



STUDENT AFFAIRS

# **Marketing & Communication Toolkit**

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## **Division of Student Affairs Marketing & Communication Contacts:**

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## PURPOSE OF THE MARKETING GUIDE

This marketing guide provides the staff and affiliates of the Mississippi State University Division of Student Affairs with a comprehensive and cohesive set of guidelines for effective marketing and communication strategies. This guide aims to ensure consistency in brand messaging, visual identity and communication tactics across all platforms and initiatives. Our goal is to enhance the visibility and reach of the Division's programs and services, fostering a more connected, informed, and vibrant campus environment.

## MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY BRANDING & DEPARTMENTAL LOGO USAGE



STUDENT AFFAIRS

- Please use the official logo for your department for all official communication, print and graphic materials and promotional items.
- Download official logos at: [brand.msstate.edu/assets/secondaryunitlogos.php](http://brand.msstate.edu/assets/secondaryunitlogos.php).

All publication materials should include the department logo. It should not overpower your design but should be visible and legible. Contact our marketing team for assistance.

**DO NOT** try to recreate, rotate or change the color of any official university logo. You can download the official MSU and university unit logos, and find acceptable and unacceptable uses below:

- Official MSU logos: [brand.msstate.edu/assets/index.php#msulogos](http://brand.msstate.edu/assets/index.php#msulogos)
- Official University unit logos: [brand.msstate.edu/assets/secondaryunitlogos.php](http://brand.msstate.edu/assets/secondaryunitlogos.php)

## TRADEMARK PROTECTIONS

- Any use of an official MSU logo or spirit mark **MUST** include the appropriate trademark identifiers (i.e., ® or ™).
- MSU verbiage included at the following link: [brand.msstate.edu/identity/index.php#trademarks](http://brand.msstate.edu/identity/index.php#trademarks) must include the appropriate trademark identifiers (i.e., ® or ™) when used in graphic marks and logos.

## SOCIAL MEDIA ICONS

All units must use the approved social media icons as their official channel icons (See example to the right.). Your unit's social media icon can be downloaded here: [brand.msstate.edu/assets/secondaryunitlogos.php](http://brand.msstate.edu/assets/secondaryunitlogos.php).



## USING MULTIPLE LOGOS

When displaying multiple logos on graphics, the vertical university logo must be used with the text for each unit stacked in alphabetical order (or order of importance of sponsorship or similar) underneath the vertical university signature (See example to the right.). Please submit a request for a stacked logo [HERE](#).



## MSU COLOR PALETTE

The official MSU maroon is Pantone 505. The MSU Office of Public Affairs (OPA) has approved support and accent colors to be used in promoting your departments. Secondary accent colors can be used when you need to draw attention using supporting colors while still promoting MSU. **You cannot use the secondary/accent colors without using maroon.**

Download the MSU color palette (PDF):

[brand.msstate.edu/assets/materials/msstate\\_colors.pdf](http://brand.msstate.edu/assets/materials/msstate_colors.pdf)

# DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS DESIGN SERVICES & REQUESTS

## WHAT WE OFFER:

The Division of Student Affairs Marketing & Communication (MarComm) Office provides the following services:

- Designing of your print and digital publications
- Understanding MSU imaging and branding requirements
- Reviewing copy and edits for language, tone and appearance
- Approving all graphics for adherence to MSU visual identity standards
- Assisting with other marketing needs (defining audience, suggesting methods of how to effectively communicate to intended audience, etc.)

## WHAT WE DO NOT OFFER:

The following are NOT provided by MarComm:

- Facilitation of all details of the design to production process (i.e., getting vendor estimates, coordinating production with the vendor, delivering files to the vendor)
- Printing and distribution of printed materials.

## WHAT MARCOMM CAN DESIGN

The MarComm office can design the following items for advertising/publicity purposes:

### Print Materials

- A-Frames
  - 24 x 36 in. [pdf]
- Building Banner
  - Banners for major campus events can be hung from the Colvard Student Union 2nd floor. Contact Event Services for permission, approval and hanging information.
- Business Cards
  - 3.5 x 2 in.
- Bi-Fold Brochures
  - folded 4 x 6 in. or 5 x 7 in. [pdf]
- Cards
  - 4 x 6 in. or 5 x 7 in. [pdf]
- Certificates
  - 8.5 x 11 in. [pdf]
- Event Programs
  - Folded 8.5 x 11 in. [pdf]
- Flyers
  - 8.5 x 11 in. [pdf]
- Half-sheet Flyer
  - 8.5 x 5.5 in. [pdf]
- Napkin Holder
  - 5.5 x 10.5 in. [pdf]
- Postcards
  - 4 x 6 in. or 5 x 7 in. [pdf]
- Posters
  - 11 x 17 in. [pdf]
- Yard Signs (Must be for directional purposes only)
  - 12 x 18 in. [pdf]

### Digital Materials

- Email Graphics
  - 600 px [jpg]
- Cowbell Connect Graphics
  - 1300 px by 780 px
- Digital Signs
  - 1920 x 1080 px [jpg]
- Social Media Graphics (For more sizes, visit [sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-image-sizes-guide/](https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-image-sizes-guide/))
  - Facebook Cover (820 x 312 px) [jpg]
  - Instagram Square (612 x 612 px) [jpg]
  - Instagram Story (1080 x 1920 px) [jpg]
  - Twitter Header (1500 x 500 px) [jpg]

## DESIGN REQUEST PROCESS

Please use the link below to submit graphic design requests for your marketing materials from MarComm:

- Marketing Design Request: [saffairs.msstate.edu/marketing/request](https://saffairs.msstate.edu/marketing/request)

Please use the checklist below and allow at least **4 weeks** for the design process. Requests can be put in earlier, but the order of request fulfillment is based on a combination of submission and due dates.

### Design Request Submission Checklist

- Title of the event
- A brief explanation of the event, mostly if it isn't obvious from the title.
- Project Deadline (i.e., When will all materials need to be delivered?). Most projects take 4 weeks minimum to complete. Please make sure the project deadline is set at least **2 weeks before** the date of the event.
- Date of the event (Include the Day, Month and Year). Example: Tuesday, Jan. 2.
  - For dates and years, use figures. Do not use st, nd, rd, or th with dates, and use Arabic figures. Always capitalize months. Spell out the month unless it is used with a date. When used with a date, abbreviate only the following months: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.
- Time of the event. Make sure to use a.m. and p.m. lowercase with periods.
- Location of the event (For off-campus events, please provide the street address.)
- Any relevant information to the event itself (e.g., cost, student ID required, RSVP link/date, giveaways, etc)
- Contact/Disability Information for the event coordinator from your department (e.g., email, phone number, etc.)
- Design Information
  - Theme/description (e.g., This flyer is for "Blacklight Skate Night." It is a part of the Dawgs After Dark series.)
  - Style/tone (i.e., the "vibe" or feel you want the design to follow)
  - Photos: These can be provided by you or requested from us. For consistency with university branding, we recommend using MSU OPA's Photoshelter. If specific or unique images are needed, we can also arrange for a custom photoshoot.
  - Sample art (i.e., example of a design you've seen and liked or something that we've made previously)

## DESIGN APPROVAL PROCESS

- If someone other than MarComm designs any promotional or marketing items, those graphics **MUST** be submitted for approval using the following link: [saffairs.msstate.edu/marketing/approval/](https://saffairs.msstate.edu/marketing/approval/).
- We will review for the following:
  - All essential information (who, what, when, where and why) and message clarity
  - Overall design/appearance
  - Tone
  - MSU branding guidelines
- We will email you any needed edits.
- If you are unable to make these edits, we can try to edit the graphic or create a new graphic.

## DIGITAL SIGNAGE REQUESTS

- Digital signage must be 1920 x 1080 px and JPG format.
- Student Affairs departments, official university units and sponsored student orgs may request to advertise on the digital signage.
- All digital signage requests must be submitted at: [saffairs.msstate.edu/marketing/digital-signage/](https://saffairs.msstate.edu/marketing/digital-signage/).

## DESIGNING PROGRAM/ORGANIZATIONAL LOGOS

- Logos for university units, student organizations and events and programs must be submitted through OPA.
- Before submitting a logo creation or redesign request to OPA, please submit a request to the Student Affairs MarComm team by emailing your request at [saffairs.msstate.edu/marketing/request](mailto:saffairs.msstate.edu/marketing/request) so our team can provide guidance to ensure the logo aligns with MSU's brand standards and vision.
- Use the following link to request logo creation/redesign by OPA: [form.jotform.com/91485085637164](https://form.jotform.com/91485085637164).

## EXTERNAL-FACING MARKETING MATERIALS

Any graphics or printed materials going to external audiences (brochures, magazines, postcards, etc.) **MUST** be submitted to Brock Turnipseed, marketing and communication director, for submission to OPA's Hub review request system.

### OPA Hub Response Time

- 2-5 business days for small projects (invitations, fliers)
- 5-7 business days for larger projects (multi-page booklets, annual reports)
- 10-14 business days for special projects (magazines, catalogs)

## PURCHASING PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

Per [OP.06.03](#), the university shall only purchase merchandise that is produced by a licensed vendor. A list of university-licensed vendors can be found at [legal.msstate.edu/trademark/lists.php](https://legal.msstate.edu/trademark/lists.php).

### Spirit Marks on Merchandise and Promotional Items

The university has set aside certain spirit marks that student organizations and internal departments may use for promotional items and merchandise purchased from a licensed vendor.

- Spirit marks that can be used on merchandise for student organizations: [legal.msstate.edu/trademark/brandguides/studentorgmerchguide\\_letter.pdf](https://legal.msstate.edu/trademark/brandguides/studentorgmerchguide_letter.pdf)
- Spirit marks for use by internal departments: [legal.msstate.edu/trademark/brandguides/internaldeptmerchguide\\_letter.pdf](https://legal.msstate.edu/trademark/brandguides/internaldeptmerchguide_letter.pdf)

### Purchasing Checklist

- Obtain quotes from [licensed vendors](#).
- Work with the MarComm team on logo/design usage
- Send a Royalty Exemption Form, along with a sample of the art, to [licensing@legal.msstate.edu](mailto:licensing@legal.msstate.edu).
- Approve the proof from the vendor.

## WAYS TO PUBLICIZE YOUR EVENTS

### Banners/Flyers/Posters

- For designated posting locations, contact the Dean of Students office or the building facilities coordinator.
- Signs should only be attached to bulletin boards.
- Yard signs are not allowed on campus
- For the complete policy, read [OP 91.110](#).

### Digital Signage

- Digital signage must be 1920 x 1080 px
- Submit signage using the Digital Signage Form at [saffairs.msstate.edu/marketing/digital-signage/](http://saffairs.msstate.edu/marketing/digital-signage/).

### Emails

- Campus-wide emails can be sent through ITS ([servicedesk.msstate.edu/TDClient/45/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet?ID=1115](http://servicedesk.msstate.edu/TDClient/45/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet?ID=1115)).
- Submit your email to [marketing@saffairs.msstate.edu](mailto:marketing@saffairs.msstate.edu) for initial review by Brock Turnipseed, marketing and communication director. Please allow a minimum of 2 days for the email to go through OPA review and a final review from the Vice President of Student Affairs prior to sending.

### Reflector

- Events can be advertised in the print and online versions of MSU's school newspaper, The Reflector, for a fee. To learn more, click here: [reflector-online.com/site/advertise\\_with\\_us.html](http://reflector-online.com/site/advertise_with_us.html).

### S.M.A.R.T Bus

- For a fee, organizations can advertise events on the S.M.A.R.T. shuttles that service Starkville and campus.
- Current rates and dimensions can be found at [smart.msstate.edu/advertising](http://smart.msstate.edu/advertising).

### University Calendar

- For events that the university/Starkville communities will attend, please submit final details to the MSU calendar via <https://www.msstate.edu/events>.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

### Department Social Media Accounts

- All social media accounts that wish to be officially associated with MSU should be registered with the Office of Public Affairs.
- Use the official social media logo for your department for all account profile pictures. These can be found at [brand.msstate.edu/assets/secondaryunitlogos.php](http://brand.msstate.edu/assets/secondaryunitlogos.php).
- All accounts should comply with MSU's official branding and visual identity standards ([brand.msstate.edu/identity/](http://brand.msstate.edu/identity/)).
- For MSU's social media guidelines, visit [social.msstate.edu/guidelines/](http://social.msstate.edu/guidelines/).

### Social Media Posting Guidelines

- Use proper grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Use high-quality photos, videos and design content.
- Include a graphic, photo or video with every post.
- Mix posts between graphics, photos and video.
- Mix informative and fun posts.
- Post on your social media accounts daily or multiple times per week.
- Collaborate with other departments on Instagram to help expand your reach.
- Do not put website links in Instagram captions. (Use Linktree, and in the caption, say "See the link in our bio.")
- Do not use vulgar language or profanity.
- Do not share confidential/private information.
- Do not plagiarize or steal. Always credit the source when sharing from another creator.
- Do not get in arguments in comments.

# TIPS FOR ADVERTISING AND MARKETING MATERIAL

## DOs

### Plan Ahead

- Decide your audience and what communication methods you plan to use to reach them.
- Use MSU's brand guidelines when brainstorming graphic ideas to maintain consistency (<https://www.brand.msstate.edu/identity/index.php>).

### Make Content Clear

- Prioritize information by making the key details the most visible and easy to read.
- Use concise messaging with simple language, avoiding long, drawn-out sentences.

### Be Concise

- Use simple language and avoid lengthy sentences to keep messages clear and engaging.

### Plan and Submit Design Requests in Advance

- Submit your marketing request for graphics at least 4-5 weeks in advance via <https://www.saffairs.msstate.edu/marketing/request/> at least 4-5 weeks in advance. This allows you to receive materials with 2 weeks for effective promotion.

### Utilize Multiple Marketing Channels

- When you receive your materials, distribute them across various channels: digital signage, social media and your website.
- For events that the community can attend, please submit your event to the MSU calendar via <https://www.msstate.edu/events>.
- On the day preceding the event, be sure to advertise the event one last time on social media.

## DON'Ts

### Don't Rush Last-Minute Requests

- Avoid submitting last-minute requests to ensure enough time for design, revisions and approvals. Rushing will reduce engagement.

### Don't Make Your Own Graphics!

- All graphics should go through the marketing request system (<https://www.saffairs.msstate.edu/marketing/request/>) so the MarComm team can create on-brand graphics for you.

### Don't Post a Graphic Without MarComm Approval

- If someone other than MarComm creates a graphic, please use the graphic approval system (<https://www.saffairs.msstate.edu/marketing/approval>) so the MarComm team can ensure graphics meet university standards.

### Avoid Text-Heavy Designs

- Large blocks of text can be overwhelming. Instead, break up content with bullet points, headers, and visuals. Using content in a concise format helps create engaging, student-friendly materials.

### Don't Crowd or Leave Excessive Space

- Overcrowded designs or too much empty space can detract from readability. The MarComm team strives to maintain at least 0.25 in. of margin around text and graphics for a balanced look.

### Don't Use Generic Stock Photos

- Students prefer authentic imagery of real campus life. If you need specific images, include this in your initial request so our team can arrange appropriate photos that resonate with students.

### Don't Neglect Analytics and Feedback

- After your event, review engagement data or gather feedback on your marketing approach. This insight helps improve future requests and ensures ongoing effectiveness in reaching students.