

## Branding with Type: The Typographic Landscape

Your campus landscape features architecture, images and...type. On paper and on screen, it's the choice and usage of type that creates the typographic landscape for your branding, in your marketing and on your campus. Type can reinforce your college's visual and emotional brand in subtle and profound ways, and can open doors to more effective communications. What's appropriate, what's new, what's dated – with so many choices, how can you be sure?

Don't make type an afterthought; it's one of the key components of visual branding. Discover what to consider when choosing font families for branding and communications, what impression type can convey to your audience, how type can be an effective visual differentiator and branding component.

Type conveys your visual brand as much as your logo, colors, photography and visual communications.

Type also conveys the character of your brand, as people associate emotional and personal characteristics with type. The choice of type used with your visual branding must support and be appropriate with your perceptual branding. Remember, your brand isn't what you think it is, it's what everybody else thinks it is.

Just as your messaging should stay focused, so should your use of type. Too many messages will dilute your focus, and the use of too many typefaces will dilute the delivery of your message. (Unless you can establish a clear and distinct hierarchy of typographic usage related to your messaging, a rare feat, and a challenge to maintain with continuity over time!)

Take a look at your brand's typographic standards:

- Are any of your typeface choices on the "Popular at Adobe" list?
- Do they still differentiate you in your regional context?
- Is there any overlap with the typographic standards of corporate or competing entities?

### The American Typographic Landscape: What's popular at Adobe®

<http://tryit.adobe.com/us/type/featuredfonts/>

- Arno Pro
- Avante Garde
- Avenir
- Frutiger
- Adobe Garamond
- Helvetica Neue
- Myriad
- Optima
- Trade Gothic
- Univers

Arno Pro

Avant Garde

Avenir

*Bickham Script Pro*

Frutiger

Garamond

Helvetica Neue

Helvetica

Myriad Pro

Optima

Trade Gothic

Univers

### How can you differentiate with type:

Visit some of the resources listed at the end of this white paper. There are well-crafted typefaces available for brand and identity usage, from designers worldwide.

### Your logo as a font

- OpenType format: any program or platform, control usage of logo.
- Using a font to apply your logo saves you the trouble of placing images into your documents as well as having to maintain links to images in documents across multiple platforms or systems.

## Branding with Type: The Typographic Landscape

### Select Questions and Answers

(From the “Branding with Type” roundtable, March 2009\*)

*Q: How many typefaces are best for my brand standards?*

A: Start with two families that include a broad range of weights and styles. What are your needs going to be? Literature, marketing, web, on screen? What about publications? Be flexible but realistic. Establish a hierarchy of usages.

*Q: Why should I hire a type designer to design my logotype?*

A: Good question! If custom modifications need to be made to a letterform, who best to do it but someone well versed in the construction and history of letterforms?

Hiring a designer with typographic expertise in the construction of letterforms will ensure that the logotype has interesting, legible, and unique letterforms that support your organization’s character. Why would you choose a common typeface for your unique logo?

*Q: How do I choose a typeface that works with my symbol or mark?*

A: There will be characteristics of the visual mark that work well with different visual characteristics of different fonts. We use expressive words like cold, warm, soft and hard to describe aspects of type that we feel, but can’t quantify with stylistic words. Style words include light, dark, bold, heavy, round, square, open, condensed and angular. Describe the visual aspects of your mark in words, and find typefaces that complement it.

*Q: What about fonts for the web?*

A: Fonts for web sites are designed for web browsers, and are limited to a small set that are common to all operating systems and browsers. It’s best to choose a web font for use only on your web site, and not use it in any printed materials. Best practices for readability apply online too: avoid fonts sizes that are too small, line lengths that are too long, default line height (ie leading) and text colors of low contrast (eg gray on white).

**Note: Since this white paper was first published, the number of online resources and sources for high-quality typefaces has grown dramatically. No matter where you license type, license legally!**

### Resources:

- [www.fontshop.com](http://www.fontshop.com) (European influence, excellent for typographic differentiation)
- [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)
- [www.emigre.com](http://www.emigre.com)
- [www.myfonts.com](http://www.myfonts.com)
- [www.fonts.com](http://www.fonts.com)
- [www.veer.com/products/type](http://www.veer.com/products/type) (excellent source of script typefaces)

### Font Books / Reference

- <http://www.fontshop.com/products/fontbook/>

### Identify Type:

- [typenav.fontshop.com](http://typenav.fontshop.com)
- [www.whatthefont.com](http://www.whatthefont.com)
- [www.identifont.com](http://www.identifont.com)

\*Thank you to all of the participants who asked thoughtful questions!

In addition to being the principal of Aespire, a design and marketing firm that specializes in mission-driven design for higher education, Brian Sooy is the principal designer of Altered Ego® Fonts. Aespire has created custom fonts for Tyndale Publishing, The Cleveland Museum of Art, Ernst & Young, and other corporations. Æ Fonts are licensed by Adobe, Monotype and Bitstream, and are distributed by Fonts.com, Fontshop.com, Monotype.com, Linotype.com Myfonts.com and Veer.com.