Purpose

Visual identity plays a big role in building awareness for any brand. The minute you see a "swoosh" logo, you know it means "Nike." Because you've seen it in all of their communications, you've come to understand what Nike is and what they stand for. In our case, the brand we're selling is the Northeastern Region (NER) and one of its products, the NER convention.   So all of our graphics -- logos, typography, photos and all other visual elements -- need to be consistent to help build our brand and product awareness. That includes everything from documents to web pages to shirts. Brand consistency helps build awareness, so that the moment a person sees our brand graphics, they'll instantly remember who we are and what we're about.

Developing brand awareness begins with a style guide. A style guide provides editors, web developers, printers, graphic designers and others a unified approach to how the brand is presented to the consumer.

Every year, the Northeastern Region holds a convention for its members, hosted by a division or multiple divisions. Each convention creates its own logo and identifies fonts and colors to use to establish its own brand under the NER brand. This style guide provides guidance and examples in developing a convention brand and how to use it with the Northeastern Region's brand. A fictitious division of the NER, the Split Rail Division, was created for these examples.

Logo Design

The design of the logo plays an important part in the convention. It is used for communications, banners, programs, and advertising. By using the logo consistently and frequently, it helps establish the logo as a product of the Northeastern Region.

Here are considerations to keep in mind when designing a logo:

1. ***Keep it simple***

    Small details and text are impossible to read below a certain size. Instead, bold graphics and text will make your logo stand out.

    Avoid images in the logo. At small sizes, the details are lost to the viewer. Plus, images often contain a wide range of colors, making it difficult to reproduce in black & white.

    Go easy on effects in the logo. They are not necessarily used in logo designs.

2. ***Make it scalable***

    A smaller sized logo must be visible, clearly.

3. ***Choose the right font***

    Use only one font in the logo, if possible. And, make sure the font is legible when scaled down.

4. ***Minimize the number of colors***

Keep the logo to a maximum of two colors. Using only two colors will allow for a black & white version of the logo, which will be needed. Plus, more colors will make it more expensive to reproduce in color.

5. *Create variations*

   You will need at least one color and one black & white version. A reversed version of the logo may also be needed, depending on the backgrounds used.

6. *Use graphic design software*

   The best logo use a graphics design software program. These programs will produce a scalable versions of a logo. However, there is a learning curve with these programs.

Graphic Design Software

Software	URL	Cost or Free
Adobe Illustrator	https://www.adobe.com/products/illustrator.html	Cost
Coreldraw	https://www.coreldraw.com/en/	Cost
Inkscape	https://inkscape.org/	Free

Graphic design software is essential to producing sharp looking logos. If you use programs such as Paint, it will only produce image files in a format that will not be sharp when scaled to other sizes. Instead, graphic design programs will produce raster and vector types of files.

Compare the two images in the table, below, showing the same area of the sample convention logo, in raster and vector formats. Notice the difference in sharpness. When a raster file is scaled to different sizes, the image will become less sharp. However, when a vector file is rescaled, it remains sharp.
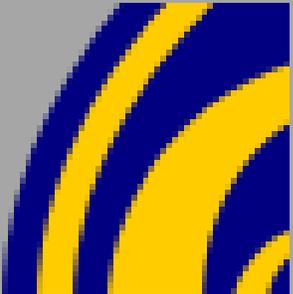
Image	Image type description
	Raster files are familiar to most users of this style guide. A raster file consists of pixels, which are single points in the image file that appear as tiny squares of color when zoomed in. If the image is enlarged, the image will lose its sharpness. The types of raster files to create for the convention logo are PNG and TIF files. PNG and TIF files allow for "transparency", allowing the background to show through, if needed.

Image	Image type description
	Vector files are most likely not familiar to users of this style guide. Vector files use mathematical algorithms to form the lines, shapes, and colors in a graphic. These mathematical algorithms allow the image to be scaled without any loss of image quality or resolution. The type of vector files to create for the convention logo are EMF and EPS files.

Logo Versions

There are several versions of the logo needed, depending on how it is used. And, when the logo is used, there are conditions that should be followed:

- No other graphic element should touch the logo.
- No element or other logo can over-print the logo.

Logo Image	Description
	There should be one colored version that is the **primary** version. Use when: • the end product is in color and • the surrounding background color **can** be easily distinguished from the main color used in the logo.
	There should be a second colored version of the logo that is reversed from the primary logo. It should **only** be used when • the end product is in color and • the surrounding background color **cannot** be easily distinguished from the main color used in the primary logo
	There should be a black version of the logo that should **only** be used when • the end product is in black and white or • the end product is in grayscale

Logo Image	Description
NER CONVENTION LOGO	There should be a transparent version of the logo that should **only** be used when • the background of the end product needs to show through the logo. In this file, only the portion shown in black is provided, allowing the background color of the object to show through.

Logo Version Usage

Usage example	Logo	Note
Color documents, banners, and web pages	Primary or reversed color versions	No change
Grayscale documents	Black	No change
Shirt or canvas bag in one of the two colors of the logo	Transparent	Vendor needs to change the black color to the primary or reversed color of the logo, depending on the shirt or bag's color. For example, if the shirt is yellow, the vendor needs to change the color from black to blue. If the shirt is blue, the logo needs to change from black to yellow.
Other color shirt or canvas bag	Primary	Two color logo may be more expensive to produce
Plaques	Transparent	No change

Logo File Format Usage

File Extension	Raster/ Vector	Usage
EMF	Vector	Always use with Microsoft Office programs, such as Word, PowerPoint, and Publisher. The image can be resized to whatever is needed without sacrificing the quality.
EPS	Vector	If Microsoft Office programs are not being used to develop printed materials, try using an EPS file. Always use a vector file, where possible, for any printed materials. EPS files are also the first choice of file format for professionally printed pieces where a vector file **can** be used, such as shirts, banners, canvas bags, and plaques.
PNG	Raster	If you cannot use either an EMF or EPS file to develop your NER printed materials, such as a newsletter or brochure, use the PNG files. PNG files should also be used for website development and social media.
TIF	Raster	If you cannot use an EPS file for professionally printed pieces such as shirts, banners, canvas bags, and plaques, use a TIF file.

Logos Files to Provide

For the convention, various sizes and formats are needed of each logo. The table below lists, by number, the size(s) of raster files recommended to produce. Vector files are scalable. Therefore, where indicated, only one version of vector files are needed.

Logo File	PNG	TIF/TIFF	EMF	EPS
Primary Color	1,2,3,4	4	●	●
Reversed Color	1,2,3,4	4	●	●
Black	1,2,3,4	4	●	●
Transparent				●

Sizes:
1. 1.5" X 1.5" 72 dpi
2. 1.5" x 1.5" 150 dpi
3. 3" x 3" 150 dpi
4. 3" x 3" 300 dpi

Color Values

It is important to establish the colors used in the logo. Consistent use of these colors help establish the brand for the convention. And, they also provide guidance to third party printers.

Colors	RGB Values	CMYK Values	Hexadecimal
Yellow	R=255 G=204 B=0	C=0 M=20 Y=100 K=0	#ffcc00
Blue	R=0 G=0 B=128	C=100 M=100 Y=0 K=50	#000080
Black	R=0 G=0 B=0	C=0 M=0 Y=0 K=100	#000000

Fonts

The font to be used with the convention logo for materials is a TrueType font called City. This is the same font in the Northeastern Region's style guide. Using this font with the convention logo helps establish the convention as a product of the Northeastern Region's brand. When used,

- Specific guidance for banners, Constant Contact emails, and advertisements are found in this document.
- Other fonts can be used in the body of documents, such as convention programs and Constant Contact emails.

- The City font is provided with the NER Style Guide.

Constant Contact

For Constant Contact, develop the masthead and footer using these guidelines:

Masthead

- The final image for the masthead must be at least the width of the Constant Contact document. For this example, the width is 640 pixels.
- NER Convention must be in upper case and bold, using the City font, as in **NER CONVENTION**
- The convention location and date range must be beneath "NER Convention", using the City font or the convention logo's font, in mixed case and normal, not bold, as in Hometown, NER – September 13-16, 20XX
- The convention logo must be on the left hand side of the masthead.
- The color of the convention logo and text must be the same.

Footer

- The final image for the footer must be at least the width of the Constant Contact document. For this example, the width is 640 pixels.
- The website should be listed in a combination of upper and lower case, using the City font or the convention logo's font, in bold, on the right hand side.
- The website text must be the same color as the text in the masthead.
- On the left hand side, color versions of the NMRA National, Northeastern Region, and the hosting division(s) logos are to be placed, in that order.
- The versions of the logos must stand out from the footer background. Follow the guidelines of the NER Style guide to determine which logo to use.
- If the NMRA National logo does not stand out from the footer background, a white border around the logo is acceptable.
- All three logos should be the same size in height.

Examples	Artwork
Masthead	
Footer	

Banner

Example	Guidelines
	• The finished banner artwork should be 36" x 91". Leave one inch at the top and 9 inches at the bottom clear, for the banner mechanism. • The final artwork needs to be a TIF file at 300dpi. This means the TIF file should be 10800 x 27300 pixels (36 x 300 = 10800 and 91 x 300 = 27300). • All the text should be presenting in the color of the convention logo. • The second color of the logo can be used for the banner background. • NER CONVENTION should appear at the top of the banner using the City font, in Bold, and all upper case. • The date range of the convention should be underneath NER CONVENTION using the City font or the convention logo's font, in normal, and mixed case. The date range should be as wide as "NER Convention" on the line above. • If the location of the convention does not appear in the convention logo, place it underneath the date range using the City font or the convention logo's font, in normal, and mixed case. Use the same font size as the date range, unless it results in text wider than "NER CONVENTION on the top line. In this case, reduce the size of the font so that the text is as wide as NER CONVENTION. • Include a map on the banner for viewers that pinpoints the location of the convention, visually. • The NMRA National, Northeastern Region, and hosting division(s) logos should appear at the bottom of the banner, in that order from left to right. Follow style guidelines to determine which logo to use, if provided. Otherwise, a white edge may be needed to enable seeing the logo. The logos should be evenly spaced and centered on the banner. • Feature the convention logo prominently. • Include at least one model railroad photo and one prototype photo from venues the convention will feature. • No more than three photos is suggested. • Have a model railroad photo be the main photo. Make it a little large in width than the banner, so that it will go edge to edge when printed. • Minimize the other text with convention highlights. This text should use the City font or the convention logo's font, in normal, and mixed case.

Newsletters and Convention Programs

Artwork is needed for distribution to all of the region's divisions for inclusion in their newsletters. In addition, artwork is needed for the cover of the convention programs. You can use the same artwork for both purposes.

Newsletters will have a white background, since it is printed on paper. Convention programs may also be printed on white paper, or could be printed on color paper. But, even on colored paper, it should be a lighter color paper.

Two versions of artwork are needed for newsletters and convention programs. One in color and the other in transparent. Follow the style guidelines to determine which logo is to be used with a white background, keeping in mind that it needs to be easily distinguishable from the white background.

If the style guideline indicates you need to use the reversed instead of the primary logo image, the other option is to create artwork using the second color as the background color, just as was done in the banner.

The artwork should follow these guidelines:

- The text, "NER CONVENTION", should use the City font, in bold, and be in upper case. The text should be as wide as the convention logo and appear above the logo.
- The Convention Logo should appear below the NER CONVENTION text.
- The date range for the convention should appear directly below the logo. The date range for the convention should use the City font or the convention logo's font, in normal, and in mixed case. The date range should be as wide as the logo.
- The location of the convention should be centered directly below the date range. Use the same font and size as the date range, unless it results in text wider than the logo. In this case, reduce the size of the font so that the text is as wide as the logo.
- The color of the text should match the logo.
- Space each line of text and the logo, evenly.

Example	Notes
	Since the primary logo is a color not easily distinguishable from a white background, a blue background was needed. If you can distinguish the logo from a white background, then no background is needed. This is the version of the artwork to be used for newsletters. It can also be used on the cover of a convention program.

Example	Notes
NER CONVENTION NER **C**ONVENTION LOGO September 19-22, 20XX Hometown, NER	Suppose the reversed logo was actually the primary logo. In this case, no block of color is needed for the background. This is a second option for convention programs. However, keep in mind that it is not your primary logo.
NER CONVENTION NER **C**ONVENTION LOGO September 19-22, 20XX Hometown, NER	When printing in black & white, on either white or color paper, use the transparent logo. This logo is good for printing convention programs in black & white. It allows the color of the paper to show through. Imagine the cover of the convention programs using yellow paper. Everything shown in gray, here, will be in yellow.

Facebook

I need help in determining the overall size to use for the profile picture and cover photo. My thought is the profile picture should be the logo and the cover photo the main photo from the banner, overlaid with the text, "NER CONVENTION", date range, and location. But, you have to make sure it will work on computers and smartphones. I did find the following information on Facebook's Help page.

Profile Picture

The Page's Profile Picture displays at 170x170 pixels on your Page on computers, 128x128 pixels on smartphones and 36x36 pixels on most feature phones.

Cover Photo

The Page's Cover Photo

- Displays at 820 pixels wide by 312 pixels tall on your Page on computers and 640 pixels wide by 360 pixels tall on smartphones.
- Must be at least 400 pixels wide and 150 pixels tall.

- Loads fastest as a JPG file that's 851 pixels wide, 315 pixels tall and less than 100 kilobytes.
- For profile pictures and cover photos with your logo or text, you may get a better result by using a PNG file.

Questions

Any questions can be directed to the Northeastern Region Marketing Director.