

THE EFFECT OF FONT STYLE ON READABILITY

Font styles greatly influence the readability of the message on a billboard. Distance and viewing time require the use of fonts that are uniform in style and shape for instant recognition, yet there are a variety of fonts to choose from that still effectively communicate the advertiser's brand and style without compromising the ability of drivers to read the message.

BAD FONT	GOOD FONT
Thick AND Thin	Uniform Stroke
Bad Serif	Good Serif
<i>Script</i>	No Script
Too Tight	Just Right
Too Fat	Bold not Fat
Too Thin	Thin No More

Good fonts read quickly. In addition to the uniformity of the letters they are evenly spaced.

Bad fonts do not read well at a distance. Fonts that are fine or detailed will fade into the background. Fonts that are too heavy will blend together and lose their basic shape. Outlines have the potential to reduce the effective size of the lettering and distort the font.

Reading through this side by side list of poor font vs. optimal font choices shows how the eye stalls on the unreadable styles yet quickly processes the readable choices. Branding style does not have to be sacrificed as there are many readable fonts with character qualities that will continue to reflect the brand.

Unreadable Style **Readable Style**
Unreadable Style Readable Style
 UNREADABLE STYLE **Readable Style**
Unreadable Style Readable Style
 UNREADABLE STYLE **Readable Style**
 Unreadable Style **Readable Style**