to create maximum impact.
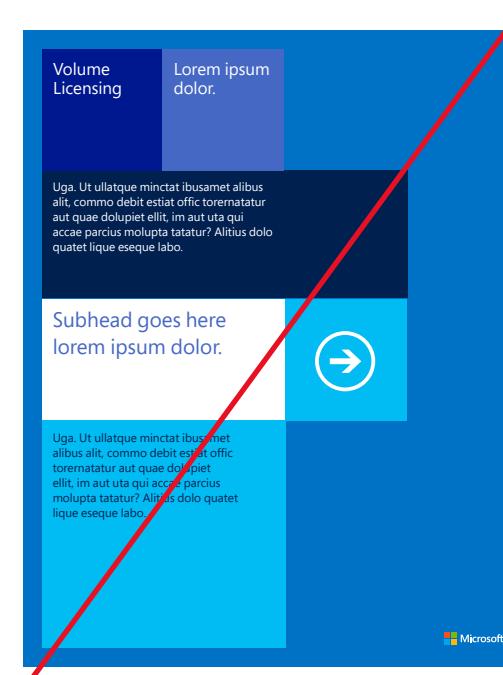
Don't align tiles diagonally.

Avoid flush shapes—create movement, not blocks.

Don't align type to the tile grid. It should align to the interior margins.
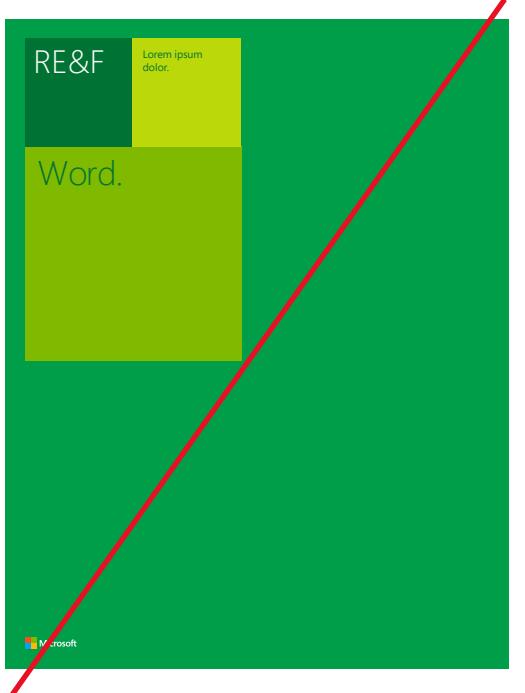
Don't create black tiles.

Don't separate tiles with gaps or margins in marketing collateral. This is a product user interface design scheme, not intended for communications.

Don't place the logo in a single tile. The logo may only be placed in areas two tiles or more in width.

Don't overuse tiles

Don't use tiles as decoration. Tiles are purposeful and must contain content.

Identifying internal groups with a cornerstone tile

The cornerstone tile is used in internal Microsoft communications to identify the source of the content.

When used, the cornerstone tile is the first tile placed in a layout. It is placed in one corner of the layout, and all other tiles are dependent on its position and size.

Cornerstone tiles are always colorful. They are not translucent and do not appear white, gray, or black.

Even when the cornerstone tile is used, keep in mind that the Microsoft logo must also appear on all communications.

Do not create your own cornerstone tiles. To request a group cornerstone tile please contact: corbrand@microsoft.com.

HR

Real Estate & Facilities
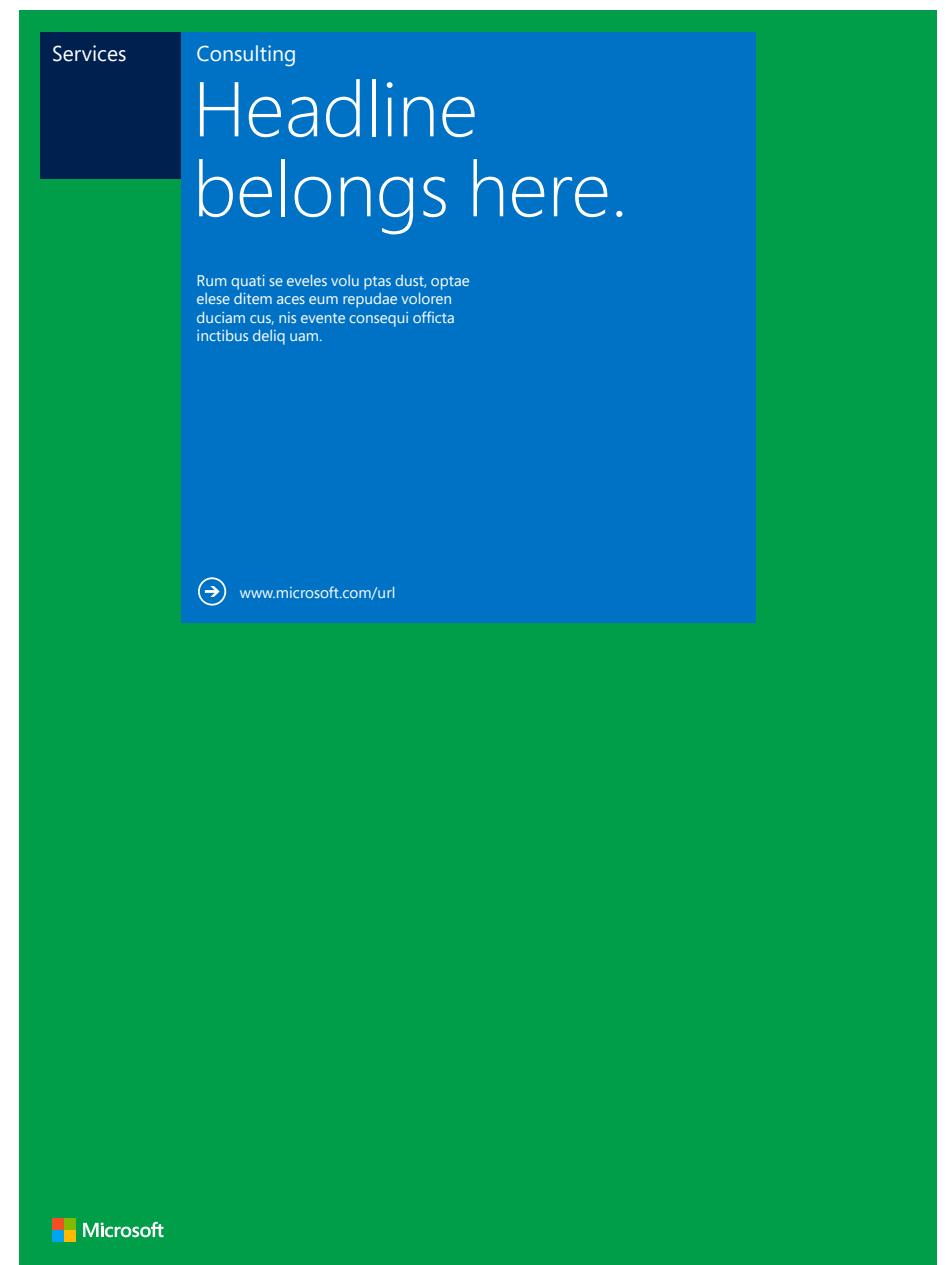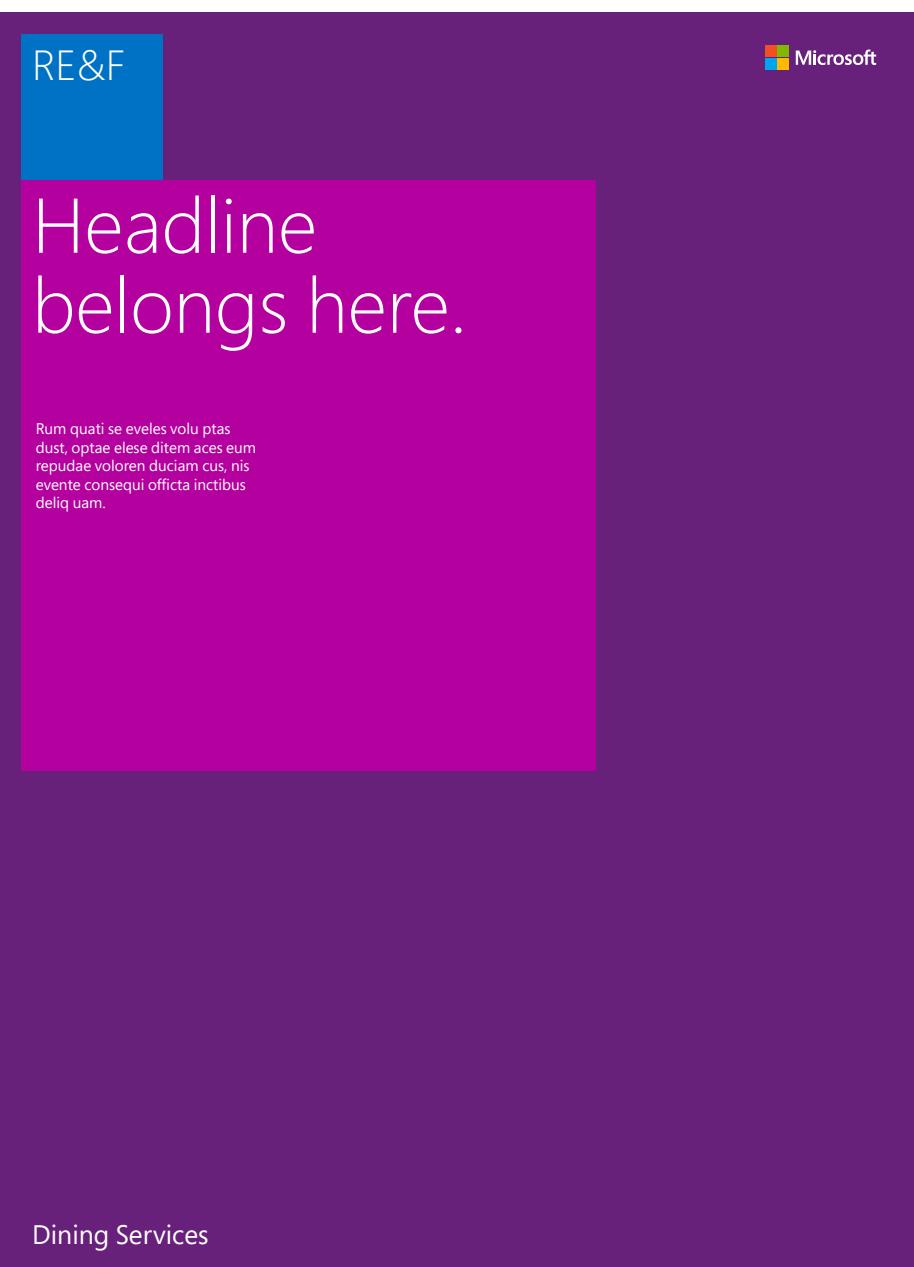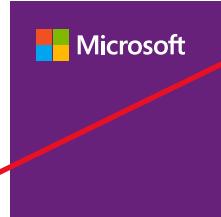
Identifying internal groups

Not all groups within the Microsoft organization should have a cornerstone tile. The highest-level divisional name belongs in the cornerstone tile.

Sub-group designations may be handled elsewhere within the layout. For instance, a communication from the "Dining" sub-group would use the parent group's cornerstone tile ("Real Estate and Facilities").

RE&F

Microsoft

Headline belongs here.

Rum quati se eveles volu ptas dust, optae elese ditem aces eum repudae voloren duciam cus, nis evente consequi officta inctibus deliq uam.

Dining Services

Services   Consulting

Headline belongs here.

Rum quati se eveles volu ptas dust, optae elese ditem aces eum repudae voloren duciam cus, nis evente consequi officta inctibus deliq uam.

→ www.microsoft.com/url

Microsoft

Internal posters

Don't place the Microsoft logo or logotype in a cornerstone tile.

Don't create group name lock-ups with the Microsoft logo or logotype.

Don't create lockups of group names together with the Microsoft name, logo or logotype, either inside or outside a tile.

Cornerstone tiles are never black. Use provided artwork.
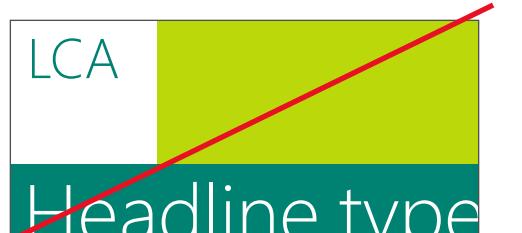
Don't create branded tile groupings or use the cornerstone tile to identify sub-groups within the organization.

Don't align type to the tile grid. It should align to the interior margins.
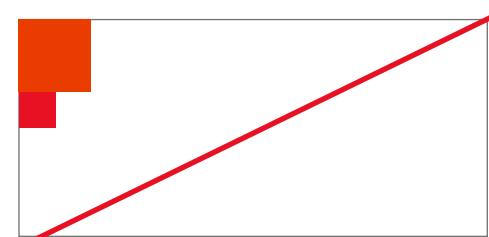
The cornerstone tile should always align to one of the four corners of the layout.

Cornerstone tiles are never white. Use provided artwork.

Don't use more than one cornerstone tile in a single layout.

Additional tiles should never be smaller than the cornerstone tile.

Don't use transparency with cornerstone tiles.

Photos that capture
the real world we
live in—authentic,
optimistic, and brave

Use the Microsoft photo libraries

Approved lifestyle and product photography is available for use in Microsoft communication materials. Avoid purchasing stock photography whenever possible.
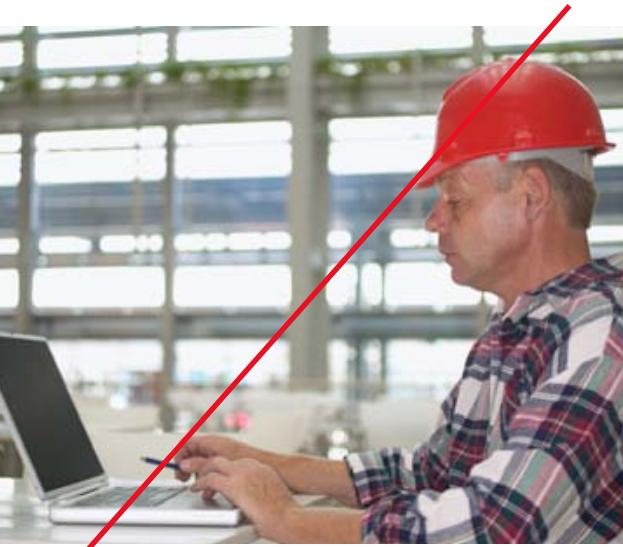
For more information on creating photography assets, please visit Brand Tools or contact corbrand@microsoft.com.

Avoid off-brand treatments

The following is a short list of what to avoid when producing Microsoft photography.
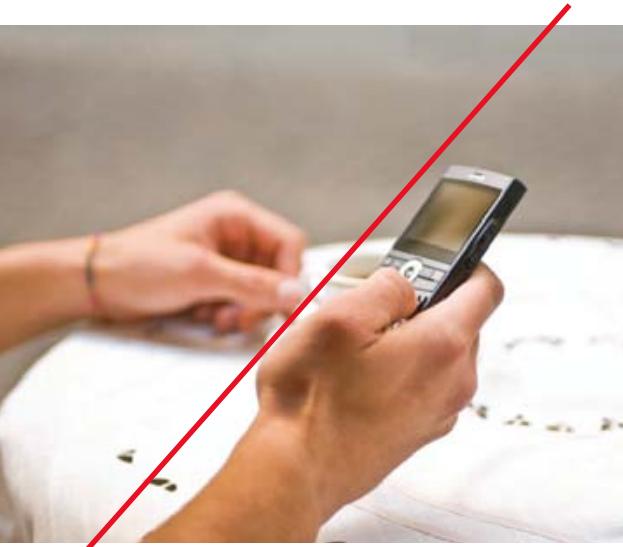
- Emotionless images
- Device-focused images that are not part of a bigger human story
- Clichéd scenarios or contrived settings
- Staged interactions
- Obvious posing
- Bland color
- Obvious post-production or Photoshop effects
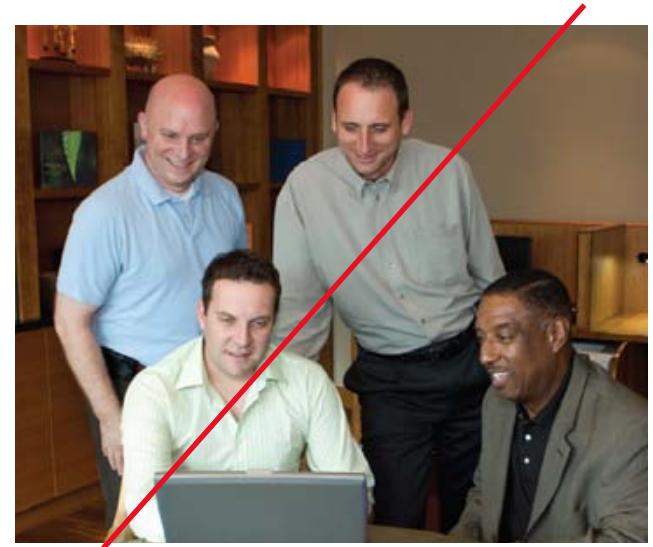
Avoid emotionless images.

Don't use photographs in which the models are obviously posing.

Avoid device-focused images that don't tell a human story.

Avoid staged interactions and bland color.

Illustrate to communicate

Illustration is an engaging way to convey ideas and tell stories. It should always have a purpose and never be used as decoration.

Illustration can be an effective solution when photography isn't available or if you want to create an even more distinctive impression—but within the Microsoft visual identity family.

Use distinctive, ownable images unique to Microsoft

Illustration is an important element of the Microsoft visual system. As with photography, you should not purchase stock illustration.

If you need to create illustrations for your communication, please contact corbrand@microsoft.com for guidance.

- Illustrations tell stories and convey ideas.

- They are simple and made up of geometric shapes.

- Use flat colors from the Microsoft palette.

- Use illustration when photography won't work.

- Illustrations should be witty but not cartoonish.

- They are vector-based artwork.

- Never use illustration as decoration.

Icons inform

Icons are primarily used in product as a call-to-action or quick reference. If you use an icon in marketing communications, such as an arrow as a call-to-action in a banner ad, use the same UI icons. Don't create your own. Contact corbrand@microsoft.com for any questions.

Go to Brand Tools at https://brandtools. microsoft.com to get approved icons.

Use icons to convey information, not for decoration

Icons are primarily used in onscreen scenarios where they are actionable. They should be used rarely in print and marketing communication.

Microsoft has many icons and icon libraries. Do not create a new icon if one already exists.

Contact corbrand@microsoft.com for additional information or visit BrandTools.

- Use icons where there is a clear function or where words won't work.

- Icons should only appear in white or black. They may be placed within tiles or separately.

- Icons should never be used decoratively.

- Stay true to the medium. Don't try to make an icon look realistic. Eliminate the chrome.

- Don't use an icon to represent a complex message.

- Don't use an icon if the message can be communicated in another way.

- Don't overuse icons.

Putting it all together

Our brand elements come together to tell stunning stories that celebrate and delight people across the planet.

Step 1: Determine whether your layout will have a border
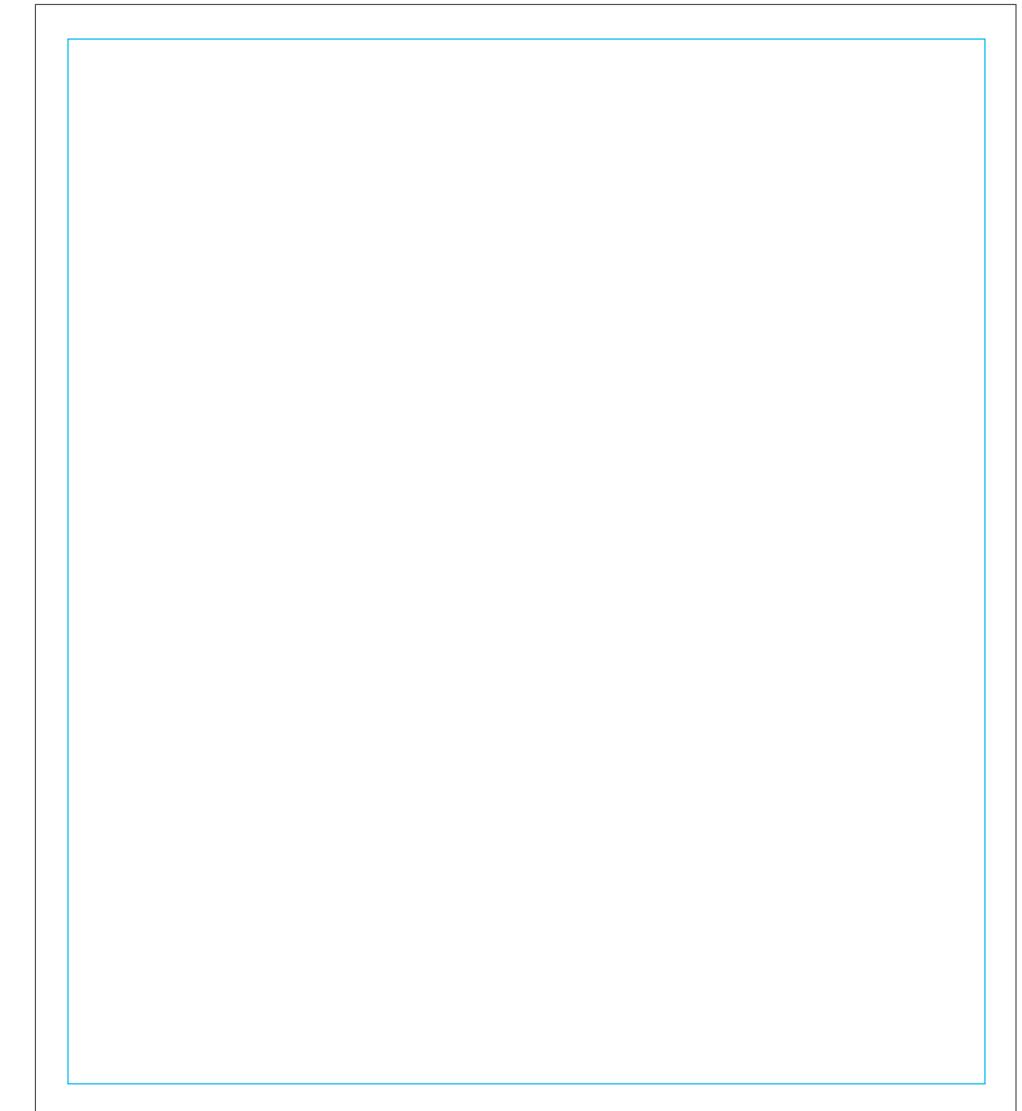
Your layout may "bleed" to the edges of the working area, or you may add a border which can later be filled with color or imagery. The size of the border is flexible, but it must have an equal thickness on all sides. In some cases the "live area" will determine what the border needs to be so you do not lose important content because of projection or print limitations.

Once a grid has been established, the same grid needs to be used through the entire mutli-page document or layout.

Layout without border

Layout with border
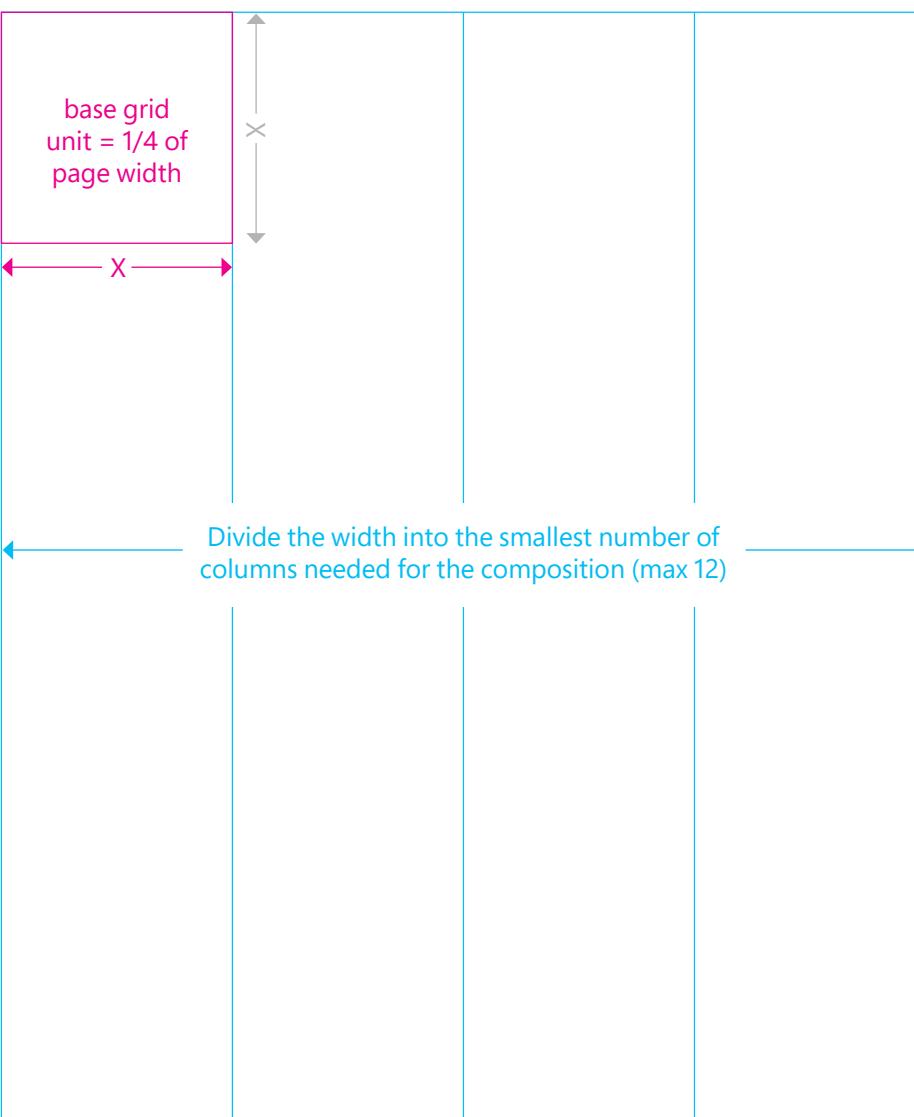
Step 2: Define your columns or rows and the base grid unit
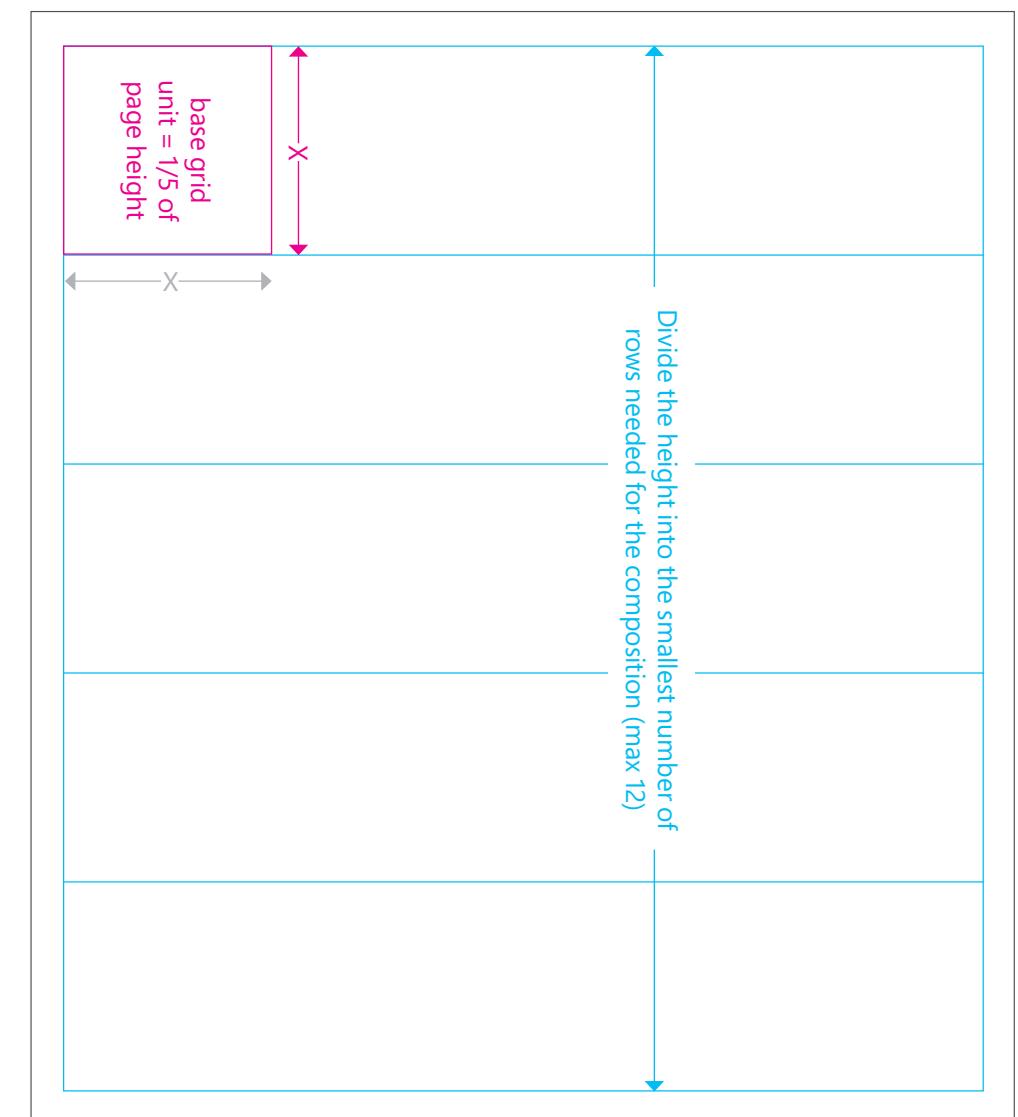
Choose the width or height of your layout (usually the larger of the two, but not always) as your defining dimension. Divide that dimension into the minimum number of columns or rows needed for the composition (maximum of 13).

Use this dimension ("X" in the diagrams at right) to create a square in one corner of your layout. This is the base grid unit from which you will derive the rest of your grid elements.

Grid with a horizontal defining dimension

base grid unit = 1/4 of page width

X

Divide the width into the smallest number of columns needed for the composition (max 12)

Grid with a vertical defining dimension

base grid unit = 1/5 of page height

X

Divide the height into the smallest number of rows needed for the composition (max 12)
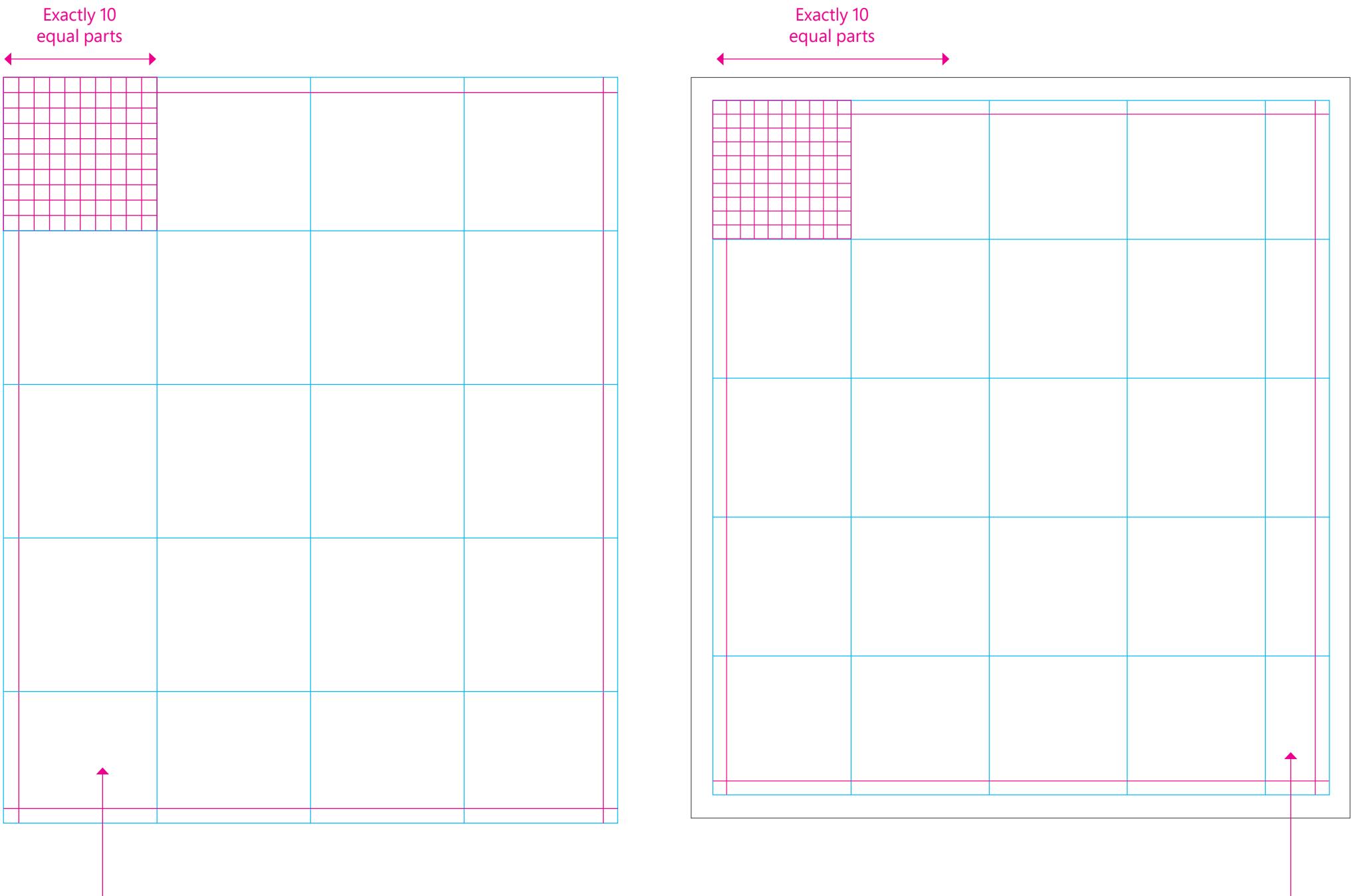
Step 3: Finish the base grid and establish margins

Fill in the rest of the base grid (shown here in blue lines) using the unit established in step 2. If you began by establishing columns, this means drawing the rows. If you started with rows, this means drawing the columns.

Next, divide the base grid unit into exactly 10 equal parts in both directions. Use one or two of these units as the exterior margin for your document. If your layout will include a cornerstone tile, use one grid unit as your margin to ensure proper alignment.

Use this same measurement as the interior margin between your rows and columns. If your design includes an outer border, then this margin is an additional space inside that border.

Exactly 10 equal parts

Exactly 10 equal parts
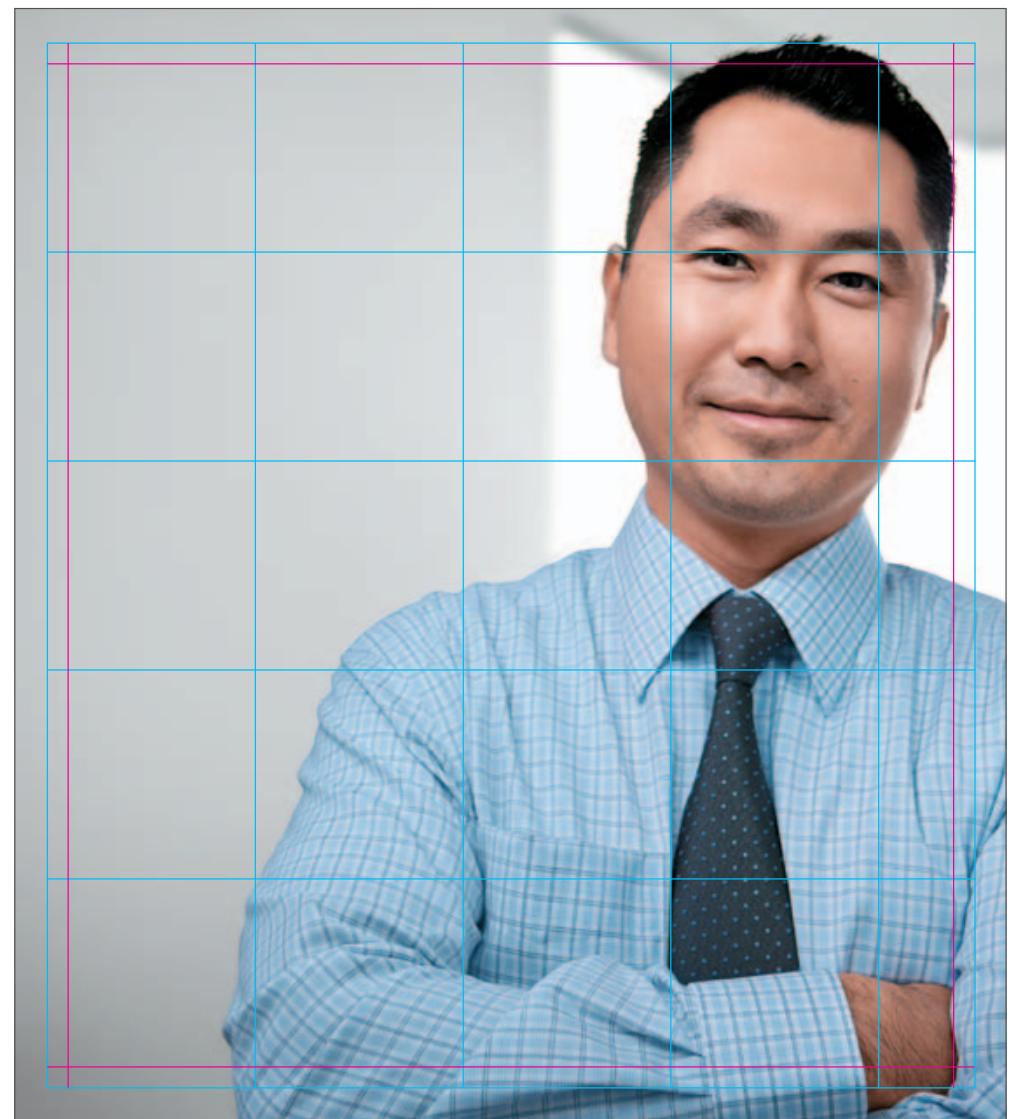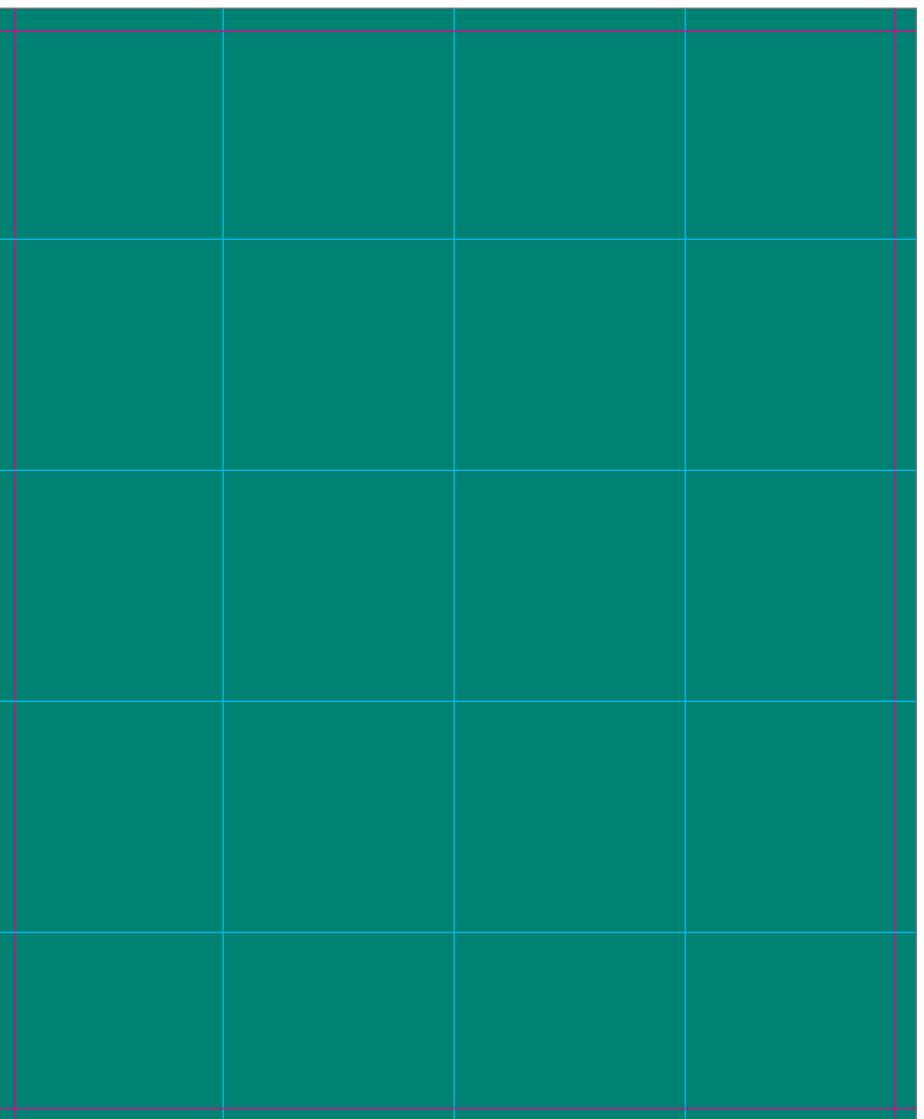
Note:
When you create an equal margin on all sides of your layout, it's acceptable if the margin guide doesn't align perfectly with the grid along one edge.

Step 4: Add a background photo or color

Backgrounds may be left blank or filled with color or imagery.

# Step 5: Add the logo (and the cornerstone tile for internal communications)
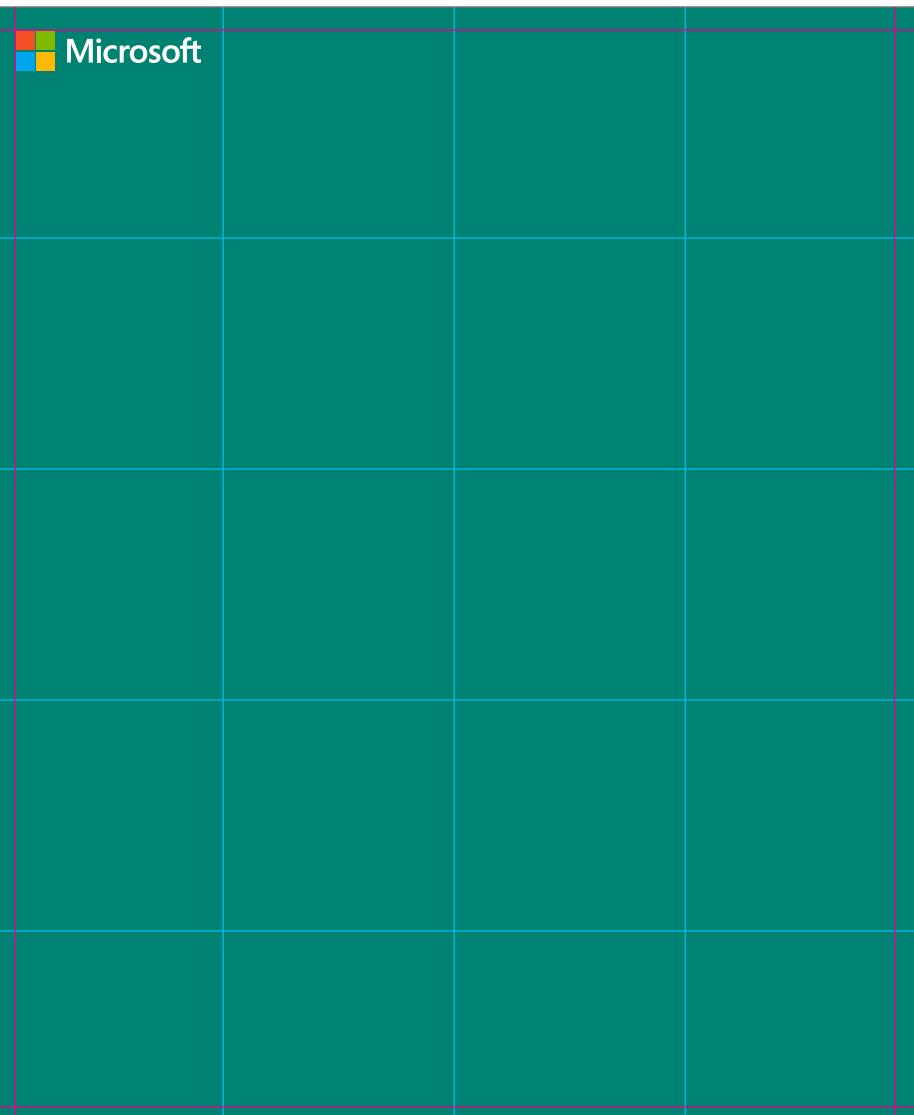
The logo is generally placed in one corner of the layout. Regardless of where it's placed on the page, it should be left-aligned within the text grid.

If your communication will contain a cornerstone tile, it may be placed in any corner of the layout. Whichever corner you select will become the singular point from which all other layout elements emanate.

The cornerstone tile occupies exactly one full unit of the base grid (shown here as blue lines).

If there is an outer border around your layout, the cornerstone tile aligns inside the border.

External communication
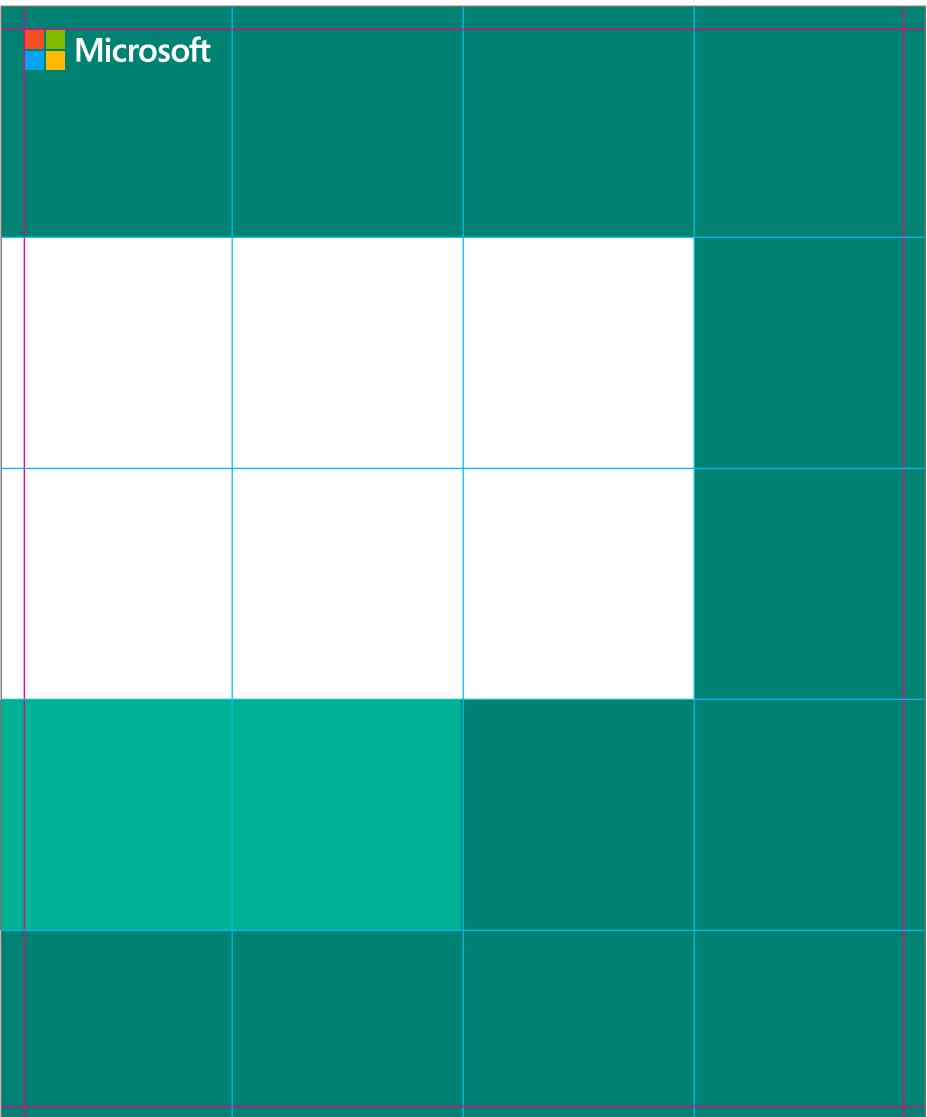
Internal communication, including cornerstone tile

Step 6: Add content tiles
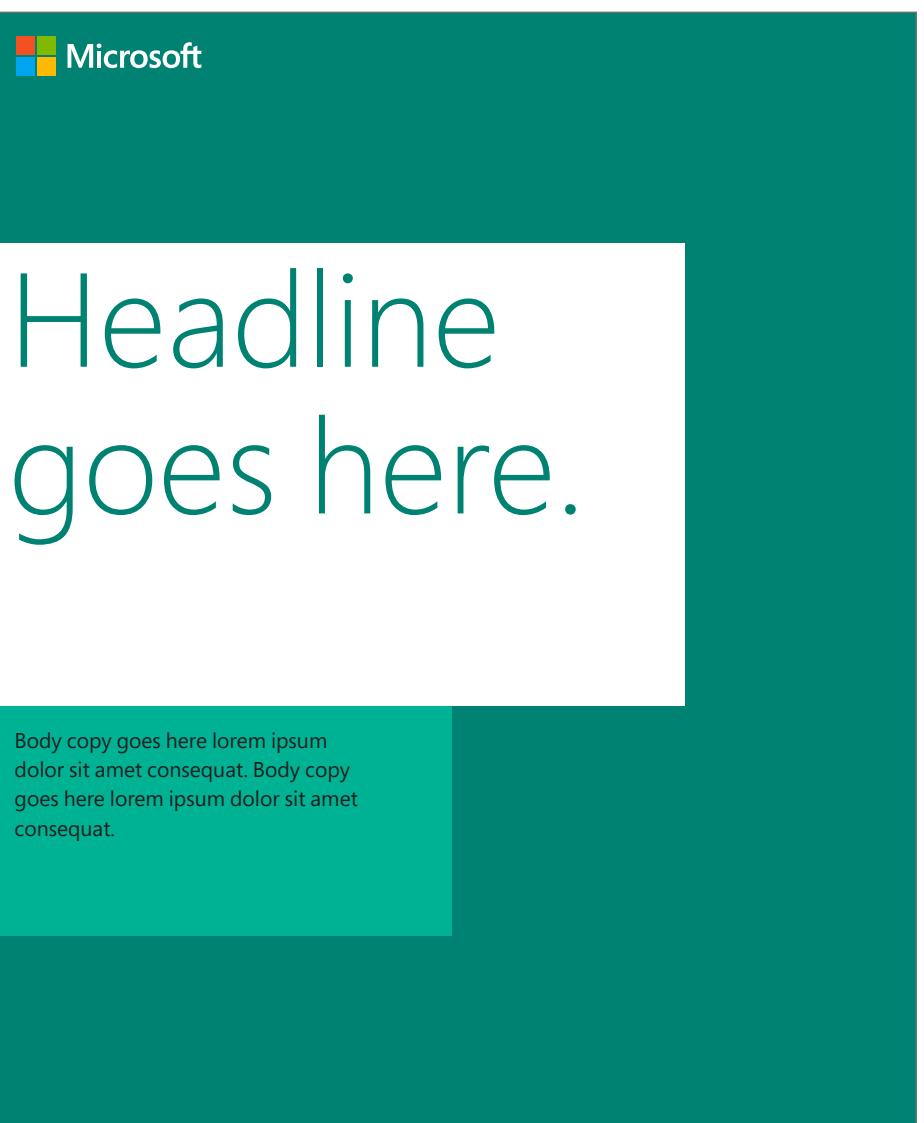
Content tiles align to the document grid (blue lines) and may be any whole number of grid units in size. The first one must be adjacent to the cornerstone tile. Additional tiles are added adjacent to one another.

Step 7: Add headlines and text

Align blocks of text to the interior margins that you established when building the grid (shown here in magenta). Text blocks may span multiple columns and rows, but they should always align in the upper-left corner of established margin lines.

Remember to limit the number of type sizes to three whenever possible, and keep type flush left.

Microsoft

Headline goes here.

Body copy goes here lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consequat. Body copy goes here lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consequat.

HR

Headline goes here.

Body copy goes here lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consequat. Body copy goes here lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consequat.

Microsoft

Tips for type and hierarchy
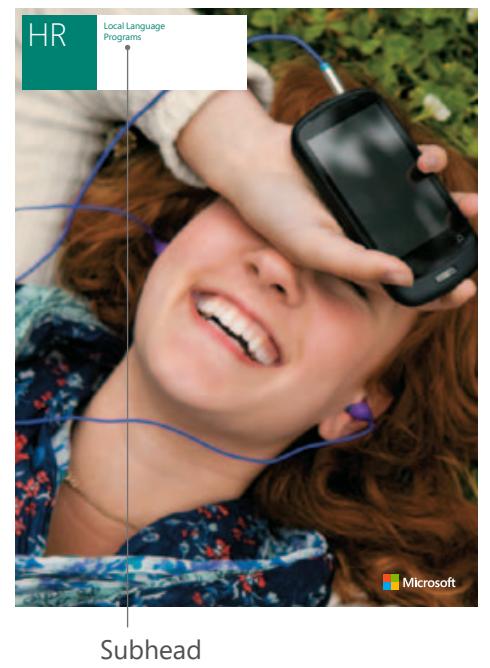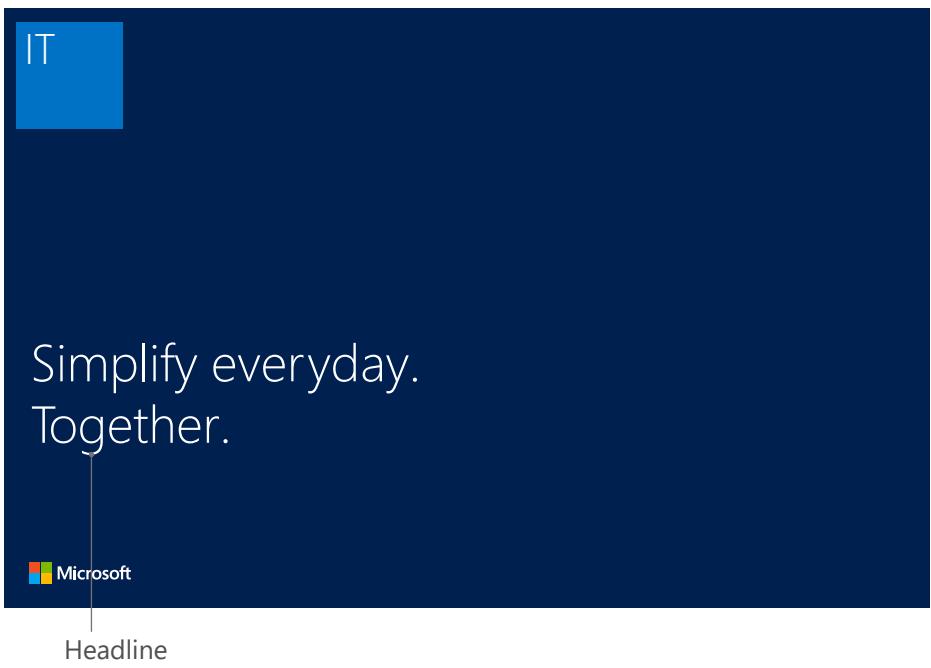
There are three primary categories of messaging that we use in the layouts in addition to the group name:

1. Headlines
2. Subheads
3. Copy
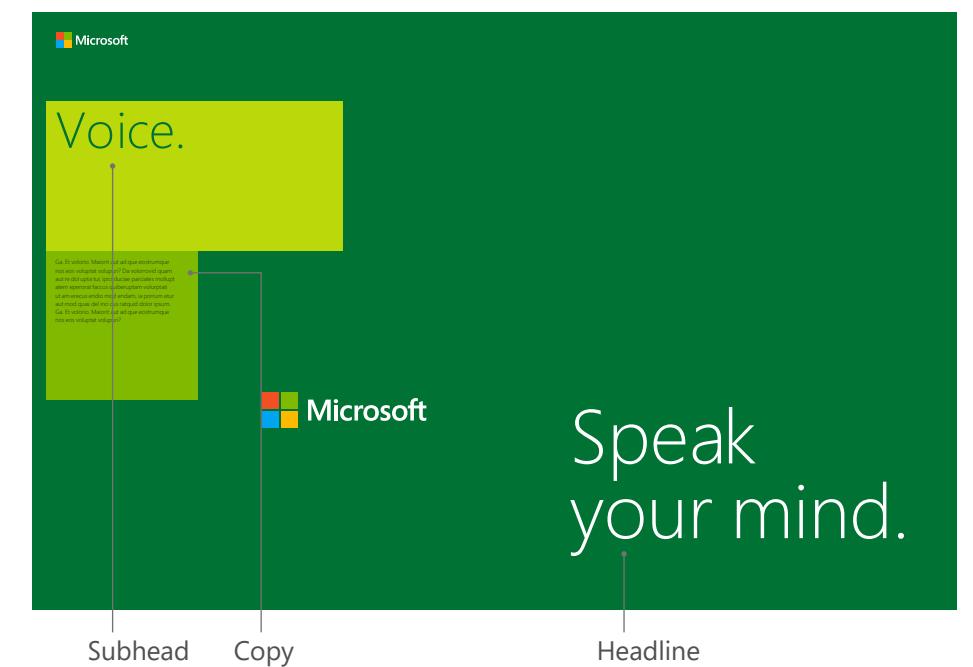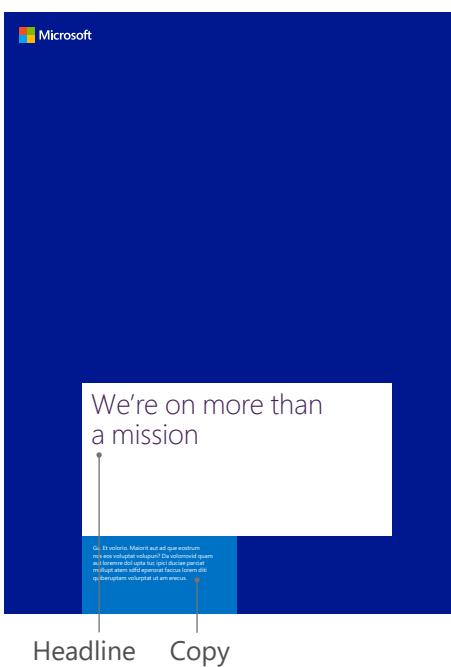
When the cornerstone tile is the same height as a second color field, the subhead should be the same type size as the logo or group name.

When two or more categories of messaging are used, there should be a clear type size hierarchy.

Cornerstone tile + headline or subhead

IT

Simplify everyday.
Together.

Microsoft

Headline

IT

Open your world.

Microsoft

Headline

HR   Local Language Programs

Microsoft

Subhead

Tiles + headline + body copy

Microsoft

We're on more than a mission

Headline   Copy

Microsoft

Human Resources   See what's changing.

Headline   Copy

Microsoft

Voice.

Microsoft

Speak your mind.

Subhead   Copy   Headline

Showcase: some
examples of what's
possible with our
visual identity system.

What we want people to think:

It's fresh
It's simple and easy
It's helpful
It's beautiful—I want it
It feels like Microsoft
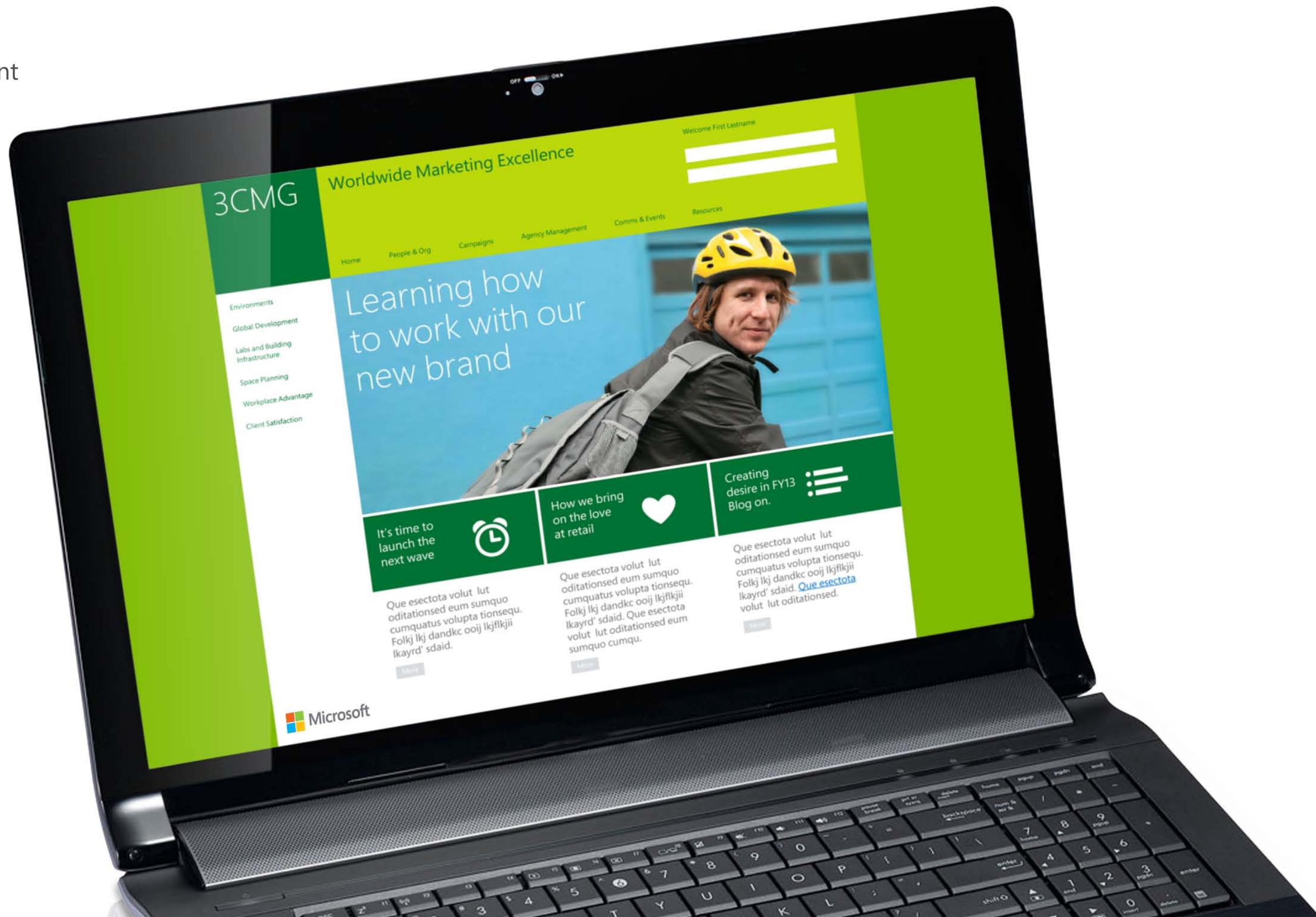
PowerPoint

Internal SharePoint

Internal SharePoint

Print ads

Better
together.

Unt ommo lup tasi mus dam lorem dolore
ea ver chilla solor magnitatia ipsum et
do lorer sped exer nam duis autem veritas
usamus maio comnim eiur era volutpat
abor eptatectio adispiscing.

Unt ommo lup tasi mus dam lorem dolore
ea ver chilla solor magnitatia ipsum et
do lorer sped exer nam duis autem veritas
usamus maio comnim eiur era volutpat
abor eptatectio adispiscing.

Microsoft

Microsoft

Share your ideas
in our survey.

Benefits

External communication   Internal communication

Billboard

Print ad

Posters
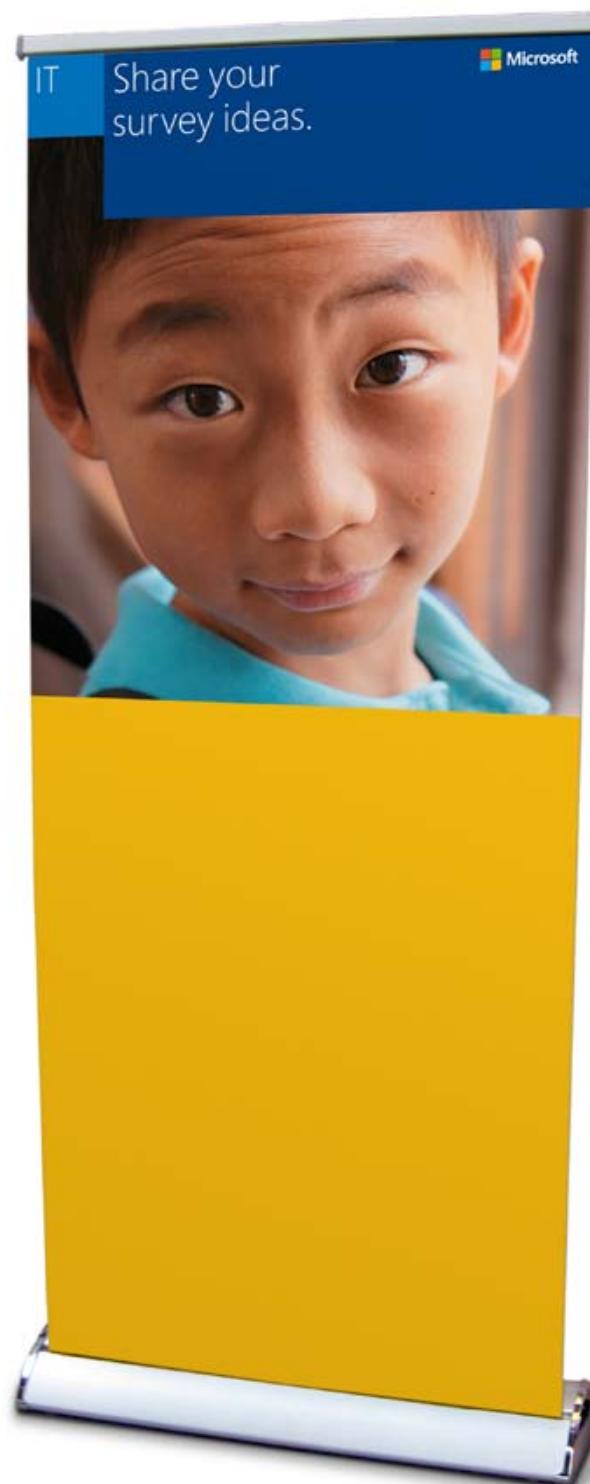
External communication
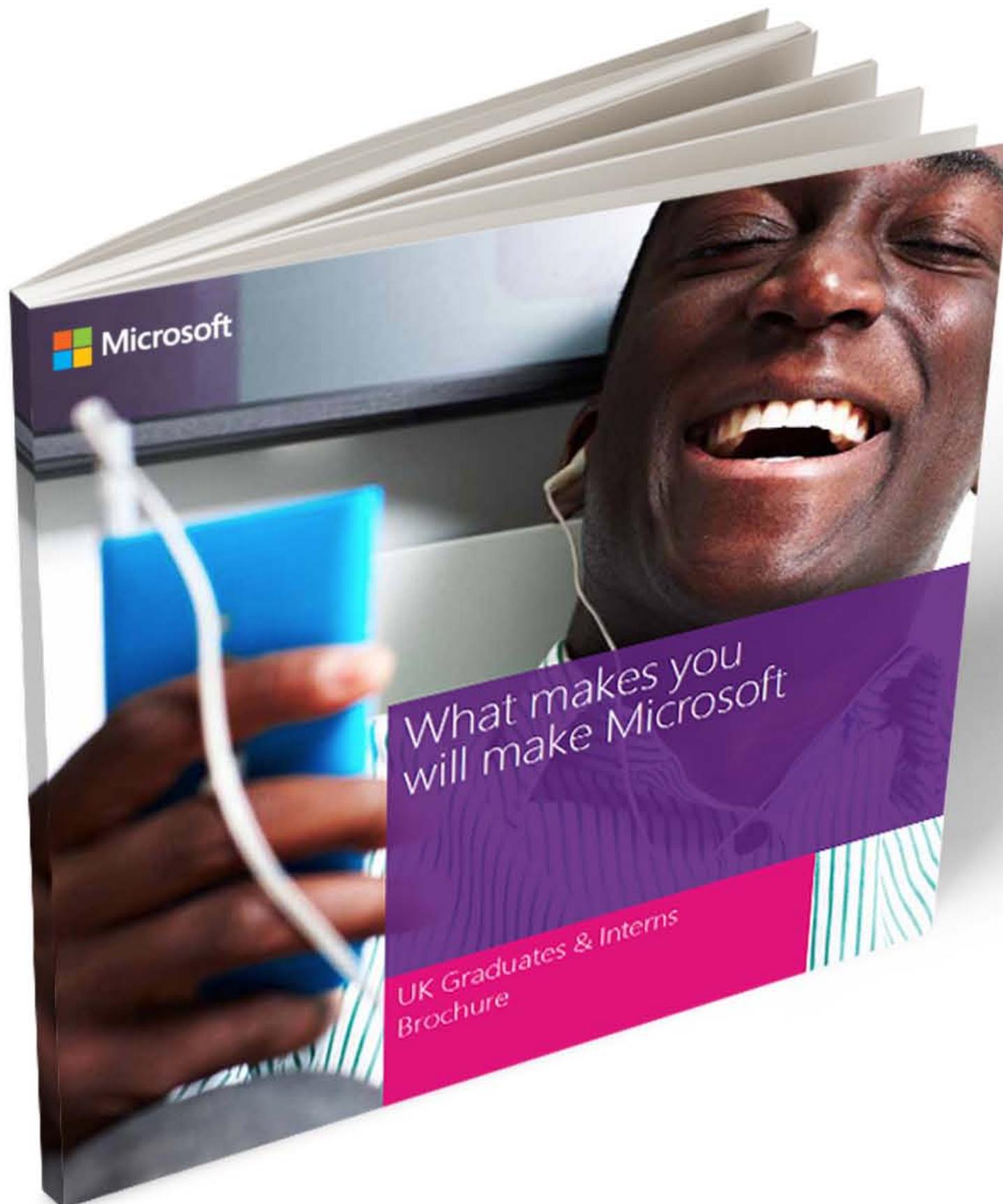
Internal communication

Internal communication

Vertical event banners
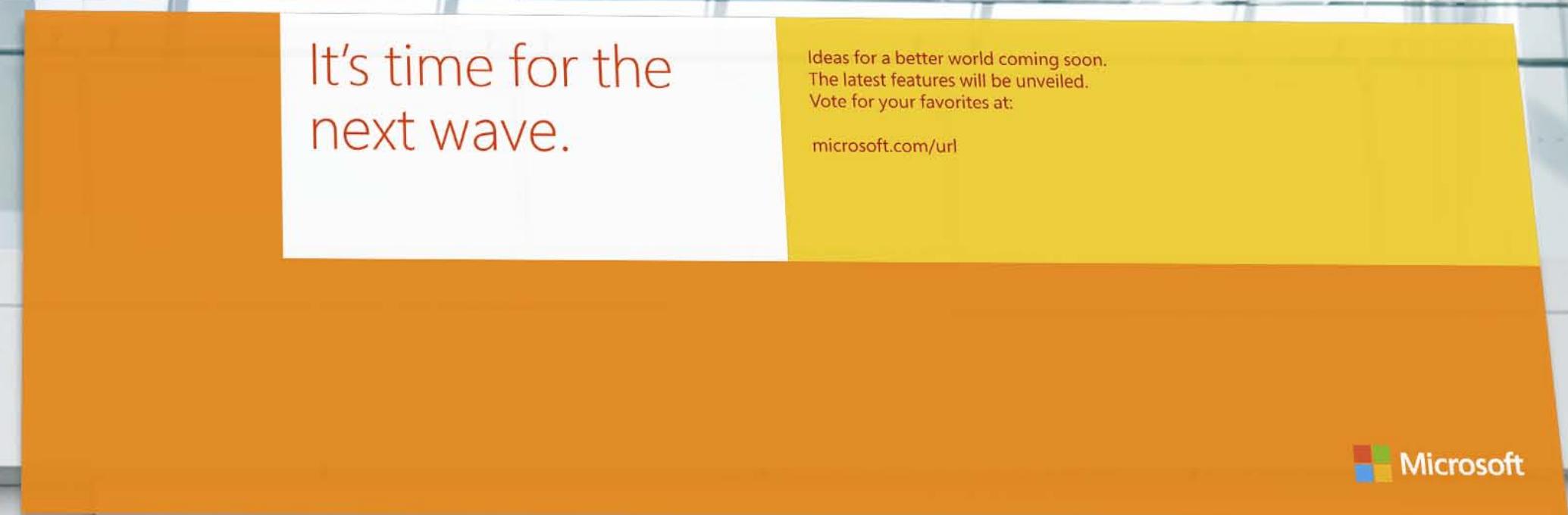
External brochure

External PowerPoint

External banner

It's time for the
next wave.

Ideas for a better world coming soon.
The latest features will be unveiled.
Vote for your favorites at:

microsoft.com/url

Microsoft

Report covers

Rum quati se eveles volu ptas
dust, optae elese ditem aces
eum repudae voloren duciam
cus, nis evente consequi
officta inctibus deliq uam.

Quarterly
sales forecast.

Microsoft

HR

Input from
the field.

Rum quati se eveles volu ptas dust, optae elese
ditem aces eum repudae voloren duciam cus,
nis evente consequi officta inctibus deliq uam.

Microsoft

What we
heard.

Email banner

Web Page

Web Page

Templates

Powerpoint presentations

Email signature

Newsletter

Datasheet

Whitepaper

Design matters

If you've just read these guidelines, you have
our appreciation. It means you share our belief
in details and quality. We know applying these
principles takes time and effort, but the stories
we tell in all our Microsoft communications will
be stronger for it.

Brand Tools has additional resources and
guidance on the entire Microsoft brand. If you
ever have additional questions about our visual
identity and its application in design, don't
hesitate to contact corbrand@microsoft.

⊙ https://brandtools.microsoft.com

■■ Microsoft

Thank you