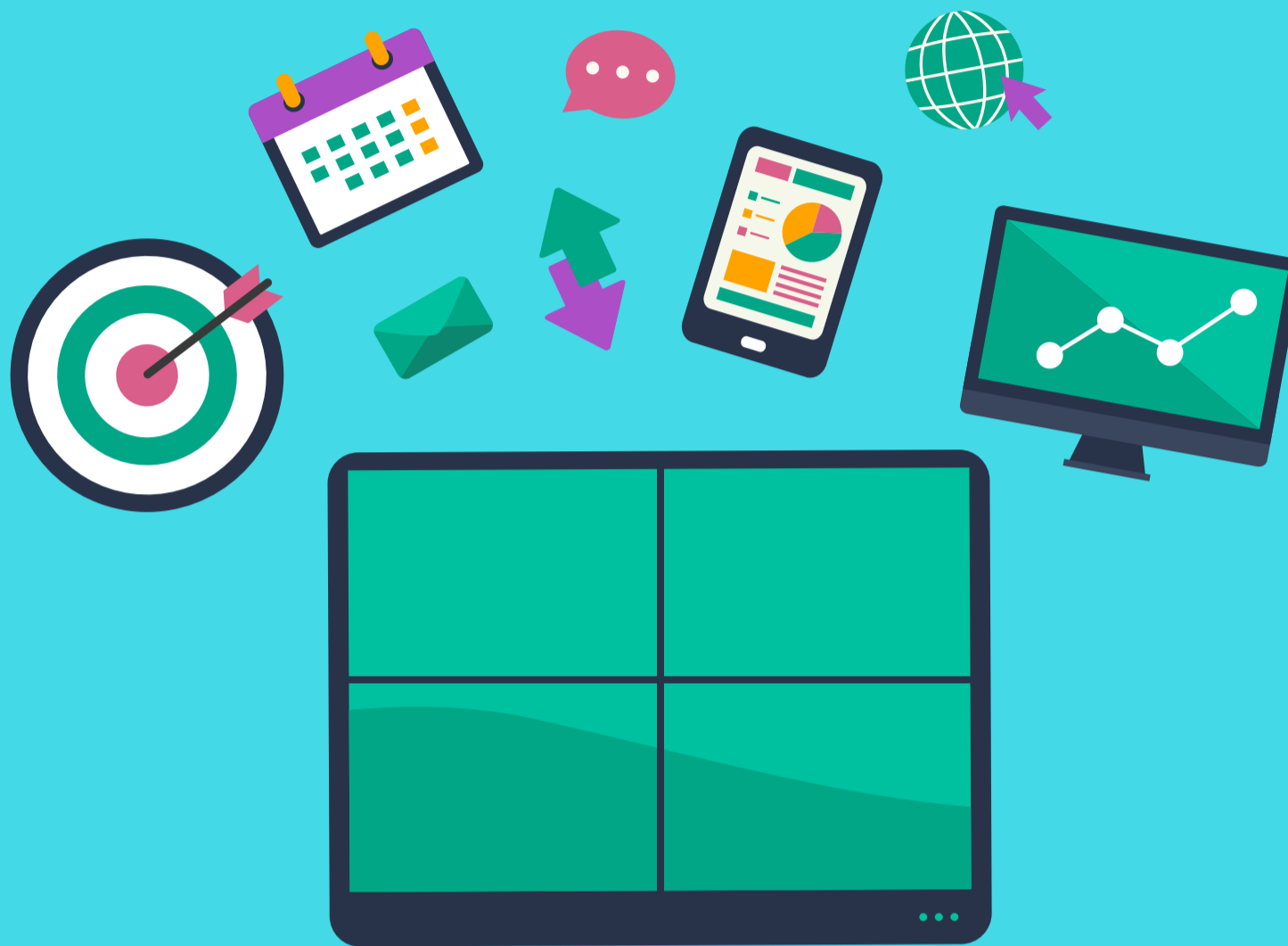


# CHAPTER 2



## Content

Your digital signage is only as good as the content you show on it. In this section, we'll cover design principles and best practices to help you create content that will get eyes glued to your screens.

# CHAPTER 2

## The Importance of Designing Effective Content

Digital signage is a dynamic and fast-paced medium and as a result, the message you share with it is only as effective as the content you choose to show. A strong design and a compelling message are important to attracting your audience, but you don't have to be a graphic designer or professional copywriter to create great content!

A few key things to keep in mind when designing content for your digital signage are:

- Brevity
- Thoughtful design placement
- Clear call to action

All of this is very doable if you follow the tips we provide in this chapter. If you do, you'll be in a great position to start building engaging content!

## Design Principles

In the design world, design principles determine how an artist uses various elements of art in their work. The most important aspect to effective content design is achieving balance.

Balance is the distribution of the visual weight of color, texture, shape and space. A balanced design will create stability in your work, which is important to maintaining your viewers' interest. A stable design is pleasing to look at, and makes for much more engaging content.

In this section we will touch on the use of color, space and alignment as it relates to digital signage.

## Simplicity

In the design world less is always more. Avoid crowding your content with too many words or Widgets, as too many competing elements in a design can be hard on the eyes. Powerful designs can convey a message with the fewest number of elements at play. A good technique for creating simple designs is to question every design decision you make. Ask yourself if that drop shadow is really necessary, or that text underline, or if you really need that stroke around your text. Good design involves subtraction.

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## Layout

Finding the perfect layout for your content is never a one-off. You'll need to play around with your design, and move things around depending on where the eye is gravitating.

You'll want to follow certain guidelines when it comes to placing your content correctly for visibility. These are called **Safe Areas**.

## Safe Areas

### Title Safe Area

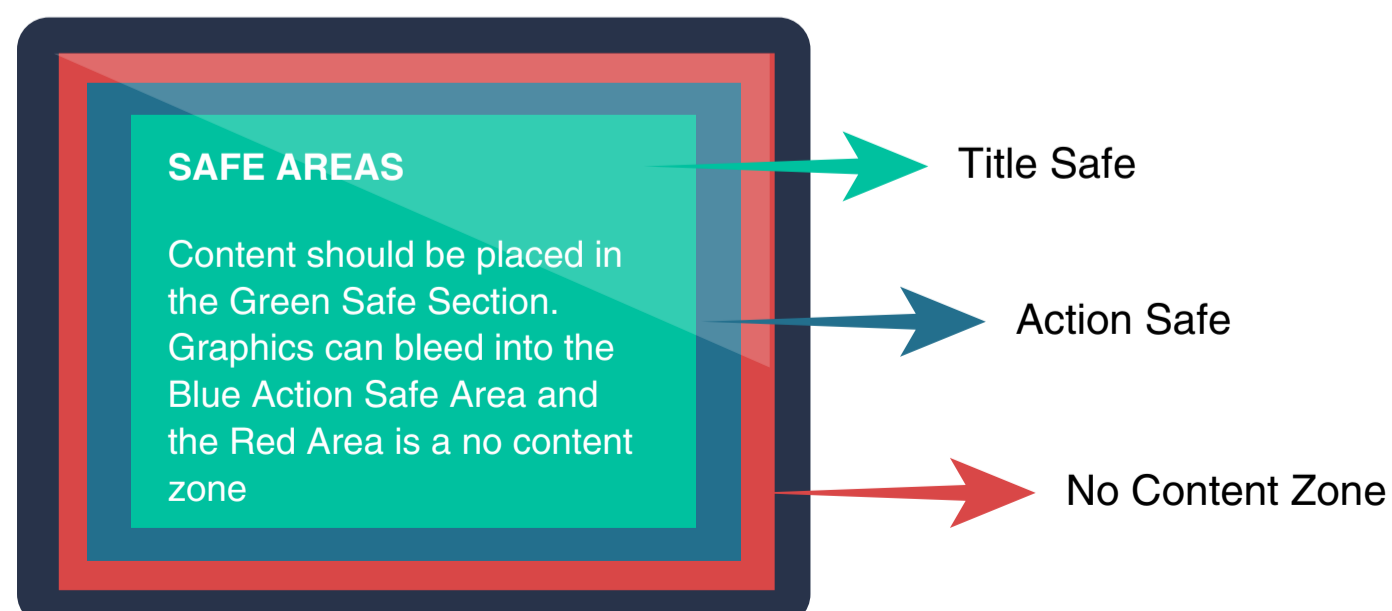
This area is a buffer zone that protects your content from getting cut off on your Display. Placing your text or graphics in this area ensures that they are visible on the Display without distortion.

### Action Safe Area

This area extends past the Title Safe area. Moving content such as Images and motion graphics can be placed here.

### No Content Zone

Every Display will have an area where content should never be placed. This margin is the area that gets cut-off when your content is shown on your Display. You can allow images or graphics to bleed into this area, but never place your important content here.



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## Alignment

Justify your content to the left to avoid having to hyphenate words. While this saves the look of jumbled words, it is also more appealing to the eye. The eye reads from left to right and so content that is justified left on a screen feels more natural and easy to read and understand.

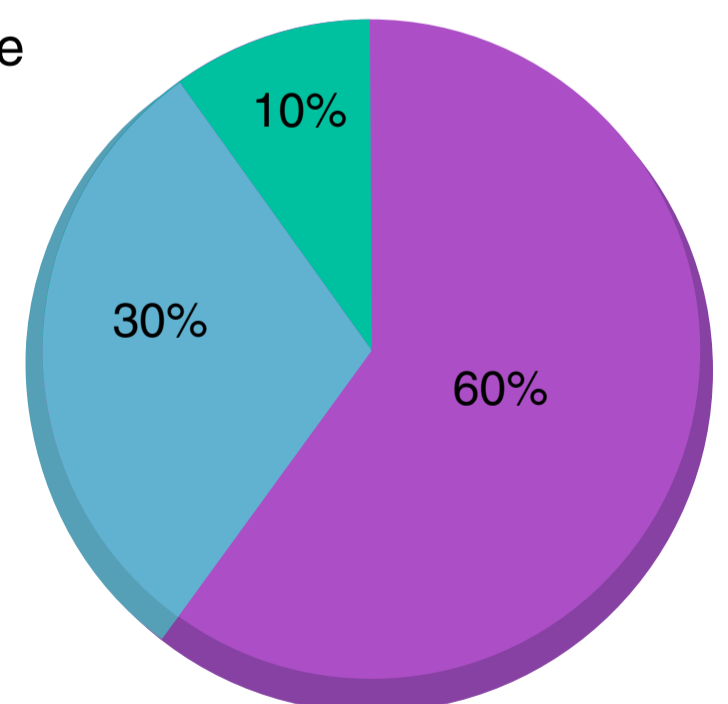
## Color

When choosing colors for your content, it's a good practice to use a high contrasting color palette. Contrast between elements in the foreground and background is great for legibility as it allows your viewer to separate visual elements on screen. If you are looking to incorporate more complex color palettes in your designs, use the color wheel to pair your palettes. [This article](#) takes you through all the possible color combinations and their applications in digital signage.

## How Many Colors Should I Use?

A lot of designers will design using the 60-30-10 rule which uses only three colors. The dominant color can be used in 60% of the design, the secondary in 30% and the last color should only be used in 10% of the design for accenting purposes.

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## The 60-30-10 Rule

- 60% will be the main color for your design.
- 30% should contrast your 60%, and this makes your design "pop".
- 10% should be an accent color to either your 30% or 60% color.

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## Visual Hierarchy and Size

Visual hierarchy is achieved by manipulating the size and space of the elements in your presentation. Adjusting the positioning and scale will allow you to manipulate where your viewers eye is drawn, when it is drawn there, and for how long.

Digital signage content generally has three pieces to it: the headline or title, body text, and a “call to action”. To have a particular element stand out, its size should be larger than the surrounding elements.

A common example of an effective hierarchy in digital signage would be a large title (about 40pt), smaller text (but no less than 24pt) and a large call to action (about 32pt) that’s separated with space from the other textual elements on the screen.

## Digital Signage Best Practices

When designing content for your business or organization, it’s important to ensure that your signage accommodates for accessibility and visual appeal. Making use of the following best practices when it comes to developing and designing your signage project will ensure that you are engaging your viewers in the best possible ways.

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## 1. Make it Legible

Legible copy makes it easy for your viewers to see and understand your message at a glance and from a distance. It's important to keep in mind that your viewers will mostly be taking in your signage from at least 5-10 feet away. So designing for this perspective will be a valuable asset to the overall success of your message.

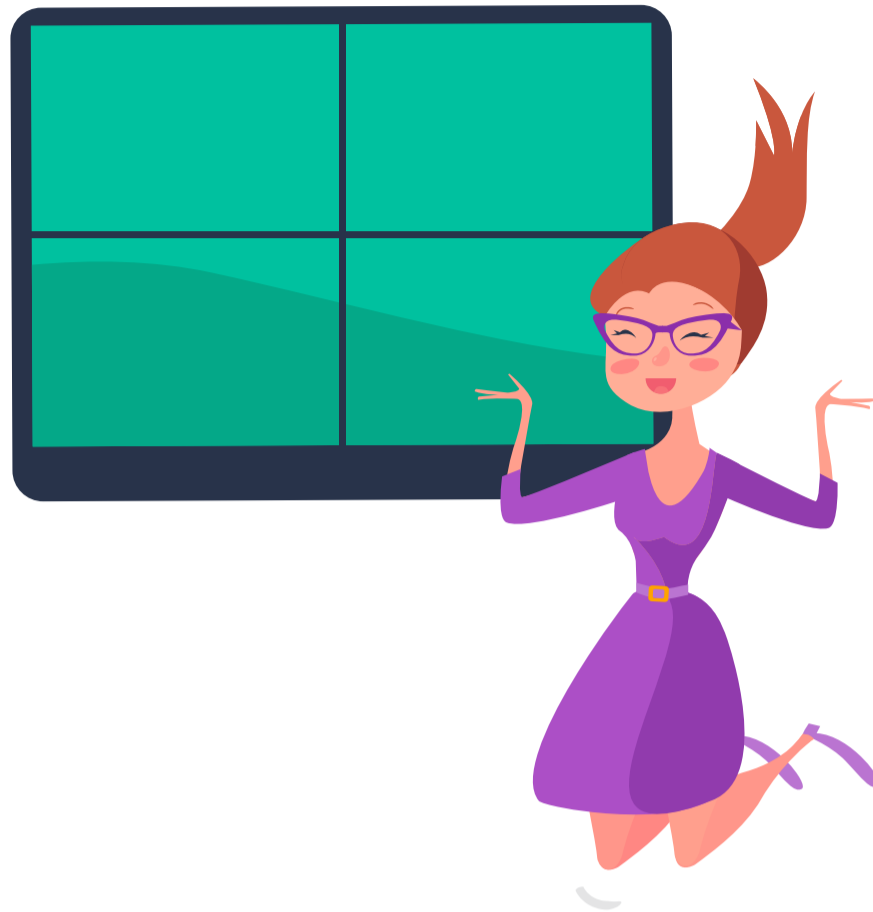
Here are a few rules of thumb when it comes to styling the text on your digital signage.

- Large font sizes are best
- Keep it short and simple
- Use Sans-Serif fonts

## 2. Design for Accessibility

In 2010, the Department of Justice published the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design. Under this law, all electronic and information technology must be accessible to people with disabilities. Digital signage falls under this category, and there are a few things you need to consider to ensure that your signage is in compliance with these ADA guidelines.

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## Text

Text should be large enough that it can be easily read from a reasonable distance. To test out the best font size for your design, set up a Display showing various font sizes and try reading it from various distances.

The color of your text should be in high contrast with the background. This will ensure better readability for the visually impaired. Not sure what high contrast means? Check out [our post](#) on using color in digital signage design.

## Interactive Guidelines

All functionality must be placed between 36 and 42 inches from the ground. That means that all buttons, key pads, and interactive elements must appear within this dimension on your Display.

Account for accessibility when designing wayfinding content. Accommodate for stairs, accessible entrances, etc.

## Displays

Any Display that extends beyond 4" deep is in violation of the ADA. This requirement applies to any object that extends from a wall and into a path of travel. Ensure that your Display is either equal to or less than 4" deep. There are many large-format Displays available that fulfill ADA regulation at 3.5" wide.

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## 3. Design for Your Viewing Pattern

Digital signage tends to be received from one of three viewing patterns: Point of Transit, Point of Wait or Point of Sale. You can improve the overall success of your message by learning the viewing pattern for your Display and designing content that complements it.

### Point of Transit

If your sign is located in a high traffic space where people are walking from point A to point

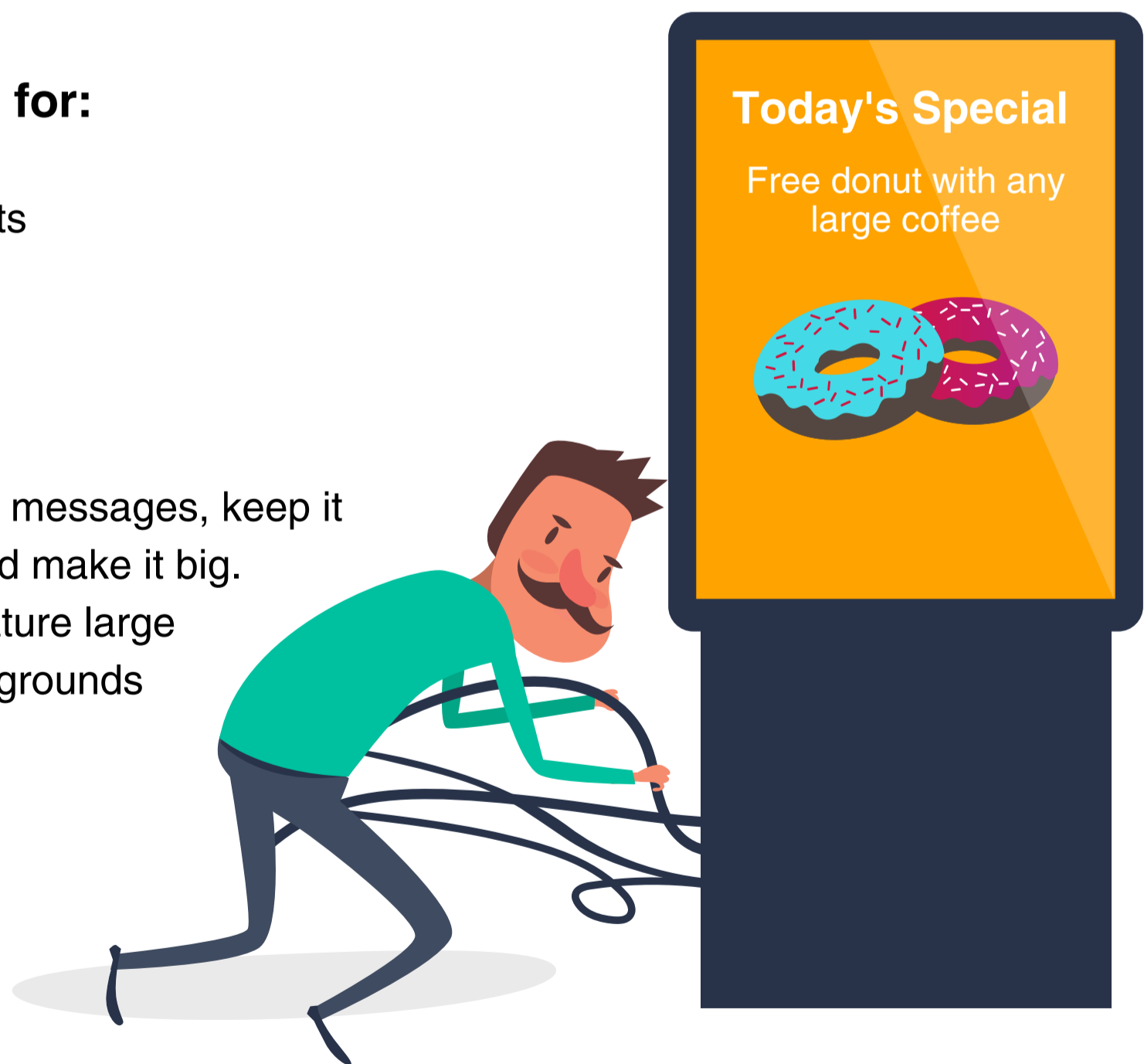
B, your signage will likely be seen at a glance. People in this scenario are usually walking between destinations and their interaction with your Display will be short. In this situation short, concise, messages shown in rotation are the most well received.

#### This scenario is best for:

- Event announcements
- Daily reminders
- Calls to action

When designing for these messages, keep it short (5 words or less) and make it big.

These designs should feature large fonts against simple backgrounds to avoid detracting from the message.





# CHAPTER 2



## Point of Wait

Point of wait interaction generally occurs in lobbies, elevators, service desks and any waiting place. As a result, viewing times tend to be longer in duration, allowing for longer messages and heavier content.

### This scenario is best for:

- Informative content such as directories, donor walls, calendars, and news.
- Engaging content (trivia, video, spotlight stories, etc.) that may help to decrease perceived wait times.

This viewing pattern is also ideal for interactive displays as your viewer is interacting with your Display for a longer period of time. Using an interactive display, you can show wayfinding maps, searchable directories, scrollable pages, or donor walls with search functionality.

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## 4. Less is More

Your signage should never feel like a burden to read. Stick to limited text, and try re-writing your message until it's as short and concise as it can possibly be.

## 5. It's All in the Visuals

Your visuals are an extremely powerful component of your design. They should always add to your message, never detracting through complicated and unrelated images.

Avoid clutter- don't fill your Display with everything you can think of just because you can.

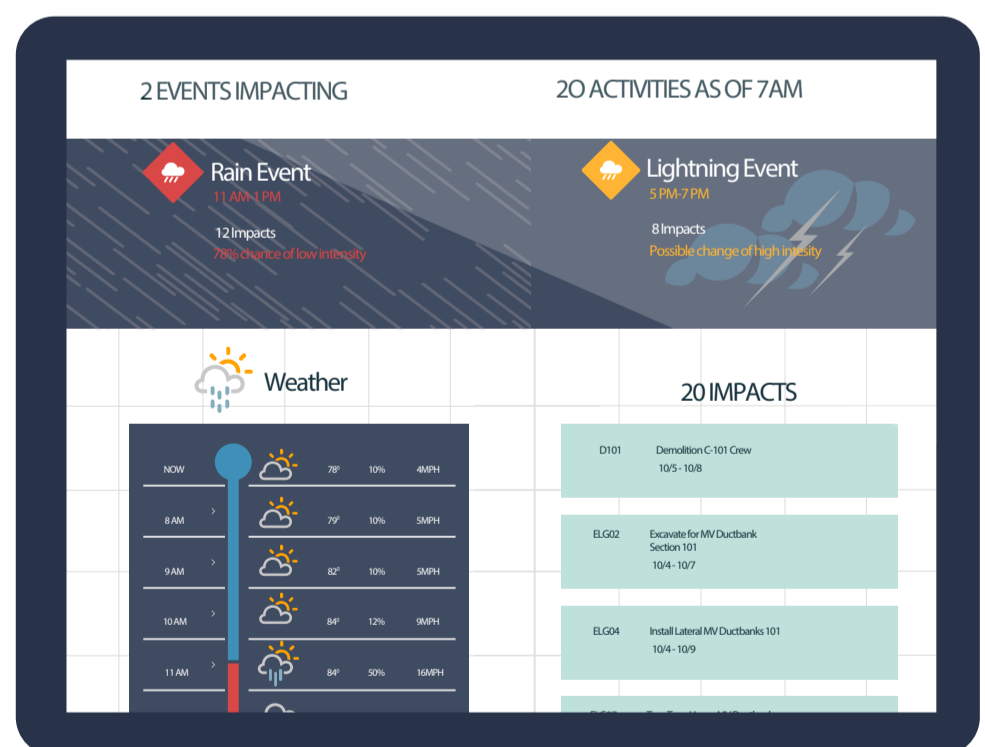
## 6. Perfect Your Call to Action

If you're using your Display to encourage your viewers to take a specific action, ensure that your message is strong, clear, and concise. Give specifics (dates, times, and locations) and be precise.

## What Can I Show?

One of the main attractions of digital signage is the fact that you can show just about anything! With Rise Vision, you can use any of our Widgets to show a variety of content on your displays. Our widgets are similar to apps that you would download for your phone but they are designed and built to run on digital signage. Some of our basic widgets include Images, Text and Video widgets, while our Core Content Widgets allow you to stream things like YouTube, Google Calendars, and a Google Spreadsheet.

We have a variety of Widgets available in [our Store](#).



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## Point of Sale

Signage that's located at the point of sale is generally being viewed for longer periods of time, and should help people make a buying decision.

### This type of signage is great for showing:

- A menu, or special
- Store/service hours
- An in-store promotion
- Discounts or sales
- Promoting your high margin items
- Cross-selling

Design is very important to this viewing pattern. If the sign is being used to increase brand awareness, the brand's colors and styles should be featured prominently. If the sign is being used to advertise new offerings, strong design will lead to better receptiveness of the intended message.