

Communications Manual

What you read, touch, or click at Southeast



SOUTHEAST CHRISTIAN CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS MANUAL

STYLE GUIDE

- OVERVIEW
- THE BASICS
- THINGS TO WATCH
- PUNCTUATION, SPELLING AND GRAMMAR
- PROOFREADING AND EDITING
- WRITING FOR THE WEB

COMMUNICATION VEHICLES

- MEDIASHOUT ANNOUNCEMENTS
- PROGRAM
- CHURCH OFFICE INFORMATION
- MINISTRY COUNTERS
- POSTCARDS & FLYERS
- RESTROOM ADVERTISING
- WORSHIP SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS
- WEBSITE

GRAPHIC STANDARDS

- LOGO INFORMATION
- TYPEFACES
- COLOR STANDARDS
- INDIVIDUAL MINISTRY LOGO GUIDELINES
- EVENT LOGO GUIDELINES

APPENDIX

- COMMUNICATION PRIORITIES
- COMMUNICATION VALUES

STYLE GUIDE

OVERVIEW

The Creative Communications Department oversees what you read, touch or click at Southeast. The Creative Communications Department of Southeast Christian Church exists to direct Southeast Christian Church in the areas of marketing, branding, and the overall creative graphic and media communication efforts of the church.

This document is an integral part of Southeast Christian Church's effort to help people take their next steps toward Christ. It provides guidelines designed to help effectively communicate the mission, vision and values of Southeast Christian Church in logos, print, electronic and online media. How we communicate with each other and our audience brings the message to life. A consistent stylistic approach will have a positive impact on the overall excellence of our church.

- Effectiveness

Requires a partnership with staff and ministry leaders to facilitate good stewardship of resources. It's about harnessing the power of our message to enhance the experience.

- Consistency

Each communication piece is a valuable tool with the opportunity to unify or dilute all communications church-wide, depending on the quality of the information and how it is organized.

- Clarity

Simplify everything our audience sees or touches to make their life easier and more rewarding in every aspect of their engagement with Southeast Christian Church. Help them connect with Jesus and others effortlessly.

- Growth

The commitment to excellence in our print and electronic communication tools provides even more areas for talented people to connect and serve.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

For answers to issues not included in this guide, please consult the Communications Department.

Mike Orr, Creative Communications Director
720.842.5505 or mike.orr@sechristian.org

Mitch Bolton, Creative Communications Associate
720.842.5506 or mitch.bolton@sechristian.org

REFERENCES

You can also refer to the following recommended references:

- Dictionary

Merriam-Webster Home and Office Edition, Merriam-Webster, Inc., Springfield, MA, 1998
ISBN 0-8777-96068. merriam-webster.com

- English/Grammar

The Associated Press Stylebook 2006, Norm Goldstein, Editor, Perseus Publishing, Cambridge, MA, 2006.

- Web/Internet

The Wired Style Guide: Principles of English Usage in a Digital Age, Constance Hale, Editor, Jessie Scanlon, Broadway Books, 1999 ISBN 0-7679-0372-2.

THE BASICS

- Always include the Southeast Christian Church logo on every public piece.
- Always include the complete address, phone, email and Web site addresses.
- Every piece should cover the most important question our audience asks: “What’s in it for me?” Then follow up with the necessary basics of: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How.

THINGS TO WATCH

There are several areas of writing that are neither right nor wrong, yet still must be consistent. Read through this section to familiarize yourself with Southeast Christian Church's grammar, style and spelling conventions.

ABBREVIATIONS	<p>Avoid in general, particularly when referring to events or groups.</p> <p>Example: Southeast Christian Church (not SECC or Southeast) - Southeast only acceptable in second reference.</p>
SENTENCES	<p>Choose active versus passive writing. Passive voice lowers the readability and clarity.</p> <p>Example: Mark decided (not "It was decided").</p>
TITLES	<p>All titles are to be in italics for easier readability (rather than underlined or with "quotes").</p> <p>Example: Brian McLaren's <i>More Ready Than You Realize</i></p>
DATES	<p>Drop reference to year when appropriate. Don't abbreviate. Use day of week when referencing dates unless more than one day is included.</p> <p>Example: Tuesday, March 9 (not Tues., Mar 9 2006)</p>
EMAIL	<p>In text, email should be italicized and always lowercase. NEVER hyphenate email addresses. Never underline.</p> <p>Example: <i>mike.orr@sechristian.org</i> (not <u>mike.orr@sechristian.org</u>)</p> <p>Note: Avoid at all possible opportunities publishing personal email addresses. Use of sechristian.org email addresses highly preferred.</p>
PHONE	<p>Should be separated with periods instead of dashes. Use lowercase "x" for extension with no space. Always include extension for direct connection or use direct line numbers. Avoid using switchboard whenever possible.</p> <p>Example: 303.841.9292, x105 (not 303-841-9292, ext. 105)</p> <p>Note: Never publish personal phone numbers in Southeast Christian Church collateral. Always use a Southeast Christian Church phone number and extension.</p>
TIMES	<p>Should be written consistently and concisely. Use am/pm, lowercase without periods.</p> <p>Example: 6:00 pm (not 6 p.m. or 8:30 P.M.)</p> <p>Example: 7-8:30 pm</p>
WEB	<p>Use lowercase for all web addresses. Internet addresses should not be underlined. Drop www. In body copy, addresses should be italicized. NEVER hyphenate.</p> <p>Example: <i>youthspecialties.com</i> (not <u>www.youthspecialties.com</u>)</p> <p>"Web" is capitalized when referring to the "World Wide Web" or "Web site". When used as an adjective like "web addresses" or "web copy," "web" is lower case.</p>
WORDINESS	<p>Avoid it and eliminate unnecessary phrases or adjectives. If the sentence makes sense without it, you should take it out. A clear, concise writing style is preferred over a wordy, flowery style.</p> <p>Example: phrases like "for more information" and "a time of" can generally be omitted.</p>

PUNCTUATION, SPELLING & GRAMMAR

This section describes the grammar, word choice, punctuation and spelling errors that occur most often.

APOSTROPHES	Avoid using apostrophes in plurals. Example: CDs, URLs, FAQs, 1990s, etc.
BULLETS	Maintain consistency in the type of bullets used.
CAPITALIZATION	Avoid all caps, except for emphasis. It gives the impression of YELLING. Capitalize pronouns when referencing the Deity (God, Father, Holy Spirit, He, Him, etc.).
COMMAS	In lists of three items or more, eliminate comma before and/or. Example: He went to the store, post office and dry cleaner. (not, “He went to the store, post office, and dry cleaner.”)
EXCLAMATIONS	Do not overuse! No more than two sentences in a row should use exclamation points.
HYPHENS	Make every effort not to hyphenate words. Add hard return if necessary to avoid. Never hyphenate Web site addresses.
NUMBERS	Spell out numbers one through nine, use numeral for 10 and above. Example: one, two, three (not 1, 2, 3) or 10, 11, 12 (not ten, eleven, twelve) Example: six-week series (not six week, or 6 week or 6-week); Pathway is a 13-week class
PERIODS	One space after periods and at the end of sentences. Omit periods in bulleted lists for incomplete sentences.
PUNCTUATION WITH QUOTES	The period and the comma always go inside the quotation marks. The dash, the semicolon, the question mark and the exclamation point go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.
WIDOWS/ORPHANS	Eliminate. A widow is the last line or word of a paragraph printed by itself. An orphan is the first line or word of a paragraph printed by itself.

IMPROPER AT A GLANCE

AFFECT/EFFECT	Affect means to influence, effect means result.
ALLUDE/REFER	These two words are not interchangeable. Allude means an indirect mention, refer means a direct mention. E.G., I.E. e.g., precedes an example, whereas i.e. means that is and simply restates what was just said. Always place a comma directly after e.g. and i.e.
IMPLY/INFER	To imply is to suggest or indicate, although never to express. To infer is to conclude from evidence.
INSURE/ENSURE	Insure means “to provide insurance for” and is the only meaning for this word. Ensure means “to make clear or certain.”
IRREGARDLESS	Avoid this term. The correct term is “regardless.”
ITS/IT’S	Its is the possessive form of the pronoun “it.” It’s is a contraction of “it is.”
CAPITOL/CAPITAL	Capitol is the building used by government. Capital is the city where the government is and capitalizing a name/word.

PROPER AT A GLANCE

GENERAL

- a lot (not alot)
- all right (not alright)
- backup
- cannot (vs. can not)
- CD or CDs
- email (not e-mail)
- FAQ or FAQs
- flyer
- HotSpot
- information about (not information on)
- Internet
- online
- snail mail
- voicemail
- Web site
- web address

MINISTRY SPECIFIC

- KidStuf
- Elements Bookstore and Café
- 30Somethings
- 5th and 6th Grade
- Primetimers
- Young Adults
- Connecting Point
- Pathway
- Southeast NOW

REMEMBER

- One error can convey that the information or audience is not important or valued. Always have someone (preferably someone who is unfamiliar with the material) proofread your work before it becomes public. Do not rely on your computer's spelling and grammar checkers.
- Use titles, headings and subtitles, but maintain consistency in style.
- Replace long blocks of text with easier-to-read bulleted lists.
- Break up text for important words by using bold, italics or underline. But don't over do it. Less is more.

PROOFREADING & EDITING

Copy without proper proofreading and editing can potentially turn off readers. It's important that each piece is reviewed by at least a member of the proofing team and/or an editor who adheres to the following practices. These team members (preferably who are unfamiliar with the material) will check and double-check even the most minor of details.

ACCURACY	Cross-reference dates and days of the week with a calendar.
AUDIENCE	Does the copy answer the most important question our audience asks: "What's in it for me?" Leo Burnett, leading advertising executive of our generation, says, "Don't tell me how good you make it. Tell me how good it makes me when I use it."
BASICS	Does the copy include the necessary basics of: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How (call to action)? Does the call to action include appropriate contact information (e.g., complete address, phone with extension, email, Web site addresses, etc.)?
CONSISTENCY	Look for consistency with punctuation, style and formatting throughout the piece. Compare with our Style Guide. Include review of capitalization, indents, type size, type face, leading, alignment, page breaks, hyphens, etc.
NAMES	Double-check accuracy on names, phone numbers and extensions directly with name owner or cross-reference with more than one proofer.
SPELLING	It's critical. A single misspelling can convey the information or audience is not important or valued. Do not rely on your computer's spelling and grammar checkers.
TERMINOLOGY	Step into the shoes of a new guest and consider what their reactions may be to certain phrases and the appearance of the piece. Do certain words sound "cliché" or "too implied"? If so, it is likely the message may not be understood by our audience.
TONE	Are we accurately representing the intended meaning? Question anything that may raise a red flag to you. It's better to address the potential problem than to allow it to go unchecked. Don't assume someone else will do it.

REMEMBER

- Work from a printout, not the computer screen (but use computer shortcuts below).
- Read out loud. You'll hear problems you may not see when reading silently.
- Use a blank sheet of paper to cover up the lines below the one you're reading. This technique keeps you from skipping ahead of possible mistakes.
- Use the search function of the computer to find mistakes you're likely to make. Search for "it," for instance, for "its" and "it's;" for opening parentheses or quote marks (people tend to leave out closing ones).
- End with a spelling check, using a computer spelling checker or reading backwards word by word. But remember that a spelling checker won't catch mistakes with homonyms (e.g., "they're," "their," "there") or certain typos (like "he" for "the").

WRITING FOR THE WEB

People read online content differently than they do print materials. The physical limitations of computer monitors, as well as the nature of a hypertext environment, prevent people from reading for long periods of time or in a linear fashion. While good writing is good writing, understanding these differences is crucial to communicating effectively on the Web.

Interestingly enough, in today's information age, people are becoming more accustomed to the reading style of web copy and are becoming more impatient with lengthy print copy. The transition has already begun to move to a "task-driven" reading approach as more and more documents are being published in scannable or bulleted formats. In other words, web copy translates well into printed material but print copy does not translate well into Web copy.

- "Chunk" text (break into bite-sized pieces) for quick and easy consumption.
- Use short phrases instead of full sentences to make a point.
- Be direct. Use active voice.
- Make one point per paragraph.
- Use a sans-serif font like Arial for easier readability on the Web.
- Avoid empty phrases, market-speak and floweriness. A reader is more likely to trust the content when it is not over-hyped.
- Eliminate vague modifiers (e.g., really, very, actually, sort of, etc.).
- Employ the "inverted pyramid" style of writing - place the main point of the topic in the first or second sentence instead of leading up to the topic sentence with introductory sentences.
- Break paragraph points into bulleted lists.
- Never use "click on" or "click here." Just make the subject a hyperlink.
Example: [Register](#) now. (not "Click here to register.")
Example: Connect at our special [events](#) or [small groups](#). (not "Click here for small groups.")

COMMUNICATION VEHICLES

Our goal in the advertisement process is to help all of our ministries become more successful. We want to be intentional about the way we communicate with the church as a whole. Our intent is to be purpose-driven and to have a process of providing people with information about our ministries. This means we work together as a team promoting the combined ministries of Southeast with a spirit of harmony and mutual respect.

The following pages will help you understand each promotional opportunity as well as teach you how to utilize the available promotional options of Southeast Christian Church.

SOUTHEAST MEDIASHOUT ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Southeast Christian Church Mediashout announcements are designed for the ministries of Southeast Christian Church to advertise, promote and inform the congregation about their ministries.

The Southeast Christian Church Mediashout announcements will be displayed on the monitors located throughout the church building as well as on the screens in the Worship Center. The announcements on the screens in the Worship Center and Lobby will run before and after each worship service.

All announcements must contain current ministry information and be appropriate for either visitors to the church or church members. Announcements should contain basic information about the ministry, seasonal event, or upcoming activity and how to contact someone for more information. Mediashout announcements must be requested in advance through the church office by completing a Design Request Form. Only 3 to 4 mediashout graphics will be rotated per weekend, therefore, ministries who have a strategic promotion have first precedence to graphics. The number of announcements shown per week will be at the discretion of the Programming Pastor and/or the Creative Communications Department.

PROGRAM

The Southeast Christian Church Program is designed to give a snapshot view of the ministries of Southeast. The program is distributed to those who enter the worship services each weekend. The listing of upcoming events is in chronological order and provides the ministry with the earliest event priority over ministries that have later events. Priority will also be given to the ministry that affects the largest number of people in the congregation. Space is limited and final prioritization of all listings is the responsibility of the Southeast staff. To place an announcement in the program, please fill out a Design Request Form, which can be obtained in the church office.

Program inserts are special promotions for events involving the entire church body, and are inserted into each program that is handed out before services. Program inserts will be limited to those activities and events that directly affect the congregation as a whole. Program inserts will also be reserved for announcements that may not fit into the other mediums described here, due to the amount of information or the nature of the event. Examples include: Congregational voting, All-Church Notices, All-Church Volunteer Sign-Ups, and All-Church events. Program inserts are at the discretion of the Lead Pastor, Todd Hudson, and the Leadership Team of Southeast Christian Church.

CHURCH OFFICE INFORMATION

All information, registration forms, permission slips, health forms, etc. must be supplied to the church office at least three weeks in advance of the event to ensure correct information is distributed to anyone calling the church office regarding the event.

MINISTRY KIOSKS

Southeast Christian Church Ministry Kiosks are designed for the ministries of Southeast Christian Church to inform participants of their upcoming events, provide a place for sign-ups or flyers, as well as to inform the congregation of serving opportunities. The ministry counters are located in the church lobby outside of the main doors to the Worship Center.

Space at the counters must be reserved through the church office by filling out a Facilities Request Form. Space must be requested at least two weeks in advance to ensure availability. Each request will secure space at the counter for a maximum of three weeks. For longer use of counter space, another request will need to be submitted. The staff will prioritize all spaces.

There must be a representative behind the counter 15 minutes prior to services and at the conclusion of each service to answer any questions that may be asked of the ministry. Services are at 5:00 pm Saturday and 9:00 and 11:00 am Sunday.

POSTCARDS & FLYERS

The ministry leader and the Creative Communications Department both must approve postcards and flyers for the purposes of sending via mail or by use at a ministry counter.

The following is to be on all brochures, flyers, posters, booklets, leaflets and postcards:

- Logo (cross in dark blue color sheltering nomenclature)
- Nomenclature (Southeast Christian Church in Eras medium ITC font)
- Motto (Bring Them In...in Eras medium ITC font)
- Address, phone number, website address

Postcards and Flyers may not be passed out at any location other than the ministry kiosk where the ministry is assigned. Outside the ministry kiosk space, ministries may not pass out any materials at weekend services. Also, a ministry may not pass out materials at events that are not of direct relation to that ministry. For example, one ministry may not publicize itself at another ministry's event, conference, or meeting without the approval of the Creative Communications Department.

Materials may not be placed on vehicles in the parking lot, nor may they be placed on vehicles in parking lots at commercial places off-site from the church campus.

RESTROOM ADVERTISING

The Creative Communications Department is responsible for the creation of restroom signs or approval of signs created for this sole purpose. Requests for the creation or approval of restroom signs should be directed to the Creative Communications Department. As there are many ministries of Southeast Christian Church, priority will be given to upcoming events and strategic promotions in chronological order. Priority will also be given to the ministry that affects the largest number of people in the congregation. Space is limited and final prioritization of all restroom signs is the responsibility of the Creative Communications Department.

WORSHIP SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Southeast Christian Church worship service announcements are designed to provide time-sensitive information to the church at large and must contain information pertinent to everyone attending the service. Only Southeast Christian Church staff will make announcements that have been approved by the Lead Pastor.

WEBSITE

All information for updating our website will be done through the Southeast Christian Church Ministry Staff. You may contact the Creative Communications Department office at 303.841.9292 with any announcements or questions regarding the Southeast website, sechristian.org. The site is designed to publish information in a timely fashion so that information is available immediately to the community. We desire to update the website daily to keep the content and information fresh and exciting to increase traffic to the site. Like a business, the goal of a website is to have repeat customers who are benefiting from the information provided on the site.

GRAPHIC STANDARDS

LOGO INFORMATION

The approved logotype consists of the Cross design sheltering the nomenclature of Southeast Christian Church. The logotype is pictured below:



The cross design must always be used to the left of the church name. The nomenclature may be used without the cross design, however, the font type of the church name must be the same as pictured above, Eras Medium ITC. The cross design may be used without the nomenclature, as long as the text it represents is that of a Southeast Christian Church ministry. If no text is desired for use with the cross design, then the print media design must include the full logo in addition to the sole use of the cross design. For example, the cross design may be used as a large watermark design on a brochure, however, the full church logo must still appear on the first page of the brochure.

The colortype of the logo is navy blue, PANTONE Reflex Blue C. The representative CMYK is C:100, M:72, Y:0, K:6. When used in conjunction, as expressed above with the nomenclature of a ministry of Southeast Christian Church, the colortype of both the cross design and nomenclature may be at the discretion of the communications department in an effort to aid branding of a particular ministry for easy recognition and equity of its ministry name.

TYPEFACE

The following three fonts are the approved typefaces for text in any communication piece: Garamond, Times New Roman, and Arial. It is recommended that variations (i.e. narrow, medium, bold) be used minimally. The objective of a common typeface is consistency in our print media as well as easing the readability of the font when used in text. There is a wide variety of font types available for use in your current software resources, as well as on the world wide web. Choose Header and Title fonts wisely; use that which best reflects your overall mission of communication and creating a “mood” for your print media resource. In NO circumstance should more than three different fonts be used in any print media resource of Southeast Christian Church.

COLOR STANDARDS

The logo of Southeast Christian Church is two-color, PANTONE Reflex Blue C and Black. In the event that the media needs to be reproduced in one color, the default black should be used for the entire logo or white if using over dark colors. Logo files can be obtained from the Creative Communications Department.

INDIVIDUAL MINISTRY LOGO GUIDELINES

Too many logos dilute church branding and create confusion for our audience. Our main purpose should be to brand the church and message series, not individual ministries.

Individual ministry logos should not be created without approval from the Creative Communications Department.

The only exceptions are ministry groups with large audiences that have a unique weekly venue. Ministry logos are not to be used without a Southeast Christian Church accompanying logo, or tagline identifying it as a ministry of Southeast Christian Church.

EVENT LOGO GUIDELINES

At times, event logos can be created for temporary use. Consult with the Creative Communications Department prior to creation. Never use without a tagline or identifier as a ministry of Southeast Christian Church.