

Promoting Community Fundraisers and Events— Tips and Recommendations for Signage

When designing event signage for both pedestrians and drivers, using the right font size and type is essential for readability and quick comprehension. Here are tips to effectively advertise and promote a fundraiser or community event:

1. **Eye-Catching Signage** – Use large, bold fonts with high-contrast colors to make signs easily readable from a distance. Include essential details: event name, date, time, location, and a brief call to action. Place signs at high-traffic intersections and community hubs.
2. **Follow City Regulations** – Check local ordinances on posting signs in public areas to avoid fines or removal. Use weather-resistant materials for durability.

Two popular and easy-to-use graphic design apps that can help create eye-catching event materials include:

1. **Canva** – A user-friendly online tool with pre-made templates for posters, social media graphics, and flyers. It offers a drag-and-drop interface, free and premium design elements, and easy customization options.
2. **Adobe Express (formerly Adobe Spark)** – A simplified design app that allows users to create high-quality promotional materials, including social media posts, flyers, and event banners. It provides easy-to-use templates, fonts, and graphics with no design experience needed.

Both tools are great for making professional-looking visuals to promote community fundraisers effectively! When designing event signage for both pedestrians and drivers, choosing the right font size and type is crucial for readability.

Here’s a general guide:

The proper use of font size and type for signage placed on highways, streets, and buildings is crucial for visibility and legibility, especially for drivers moving at various speeds. Here are the key considerations:

1. **Font Type (Typeface):**
 - **Use Clear, Sans-Serif Fonts:** Highway signs typically use **FHWA Series (Highway Gothic)** or **Clearview** fonts, which are designed for legibility at high speeds.
 - **Avoid Decorative or Script Fonts:** These are difficult to read quickly, especially from a moving vehicle.
 - **Consistent Lettering:** Use uppercase and lowercase letters for improved readability, as studies show that mixed-case text is easier to recognize than all-uppercase words.

2. **Font Size Guidelines:**

The font size should be proportional to the viewing distance and the speed at which drivers are traveling. The **general rule** is that letters should be **at least 1 inch in height for every 40 to 50 feet of viewing distance**.

Road Sign Font Size Recommendations

Road Type	Speed Limit (mph)	Minimum Letter Height (inches)
Parking Lots / Slow Zones	10-25 mph	4-6 inches
City Streets / Urban Roads	30-40 mph	6-8 inches
Arterial Roads / Major Streets	45-55 mph	8-12 inches
Highways / Freeways	60-75 mph	12-24 inches

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For **billboards and large building signage**, the text should be even larger to allow readability from long distances.

3. Contrast & Color:

- **High Contrast:** Dark text on a light background (or vice versa) improves readability. Examples:
 - White on green (highway guide signs)
 - Black on yellow (warning signs)
 - White on red (stop signs)
- **Reflective or Illuminated Signs:** Signs should be either **retro reflective** or illuminated to remain visible at night.

4. Placement & Viewing Angle

- **Position at Driver's Eye Level:** Typically 5 to 7 feet above the ground.
- **Adequate Spacing Between Letters:** Crowded text is harder to read at a glance.
- **Avoid Obstructions:** Ensure the sign is clear of trees, poles, or other objects.


For **garage sales, farmers' markets, and other vendor sales targeting pedestrian traffic**, signage should be bold, simple, and easy to read at a glance. Here are the key recommendations:

1. Contrast & Color

- **High Contrast:** Dark text on a light background (or vice versa) improves readability. Examples:
 - White on green (highway guide signs)
 - Black on yellow (warning signs)
 - White on red (stop signs)
- **Reflective or Illuminated Signs:** Signs should be either **retro reflective** or illuminated to remain visible at night.

2. Placement & Viewing Angle

- **Position at Driver's Eye Level:** Typically 5 to 7 feet above the ground.
- **Adequate Spacing Between Letters:** Crowded text is harder to read at a glance.
- **Avoid Obstructions:** Ensure the sign is clear of trees, poles, or other objects

 Tip: Use a border around the text to improve visibility!

3. Material & Placement

- Corrugated plastic, foam board, or poster board (for outdoor durability)
- A-frame signs (sandwich boards) for sidewalks
- Banners for larger vendors (markets, fairs)
- Arrows & directional signs if people need guidance
- Place at eye level or higher (e.g., attached to a pole or fence) for easy spotting

4. Wording & Simplicity

Keep text short and to the point—less is more! Examples:

- ◆ “GARAGE SALE – 123 Main St. – Sat 8 AM-2 PM”
- ◆ “FARMERS MARKET – FRESH PRODUCE – OPEN NOW”
- ◆ “HOMEMADE PIES → Booth #12”

Avoid cluttering with unnecessary words or fancy graphics—stick to 3-5 key pieces of information.

References resourced to develop this brief handout:

United States Sign Council (USSC), On-Premise Sign Standards, 2013

Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standards particularly 29 CFR 1910.145

American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z535 Series

Sign Research Foundation (SRF)

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