COMMERCE

Brand Guide

Version 1 | Last Updated Sept. 20, 2024

COMMERCE

01 INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The Montana Department of Commerce

The Montana Department of Commerce is committed to delivering a better quality of life for Montanans. This brand book is a comprehensive resource that guides Commerce in telling the story of our integrated and unified efforts, a narrative that transcends individual services and divisions to drive effectiveness and unleash the potential of a unified, One Commerce impact in Montana's economy.

Purpose of the Brand Book

This brand book serves as a toolkit of communication strategies and visual elements designed to align our message and enhance our outreach. Here, we detail how to communicate who we are, what we offer, how we operate and the way we shape the economic narrative of Montana.

Defining + Navigating the Brand Book

This brand book is more than just a set of rules — it's a compass that directs the way we share our story with the world. As stewards of the Montana Department of Commerce brand, it's our collective responsibility to represent our state with pride and professionalism.

Use this guide as your roadmap for brand consistency. Whether you're creating a presentation, designing marketing materials or engaging on social media, these guidelines should be your first reference point.

Within these pages, you'll find specific instructions on logo usage, color palette, typography and more. Each section is designed to be straightforward and actionable. By following these guidelines closely, you'll help maintain the integrity and consistency of our brand, which is vital to our ongoing success and reputation.

Our Challenge

→

Our challenge lies in dismantling the barriers within our communication streams, affirming that, from business development to community infrastructure or tourism marketing, our narrative is singular and strong. This guide lays out the structure for uniting our varied services under one distinct entity, thus broadening the reach of our support to Montanans far and wide.

OUR METHODOLOGY

Drawing from a foundation of research and deep stakeholder engagement, we have laid the framework for a brand that not only resonates with the heartbeat of our communities, but also rises to meet the multifaceted needs of our constituents. Our approach ensures that every element of our branding is tailored to communicate effectively, engage meaningfully and serve the practical realities of those we represent. This process has yielded a brand identity that stands as a beacon of service and commitment, reflecting the values and aspirations of the diverse voices that make up Montana.

OUR SOLUTION

Our solution is to concentrate our unified focus on what matters most: Montana's economy.

This brand defines Montana's economy as the cornerstone of our renewed strategy. This transformation is not limited to aesthetics; it is a strategic overhaul aimed at bolstering functionality and optimizing the delivery of our diverse services. By transitioning from division-centric to a more intuitive, service-oriented approach, we prioritize the needs and convenience of those we serve. The rebranding initiative — symbolized by our new logo — along with the website's reorganization, directly addresses the challenge of breaking down silos within the department. It ensures that our message resonates clearly and consistently across all channels, reflecting our actions and unified commitment: We are One Commerce. This guide lays out the blueprint for a seamless integration of our various functions, propelling our presence and efficacy to new heights to ensure that every Montanan can easily tap into the support and opportunities we offer.

02 BRAND OVERVIEW

BRAND OVERVIEW

The Brand Overview serves as a strategic guidepost for internal coherence and external recognition. Here, we distill the essence of who we are, what we stand for and how we project our identity into the world.

The purpose of this section is multifold — it unifies our services under a cohesive brand narrative, establishes a clear and consistent understanding of our mission and vision across all levels of the department, and articulates the core values and personality that distinguish the Department of Commerce.

Our focus is to ensure that every member of our department not only understands but embodies the principles outlined here in every interaction. This alignment ensures that our collective efforts resonate with a singular voice and vision, making our commitment to the citizens and businesses of Montana clear and impactful.

Through this section, we aim to foster a shared identity that empowers us to work together toward our common goals with renewed clarity and dedication.

Mission Statement
→

The Department of Commerce effectively and efficiently delivers programs and resources through technical assistance, funding/investments, training/consulting, promotion, research, reporting and outreach to provide affordable housing and create sustainable business and economic growth to enhance community vitality to benefit the citizens of Montana.

Vision Statement
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The vision of the Department of Commerce is to be the recognized leader in realizing Montana's full potential by efficiently growing sustainable economies and vibrant communities.

Brand Values

Commerce is driven by a set of core values that shape our actions and guide our approach to serving the people and businesses of our state. These values are the cornerstones of our identity, influencing how we conduct ourselves, interact with others and pursue our shared goals.

EXCELLENCE
We are committed to delivering superior service, valuing respectful communication, creative solutions and responsible resource management.

INTEGRITY
Our foundation is built on trust, achieved by aligning our actions with our words and engaging with transparency, consistency and accountability.

ENGAGEMENT
We prioritize genuine, collaborative relationships, uniting within our department and with partners and communities to realize shared goals.

INNOVATION
By embracing change and learning, we cultivate resilient, empowered teams that generate impactful results.

LOVE FOR MONTANA
We celebrate and serve Montanans. We embody and embrace respect, self-reliance, independence, industry and authenticity and represent the Montana way of life in our work.

Brand Personality

The Montana Department of Commerce strives to be the leader in realizing Montana's full potential by fostering robust economies and dynamic communities across our state. We accomplish this by embodying a multifaceted brand personality.

OPTIMISTIC

We are the torchbearers of possibility, instilling optimism for a robust economic future that elevates the quality of life for present and future generations of Montanans.

CONFIDENT

With our expertise and experience, we exude confidence in our ability to uplift Montana's communities.

RELIABLE

Stakeholders can trust in our dependable support and consistent delivery of services.

INDUSTRIOUS

Reflective of Montana's spirit, we build upon the intellectual and natural resources so abundant across the state. Montanans will be the architects of the state's future.

Brand Promise
→

Our brand promise is to serve as the catalyst for economic and community development, providing tools, guidance and support that empower businesses and individuals to thrive in Montana.

Brand Tradition
→

The Montana Department of Commerce has a storied history of facilitating growth and prosperity in the Treasure State. From our roots in supporting local industries to our expansion into housing, tourism and community development, we have played a pivotal role in crafting the narrative of a state that is rich in opportunities and natural beauty. Our history is one not just of assistance but of empowerment, driving the economic engine that sustains Montana's way of life.

03 VOICE + TONE

VOICE + TONE

These are the guiding principles that ensure the Department of Commerce's brand is communicated with a distinctive and authentic voice, one that resonates with the audience and remains consistent across all forms of communication.

Our Voice

The voice of the Montana Department of Commerce is the embodiment of our brand personality. It is the consistent expression of who we are through our communication. Our tone may shift appropriately to suit the context and audience, but our voice remains constant, ensuring that every message we convey is unmistakably Commerce.

CONFIDENT
We speak with authority and knowledge, reflecting our role as leaders in driving Montana's economic growth and community development.

INSPIRATIONAL
Our voice carries the spirit of Montana's promise, inspiring action, innovation and collaboration toward a more prosperous future.

AUTHENTIC
We stay true to Montana's roots and culture, communicating with genuineness and an appreciation for the state's unique character.

DIRECT
Direct communication is our goal. We avoid jargon, opting instead for straightforward language and short, clear statements that ensure our message is easy to understand.

Our Tone

Our tone is adaptable, changing fluidly to match the mood of our audience and the context of the message, yet it always supports our voice characteristics.

INFORMATIVE	When sharing knowledge or data, our tone is professional and informative, helping stakeholders to understand and trust the information provided.
SUPPORTIVE	In offering services or assistance, we adopt a supportive and encouraging tone, making it clear that we are a reliable partner.
CELEBRATORY	When highlighting successes or milestones, our tone becomes celebratory and proud, sharing in the joy of achievements with all Montanans.
RESPECTFUL	In all our communications, we maintain a respectful tone, recognizing the diverse perspectives and values within our community.

Messaging Principles

These 10 principles guide our approach to communication, ensuring that every piece of content we create advances our mission while resonating with the hearts and minds of those we serve.

01 CLARITY FIRST

Every message we craft should be easily understood. We avoid jargon, acronyms and complex language, favoring straightforward, concise communication that can be grasped quickly. Our communications should illuminate, not obscure, the path for Montanans seeking our services.

02 SERVICE WITH SINCERITY

Our tone displays the genuine care and dedication that's reflected by our commitment to service. Whether we're providing guidance, information or support, it's delivered with an earnestness that our constituents can trust.

03 REFLECT MONTANA'S SPIRIT

Our messaging embraces the resilience, independence and pioneering ethos of Montana. We speak in a way that resonates with the rugged individualism and communal bonds that are hallmarks of our state's culture.

04 EMPOWERMENT THROUGH INFORMATION

We aim to empower our audience by providing them with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions. Our communication should not only inform but also inspire action and confidence.

05 RESPECTFUL AND INCLUSIVE

Montana's diversity is its strength, and our language reflects respect for all backgrounds and perspectives. We ensure that our messaging is inclusive, welcoming and free from bias.

06 ### UNIFIED BUT FLEXIBLE

While our voice remains consistent, our tone flexibly adapts to various contexts and audiences. Whether we're addressing business leaders, local communities or tourists, our communication respects the nuances of each interaction.

07 ### POSITIVE AND FORWARD-THINKING

We maintain a positive outlook, focusing on solutions and opportunities. Our messages carry a forward-thinking momentum, aligning with our vision for progress and growth in Montana.

08 ### AUTHENTICITY IN EVERY WORD

We stay true to who we are. Our messages are crafted with honesty and authenticity, ensuring that our actions align with our words, building trust and integrity.

09 ### BALANCE PROFESSIONALISM WITH APPROACHABILITY

Our expertise does not come at the expense of approachability. To remain approachable, we strike a balance, ensuring our messaging is both authoritative and relatable.

10 ### STORYTELLING THAT CONNECTS

We harness the power of storytelling, sharing the successes and experiences of real Montanans to illustrate the impact of our work. Our stories aim to connect on a personal level, building engagement and understanding.

Best Practices for Communication

Less is more when writing. Readers want to find information quickly and with ease. Content that is clear, concise and compelling will help readers move through your webpages. In school we're often taught to "bury the lede," that is, present information in a chronological order. When writing for the web, make sure the purpose and point of your content is front and center. Don't make users endlessly scroll to find what they need.

Here are some tips and tricks to present content in a concise way.

Note: It is not ideal to copy/paste text from MS Word as it includes a lot of hidden code that can mess up a web layout. Word document text should be saved as "plain text" to get rid of the Word code.

01 WE ARE ONE COMMERCE

To reinforce the point that We Are One Commerce, identify yourself in written and verbal communications as part of the Montana Department of Commerce, rather than by your specific division. We understand there will be times when you will need to provide additional context and refer to the division of Commerce you work within. In such cases, always link your division name to the Montana Department of Commerce (for example, "Montana Housing Division at the Montana Department of Commerce"). Please contact the MarComms team for further guidance or with questions on this point.

02 INVERTED PYRAMID

An inverted pyramid is a way of presenting information with the most important details shown first and the less important information shared last. This technique is commonly used for online communication.

03 DESCRIPTIVE HEADLINES/HEADINGS

Include keywords that will draw attention to your content and reassure readers they're in the right place. Avoid empty statements like "welcome to our website." Your headings should clearly describe the subject of each segment listed below it.

04 **KEYWORDS**

Position keywords at the beginning of sentences and headings to assist readers in finding information and to allow search engines like Google to discover your webpage and deliver it to more users.

05 **AVOID JARGON**

Use accessible language that is easy to understand for someone who might not know a lot about your program or the service you're providing. Avoid abbreviations and most acronyms in headlines. After the first mention of an organization, program or initiative in body copy, do not include its acronym in parentheses, set off by dashes or commas or in any such explanatory construction; if the meaning of the acronym isn't clear as the second reference of the organization, program or initiative in subsequent sentences, don't use it. Keep in mind the audience's level of familiarity with various organizations, programs or initiatives, using shortened names over acronyms when possible. Avoid using acronyms excessively.

06 **BE CONCISE**

The history of a program can be good context, but it shouldn't be the first element of content on a program's webpage. Avoid making a user search through a lot of text to find the tidbit they're after. In addition, choose language that is colloquial and brief. If you have to look up the meaning of a word, chances are there's a simpler choice.

07 **AVOID QUALIFIERS**

Program accomplishments will speak loudly to users if they are presented clearly. Don't tell users that programs are terrific, fabulous, great, beautiful, etc. Instead, just get to the point. Don't use long, multisyllabic words when short ones will do. Trim your sentences.

08 **AVOID CLICHÉS AND METAPHORS**

Employing overused phrases or figurative language in your writing can make it less effective in conveying your information or message. Instead, stick with clear, direct language that communicates what you really mean. Rather than writing "Devon thinks outside the box," be more precise: "Devon addresses problems from a unique perspective and often proposes innovative solutions" or "Devon is a creative problem-solver."

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNICATION CONTINUED

09 EDIT AND PROOFREAD

Every writer needs an editor and a proofreader. Take a second or third look at your writing to look for ways to trim unnecessary words or phrases.

10 USE VISUAL CUES

If you're listing or ranking content, consider a bulleted or numbered list. This helps readers scan content and breaks up the visual monotony of paragraphs. Use headers to create visual cues that you're moving on to a new topic.

11 USE HIGH-QUALITY IMAGES

This is a balance between performance and usability. Use file compression to make the file size as small as possible while retaining a high-quality image. A top-notch photo or infographic can make your content stand out. Don't settle for an out-of-focus photo or an image that's too small and pixelates on the screen. Banners should be set to 100% in the source code so they're responsive for mobile viewing. Here are recommended sizes in pixels:

- Hero banner image: 2200x650, under 300KB

RESOURCES
AP Style Guide:

- apstylebook.com (subscription based)

- owl.purdue.edu/owl/subject_specific_writing/journalism_and_journalistic_writing/ap_style.html

STYLE GUIDELINES

Addresses

- I-90 Exit 16
- HC 36 Box 1
- Star Route Box 2
- RR 35 Box 1
- Jct. U.S. 2 & 89
- Jct. U.S. 2 & MT 49

Acronyms

- Avoid using acronyms that a reader would not easily recognize.
- After the first mention of an organization or program, do not include its acronym in parentheses, set off by dashes or commas or in any such explanatory construction; if the meaning of an acronym isn't clear as the second reference of the organization or program, don't use it.

  Correct: An inventory of lead service lines is underway. The LSL inventory must be completed by October 2024.

  Incorrect: An inventory of lead service lines (LSL) is underway.

Alphabetical Order

- Word by word or letter by letter, which continues across spaces, hyphens, etc.
- "A" is included when alphabetizing.
- "The" is not included when alphabetizing.

And vs. Ampersand (&)

- The ampersand (&) should never be used in body copy unless it's included in the proper name of a program or organization. Ampersands can be used in headlines, but should be consistent.

Capitalization

- Capitalize the first word of every sentence, including quoted statements and direct questions.
- When two or more proper nouns are used, do not capitalize the common referent in a list, e.g., Glacier and Yellowstone national parks.
- In animal names, capitalize only proper names, otherwise lowercase, e.g., Canada goose vs. mule deer.
- Governor is capitalized — and abbreviated — only when followed by a name, e.g., Gov. Greg Gianforte vs. the governor's visit.
- The Legislature is always capitalized when referencing a legislative body, e.g., "The Montana Legislature is in session."

Collective Nouns

- Collective nouns like team, school board, union, committee and group take singular verbs, like "is," and the pronoun "it" instead of "are" and "they."

Comma Usage

- Do not use a final comma (,) in a series. For example, "The colors on the flag are red, white and blue."

Dashes

- (-) a hyphen, used in AP Style to indicate a span of time, e.g., May 3-6.

- (--) (2 dashes) en dash, not used in AP Style.

- (---) (3 dashes) em dash, used, with a space on either side, to indicate a break in thought or sentence structure, e.g., "Geotravelers focus on the experience of the destination — not on checking off a list of must-see attractions."

Dates

- 1960, not '60

- 1960s or the '60s, not 1960's or "the sixties"

- 1960–1970, not 1960–70

Days

- Monday-Sunday

- Spell out days of the week. Abbreviate only when used in a table (and don't use periods): Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri and Sat

Fractions

- In general, use whole numbers and decimals.

Highways

- Secondary highways should be designated as Highway 423 or Route 423.

- Major highways should be designated as U.S. 12 or MT 200.

- Interstates should be designated as Interstate 15 (I-15 on second reference).

- Exits on interstates are identified with a capitalized letter, e.g., I-15 Exit 345.
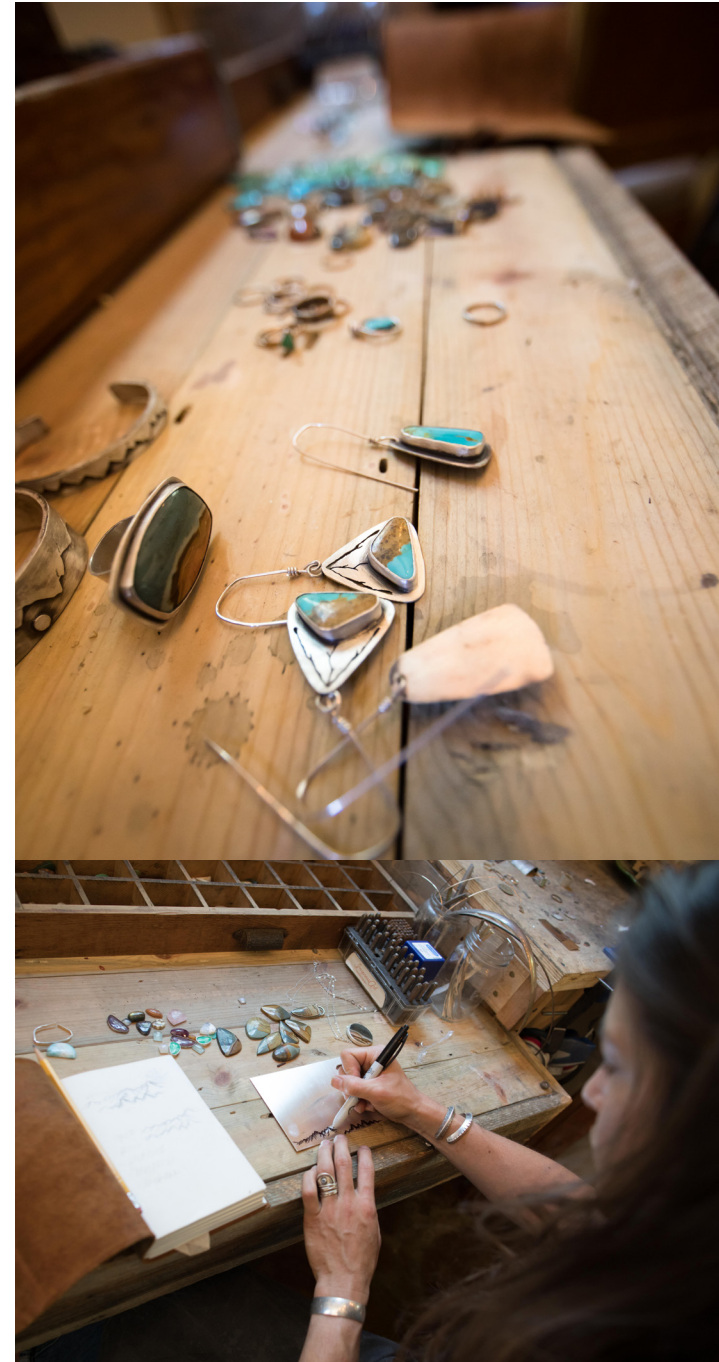
STYLE GUIDELINES CONTINUED

Homonyms

- Be aware of common homonyms.

  - **Their** ideas were solid.
    There was an idea in her head.
    They're full of ideas.

  - It's a far cry from finished.
    Its paint was chipping.

  - Can **two** students volunteer?
    Is this **too** much pressure?
    Where can I catch the bus **to** school?

Hyphenation

- Hyphens are joiners. Use them to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words, per AP Style:

Compound modifiers: When a compound modifier — two or more words that express a single concept — precedes a noun, use hyphens to link words in the compound except the adverb very and all adverbs that end in ly: a first-quarter touchdown, a bluish-green dress, a full-time job, a well-known man, a better-qualified project.

Italics

- Italics can be used to emphasize words or phrases. However, never use italics in press releases or news articles.

Line Height (leading)

- Line height should be 1.5x the font size.

- Line spacing on the web is controlled by the CSS/website platform styles. Use single spacing for Word documents and web copy.
  Note: It is not ideal to copy/paste text from MS Word as it includes a lot of hidden code that can mess up a web layout. Word document text should be saved as "plain text" to get rid of the Word code.

Months

- January-December

- Write out the name of a month if it is used without a date or with only a year. If used with a specific date, abbreviate Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.

- Abbreviate the names of months when used in a table as follows and do not add a period: Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov and Dec

Percentage

- Use the % sign when used with a number, with no space, in most cases, e.g., the mortgage rate is 4.75%.

- For amounts less than 1%, include a zero before the decimal, e.g., 0.5%.

- In casual uses, use words instead of figures, e.g., "They had a zero percent chance of being on time."

Numbers

- Spell out zero through nine except in units of measurement.

- Exception: In the travel guide, use numerals throughout.

- Use commas (,) for thousandth place (1,000).

- For a fraction, use a decimal style (preferred) or a superscript (½, not 1/2).

Spacing

- Single space between sentences (not double space as may have been taught).

- Do not put a space between double initials before a last name (e.g., C.M. Russell)

Telephone Numbers

- Use hyphens, not parentheses and periods, e.g., 406-841-2870, not (406) 841-2870.

- 800-VISIT-MT (406-847-4868)

- Toll-free (adjective) but toll free (adverb), e.g., "You may try our toll-free number, but call toll free for your guide."

- List U.S. numbers for international audiences like so: +1-406-841-2870.

Time

- 11:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

- 12-4 p.m.

- Noon, midnight

Websites

- Do not include the http://www. when written in a text format for both print and electronic usage, e.g., commerce.mt.gov or visitmt.com.

- Exception: If the http://www. is needed as part of the address in electronic documents, you may include it. (This usually only occurs with federal agencies.)

- Double-check all website URLs in text before final printing.

- Do place a period (.) at the end of a sentence ending with a website.

- URL text should be Camas Blue.

WORD STYLES
Word spelling examples, explanations, insights, etc.

Absaroka Mountains	
Absaroka Range	
Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness	
Absarokee	The town
Alpine	A style of skiing; the term "downhill" skiing is preferred
American Indian or Native American	When possible, specify tribe rather than generalize
Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness	
Angler	Someone who fishes
Backpack	
Backward	Not backwards
Badlands	
Bears Paw Mountains	Note the "s"
Big Horn	For county, college
Bigfork	One word
bighorn	For sheep
Bighorn	For battlefield, lake, mountains, etc.
Bison or buffalo	Bison is the correct term, both can be used for variety
Blackfeet	American Indian tribe name, NEVER use Blackfoot
Blackfoot	River
Capital	The town
Capitol	The building
Catch-and-release	A type of fishing
Choteau	The town
Chouteau	The county

Email	Note no hyphen
Farther	Used for physical distance
Further	Used to express time or degree
Glacier National Park	Full name on first reference, Glacier or Glacier Park on second reference
Going-to-the-Sun Road	
Hi-Line	Reference to north-central and northeastern Montana
internet	Do not capitalize unless part of a proper name
Little Bighorn Battlefield	NOT Custer Battlefield National Monument
Made in Montana	Proper noun when referencing the program
Main Street vs main street	Main Street in reference to the program or a proper noun, lowercase when generalizing
Nonprofit	No hyphen
Nonresident No hyphen	
Online	One word
Powwow	
Tipi/Tipis	
Theater	Indicates a place or building, theatre refers to the art of drama
Toward	Not towards
Trailhead	
Website	One word
West vs. west	Refers to "the West," while west is a direction
Yellowstone National Park	Full name on first reference

04 BRAND IDENTITY

BRAND IDENTITY

Our Logo

In a world cluttered with complexity, the Department of Commerce stands out with a mark that embodies the essence of simplicity and the power of clarity. The emblem, at its core, is a distillation of focus: the iconic silhouette of Montana itself coupled with the clear, unfettered declaration of "Commerce." This minimalistic approach is a deliberate choice that underlines our commitment to putting the substance of our work — the stories we share, the businesses we elevate and the futures we shape — above the noise.

COMMERCE

Logo Variations

PRIMARY LOGO

COMMERCE

SECONDARY LOGO

**MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE**

SECONDARY STACKED LOGO

**MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE**

PRIMARY LOGO

COMMERCE

SECONDARY LOGO

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE

SECONDARY STACKED LOGO

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE

Logo Usage

The Department of Commerce should lead with the primary logo version when the use is accompanied by content that references the Montana Department of Commerce name in full, i.e., the website and social media channels. The secondary logos should be used where there is no supporting context about the Montana Department of Commerce.

Minimum Size

The logo should always be clearly legible. Always size the logo proportionally. The primary logo can be as small as 1.7" or 170 pixels wide. The secondary logo can be as small as 4.3" or 250 pixels wide. The secondary stacked logo can be as small as 2.82" or 200 pixels wide.

PRIMARY LOGO

COMMERCE

1.7" OR
120 PIXELS WIDE

SECONDARY LOGO

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE

4.3" OR 250 PIXELS WIDE

SECONDARY STACKED LOGO

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE

1.94" OR 140 PIXELS WIDE

Protected Area

The protected area surrounding the Department of Commerce logo should be clear of text, other logos and/or design elements. In the logo, the size of the protected area is equal to the height of the Montana icon.

SIZE OF
PROTECTED AREA

COMMERCE

SIZE OF
PROTECTED AREA

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE

SIZE OF
PROTECTED AREA

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE
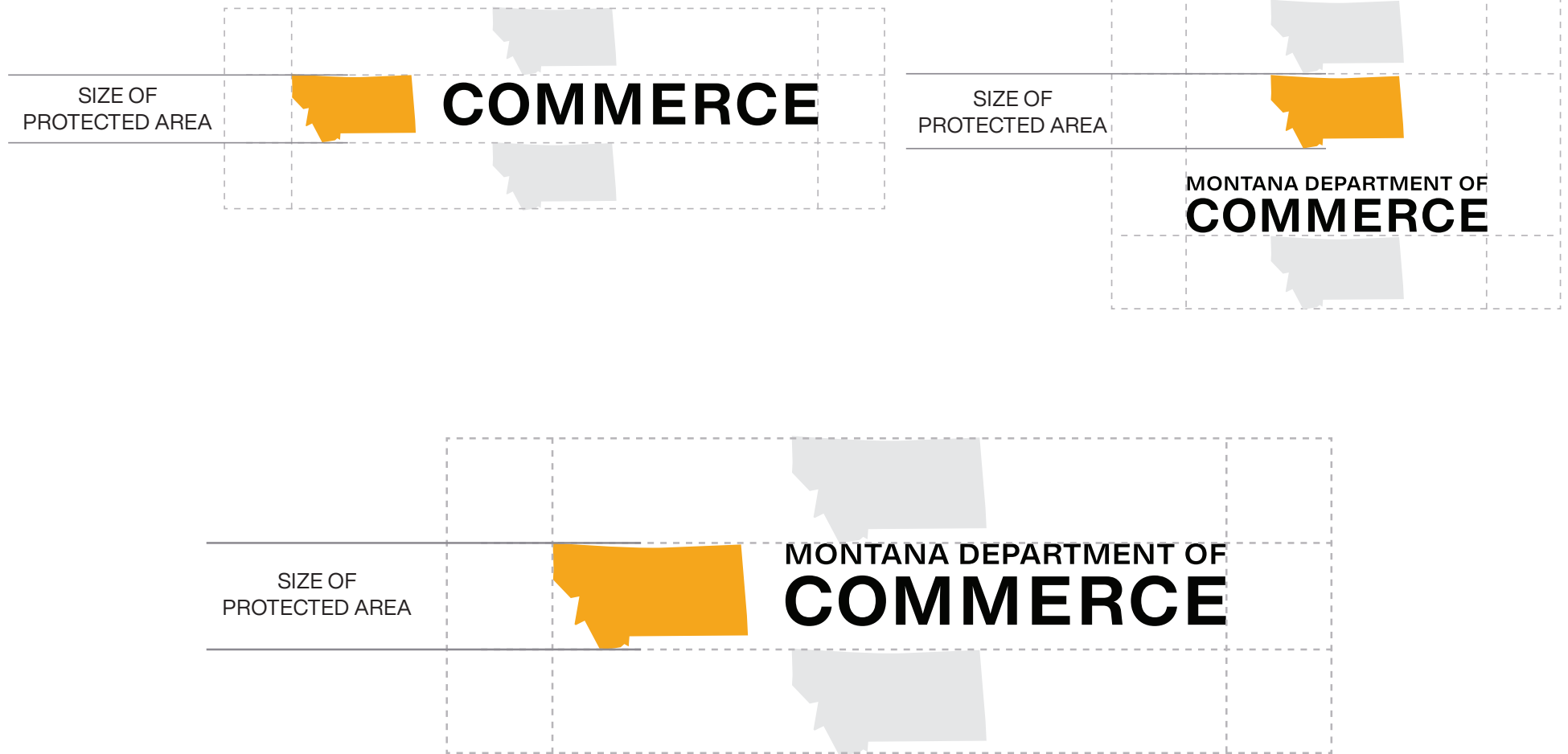
Incorrect Logo Usage

Don't adjust the spacing between components.

COMMERCE

Don't apply a drop shadow or similar effect.

COMMERCE

Don't adjust the proportions between components.

COMMERCE

Don't distort in any way.

COMMERCE

Don't adjust the position between components.

COMMERCE

Don't rotate on an angle
(unless in relation to context).

COMMERCE

Don't change colors.

COMMERCE

Ensure the logo is clearly legible. Do not reverse on
a pale color or busy background.

COMMERCE

The logo should be clearly legible when placed on a photo background.

Correct

COMMERCE   COMMERCE

Incorrect

COMMERCE   COMMERCE
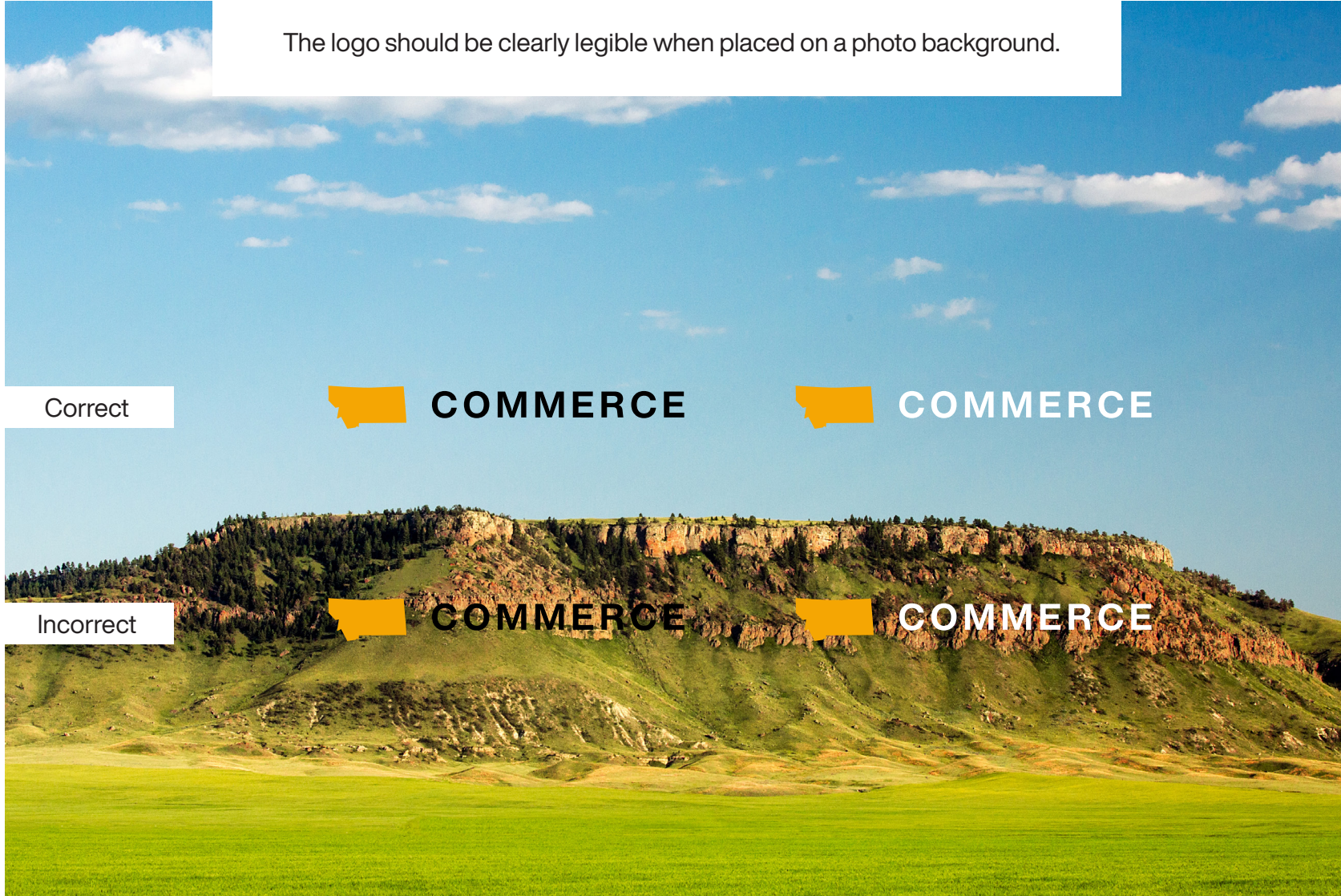
Logo Usage

The logo should be clearly legible when placed on a solid color background.

Incorrect

Correct

Black and White Use Case

If printing in black and white, please use the all-black logo instead of grayscale.

Incorrect

COMMERCE

Correct

COMMERCE

Co-Branding

This is only relevant for a select group of programs: Made in Montana, SBDC and C-PACE/MFFA.

Maintain the integrity of our logo by preserving core elements such as colors, fonts and proportions. Consistency in design is paramount; harmonize visual aesthetics with partner brands, utilizing neutral backgrounds and allowing for adequate spacing to enhance clarity. Grant equal prominence to logos, ensuring they stand out against the background with sufficient contrast. Adhere to the guidelines of all involved brands.

State Seal
Use of the state seal requires approval from the Secretary of State. Please contact MarComms to learn more.

Color Palette

Our selective palette is inspired by the colors of Montana's flag. This palette is crafted to draw the eye to what truly matters: the stories, the businesses and Montana's tomorrow.

→

BRAND IDENTITY

PRIMARY COLORS

We tested these formulas for optimal color reproduction on screen and on paper.

CMYK is for printing. RGB is for screens and devices HEX is for websites and coding.

Pantone/PMS is for standardized color matching.

Big Sky Blue

100% 80% 60% 40%

C100 M89 Y34 K25
R17 G47 B96
PANTONE REFLEX BLUE C
HEX #112F60

Treasure State Gold

100% 80% 60% 40%

C2 M39 Y100 K0
R245 G166 B3
PANTONE 1235 C
HEX #F5A603

Camas Blue

100% 80% 60% 40%

C69 M31 Y0 K0
R74 G148 B211
PANTONE 298 C
HEX #3A7AB2

Sapphire Green

100% 80% 60% 40%

C89 M41 Y71 K33
R8 G91 B75
PANTONE 342 C
HEX #085B4B

Coal Black

100% 80% 60% 40%
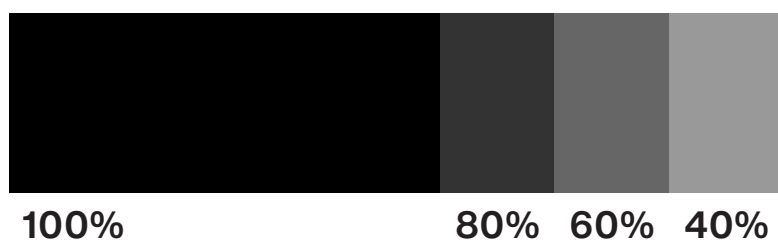
C75 M68 Y76 K90
R0 G0 B0
PANTONE BLACK 2 C
HEX #000000

DATA VISUALIZATION SECONDARY COLORS

NOTE: These colors are only for use in data visualizations and are not considered brand colors.

Data visualization is a crucial aspect of our brand communication. These guidelines ensure that all visual representations of data are clear, consistent and align with our brand identity. This document provides standards for color usage, typography, chart types and design elements and specific recommendations for different types of data.

Usage Guidelines

- Use primary colors for key data points.

- Use secondary colors for supplementary information.

- Neutral colors should be used for background elements and gridlines.

- Always include axis titles and legends.

- Avoid 3D effects, which can distort data interpretation.

- Maintain an uncluttered layout.

C79 M17 Y71 K2
R48 G153 B112
PANTONE 2417 C
HEX #309970

C0 M83 Y96 K0
R240 G82 B38
PANTONE 172 C
HEX #F05226

C63 M39 Y40 K6
R105 G130 B135
PANTONE 6114
HEX #698287

C24 M100 Y96 K18
R164 G30 B37
PANTONE 7621 C
HEX #A41E25

C42 M98 Y61 K49
R96 G15 B46
PANTONE 7421 C
HEX #600F2E

DATA VISUALIZATION

DATA TYPES

Qualitative Data Palette

A qualitative palette is used when the variable is categorical in nature. Categorical variables are those that take on distinct labels without inherent ordering. Examples include country or state, race and gender. Each possible value of the variable is assigned one color from a qualitative palette.

EXAMPLE

Sequential Data Palette

When a variable that needs to be colored is numeric or has an inherent order, it can be represented using a sequential palette. In this approach, colors are assigned to data values along a continuum, typically based on variations in hue, lightness or a combination of both.

EXAMPLE

Diverging Data Palette

If our numeric variable has a significant central value, such as zero, we can use a diverging palette. This type of palette merges two sequential palettes that meet at the central value. Values greater than the center are assigned colors from one side of the palette, while values less than the center are assigned colors from the opposite side.
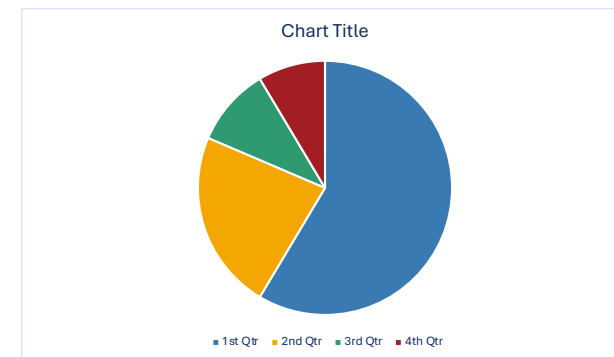
EXAMPLE

Bar Charts

- Use for comparing quantities among categories.

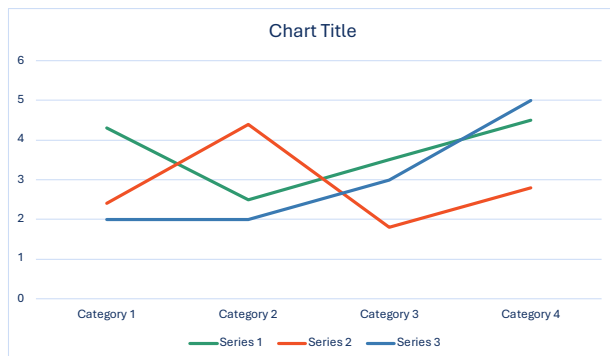- Space bars evenly and use consistent widths.
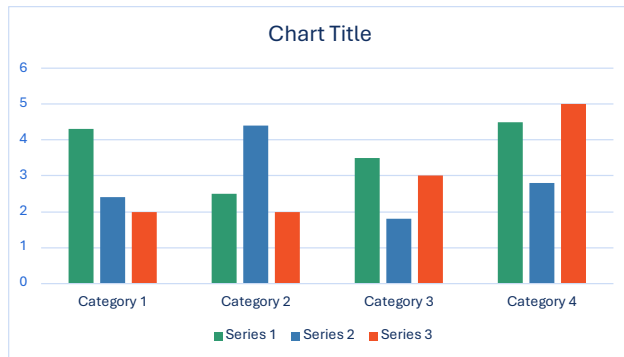
Pie Charts

- Use for showing proportions of a whole.

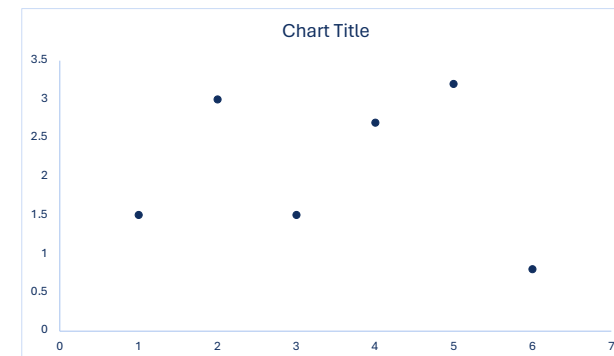- Limit to 5-7 slices for readability.

Line Charts

- Use for showing trends over time.

- Use solid lines for actual data and dashed lines for projections.

Scatter Plots

- Use for showing relationships between two variables.

- Use circles with a consistent size for data points.

ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES

Shades and tints are available to increase the color contrast on design elements for accessibility. For example, when using Treasure State Gold with background or white text over Treasure State Gold, increase the shade to level 700.

SHADES AND TINTS FOR WEB

These shades offer a dynamic range to expand the palette to convey the right emotion and message in every context.

The shades and tints below are intended for web use and are defined by the styling of the Commerce website.

Level	000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900
Big Sky Blue										
Treasure State Gold										
Camas Blue										
Sapphire Green										
Coal Black										

SHADES AND TINTS FOR PRINT

These colors offer a dynamic range to expand the palette to convey the right emotion and message in every context.

The tints below are intended for print use and can be defined by changing the tint of the color in the design program.

NOTE: To meet accessibility standards, text that is in a color should always be used at 100%. Additionally, there should be at least a 70% difference in color value between the foreground text and the background, whether the text is darker than the background or vice versa. When placing dark type on a color background, the color should be no stronger than 20%.

In print applications, the Treasure State Gold color included at right should NOT be used for text, as it does not provide enough contrast — even if used at 100% — to be accessible. Instead, use the 700 level of Treasure State Gold indicated for web for text in print.

Treasure State Gold 700 Level

C0 M22 Y66 K33

Treasure State Gold 700 Level

Treasure State Gold 700 Level

Big Sky Blue

| 100% | 90% | 80% | 70% | 60% | 50% | 40% | 30% | 20% | 10% |

Camas Blue

| 100% | 90% | 80% | 70% | 60% | 50% | 40% | 30% | 20% | 10% |

Treasure State Gold

| 100% | 90% | 80% | 70% | 60% | 50% | 40% | 30% | 20% | 10% |

Sapphire Green

| 100% | 90% | 80% | 70% | 60% | 50% | 40% | 30% | 20% | 10% |

Coal Black

| 100% | 90% | 80% | 70% | 60% | 50% | 40% | 30% | 20% | 10% |

Typography

The selection of Helvetica as our typeface is a conscious nod to the ethos of our brand: clear, functional and accessible. Renowned for its clean lines and excellent legibility, Helvetica is a paragon of typographic minimalism, bringing an air of neutrality that doesn't compete with the content it conveys, but rather supports it with unwavering clarity. This classic typeface mirrors our dedication to substance over superfluous detail, ensuring that the stories we tell, the businesses we boost and the futures we forge are always the focal point. Helvetica is not just a font choice — it is a reflection of our practical approach, a design tool that amplifies our message without excess or embellishment. The choice of Helvetica as our typeface stands as a foundational element in our visual communication, embodying the minimalist philosophy that lets the essence of our work stand out, undistracted and authentic, in the service of Montana's economy.

Please use Arial when Helvetica is unavailable.

HELVETICA REGULAR, *BODY COPY*

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 !@#$%-+&()

HELVETICA ITALIC, *BODY COPY*

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 !@#$%-+&()

HELVETICA MEDIUM, *HEADLINE*

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 !@#$%-+&()

HELVETICA MEDIUM ITALIC, *HEADLINE*

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 !@#$%-+&()

HELVETICA BOLD, *SUBHEAD, EYEBROW*

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 !@#$%-+&()

HELVETICA BOLD ITALIC, *SUBHEAD*

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 !@#$%-+&()

HELVETICA BLACK, *SUBHEAD*

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 !@#$%-+&()

HELVETICA BLACK ITALIC, *SUBHEAD*

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890 !@#$%-+&()

Typography Examples

Helvetica Bold, Big Sky Blue,
All Caps
— **EYEBROW**

Helvetica Medium, Big Sky
Blue, Sentence Case
— Headline 1

Helvetica Regular, Coal Black,
Sentence Case
— Body copy aliam harchil et ad quist, sapero to
inctate nimus, od que ium ad que que ent omniet,
explabo rerionsequecon evero voluptatur.

Helvetica Regular, Big Sky
Blue, All Caps
— HEADLINE 2

Helvetica Bold, Big Sky Blue,
All Caps
— **SUBHEAD 1**

Helvetica Regular, Big Sky
Blue, All Caps
— SUBHEAD 2

Imagery

In the visual storytelling of the Montana Department of Commerce, imagery is not merely decorative — it's communicative. Our brand uses carefully curated images that capture the authentic spirit of Montana, reflecting the reality of our communities, the dynamism of our businesses and the vast potential of our landscape. Each photograph, illustration or graphic element is selected with purpose, to not only resonate with viewers but to also articulate the narrative of progress, opportunity and unwavering community support that defines our mission.
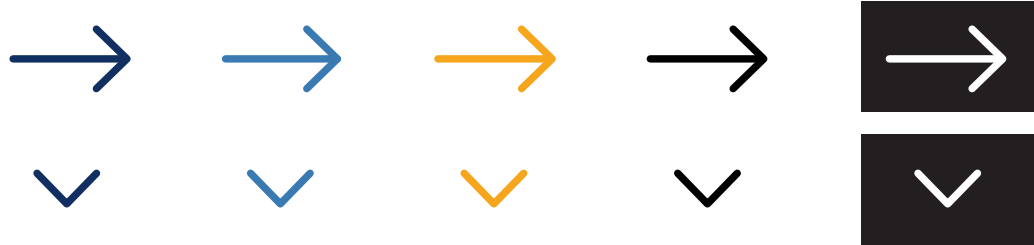
COMMERCE
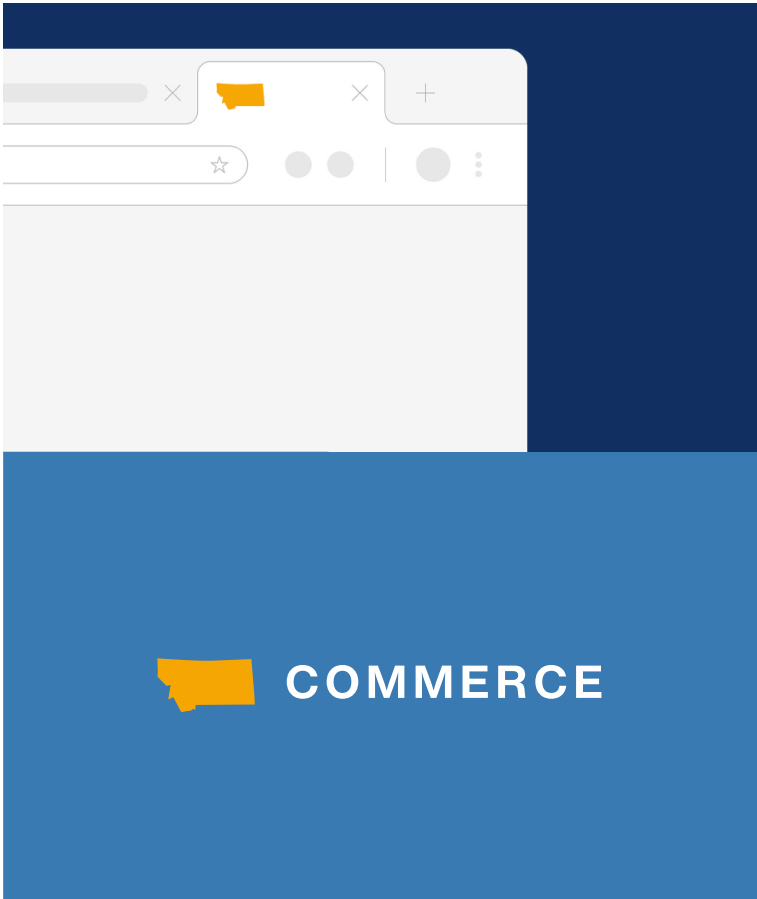
Design Elements

Montana Icon

The Montana icon by itself can function as a versatile visual element and can be used to break up color blocks.

Arrows

Arrows are a versatile design element, adding direction, movement and emphasis to various visual compositions.

Location Markers

The locator pin indicates a specific location point or destination within Montana.

LOCATION

LOCATION

LOCATION

LOCATION

Hero Heading

The hero heading is a transparent overlay that is positioned on a photo and contains headline and subheadline text.

HERO HEADING
LOREM IPSIM DOLOR SIT AMET

Design Elements

Eyebrow Headers

Eyebrow headers are small, succinct headers typically placed above the main title or headline of a section to provide additional context or emphasis.

INDUSTRIOUS   INDUSTRIOUS

INDUSTRIOUS   INDUSTRIOUS

Bulleted Lists

A bulleted list can greatly enhance readability and comprehension of information.

- I-90 Exit 16
- I-90 Exit 16
- I-90 Exit 16
- I-90 Exit 16

Social Media Icons

Social media icons are recognizable symbols or logos representing various social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and others. They should be consistently displayed in a small, uniform size across all marketing materials.

Buttons

Buttons are interactive elements in digital interfaces that users click or tap to perform specific actions, such as submitting a form, navigating to another page or initiating a process. They serve as visual cues that indicate where users can take action within an application or website.
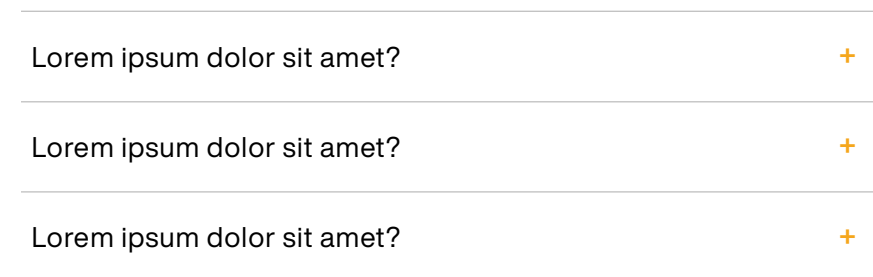
APPLY NOW →

Cards

A card is a UI design component that displays content and actions about a single subject.

Card Title

Card Title
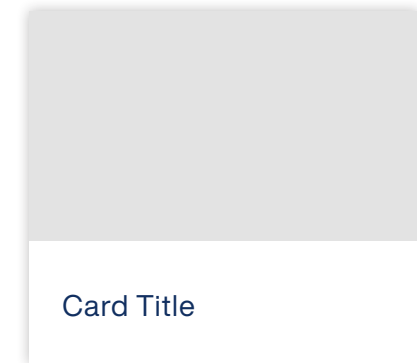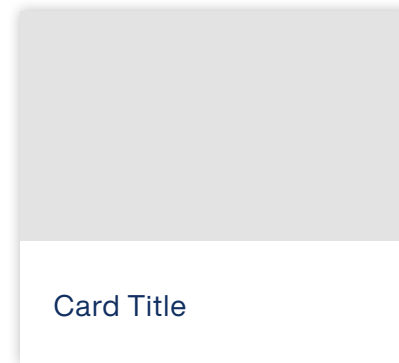
Accordion

An accordion is a type of menu that displays a list of headers stacked on top of one another.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet?   +

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet?   +

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet?   +

Photography

Photography is the key to showcasing our communities and telling the stories of Commerce.

- Photos should have a timeless feel. Do not add filters to photos. Do not stretch photos.

- When possible, photos should include a human element to create an emotional connection to the imagery.

- Photos should feel authentic and not staged.

- Our goal is to represent Montanans across the state.

05 CONTACT + DOCUMENT INFORMATION

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