



everything mature consumers experience

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15

TOP Design Tips *for the Mature Consumer*



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How can 20-something designers create effective marketing pieces for 50-something consumers?

Designing for the active adult consumer involves understanding the mental and physical changes that occur naturally as people age. With more than 88 million Americans over 50, it's important to create designs that reinforce the marketing message and speak directly to the targeted mature consumer.

Research shows that three key changes take place in our eyes as we age:

- The lens yellows. It becomes harder to distinguish blues, greens and purples.
- The lens absorbs more light, leaving less light available for seeing.
- It becomes harder to handle glare.

A designer needs to keep the mature consumers' visual acuity clearly in sight. We've provided **15 guidelines** on font style and size, imagery, colors, concepts and web usage that will help you create designs for aging eyes that are both pleasing and effective.



15. Always have a contact number and mailing address on the site. (With a phone number on every page, if possible).

The percentage of seniors (65 and older) online jumped 47% between 2000 and 2004, reports the Pew Internet & American Life Project. Once online, they're just as enthusiastic and active as younger users.

However, most mature consumers still do not like to make all their interactions online. They want to make a personal connection and/or don't trust e-commerce. (This is especially true the older the target.) It often takes longer for a mature consumer to make a decision to purchase and they'll need to get information through several sources when considering your product or service.

Make it easy to find contact information. And, respond to emails quickly. This will help create a positive connection on- and off-line.

Designed for Success:

What does it take to successfully design for a 50+ audience? Make type easy to read with aging eyes. Choose images consumers can relate to and that are respectful, not patronizing. Use color and clear design to create a connection between your product or service and the mature consumer.

By better understanding your active adult target, you can design effective marketing pieces that create results for your company.

To learn more about marketing to baby boomers and beyond, visit www.creatingresults.com or call us at 888-205-8899.

Older and Online

13. Navigating your web site should be simple and straightforward.

Active adults are active on the World Wide Web. They are more internet savvy than ever before, and more users are joining every year.

As we age, there are cognitive changes that happen to everyone. It becomes harder to process new information. So design your site to be as easy as possible to navigate!

- Simple navigation.
- Make it easy to understand.
- Don't experiment with new styles of navigation. Keep to the standards for the navigation - horizontal or vertical side navigation will be easily recognized.
- Navigation and calls-to-action should be clear and accurate. The user should understand what each page is about and what they will get when they click on a button.

14. Limit the technology.

Keep it simple on forms and Flash. No large downloads (without warnings).

EASY TO FIND NAVIGATION CONSISTENT ON EVERY PAGE

NOT SURE WHERE NAVIGATION BAR IS?



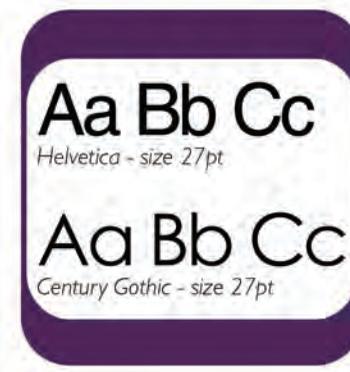
Once you have explored these guidelines and begin to experiment with them you'll learn how to adjust them to your particular project. These guidelines are not meant to limit the creative process or create a cookie cutter approach to all mature consumer marketing. Sometimes it is important to color outside the lines.

Just Their Type

1. Make Fonts Larger for Readability

Just how much larger should a designer go? It really depends on the font used, the product or service you are designing for and the environment in which the copy is used.

For example, Helvetica and Century Gothic are both san-serif fonts, but if you set both fonts the same size, Century Gothic appears to be larger and more readable. If the product is for improving the consumer's eye sight, your text should be larger than the norm. Also, if you are designing an informative-message advertisement, one that looks like an article in a magazine, the font must look like the rest of the magazine in order to create the feeling of authenticity.



Increasing the leading (the space between each line) will help with readability. However, it would be better to keep the fonts larger than increasing the leading.

And, don't play with the kerning (the space between the letters). Computer type has come a long way in the past 10 years. Typography designers use their expertise on the kerning of each letter, for each font, to insure they are extremely readable.

2. Choose fonts wisely.

- Serif fonts are easier to read and are often used as body copy. Limit your piece to one or two font families.
- Avoid condensed fonts; they are more difficult to read.
- Use initial caps - all upper-case headlines are not easily read by any audience, especially if your headline is long.

3. Don't reverse body copy.

And, if you must, increase the size and thickness of the font to help with contrast.



4. Avoid placing body copy over screened images.

(photography or illustrations) A large headline may be fine if the font size is large.

5. Have strong contrast.

Font colors must be different from their backgrounds (no red on blue/black backgrounds and no light colored fonts on a white background).



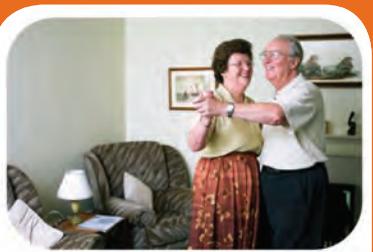
Image is Everything.

Verbal memory declines faster than visual, so images become even more important. Pick your pictures wisely, to evoke memories or feelings as you honestly show the targets what they'll get with your product or service.

Imagery selected for active adult marketing is where the most mistakes are made. Invest your time and money in images that will connect with your audience.

6. Active adults (and people in general) visually see themselves as being younger than they are.

If you use photography where the models are in the actual age range of your target audience, your audience will not see themselves in your advertisement. Use slightly younger models so your clients can picture themselves using your products or services. Also, show mature consumers in action.



LEAST EFFECTIVE

7. Use current style of photography

(current style of clothes, current hair styles, while doing current activities), unless you are trying to trigger a memory from your audience.

8. “Zany” photography is hard to pull off without offending.

If funny is the direction you are headed in, test the idea out first with a select target group. Remember, that your audience might have a different sense of humor than you do.



MOST EFFECTIVE

3

9. Stay away from shockingly sad images.

No “deaths” or “lonely people” imagery. Even if your company deals with these types of topics it better to show the benefits of your product or service than the negative effects of not using it. Negative scare tactics used in some advertisements usually backfire. The reader will most likely skip over these types of negative messages and go on to the next page.

A Coat of Many Colors

10. Calmer colors are the safest to use.

Pick a main calm color and then pick a complimentary second color. Keep a limited color palette and remember that different ethnicities have different tastes and tolerances for colors. And, even though the mature consumers think of themselves as hip, they usually gravitate toward “safer” colors.

GREEN
nature's color; calming and gently energizing at the same time.

BLUE
soothing, meditative, restful, peaceful, spiritual. Lowers blood pressure.

LAVENDAR or VIOLET
healing, calming.

PURPLE
comfort, protection, spirituality, calm.



GREEN PALETTE

11. Photography should match or compliment your color palette.

It is important to adjust the colors of a photograph in order to compliment the layout. Not adjusting the colors will usually minimize impact.

12. Don't use high gloss papers.

A dull coat paper will minimize glare while giving your piece a fresh, updated look.



BLUE PALETTE

4