

Checklist: White Paper Design

Pass this checklist to any designer who isn't sure how a white paper should look. Also send them some samples of effective white paper design.

#	Item	✓
1	Create a cover using a stock photo; ideally show the target reader at work *	
2	Make text and headings large enough to be easy to read	
3	For readers over 40, make body text 100% black—NOT gray	
4	Devote one page to Contents; check that all page numbers are correct	
5	Make the entries in the Contents clickable links to jump into the document	
6	For easier scrolling on-screen, use 1 column—NOT 2 or 3 columns	
7	Leave lots of white space; make the text column 60 characters wide MAX	
8	Make headings bold, with a visual hierarchy to help readers scan pages	
9	Include a visual break on every page; if nothing else, use a small graphic	
10	Follow paragraph breaks from the writer	
11	Break any longer paragraphs in two yourself	
12	Turn off hyphenation, and NEVER hyphenate a company or product name	
13	Use text organizers from the writer to break up the text: headings, bold, bullets, pull-quotes, sidebars, and tables *	
14	Don't leave widows at the top or orphans at the bottom of any pages	
15	Follow page breaks from the writer; it's okay to leave white space	
16	Include tasteful branding on every page	
17	Do not over-design; for example, do not make every bullet into an icon	
18	Do not make the white paper look like a flashy brochure	
19	Do not include a blank page of solid color; this wastes ink	
20	Insert metadata into the PDF so that Google can index the white paper *	

** For more help, ask your white paper writer.*

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