

A M E R I C A N L E D
T E C H N O L O G Y



*Design
tips*

Tips for Designing Content for LED Displays

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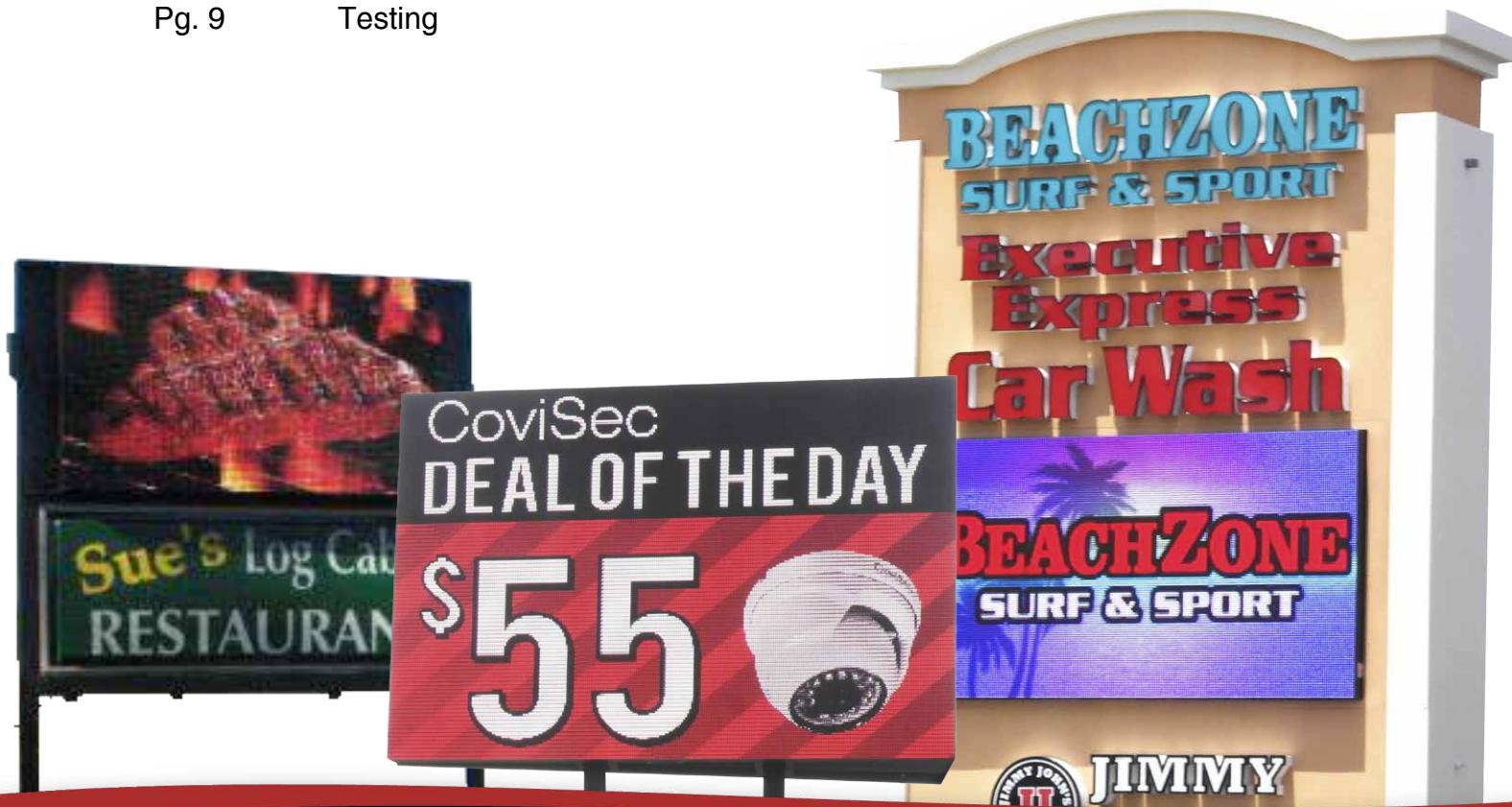
Design Tips

Importance of Content

Perhaps the most important part of your new LED display is the content. Great content design not only shows the displays full capabilities, but also gets the best results. Great content design gets more attention and successfully delivers your message.

We've compiled a few tips to help you create effective content. In the following pages we will cover:

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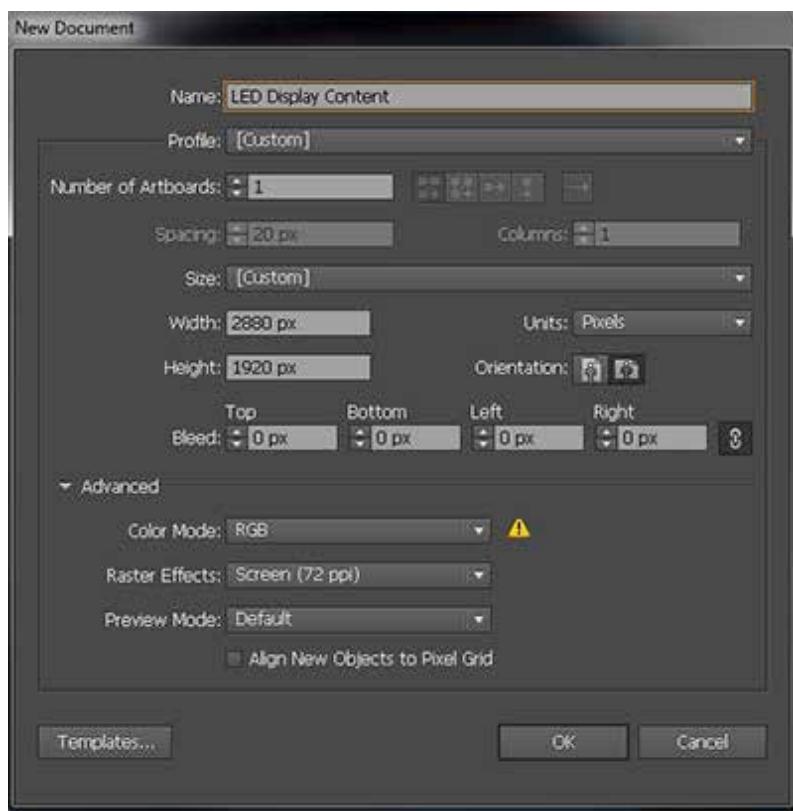


Design Tips

Media Size

You can create content straight from our software or use programs such as Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, CorelDraw etc. Using our program, you can create simple messages quickly. When using other programs, you can create a more complex message with images and/or video.

When creating your document, we recommend the size of your image should be 10 times the size of your LED Displays pixel ratio (or at least 4) for best results. In other words, a 13.33mm 4x8 display with a pixel ratio of 96 x 192 pixels should be entered as 1920 for width and 960 for height. Our software will shrink the final image to fit your display without loosing quality. Also, make sure the color mode is RGB (Red Blue Green) and not CMYK (Cyan Magenta Yellow Black). CMYK is the color space used for printing vs. RGB which is used for digital applications. The Raster Effects or resolution should be set to Screen or 72 ppi.



Design Tips

Decide on a Message

Messages should be short and to the point. For Outdoor Signage especially, there is a limited time-frame to get the message across. Motorists, in most cases, have less than five seconds to see and fully comprehend a message. For this reason, messages must be brief. Try to keep each slide down to 1 to 7 words. If your message is long try using multiple slides to deliver the entire message.

Great



SATURDAY
10 AM - 4 PM

FOOD, FUN
& LIVE MUSIC

Not So Great



Too Much Text

Using multiple slides allows for larger text that can be seen farther away and more easily read by passing motorists.



Tip: Use the scheduling feature of our software to display time sensitive messages at the time they are valid. Having an early-bird sale or lunch special? You can display these messages during the specific time the offer is valid.

Design Tips

Need Ideas for Messages?

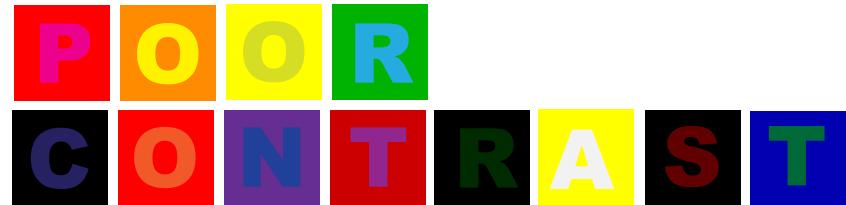
Try these:

- General Messages: Celebrate the holidays, show community support & advertise local events, interesting quotes, news & weather, amber alerts & public service announcements
- Call to action: Display a message asking viewers to stop by, give you a call, make an appointment, visit your website or join you on social media.
- Advertise your services & products: Having a special sale or a new product?
- ‘A picture is worth a thousand words’: Don’t forget to display pictures of your products/services whenever possible
- Pictures are great, but video & animations can be better: Movement captures more attention. Animate your messages or display video when possible. Videos can be great for demonstrating services.

*Your message should be relevant to your audience, up-to-date, & interesting/useful.

Color & Contrast

Colors should be vivid to capture attention. Rich, pure colors with no white or black mixed in work best, especially for text. Colors should be high in contrast. For example, yellow text on a black background has more contrast than blue text on black. Avoid using a white background, as this means the LEDs are putting out the most light and therefore using the most energy. Using a darker or black background can save on energy.



Tip: An easy way to see the contrast level is to view your image in grayscale (you can do this by converting or print off a grayscale copy). If your text and background blend together the contrast is too low. If you can read it easily it's good to go.

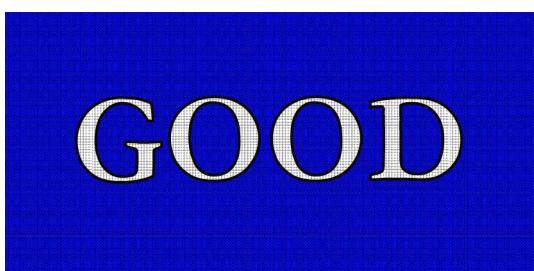
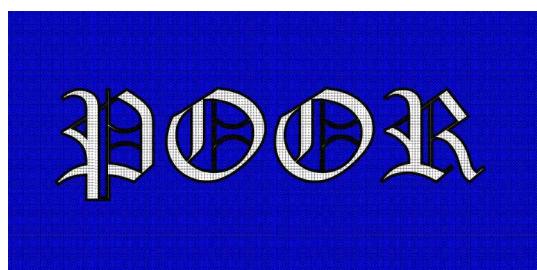
Text & Fonts

When choosing a font, it is best to go with a bold and easily read typeface. Sans-serif fonts can be easier to read. Serif fonts can still be used, but for best results should be large and bold. Text should be as large as possible for best visibility. It is recommended that text be outlined in black or a drop shadow be used to improve legibility. All caps can be effective if your message is brief, but for longer messages upper and lowercase letters should be used as they are easier to read from far away.

Great



Not So Great



Some examples of good fonts to use are: Arial Black, Cooper Black, Franklin Gothic, Futura, Helvetica, Tahoma, and Verdana.

Images

When choosing an image, select the largest available image. An image can be easily reduced to fit your slide, but if the image is smaller than needed it loses quality and can become pixelated when increased to fit. For the best quality, look for images that are 300 dpi and at least 500 x 500 pixels. A great size to look for would be 1920x1080 or 768x1024. These are common computer display ratios.

Logos

When using a company logo, it's always best to use the original vector file if available. Vector files are directly editable and when scaled, no pixels are visible. Vector files are most commonly in the form of .eps, .ai, or .cdr files. Create a new file in Illustrator or CorelDraw to the size of the pixel ratio of your display & import the original logo file. The logo can then be increased to fit without it blurring.

Animations & Video

When using a video file, keep in mind the frames per second (fps) should be anywhere from 10-30. The higher the fps the more fluid the transition, but the file size is also larger. Compressed videos may be used, but the more compressed the video, the lower the quality. Most videos taken from cameras are 24 fps or up.

Creating your own animations? Great programs to use are Adobe Flash and Adobe After Effects. There are others out there as well.



Tip: Looking to the internet for great images? Avoid copyright infringement by selecting Public Domain images, open source, or royalty free images. Some may be free, others can be purchased with low fees from sites like dreamstime.com or istockphoto.com.

Design Checklist

Here's a basic checklist of everything covered in this guide:

- Content size is 10 times the pixel ratio of the LED display
- Color space is set to RGB & Resolution is 72ppi
- Message is short & to the point
- Colors have plenty of contrast
- Text is large, bold, & easily legible
- Images & Logos are clear, crisp, and are of a large pixel ratio
- Videos & Animations are 10-30 fps or more

Your Ready for Testing!

Design Tips

Testing Content

It's always a good practice to test your content. During creation, you can stand away from your computer about 10 feet & glance at your design for about 3-5 seconds to simulate the experience of passing traffic. Could you easily read & comprehend the message? If so, you're right on track.

Upload your content to the display & stand back the appropriate recommended distance for your displays resolution. It's important to make sure your content is displaying properly. After all, it is your content that will bring results.

