Contents

Messaging

3. Brand Story (Members)
4. Brand Story (Firms)
5. Tone of Voice
6. Key Elements of Tone of Voice
7. Brand Attributes

Logo

9. Primary Brand Logo
10. Secondary Brand Logos
11. Meaning Behind the Mark
12. Improper Logo Usage
13. Society Chapter Alternates

Color palette

14. Proportions + Breakdowns
15. Brand Gradients

Pattern

16. Pattern Usage

Iconography

18. Brand Icons

Photography

20. Primary Photography Style
21. Secondary Photography Style
22. Photography Library

Typography

23. Brand Fonts + Usage

Provided Application

24. Email

Contact

27. SDA + Intrinzic
    Contact Information
Brand Story (Members)

Advance Your Career

Gain the resources and support to take your career to the next level with SDA. Our members represent a national network of business professionals who are advancing administrative best practices in architecture, interior design, landscape architecture, construction, and their related fields. We are business operations experts known for rising through the ranks at our firms, where we make an impact by optimizing processes and supporting the kind of positive workplace culture that attracts both clients and prospective employees.

With the support of SDA and access to our training, education and robust national network of chapters and online forums, you’ll become known as a go-to professional who can not only speak to the best ways of working, but implement and maintain them to continually grow your skills and add value to your firm.

Join today and get access to SDA’s:

• Conferences and seminars
• e-Learning programs
• Webinars
• Certified Design Firm Administrator (CDFA) program
• Local chapters
• Member Center and online forums
Brand Story (Firms)

Optimize Your Operations

Is your firm the well-oiled machine it should be? There’s no better way to improve your bottom line than to make sure you have the right people in place to optimize your operations.

When you support your staff with memberships to SDA, we can help ensure that the people in your critical administrative and operational roles are certified professionals you can trust. We provide members the training and resources to think and act as leaders. With SDA members in your organization, you’ll have dedicated employees who can implement and maintain the systems, processes and technologies to help you maximize your time and your revenue, keeping you billable and focused on staying within project budgets while exceeding client expectations.

How can SDA help you?

1. Improved focus on your bottom line

SDA members are trained and certified professionals you can trust to keep your operations running smoothly and allocate resources with a budget-conscious focus on maximizing revenue.

2. Access to top job candidates

Our Career Center can help you find credentialed and accomplished business professionals in your network who will positively impact your firm.

3. A best practices mindset for your entire firm

Our training and education programs are designed to keep your staff in step with the current best practices in your industry so they can apply them on the job and improve workflow at your firm.
Tone of Voice

Tone of voice outlines not “what” SDA says, but even more importantly – “how” it is said. The Tone of Voice document provides guardrails for all communications, and a benchmark to ensure that all written communication brings the brand to life accurately and authentically.

When creating copy and verbal assets, keep in mind that SDA:

- Is highly professional, demonstrating a deep knowledge and understanding of the industries it supports.
- Clearly conveys a sense of confidence and leadership.
- Is approachable and authentic, with genuine and open communication that stresses inclusion.
- Is empowering, inspiring and motivating, helping members recognize their contribution to the companies they support.
- Showcases the value of team and collective over the individual.
- Is never about “us” vs. “them”. Always refers to accomplishments from the team perspective. And how firms and SDA members work together to positively impact the industry.

**TONE OF VOICE BEST PRACTICES**

- Use first person that focuses on the audience more than SDA.
- Convey knowledge and strength with concise, active writing. Use passive language sparingly.
- Balance genuine sense of purpose with an openness to ideas.
- Use a conversational tone, not a formal writing style. Leverage short phrases for impact.
- Be unafraid to put a stake in the ground and voice an opinion.
- Be proud, without being boastful, of the impact SDA can have for members, the firms they work with and the industries they support.
- Balance operational and administrative expertise with true business savvy.
Key Elements of Tone of Voice

**Business focused** - Always presents opportunities in the context of how they benefit the firms that our members support. Proves in every interaction that we are here to move business and the industry forward.

**An active participant** - Always engaged, and a knowledgeable contributor to the unique operational challenges of design companies.

**Open Minded** - Nothing is just black and white, always considers the unique nature of the work and situations our members face.

**Expertise** - Uses our depth of experience and knowledge of the industry to help firms operate at the highest possible level.

**Does not take sides** - Not afraid to be honest, even when subjects can be difficult.

**Acts as a guide** - Fosters connections to help educate, inform and prepare members for how to work, lead and implement best practices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IS...</th>
<th>IS NOT...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empowering</td>
<td>Pandering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genuine</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>Far Reaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insightful</td>
<td>Jargon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considered</td>
<td>Authoritative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepting</td>
<td>Apologetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>Demanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Attributes

Advancement

SDA believes that we all have a drive inside of us to move forward, to be recognized for the contributions we make, and to have a job that is meaningful to us. That is why our mission is to advance our roles in our fields, fostering leadership at the individual level and for the entire profession. When one of us rises, we all rise. Whether you need to vet an idea via online discussion, want more formal training, or have your eye on certification, we can help you develop your leadership skills and become an expert who is relied on for elevating the way your business does business.
Attributes

Community

Surround yourself with good people, because they will shape you. The right peers will inform your beliefs, enhance your expertise, and help you develop your own, distinct point of view. As a network of business professionals, we know that when we join together, we give ourselves something we could never find anywhere else. Experience and expertise. Camaraderie and connection. Knowledge and perspective. At our conferences and seminars, our chapter meetings, and in our online forums, you’ll find a network of people you can trust. People who will help you make the right decisions — for yourself and your firm—in the moment and day after day.

Professional

When you contribute, you know you belong. Our companies need us to share our talent and the experience that we bring, to help develop their best practices, and to make our mark by positively impacting their business. We all know there is a right way to do the work we do, but sometimes we have to show others the light. To do that, we must do more than just talk the talk, we need to demonstrate our knowledge and value in the ways we act and carry out the responsibilities of our jobs. With SDA, you’ll have access to the education, training, and conversations that will make you an expert and secure your future as an indispensable team member whose work is truly best-in-class.

Empowerment

When we believe in ourselves, we have the power to determine our own path, chart the course of our careers, and contribute to the trajectory of our firms. And when we believe in each other, there is nothing we cannot do. As a network of business professionals, we know that our jobs—our roles—are vital to the success of our companies. The tone that we set and the standards we bring to our work can be a transformative force on the culture of our industry and its ability to deliver the products and services our clients rely on us for. We’re here to give you the confidence and the courage to see the potential in your career, to embrace the opportunities you see at your firm, and go for it.

Valuable

We know the agencies we work for better than anyone else. Front to back, top to bottom, and every space in between, an administrator’s work touches all aspects of operations. And there’s no better way for a firm to improve its bottom line than making sure the right people and systems are in place. In a world where billable time reigns supreme, we can make sure that our firms are optimizing their operations every minute of the day.
Meaning Behind the Mark

1. Contemporary Lowercase Typeface
The letters ‘sda’ are typset in a modern serif typeface. The serif is a traditional typeface with a credible and sophisticated take-away, nodding to our experience and expertise; while the lowercase letterforms evoke an approachable, human and contemporary feel.

2. Overlapping Letterforms
The SDA letters overlap, portraying collaboration and unity within the organization.

3. Arrow Graphic
The arrow symbol demonstrates the advancement and empowerment that SDA provides to its members and firms. It shows our mission of advancing roles in our fields, fostering leadership for individuals and our communities. When one of us moves forward, we all do.

4. Overlapping Shapes
The arrows are built from transparent shapes. This transparency speaks to our network of trust, transparency in the organization and our collaborative nature.
Primary Brand Logo

1. Primary Logo Lockup
This logo option should be used as the predominant mark for the brand and should be used on all brand items that allow for full-color printing.

2. Minimum Logo Size
To maintain quality and legibility in all applications, the logo must not appear smaller than 1.5 in. wide.

3. Logo Clear Space
To preserve the logo’s integrity, always maintain a comfortable clear space around the logo. The minimum clear space for the logos is defined as the height of the letter “s” in “sda”. This minimum clearance space should be maintained as the logo is proportionally enlarged or reduced in size.
Secondary Brand Logos

1a. One-color Brand Logo
Secondary, one-color logo options should be used when printing methods prohibit full-color printing or legibility is jeopardized.

1b. The one color logo may be used on top of gradients, solid colors, or NON-busy photography.

One color logos should ONLY be used in Pantone Cool Grey 11 C or white. NEVER use the SDA logo in other colors.

2. Embroidery-only Brand Logo
The following example should only be used on embroidery materials. Any other one color uses should follow option 1a or 1b.
Improper Logo Usage

1. Disproportionate Scaling
   The logo should never be stretched to fit a specific size. It should always be proportionately scaled.

2. One-color Full Logo (except specified options)
   The one-color logos on the previous page are the only one-color logo options that should be used.

3. Arbitrary Rotation
   Avoid arbitrarily rotating the logo when used.

4. Text Alteration
   The type in the logo should never be changed or altered in any way.

5. Scaling the Icon and Wordmark Independently
   Always keep the logo icon and wordmark as one lockup. Never scale the icon or wordmark independently of one another.

6. Separating Icon From Wordmark
   Never separate the icon from the wordmark or use either as an independent asset.
Society Chapter Alternates

Chapter Logo Lockup
SDA will provide you with a logo that is designed for your chapter. The following rules apply to these alternate logos.

These logos should follow all the same sizing and usage guidelines shown on page 9

The chapter name should be left aligned with the “sda” letters and be spaced the same height as a capital letter in the chapter name.

If the chapter name is longer in width than the bottom of the arrow graphic, it may break onto a second line.
Brand Colors

1. Primary Colors
Custom four-color process builds or the CMYK breakdowns are listed for an optimum color match. For web and digital uses, the custom RGB breakdowns or hex codes should be used.

2. Secondary Colors
Custom four-color process builds or the CMYK breakdowns are listed for an optimum color match. For web and digital uses, the custom RGB breakdowns or hex codes should be used.

3. Color Proportion
The allotted proportions should be used as a guide to determine color usage on all materials.
Brand Gradients

1. Gradients
The brand gradients were strategically chosen to represent the new message of SDA. Gradients should be used as frequently as possible, especially in digital applications.

To avoid muddy colors, ideal gradients are created using RGB or CMYK colors only – NOT Pantone spot colors.
Pattern

1a. Primary Pattern
The pattern is meant to be a supporting element and may be cropped or proportionally scaled to best fit the design it is being used in. This pattern should always be on Pantone Cool Grey 1 C.

NEVER separate the arrow elements and use them independently. NEVER overlay this pattern over imagery.

1b. Secondary Pattern
The dot pattern should be used as an organizational element in the background of any application, where appropriate.
1. Arrow Graphic Asset
The arrow graphic and diamond shape can be used as a graphic container to hold images, like the following example. The diamond shape in the middle may be scaled appropriate to the application.
Brand Icons

SDA’s icon style is clean and simple and made up of a combination of lines weights and colors.

1. Brand Icons
Any icons created to be used in the SDA brand should be comprised of two main parts – The primary element and secondary details. See the following example for reference.

2. Brand Icon Rules
The icons, whether designed or purchased, should also be comprised of two stroke weights and follow these rules.

1. The primary layer of the icon. Use the thicker of two stroke weights and SDA’s primary gradient.

2. The secondary details of the icon. Use the thinner of two stroke weights and Pantone Cool Grey 11 C and/or Pantone Cool Grey 4 C
Brand Icons

When printing doesn’t allow for full color, or the placement of an icon is on a color, you may use one of the two following icon styles.

The one color icons may be used on top of gradients, solid colors, or NON-busy photography.

1. One Color Brand Icons (Black)
2. One Color Brand Icons (White)
Brand Photography

1. Primary Photography Style

Primary photography should highlight single SDA members in candid, naturally lit professional environments.

Photography should never appear posed, over or under exposed or shot too far away.
Brand Photography

1. Secondary Photography Style

Secondary photography should highlight SDA members interacting with co-workers and demonstrating leadership abilities naturally and in a candid style.
Brand Photography Library

1. Photography Library
All of the photos shown can be used in any application.
Brand Typography

1. Brand Fonts
Sanchez and Rubik are the assigned typefaces for the brand. These are free fonts available through Google Fonts and can be used anywhere in print or on the web.

The combination of typefaces shown should be used consistently across all touchpoints in order to retain brand cohesion and recognition. All type should have distinct levels of hierarchy between headlines, subheads, and body copy. The right is a visual guide of how to appropriately achieve that hierarchy.

All type should be ALWAYS be Using Pantone Cool Grey 11 C when on a light color, or white, when on any darker colors or on photography.

---

Advancing A/E/C Firms from Within

---

**HEADLINES**
Sanchez | Regular

---

**SUB HEADLINES**
Sanchez | Italic

---

**BODY COPY**
Rubik | Regular

---

**Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tin**

---

**Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis**

---

1. Sanchez | All weights
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 @#$%

Download: fonts.google.com/specimen/Sanchez

1. Rubik | All weights
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 @#$%

Download: fonts.google.com/specimen/Rubik
Application Example (Email)
Contact

For access to the brand assets shown in this document and for more information on the brand usage, contact Stephanie Kirschner.

**Stephanie Kirschner**
SDA Executive Director
P: 513.268.5302
E: admin@sdanational.org