

Sustainability Communications: Connecting and Inspiring



Introduction

Penn State has created a visual identity to communicate that sustainability is part of our University's value and mission. The typography, color and imagery have been carefully chosen to convey the values that we are communicating: optimism, hopefulness, respect, efficiency, and professionalism. We use this identity to inform and inspire others. Further, to broaden the understanding of sustainability beyond its environment aspect, we are now using blue colors in the identity and avoiding strongly connected environmental graphics, such as leaves and planets.

Our Green Teams are champions of sustainability, innovating at the grassroots level. You can use this branding strategy to visually align your efforts with that of the overall University, helping our organization create unity among all our sustainability leaders and efforts.

This guide summarizes the key characteristics of the Penn State sustainability branding and suggests ways to illustrate and brand your stories in ways that inspires and inform your audience. The content below is a summary of a detailed Visual Identity Guide created for the Sustainability Institute's by Kelly Harris, Landscape Architect at the Physical Plant. The full report can be downloaded from the Wordmarks folder on the Green Teams website.

Branding – What and Why?

A brand is both a tangible and an intangible expression of the inspiration, vision and values of the entity being represented. Words and images are tangible elements that can influence the way people feel about the subject. The intangibles are the emotional reactions and feelings people experience as a result of personal interactions.

Whether fairly or not, books are often judged by their cover. In this case, the brand represents a good and noble cause (sustainability) that is grounded in academic research. Both the tangible and intangible attributes of a brand (its essence) can influence the actions of the audience. By establishing a perceptible and memorable visual identity, we are conveying a uniformity of values across Penn State to show that sustainability is important and urgent and that we want to inform and inspire others to action.

Penn State's Visual Identity

Whether you are in State College or in the back roads of Montana, if you see the Penn State mark shown at right, you think of our University. With the vastness and complex organizational structure of our institution, the mark and its associated graphics were created in 1987 to ensure that all areas of the University are corporately identified through the use of this overarching institutional logo, commonly referred to as the University mark.



Options for using the University Mark:

The University has specific guidelines for using the mark and other symbols, as spelled out in the Visual & Editorial Standards found at: http://ur.psu.edu/stylemanual/////graphic_identity/graphic_identity.html

In general, the Penn State blue or black mark should be printed on a white background or in the reverse on a colored background as shown at left.



"ACK!!!"

This is an incorrect reverse of the mark.
The background of the shield is white
and the lion and 1855 are blue.



"ahh ..."

Visual Identity for Sustainability at Penn State

Keeping in line with the Penn State guidelines, the word mark for sustainability at Penn State is comprised of text only, as shown below. This word mark can be used with black text on a light colored background or white on a dark colored background. For the inaugural theme for our website and Institute, we have used a blue-sky background to allude to the environment, of lofty mission and connect to the Penn State colors. Limiting the colors to these two combinations contributes to the unification of Penn State's sustainability efforts. Specific color types are listed below.

sustainability.psu.edu

sustainability.psu.edu

The Sustainability Institute has aligned our word marks with the primary sustainability marks, as you can see below. When referring to the Sustainability Institute, one can use the Sustainability Institute or Penn State's Sustainability Institute, not the Penn State Sustainability Institute.

sustainability
INSTITUTE

sustainability
INSTITUTE

Green Team and Green Paws Program Marks

We have created word marks for all registered Green Teams to use on their materials and they are designed to complement the sustainability identity. The customized and program word marks shown below can be found in the [Wordmark Folder](#), under the [Resource tab](#) on the [Green Teams website](#). If you have a green word mark, we will be providing you with a blue one over the next month so that you can join our campaign of helping others understand the full breath of sustainability.

The wordmark for "green paws" features the word "green" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below it, the word "paws" is written in a black, lowercase, sans-serif font. The "p" in "paws" is slightly larger and positioned to the left of the rest of the word.

(Filename: greenpaws mark)

The wordmark for "green teams" features the word "green" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below it, the word "teams" is written in a black, lowercase, sans-serif font. The "t" in "teams" is slightly larger and positioned to the left of the rest of the word.

(Filename: greenteams mark)

The wordmark for "green team Sparks" features the word "green" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below it, the word "team" is written in a black, lowercase, sans-serif font. To the right of "team", the word "Sparks" is written in a smaller, black, lowercase, sans-serif font.

(Mark files organized alphabetically)

How to Use the Marks, Fonts and Colors

Don't
combine the word marks
with the Penn State mark.



Don't
recolor the word marks



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Don't
distort the word marks

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Don't
add effects to the word marks

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Don't
rotate the word marks

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Fonts:

The font styles that complement the sustainability branding the best are:

Franklin Gothic for Headlines and Subtitles

Arial Regular for the paragraph text

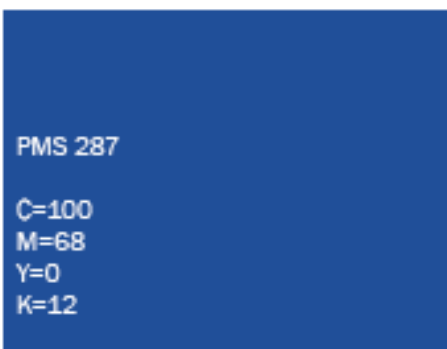
Colors:

Colors also help to define the brand and the colors at right coordinate successfully with the Penn State and sustainability identity marks. You can use other colors, but we thought it would be helpful to know what hues are complementary.

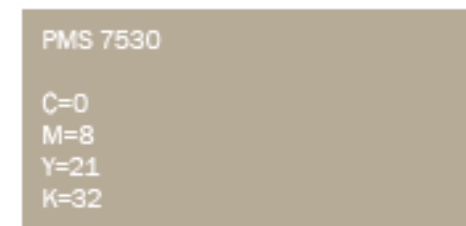
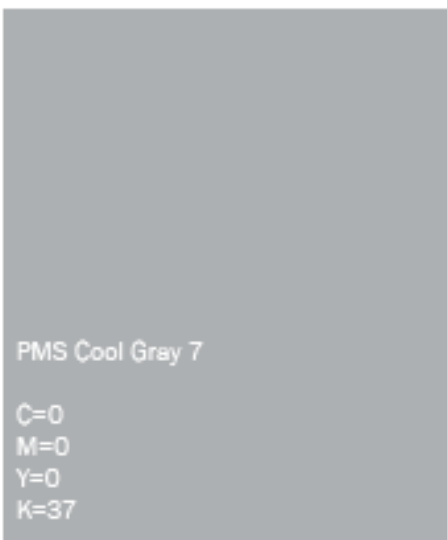
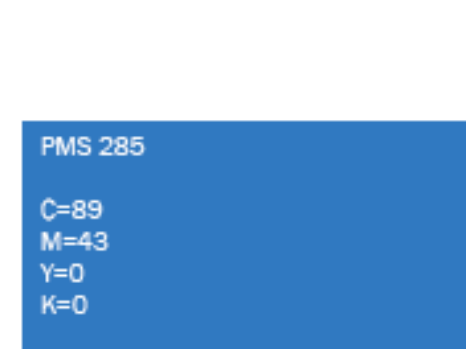
“SUSTAINABILITY IS THE NEW “GREEN”

As explained in the introduction, we are using the blue color to broaden the conversation about sustainability. We hope that people will ask why we are not painting ourselves green so that we can enter into a conversation about how Penn State defines sustainability as the pursuit of human health and happiness, environmental quality and economic well-being. It is a balance of social, environmental and economic quality.

Primary Colors



Accent Colors



A Good Photograph is Worth a Thousand People

When you saw the above title, you probably thought it would end differently, but if you accompany your story with an engaging photo, it will probably be tweeted and expand your audience exponentially. Short, catchy titles that surprise or intrigue the reader will more likely catch their attention than a long, complicated one.

Another method to grab attention is a photograph that tells a story. With the plethora of cell phones and point and shoot cameras, good photographs are much easier to collect, if you know how to compose the picture. In general, capture people doing something and have the people take up most of the picture area, as illustrated in the photos below. Even if your Green Team has organized a tabling event, showing action will engage the reader more than just a person sitting at a table. Don't forget to give the photographer credit for the photo. They did the work.

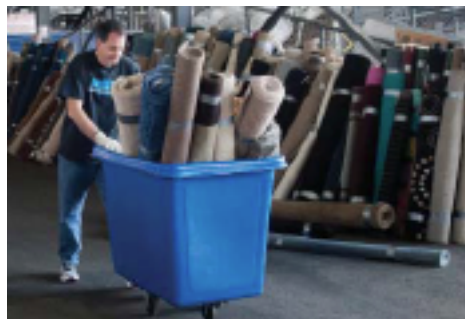


Photo Credit: Patrick Mansell



Photo Credit: Andy Colwell

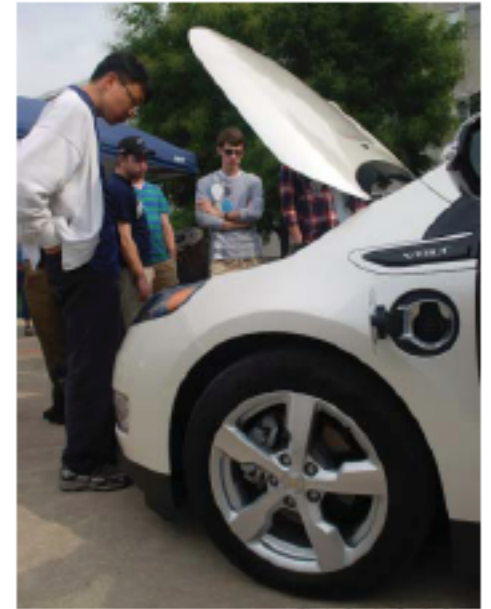


Photo Credit: Curtis Chan

Merchandise Guidelines



Several teams have created mugs or t-shirts for their members. Penn Staters may use Penn State's names, marks, and symbols according to the [Visual and Editorial Guidelines](#), on any materials used for recruitment, development, or general promotion. However, when merchandise or specialty products such as shirts, ball caps, mugs, pens, etc. are produced, those items are subject to a promotional agreement from the [Licensing Programs Office](#). This is the case whether the item is to be given away or sold for profit. In all cases, such merchandise must be produced by a licensed Penn State vendor.

Questions and Resources

If you have questions about how to work with the marks, please contact:

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Please send stories about your innovations and successes to [Lydia Vandenberg](#). We want to help you spread the word!

Cover photo: Eco-Reps Build their Teamwork Skills

