

# EGAT Style Guide

## *For Webmasters and Programmers*

**Note:** This guide is arranged in alphabetic order by topic.

### **Style Guide purpose**

This Style Guide is meant to help standardize the look and feel of all of the EGAT Bureau's Intranet sites. Consistency improves site appearance and usability. This version of the Guide, for webmasters and programmers, is complemented by a Style Guide for Writers specifically designed for Web content writers. When receiving content from a writer, please alert them to the presence of the Style Guide for Writers created especially for them.

The guide is a continual work in progress. Contact us with comments and suggestions on how to improve this guide. Please send your comments to Jim Bellis at [jbellis@usaid.gov](mailto:jbellis@usaid.gov) or Chuck Patalive at [cpatalive@usaid.gov](mailto:cpatalive@usaid.gov).

For more information on site technical requirements, refer to the USAID CIO's Web Services group guidelines (<http://inside.usaid.gov/M/CIO/KM/WS/guidelines.cfm>).

### **Accessibility**

Ensure that all Web sites, their contents and Intranet applications are compliant with the Disabilities Act, Section 508. The legal requirements to meet Section 508 are presented on LPA XWEB ([http://www.usaid.gov/info\\_technology/xweb/federal\\_regs.html#508](http://www.usaid.gov/info_technology/xweb/federal_regs.html#508)). The USAID ADS incorporates the requirements in Chapter 302 (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/302mak.pdf>) and Chapter 501 (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/500/501mad.pdf>).

Direct questions regarding Section 508 to Chuck Patalive at [cpatalive@usaid.gov](mailto:cpatalive@usaid.gov).

### **Alignment**

Left align all text. Present paragraphs in block format (without indentation).

### **Captions**

Photos: place captions below the photograph, left justified, in Arial type face with font size of 10 pixels.

Tables & charts: place captions below the table or chart, left justified, in Arial type face with 10 pixel font size.

### **Case (upper / lower)**

Avoid using upper case for complete words because they are difficult for persons reading text to scan rapidly.

### **Emphasis**

To emphasize a word or phrase, use bold type. Do not italicize words unless they appear in italics in the quoted original content. Do not underline words for emphasis. (See "Underlining" below).

## Form text field sizes

Utilize the Electronic Commerce Modeling Language (ECML) ver. 2 designations for specified form fields where applicable. The form field size designations can be found at [www.rfc-archive.org/getrfc.php?rfc=4112](http://www.rfc-archive.org/getrfc.php?rfc=4112). Do not use ECML field naming conventions unless the application is for e-commerce.

## Language standards

For all issues of spelling and punctuation, refer to the revised and updated edition of **The Associated Press Stylebook** (c) 2008. You will find a copy of the Stylebook 2008 at the EGAT/PAICO Communications Library – contact Chuck Patalive ([cpatalive@usaid.gov](mailto:cpatalive@usaid.gov)).

## Line length of text - Screen

Maximum line length of text is based on desired maximum page width, which, in turn, is based on desired screen resolution. These standards (screen resolution = 800 x 600 pixels and page dimensions = 760 x 410 pixels) dictate a maximum line length for text of **670 pixels**. This allows for 45 pixel right and left margins.

## Line length of text for printing

Setting a maximum line length of 560 pixels (from left of screen) constitutes the “safe area” for page printing (without eclipsing text on the right). For this reason, designate a special print-ready page for all screens requiring a print option. This can be controlled by CSS code.

In a separate CSS file specifically for printing, designate display = “none” for the left and right screen areas. Leave the CSS file for screen display in place. In it designate display = “screen”. The CSS files for printing and for screen display are to be linked into each of the site pages where the attribute media = “print” and media= “screen” are designated, respectively.

Example:

We want the “masthead” section of the page not to print when the page is sent to the printer. In the print CSS file for the masthead section of the page (<div ID=“masthead”>), the ID selector for the masthead (#masthead) must include the rule: display: none. Written: #masthead {display: none}. The link tags on the html page’s head section are designated by:

```
<link rel="stylesheet" href="screen.css" type="text/css" media="screen">
```

```
<link rel="stylesheet" href="print.css" type="text/css" media="print">
```

Note: You can use any CSS file names -- “screen” and “print” are only examples. The extension, however, must be .css.

## Links

Non-visited links are to be displayed as underlined (system default) blue text. Visited links are to be displayed in underlined purple. Active links (meaning: mouse-over activated) are to be displayed in (system default) red.

## Naming conventions (constants, databases, functions, graphics, files)

Some of our naming conventions are based on the “Camel” and “Pascal” notations used in the programming field. Here are the definitions of these two terms.

**Camel notation** (also called Camel Case): When two or more words are written, the first word appears in all lower case and the first letter of the following words are capitalized.

Examples: workHorse, iPod.

**Pascal notation** (also called Upper Case Camel): This is the same as Camel notation except the first character of the first word is also upper case.

Examples: TimesSquare, FastPace.

The full range of naming conventions follows in alphabetic order to the entities to which they apply.

**Constants:** are upper case with words separated with an underline. All constants are named (literal) with the exceptions of unit increments and decrements.

Examples: ED\_OFFICE = 1, AG\_OFFICE = 2.

**Databases: Field names** are written in Camel notation and are singular case.

Examples: accountNumber, accountName.

**Databases: Table names** are written in Camel notation and are of plural case.

Examples: bankAccounts, preferredCustomers.

**Databases: linking tables** are a combination of the two names of the tables they are linking. The two names are separated by an underline.

Example: bankAccount\_preferredCustomers

**File names:** describe the subject of the file contents. File names are all lower case with underscores between the words.

Example: morning\_glory\_archive.htm.

**Function names:** follow Pascal Notation (upper case Camel). Examples: BigTrip(), DropDown().

**Graphic names** (pictures, charts, buttons, headers, etc.): are written in a combination of lower case and underscore notation. The name starts with the descriptive name of the element and ends with the width and height of the graphic. Underlines separate multiple descriptive names. If the photo is of a person, the file name description should be the person's last name followed by an underscore and the person's first name then followed and underscore and the pixel dimensions of the photo.

Examples: A photo of Big Sur = big\_sur200x150.jpg,  
A photo of Jonny Jones = jones\_johnny\_110x110.png

**Variables:** are written in camel notation. If the name consists of only one word, it will be

written in lower case. Variable names are singular (in case they need to be saved in the database).

Examples: \$bigTrip, \$accountNumber, \$velocity

## **Photos**

All photographs and graphic elements must have alt tags to meet the requirements of Section 508. Alt tags convey what a sighted person is seeing in the image. The alt tag may or may not use the identical text of the caption.

Example: A photo with this caption “Border police are effective for helping to reduce trafficking.” The alt tag might read “Photograph: border police checking cargo of large truck at Turkish border crossing.”

## **Screen resolution and page dimensions**

Still today the most common screen resolution setting in USAID offices is **800 x 600 pixels**.

Hence, we will build all Web sites and Internet applications for this resolution. To prevent horizontal scrolling in this screen resolution, the maximum page **width** must be **760 pixels**. For full visibility without scrolling (in the stated screen resolution), the maximum **height** of the page is **410 pixels**.

## **Titles and subtitles**

“Headline style” definition: Bold, capitalize initial letter of each word.

Headline style is used for

- Page titles
- Document titles
- References to other Web sites
- Titles of documents mentioned in the text
- Proper names, product names, trade names

“Down style” definition: Bold, capitalize first letter of first word only.

Down style is used for

- Section and subsection headers
- References to other sections within the site
- Figure titles
- Lists

## **Type face and type size**

According to various studies and publications, sans serif type faces are preferred for reading on computer monitors (the opposite – serif -- is the type face of choice on hard copy). Sans serif type faces, Verdana and Arial are preferred. They are standard type faces that will be on everyone’s system. Verdana type face is used for both titles and text on all of our Web sites and applications.

Type size and how to designate it (in CSS) is a raging controversy. There are basically two sides to the argument. One is that type size should be designated on a relative basis, either by % or em designations. The other side wants fixed (absolute) type size so as not to destroy a page display. To accomplish this, type size is designated in pixels. For current applications, we designate a fixed size, but this will remain open for further discussion. Regular text is Verdana 13 pixels. Page headers are Verdana, bold, 18 pixels (H1). Section headers are Verdana, bold, 16 pixels (H2).

These guidelines have borrowed heavily from two publications:

**Web Style Guide** 2nd edition

Patrick J. Lynch and Sara Horton

Yale University Center for Advanced Instructional Media, © 2001

**Designing Web Usability**

Jakob Nielsen

New Riders, © 2000