

Designing an effective billboard display isn't easy with many factors to consider. Graphic artists should keep in mind that in billboards, the old adage less is more is often true. We need to avoid fancy fonts and colours to ensure that the billboard display is legible and memorable.


We provide a free legibility service, the Paradise Outdoor Simulator, via our website - upload your draft creative and check its effectiveness.

Colour Contrasts

BAD			
GOOD			

Contrasting colours – such as the ones in the top row – ‘vibrate’ and are difficult to read. As you can see they are hard enough to read from a few feet away, let alone traveling along the highway! It's always best to use contrasting colours on your copy. As you can see from the examples above, black and yellow and black and white are the best colour combinations. Just remember, if you're straining to read it on your computer screen, chances are it will be next to impossible to read on a billboard!

Fonts

	
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Billboards are no place to experiment with fancy font faces. Remembering that any potential clients have only a few seconds to read your copy, confusing them with impossible-to-read text is going to ensure they don't pick up your message. Avoid any font sizes that are too small. Please read the following table for more information about font legibility

Letter Height 6"	Readable Distance 60'	Time to Read at 60 mph	Less than 1 second
Letter Height 9"	Readable Distance 90'	Time to Read at 60 mph	1 second
Letter Height 12"	Readable Distance 120'	Time to Read at 60 mph	1.25 seconds
Letter Height 18"	Readable Distance 180'	Time to Read at 60 mph	2 seconds
Letter Height 24"	Readable Distance 240'	Time to Read at 60 mph	2.5 seconds
Letter Height 36"	Readable Distance 360'	Time to Read at 60 mph	4 seconds
Letter Height 48"	Readable Distance 480'	Time to Read at 60 mph	5.25 seconds

Effective Copy

Revive Cafe
Coffee • Food • Take away
Cash, Credit or Eftpos
We're open 24 hours

TURN LEFT IN APPROX 1KM

BAD

Revive Cafe
Open 24 hours

NEXT EXIT

GOOD

Traveling the highway at 100kmph means that when you see a billboard, you're only going to get a few seconds to draw the most important information from it. As an advertiser, you want the most important message to be easily seen and understood by the drive market. For this reason, you should avoid clutter when deciding on copy for your billboard.

People often fall into the trap of trying to put as much information on a billboard as they'd want to put in a print ad – this won't work! Only the most important information needs to be displayed so that drivers get a single, clear message to remember.

Before you finalise your artwork, make sure to use the Paradise Outdoor Simulator to check out how the display will look.