Creative Resources

Tips for Creating Effective OOH

Clear Channel Outdoor

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Designing For Outdoor

#1 Make your text large.

All text must be at least one foot tall to be legible from an average viewing distance of 500 feet. Remember that one foot tall is the minimum. Headlines and other important information should be closer to two or three feet tall.

$$\text{x-height} = 1'$$

Note that the one foot rule applies to posters as well as bulletins. Even though a poster is smaller the viewing distance is the same. Therefore if you are creating a campaign you may need to rearrange elements in order to create the same visual emphasis from one unit to the next.

#2 Choose bold, easy-to-read fonts.

Stay away from skinny typefaces as they will optically disappear from a distance. Bold, sans serif fonts will read best. Serifs are acceptable as long as they are large. Scripts and other decorative fonts – no matter how large you make them – will not be legible.

Also remember to add 20–30% more tracking between letters than you would in print. This is because as the ad is viewed from a distance, the space betwen your letters is going to shrink as well. You'll need to compensate for this effect on the front end.

#3 Focus on the advertiser.

Logos typically take up 1/3 to 1/2 the height of the board. Interestingly Outdoor has more in common with web banner advertising than it does with print: the advertiser's logo holds a prominent position within the compositional hierarchy.

#4 Image is everything.

Images always take up the full height of the board. It's much more interesting to make a small large than it is to make a large object small. For example, objects such as strawberries and watches are much more effective than buildings or landscapes.

#5 Forget about negative space.

Negative space doesn't work in Outdoor the way it does in print because the viewing space is too small. Don't waste space! Activate your entire compostion. This doesn't mean make your ad busy or crowded, but rather use space strategically to make your image, logo and text as big as possible. This will maximize your exposure time and increase your number of impressions.

#6 Create a strong silhouette.

Choose an object with a strong silhouette and interesting negative shapes. Imagine if your image was entirely black, would people still be able to recognize it?

Avoid complicated backgrounds and patterns. Clip objects out of their backgrounds whenever possible to further intensify the silhouette.

#7 Stick to one main idea.

Choose one feature of your product and communicate it as visually and as rapidly as possible. What is the one thing you want people to remember? Avoid inundating your consumer with extraneous information which will only dilute your main objective.

#8 Use seven words or less.

Outdoor is a visual medium so try to use as few words as possible. The general rule of thumb is one word per every second of exposure. The art of copywriting is to be funny, dramatic or insightful in 7 words or less.

#9 Use strong color contrast.

Remember to employ strong color contrast. This is especially true in regards to the headline in comparison to the background. For text you want to choose a color combination that is different in both hue and value.

As a whole, you'll want your ad to jump out of its natural environment. Choose highly saturated and opaque colors for elements that you want to get the most attention.

#10 Think outside the box.

The two things that the eye is most attracted to are size and silhouette. Therefore the decision to invest in extensions is a surefire way to get the most bang for your buck.

Three-dimensional props and other unique constructions can give a board extra talk value and landmark status.

⬛ **Clear Channel** Outdoor

Using Color in Outdoor

Monochromatic

Monochromatic color schemes utilize a single hue as well as its tints and shades. Renowned for its simplicity, a monochromatic color scheme is a great way to establish a brand that is centralized around a single hue.

Analogous

Analogous color schemes use colors that are next to each other on the color wheel. These colors match well and create serene and stable designs. Analogous color schemes are found in nature and are pleasing to the eye.
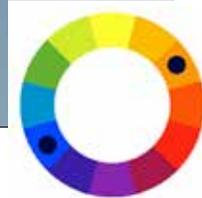
Complementary

A complementary color scheme uses two colors on opposite sides of the color wheel. This particular palette is very loud and jarring and must be used with caution: typically one color is dominant and the other is used as an accent.

Split-Complementary

The split-complementary is a variation of the complementary color scheme. In addition to a base color, it uses the two colors adjacent to its complement. This color scheme has the same strong visual contrast as the complementary, but with less tension.

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Triadic

A Triadic color scheme uses colors evenly spaced around the color wheel. A triadic scheme is very elegant and more calm than the higher contrasting palettes.

Tetrad

A Tetrad color scheme uses two opposing pairs of complentaries, counteracting all tension and giving a design the most stable composition possible.

Warm

Warm colors raise our metabolism and create a sense of heightened alertness. Warm colors are often used to promote food or a sense of urgency. For this reason this color scheme is popular among restaurants, discounts and limited time offers.

Cool

Cool colors are metabolically neutral and thus are often used for brands that want to be perceived as offering something calm and safe. For this reason, this color scheme is popular among hotels, banks, credit cards and insurance companies.

Copywriting Techniques

Copywriting is the use of rhetorical and allusionary devices to persuade your audience. It's interesting to note that many of the same techniques used in literature, comedy and speech are used in Outdoor as well.

Consider how the features of your product might correspond with some of the examples listed below. And always remember to keep your ad copy short and simple for optimum results.

Anaphora
A succession of clauses beginning with the same word or group of words.

Epistrophe
A succession of clauses that all end with the same word or group of words.

Antanaclasis
The repetition of a single word but with different meanings.

Polyptoton
The repetition of a word used in different cases within the same sentence.

Antimetabole
Repetition of two short phrases but in reversed order to establish contrast.

Apposition
The placement of two phrases side by side with one element serving to define or modify the other.
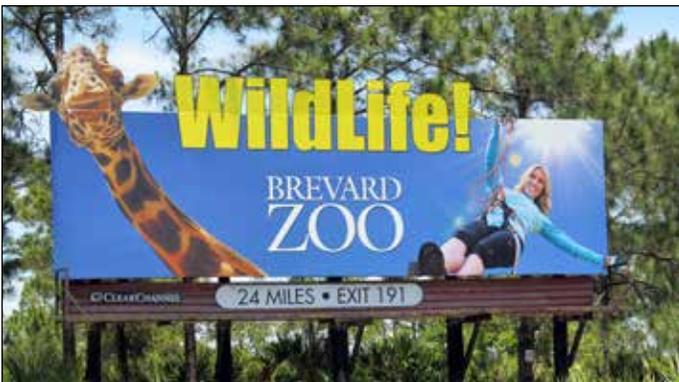
Ecphonesis
A short phrase consisting of a single word and ending with an exclamation point.

Alliteration
The repetition of the same sound at the beginning of words, or in stressed syllables.

Rebus
An allusional device that uses pictures to represent words or parts of words.
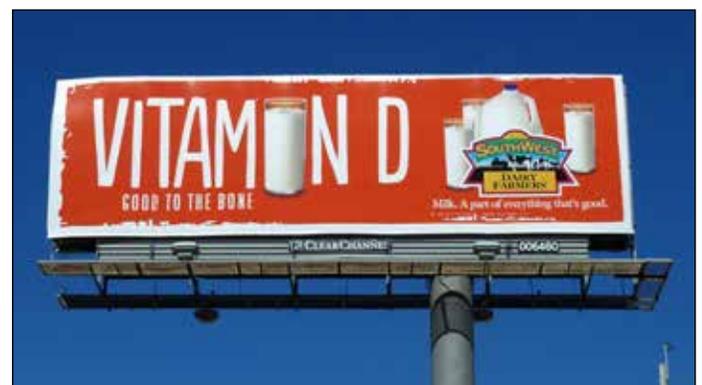
Pictogram
An allusional device that conveys its meaning through its resemblance to another object.

Grammatical
A unique construction of punctuation or syntax to create interest.

Colloquial
The use of familiar conversation rather than formal language for dramatic effect.

Assonance
The repetition of vowel sounds to create internal rhyming.
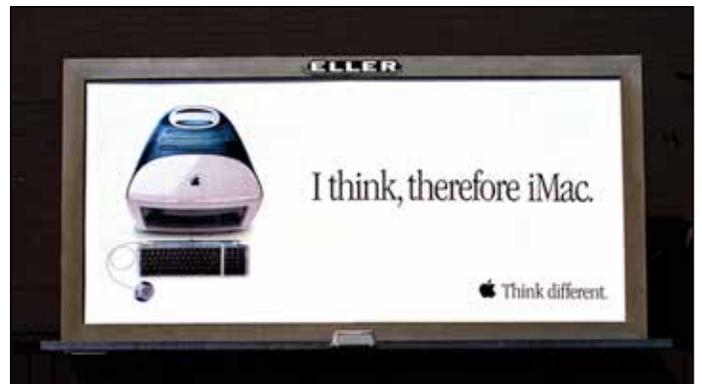
Anthimeria
Substitution of one part of speech for another such as a noun used as a verb.

Paronomasia
A pun or play on words used for humorous effect.

Paraprosdokian
A sentence where the latter half takes an unexpected turn, thereby creating a humorous effect.

Maxim

A saying which expresses concisely either what happens or ought to happen in life.

Bicolon

A succession of two grammatically equal structures.

Tricolon

A succession of three grammatically equal structures.

Tetracolon

A succession of four grammatically equal structures.

Antithesis

The immediate juxtaposition of opposing or contrasting ideas.

Onomatopeoia

The stylized use of words to imitate the sounds, objects or actions they refer to.

Understatement
A figure of speech in which something is represented as less than it really is with the intent of drawing attention to the opposite meaning.

Hyperbole
A figure of speech where emphasis is achieved through exaggeration, independently or through comparison.

Parodic
Comic imitation intended to ridicule an author, an artistic endeavor, or a genre.

Conundrum
Questions or situations that serve as a riddle and have a pun answer.

Topical
References or parodies of current events and pop culture.

Euphemism
An innocuous or inoffensive term or phrase used for something unpleasant or obscene.

Legibility Guide

Distance in Feet	Print Resolution	Resolution for LED	Examples	Minimum Readable X-Height in Inches
5' – 50'	High	3mm – 8mm	Malls, Airports, Retail, Lobbies, Office, etc.	1" – 2"
50' – 100'	High	6mm – 12mm	Window, Street Display, Drive Through	2" – 4"
100' – 200'	Normal	12mm – 25mm	Posters, Surface Streets	4" – 8"
200' – 300'	Normal	25mm – 34mm	Posters, Surface Streets and Highway Bulletins	8" – 10"
300' – 350'	Normal	34mm – 66mm	Highway Bulletins, Highway Posters	10" – 15"
350' – 500'	Normal	34mm – 66mm	Highways, Spectaculars	15" – 20"
500' – 600'	Low – Normal	66mm – 76mm	Highway, Spectaculars, Stadiums	20" – 24"
600'+	Low	76mm – 90mm	Skyscrapers, Spectaculars, Set Back from Road	24" – 40"

Distances will vary. The general rule is that all text must be a minimum of 1 foot tall to be legible from an average viewing distance of 500 feet.

Cross Read 600'

Left-Hand Read 400'

Right-Hand Read 300'
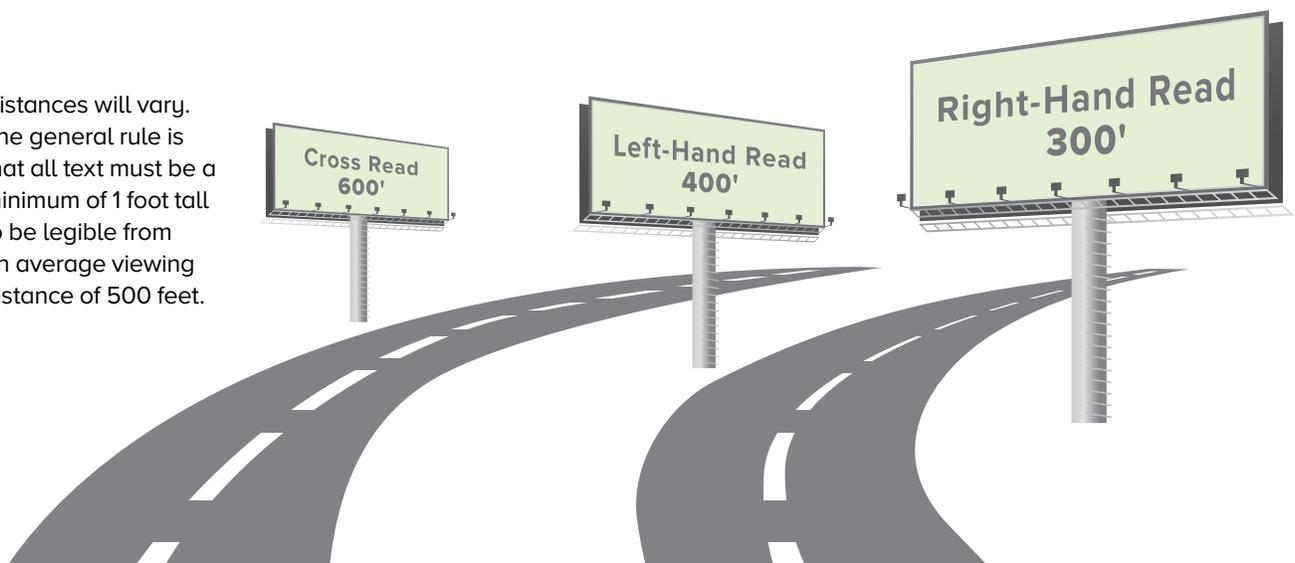
Designing For Digital

#1 Make your text large.

Many of the same rules that apply in traditional Outdoor apply in digital as well. All text needs to be at least one foot tall to be legible from an average viewing distance of 500 feet. Logos take up 1/3 to 1/2 the height of the board, and images take up the full height of the board.

#2 Choose bold, easy-to-read fonts.

Avoid skinny typefaces. Not only will your message be read from a distance, but as letters get smaller it will be increasingly difficult for LED bulbs to create them. Be sure to choose a font that has enough weight to be legible under these conditions.

#3 Add more tracking.

Digital Outdoor requires sufficient tracking to keep your letters from blending together. Apply 20–30% more tracking than you would in print. This is because as the ad is viewed from a distance, the space between your letters is going to shrink as well. You'll need to compensate for this effect on the front end.

#4 Create a strong silhouette.

Choose an object with a strong silhouette and interesting negative shapes. Imagine if your image was entirely black, would people still be able to recognize it?

Avoid complicated backgrounds and patterns. Clip objects out of their backgrounds whenever possible to further intensify the silhouette.

#5 Crank up the volume.

The most important tip when designing for Digital Outdoor is design in RGB. Whenever you are choosing a hue, choose the RGB version of that hue.

Position dark-against-light and light-against-dark. Infuse black back into your composition whenever possible. The art of digital is to create a tapestry of depth and high contrast.

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#6 Delineate white text.

Any time you have white text against a colored background, add a 1 to 2 point dark stroke around the edges to help delineate the edges. Some advertisers also choose to add a 75 to 85% drop shadow. This will help separate the white light from the colored light around it.

#7 Delineate color text.

On the flip side, any time you have color text against a white background, add a subtle inner shadow of the same hue. This simple computer effect is an easy way to make the edges of your letters crisper and optically easier to discern.

#8 Use black text on bright backgrounds.

Bright RGB backgrounds are a great way to grab consumer attention. However you will find that on a very bright background, black text is going to read the best.

#9 Keep it simple.

Remember that your ad will only display for 8 seconds. Keep your message as simple as possible – no more than 7 to 10 words. If you feel you have more to say, create a second ad and have it play on the subsequent rotation.

#10 The medium is the message.

Dull, muted tones are not conducive to digital Outdoor. Always choose bright, highly saturated palettes and photos. The most interesting ads are those where light is an integral part of the color scheme, the narrative or the composition.

Designing For Social

#1   Pick a compelling activity.

The first and most important step is to pick a compelling activity that people will want to participate in. It should capture the tone and personality of your brand. Ask a question or request a photo. Try to describe the activity (or its purpose) in 7 words or less, or within the confines of a hashtag.

You may want to introduce your activity for a week or two to get your audience familiar with the idea. The #WithoutShoes campaign by Tom's ran a full week –both on digital boards and social outposts – explaining the purpose of the campaign before posting submissions. Also you will not want to go "live" until you have a few submissions in the queue to fill the text and photo fields.

#2   Be open minded.

The most provocative social campaigns are often the most open ended. People are more likely to participate in your activity if the request does not "feel like advertising." It might be too much to ask that consumers interact directly and physically with your product. You may have better luck with an activity that allows consumers to participate in your brand abstractly.

Consider the #StayAwakeForIt campaign by Caribou Coffee. The photo submissions did not visually reference coffee at all.

#3 Think short and sweet.

The activity you choose should be simple and easy-to-understand. For example, craft a question so that the answer illicits a short and simple response.

The #ShareACoke by Coca-Cola campaign was simply a hashtag, a photo and a person's name. Therefore it was very simple and easy to understand what text was destined to be on the board.

#4 Consider your hashtag.

Create a hashtag that is short and easy to understand. Avoid clunky acronyms and product endorsements. Instead, appeal to your customer's lifestyle and beliefs. Action verbs and personal testaments (e.g. "I" or "My") work well.

When designing your hashtag, use mixed case letters for ease in comprehension. The #iLoveJax campaign specifically chose a font that helped distinguish the letters I and J.

#5 Show that you're live.

To show that the board contains live information, include the logo of the social network you are pulling from. Don't be subtle! Remember that your message will be viewed from 500 feet away and logos –including social networks– need to be quite large to be legible.

#6 Create a template.

The standard digital billboard displays a 400 H x 1400 W pixel (4" x 11" at 100 dpi) RGB jpeg. Create a file in those proportions and leave the dynamic portions blank: photo fields, tweets, handles, etc. Note that the respondent's entire handle is dynamic including the @ symbol. If you want to create a layered effect such as in Miller Lite's #ItsMillerTime campaign above, it is recommend to also submit working files, such as a layered PSD.

#7 Understand your objectives.

Because there is a moderation step going on in the background, the time from the consumer's post to its display up on a digital board will not be instanteneous.

The rule of thumb is that every template adds 5 minutes: 2 minute moderation + 2 minute satelite delay + 64 second rotation.

- If your objective is to post as many users as possible, run multiple templates.
- If your objective is to post users as fast as possible, run fewer templates. One template pulling from one social outpost would post the fastest.

The #ThePowerOfSmile campaign by Delta Dental ran mulitple templates in order to display and interact with as many participants as possible. However, they strategically trimmed the number of templates down during an event so that pedestrians could see their photos faster.


#8 Create photo fields.

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Google+ all post photos of various aspect ratios. (1:1, 5:9, 5:8, 10:13, 5:4 among others) You have two options for how you'd like to accomodate this:

Create one template for each aspect ratio.

Create a template that accomodates all aspect ratios.
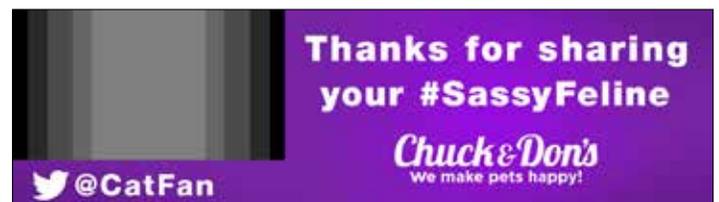
#9 Leave enough space for long names and handles.

For every Bo Smith in the world, there is an Alexandra Von Grimmelshausen. Therefore when designing your social template, remember to plan ahead for potentially long names and handles.

There are two different ways to insert dymamic text. Clear Channel can either program the font to remain at a particular point size (at the risk of cutting it off if it runs long) or program it to "Size to Fit." If text is set "Size to Fit," the words will scale up or down within a predetermined space. Either way you choose, plan ahead that some respondants might have long names and handles.

#10 Don't over think it!

If you are only going to be posting one or two photos a week, you probably do not need to use an automated system like Social Connect. Some social campaigns can be as easy as downloading the user's name and photo and inserting them manually using Photoshop.

There are instances where doing things manually are beneficial. For example, if you want to have creative control over the cropping and text layout. The #Can-Vert campaign by Old Bay Seasoning listed the "colloquial" location of the user. To accentuate the universal nature of the product, it was beneficial to craft the campaign by hand.

Designing For Embellishments

Embellishments are any element that has been added to a location that is above-and-beyond traditional Outdoor. This includes extensions, 3D props, lighting effects, 3D lettering, LED displays, inflatables and mannequins. If you can imagine it, Clear Channel can build it!

Safety and City Codes

There are several steps involved with the creation, construction and engineering of any embellishment. The most common question is, "How much will this cost?" Unfortunately the answer to that question may come later in the process. Clear Channel will first need to work directly with municipalities and land owners to see that your embellishment will not
- risk the safety of motorists or pedestrians
- break any local or federal ordinances
- compromise the integrity of the original unit

Timeline

If you are planning an embellishment, you should start concepting 6 months prior to installation. If your concept or embellishment uses proven and tested technology (mannequins, LED reader boards, etc.) you can expect this timeline to be shorter. If you are creating something new –something that needs to be engineered and manufactured– you can expect the process to last at least 5 to 6 months. You may even need to revisit your creative, location and initial investment several times. Your Account Executive will work with you on determining an appropriate timeline.

Step One: Creative

Supply a creative mock up of your idea to your Account Executive. It can be as rough or as elaborate as you want at this stage. Also supply a short paragraph or bullet-point list that describes your idea. Use this opportunity to describe how often or how quickly it moves, how large or how deep it is, etc. Note that Clear Channel has artists on staff that can help you conceptualize your idea free of charge.

Step Two: City Ordinances
Clear Channel Outdoor will need to review the artwork with the city in which your embellishment will be located. Often cities have different rules about billboards and whether they can feature embellishments. This may take anywhere from one to six weeks depending on the complexity of the design and how often city officials are available.

Step Three: Modifications
This is a part of the process where your creative or investment may need to be revisited. If it is determined that the city does not allow your particular embellishment, you may be asked to pay the city for a permit allowing you to do so. You may also need to alter your creative to be within the city's restrictions.

Step Four: Research & Engineering
Clear Channel Outdoor works directly with prop shops, electricians and lighting professionals. The next step is to research the engineering and construction necessary to complete your idea. You may receive a quote at this time. Remember that you are creating something one-of-kind! As exciting as this is, you will not have the benefit of mass produced or pre-assembled parts for your creative endeavor.

Step Five: Construction
Expect construction of your embellishment to take 3 to 6 months. This is in part because construction materials may need to be shipped from other cities or states. This is also because part of this time may be used to build a scale model, do preemptive electrical work on-site or apply weight and wind tests to materials.

Step Six: Installation
At the time when your concept is first being researched, you may receive two quotes. Installation will be quoted separately from construction because different companies will be employed. Installation includes shipping of the embellishment from the prop shop to the location by flat bed truck. Installation may take several hours, and you will be notified if you would like to be present at that time.

Understanding Your Quote
Quotes include any applicable costs associated with the research, construction, installation or maintenance to your embellishment. These include

- equipment rental
- construction materials
- labor for installation
- labor for production
- electricity
- transportation
- pedestrian control
- mechanics
- electricians
- working models
- safe work zone
- lane closures
- street use
- city permits

Copyright & Usage Legal Guidelines

Legal Definitions

Copyright
Protects any work that is "fixed" in a tangible medium of expression, including, photographs, music, graphics, books, drawings, paintings, and videos. The moment the work is created, it is protected by copyright. Copyright notice or registration is not required for protection.

Editorial Use
The use of a copyrighted work solely for news related content.

Commercial Use
The use of a copyrighted work in connection with any advertising, commercials, contests, sales, promotions, ticket giveaways, and digital sales content.

Fair Use
In some instances, copyrighted works may be used without obtaining permission of the owner if the use falls under fair use. However, it is limited to purposes such as comment, criticism, teaching, scholarship, research, or news reporting. Please work with our legal department to confirm whether a proposed use would qualify as fair use.

Stock Images
Licensed photographs or illustrations that may fulfill design needs without the need of hiring a photographer or illustrator. There are two main categories of stock images:
- **Royalty-Free** Copyrighted material without the need to pay royalties or license fees for each use.
- **Rights-Managed** Copyrighted material that requires a license for each use.

Public Domain
Copyrighted works deemed in the public domain may be used without obtaining permission of the copyright owner. These works include:
- facts and historical events
- copyrighted works for which protection has expired or been abandoned
- government works. Please obtain written authorization from the legal department regarding whether any works that fall into the public domain.

Note: An image or photograph is not free to use because it can be found on the internet. If you are interested in obtaining a particular image, contact your Account Executive and Clear Channel can direct you to the resources available.

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Common Questions

How do I know if something is copyrighted?
If it exists, it has copyright protection. All photographs, images, text, music, videos and artwork have copyrights. Whoever created it owns the rights to it.

Can I use images from Google Images?
No. Just because a photo is on Google or anywhere else on the Internet does not mean it is free to use.

Can I use images that are "public" on Facebook or from other social networking sites like Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest?
No. A photo located on Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, or other social media site does not mean that it is free for commercial use. As a general rule, photographs, videos, pictures, images, logos or the like are never free to use.

My favorite band is coming to town. Can I use the band's logo or song lyrics?
No. As with all performers, the logo is a trademark owned by the band and their song lyrics are copyright protected.

Can I use Google's logo or stylized lettering?
No. The term "Google" is trademark-protected in any font and the exact stylization and coloring is also protected and owned by Google. You may not use another business' logo —whether in a directional or as an endorsement— without the owner's consent.

Can a body shop, mechanic, or used car dealer use pictures of brand name cars or logos, if they are used in a positive manner?
No. A license or some authorization is needed from the car manufacturer to use a logo or car image in the ad. (e.g. "An authorized XXX Dealer/Service Center") If, however, a "list" of cars or a "gallery" of the advertiser's own images are used to identify the types of cars that are sold, then that has a lower risk. However typically the advertiser must obtain a franchise agreement with the auto manufacturer to use brand names and images.

Can I use photos of my customers?
Yes, however the advertiser needs to provide signed model release forms for every single person featured in the photograph, especially children. An email is not a signed contract and will not suffice as a release. Ask your Account Executive if you need a copy of Clear Channel's model release form.

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Can I use Super Bowl, NFL, NCAA, March Madness, Final Four, FIFA , Olympics or MLB in my ad?
No. These are all federally registered trademarks owned by third parties. Their names and logos cannot be used in any advertisements without consent.

If a stock image is used on my billboard, can I use it in other advertising as well?
Yes. Clear Channel's stock image license generally allows for use in our client's marketing materials. However the advertiser will need to purchase a separate license to clarify this additional usage: what types of media will the image be used in, for what duration, etc. After your Outdoor campaign in finalized, your Account Executive can point you to this online resource.

Can I take a photograph of my billboard and use it for internal purposes?
Yes. Photographs of our billboards can be displayed on an advertiser's website and can also be shared via social media, as long as it does not make a reference to our business and the actual billboard or ad is not cropped in any manner.

Must I place a disclaimer on political ads?
Yes, all political advertising must contain "Paid for by X" followed by the complete mailing address of the person or business sponsoring the ad. For more information on political disclaimers, ask your Account Executive for our complete Political Guidelines.

Can I use road signs or highway signs in my ad?
No. It is best practice not to use road signs and is prohibited in some states. More information can usually be found on your state's government website.

Questions?

If you have any questions regarding these legal guidelines or another concern not addressed here, please contact our Vice President of Creative Paul Livornese (PaulLivornese@clearchannel.com) We will be happy to work with our legal team to answer questions you may have on these matters.