



STATEWIDE COMMUNICATIONS STANDARDS &
BRANDING GUIDE

Montana SBDC Lead Center
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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This guide outlines the network-wide branding and communication standards set by the SBDC Lead Center to create uniformity across our brand. Elements of the marketing plan correlate to the larger SBDC Network Strategic Plan.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview

SBDC Minimum Marketing Requirements.....	3
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Visual Brand Identity Standards

The Montana SBDC Brand.....	4
MTSBDC Logo & Font Usage.....	5
ASBDC Logo Usage.....	6
SBA Branding.....	7
Templates.....	8
Email Blast Template.....	9

Marketing Mediums & Communications Standards

Network Marketing Mediums.....	10
Core Competencies and Offerings.....	11
Communication Templates.....	12-14
ASBDC Recommended Communication Templates.....	15

SBDC Minimum Marketing Requirements



- ☑ The SBDC service center has proper signage in the form of SBDC and SBA logo window stickers, distinctly visible within and outside office so clients can locate the center.
- ☑ The SBDC service center utilizes the most current marketing materials available from the Lead Center. This includes, but is not limited to, banner & table cloth display at trainings and events, event flyer templates, Constant Contact email blast template, and the SBDC online training calendar.
- ☑ The SBDC logo is present and prominent on all of the business cards produced/provided by the SBDC host.
- ☑ The SBDC host's website and print materials for the SBDC must display an immediately visible SBDC logo.
- ☑ The SBDC service centers must adhere to this SBDC Statewide Communications Standards & Branding Guide when producing regional SBDC marketing materials and communication documents to ensure proper use of the SBDC logo, color palette, SBA logo and funding statement, and other.
- ☑ All marketing materials produced must be approved by the SBDC Marketing & Public Relations Specialist before use.
- ☑ The SBDC Host Organization (contractor) will provide recognition that the Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC) is a funding partner in conjunction with the SBA funding statement.

The Montana SBDC Brand

Every Montana SBDC communication is an opportunity to express our brand. It is one more way we can build relationships and reinforce loyalty. By using brand standards, we can create powerful communications that build a distinctive and memorable impression, establish a consistent voice, provide practical, relevant and essential information, and ensure that our core values are the foundation of every message that carries our name.

VISUAL BRAND IDENTITY

Using standard design elements provides a distinct and familiar look that consistently builds equity and strength in the Montana SBDC brand. The “look and feel” of the Montana SBDC brand identity should reveal a key component of equity (the value of our brand). A clean, uncluttered visual identity provides clarity and consistency. By using design elements consistently, the value of the Montana SBDC brand is preserved with each use.

WHY BRANDING STANDARDS ARE IMPORTANT

The ASBDC Accreditation Standards *clearly state* in Section 3.3 Marketing and Promotional Programs:

“For marketing and promotional programs, the requirements for designing, managing and improving the programs must include a clear integration of strategy, image and common brand or logo for the SBDC that conveys the SBDC image and identity as a cohesive statewide network. Information, materials and signage must convey the identity of a cohesive statewide network.”

MARKETING PRIOR APPROVAL NEEDED

Each SBDC service center must seek approval from the SBDC Lead Center before investing in any secondary marketing materials not originally approved or provided by the SBDC Lead Center to ensure compliance with the SBDC COMMUNICATION STANDARDS & BRANDING GUIDE.

THE “CO-BRANDING” DILEMMA

Montana SBDC funding partners include the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), the Montana Department of Commerce and SBDC host organizations. Each regional service center shares a common challenge: how to properly allocate logos and acknowledgements of support on printed and electronic communication materials. As is the case with SBDCs across the nation, an approach that integrates the logos and disclaimers associated with funding partners needs to be used.

Depending on the media (print vs. electronic), and type of document (brochure, flyer, poster, stationery, business cards, signage, advertising, newsletters, web pages, presentations, etc.) the size and placement of the appropriate logos and disclaimers will vary.

As a general rule, the position of the logos should be the Montana SBDC logo in a primary position, the SBDC host organization logo in a secondary position, the SBA logo and/or disclaimer in a tertiary position, followed by other partners and sponsors as appropriate.

MTSBDC Logo & Font Usage

The approved version of the Montana SBDC logo, as well as the accredited member seals, are available in Dropbox.



LOGO USAGE

1. The logo must be legible; it cannot be reduced in size so that it hampers readability. The logo must not be reduced to smaller than a width of 1.25 inches in print media or a width of 90 pixels in electronic media.
2. The logo must be reduced or enlarged TO SCALE. Do not distort height or width.
3. The logo may not be altered in any way from its original design.
4. The logo may be used by itself or with the accreditation seal additionally displayed to the right of the logo.
5. The logo with the words “Accredited Member” above “Montana” is the preferred logo for usage, however you may use the logo without it if space is an issue on your publication.
6. The logo must not carry a “white box” around it when applied to a colored background. There are logos without transparent backgrounds uploaded to dropbox for use on colored backgrounds.

TYPOGRAPHY

HELVETICA is the current font being utilized by the Montana Department of Commerce and thus the SBDC Lead Center in the creation of headers and title communication text. If unavailable, ARIAL may be substituted.

BERTHOLD AKZIDENZ GROTESK SUPER and BERTHOLD AKZIDENZ GROTESK REGULAR are the fonts used in the SBDC logo. These fonts may be used for accent text.

COLOR PALETTE

To ensure the consistency of our visual identity, specifications for each color used in the America’s SBDC logos are provided for use in print [Pantone and CMYK values] and electronic applications [RGB values]. The correct use of this color palette with the logo is essential to the success of the brand’s recognition.

SBDC Red

Pantone 193
CMYK 0/100/63/13

SBDC Blue

Pantone 282
CMYK 100/68/0/54

Gray (3-color logo)

Pantone Cool Gray 7
CMYK 0/0/0/37

ASBDC Logo Usage

Logo Usage

http://americassbdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Brand_Guidelines3.pdf

3.1 Minimum Size Requirements

To ensure that the America's SBDC logo is large enough to be easily recognized, it must not be reduced smaller than a **width of 1.25 inches** in print media or a **width of 90 pixels** for electronic media. These are minimum size requirements only; the logo should be used larger in every possible instance.

The logo may not be altered in any way from its original design.

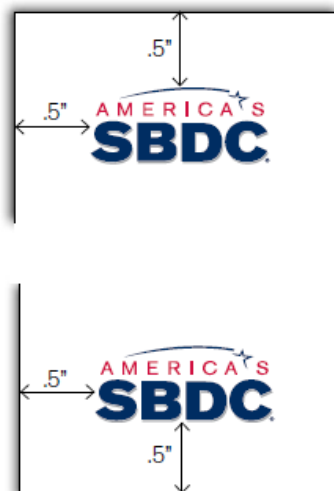
3.2 Area of Isolation

To preserve the logo's integrity, always maintain a minimum clear space around the logo. This clear space isolates the logo from competing text (i.e. taglines and affiliations such as "PTAC") and graphic elements such as other logos, copy, photography or background patterns that may divert attention. The minimum clear space for the America's SBDC logo is defined as the height of the "A" in the word "America's" in the logo. This minimum space should be maintained on all sides of the logo when the logo is proportionally enlarged or reduced in size.



3.3 Placement Recommendations

On most applications, the recommended placement of the America's SBDC logo is either in the upper-left or bottom-left hand corner of the document or page. The logo should be placed equal distance from both edges.



3.8 Incorrect Logo Usage

In order to maintain the integrity of the America's SBDC brand, it is essential that the America's SBDC logo be consistently and correctly used. This correct usage will also ensure that the brand stakeholders and public at large experience a clear representation of the brand through all communications materials.



DO NOT
Change the logo's orientation.



DO NOT
Bevel or emboss the logo.



DO NOT
Place the logo on a busy photograph or background.



DO NOT
Change the logo colors.



DO NOT
Crop the logo in any way.



DO NOT
Add "glow" effects to the logo.



DO NOT
Present the logo on colored backgrounds. Use the reverse logo in this case.



DO NOT
Present the logo in "outline only".



DO NOT
Add "drop shadow" effects to the logo.



DO NOT
Reconfigure or change the size or placement of any logo elements.



DO NOT
Stretch or squeeze the logo to distort proportions.



DO NOT
Recreate elements or replace with something else.

SBA Branding



SBA STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

“Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.”

This acknowledgement of support must appear verbatim and may not be altered or replaced with substitute language. However, on materials with severe space constraints such as signs and banners, an SBDC may substitute “SBA” for “U.S. Small Business Administration” in the acknowledgement of support.

USE OF SBA LOGO AND STATEMENTS MADE ON MATERIALS

SBDC’s have two options for the use of the SBA logo and statement of support:

Option 1: Use the SBA logo plus statement of support immediately adjacent or below SBA logo placed in a tertiary position to the SBDC and host organization logos.

Option 2: Use statement of support only.

Either option must be present on all materials using project funds (i.e., federal funds, matching funds, and/or program income) such as press releases, brochures, reports, advertisements, training booklets and web pages. The SBA logo and/or acknowledgement of support may not be used in connection with SBDC activities that are outside the scope of the Cooperative Agreement. In particular, under no circumstances may the SBA logo or acknowledgement of support appear on items used in conjunction with fundraising, lobbying, or the express or implied endorsement of any good, service, entity or individual.

EDITORIAL CONTENT

Where an SBDC produces materials that feature editorial content, it must use the following alternate acknowledgement of support:

“Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. All opinions, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA.”

FACILITIES

The SBA logo must be featured at all facilities open to the public. Such signage must also prominently feature the acknowledgement of support.

TRAININGS OR MEETINGS

All notices, promotional items, brochures, publications and media announcements informing the public of events, programs, meetings, seminars, conferences and workshops sponsored or cosponsored by the SBA must include the following accessibility/accommodation notice:

“Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. Please contact....[contact information].”

Templates

Templates for SBDC Network usage are available on Dropbox:

- Powerpoint Presentation
- Letterheads
- Center Flyer Templates
- Program Flyer
- Cards
- More will be added over time and as requested






Presentation Title Here

Helena, Montana | MT DOC
January 21, 2015

HELENA
**SMALL BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

Presents:



DATE:
Month XX, 2016

TIME:
X:XX—X:XX

PLACE:
Venue Name
City, MT

REGISTER AT:
Web address

Event Title

Event body text and description goes here
addressing the who, what, why.

CONNECT ONLINE:

[facebook.com/montanasbdc](#)
[sbdc.mt.gov](#)
[twitter.com/mtsbdc](#)

Need more info?

Contact: Advisor Name
Phone Number | [email@email.com](#)
Address of Center



Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration and your host name goes here. All opinions, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance.

MONTANA
**SMALL BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT
CENTERS**

PROVIDING TOOLS & GUIDANCE FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS

WHAT WE OFFER	WHAT WE DON'T OFFER
<div style="text-align: center; font-size: 24px; margin-bottom: 10px;">✓</div> <p>Our expert Business Consultants partner with Montana entrepreneurs to create successful companies. Our no cost, one-on-one advising is customized to meet your needs in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Analysis Business and Strategic Planning Business Management Market Plan & Research Assistance Trainings & Workshops Entrepreneurial Development Start-Up Assistance 	<div style="text-align: center; font-size: 24px; margin-bottom: 10px;">✗</div> <p>Advising is by appointment only, on a first come, first served basis. Requirements to meet with consultants vary by center.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Licenses Business Name Registration Grants Loans Writing Business Plans or Grant Applications for You

LEARN MORE ONLINE:






[facebook.com/montanasbdc](#)
[sbdc.mt.gov](#)
[twitter.com/mtsbdc](#)

[mtsbdc@mt.gov](#)
301 S. PARK AVENUE | PO

Email Blast Template

Every center has a free Constant Contact account—this template is set up by the PR Specialist and centers send out their own event announcements.



Title Goes Here



Month 00, 2016 | 0:00am-0:00pm | Cost: \$00

Location; City, Montana

Event description goes here.

REGISTER NOW

Best,

Jason Nitschke, Great Falls SBDC Regional Director

Great Falls Development Authority

[Reach out with questions](#) or [schedule a counseling session](#)

sbdc.mt.gov/GreatFalls

(406) 771-9022



Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Montana Department of Commerce.



Network Marketing Mediums

Outlined below are external marketing activities service centers in the SBDC network utilize. Direction is set by the Lead Center and some activities are carried out by centers.

<h3>Website</h3>	<p>sbdc.mt.gov is hosted by MDOC and managed by the PR Specialist. Pages for each center are at sbdc.mt.gov/locations. Some host sites also have pages for Advisors.</p>	<p>A training calendar from Neoserra is embedded on sbdc.mt.gov/trainings. Centers are required to post upcoming trainings to this calendar.</p>	<p>The Invest in Success homepage is hosted by the SBDC site and managed by the PR Specialist (sbdc.mt.gov/investinsuccess).</p>	<p>New features are added consistently, including, but not limited to, banner ads, news articles on the 'news' tab, start up guides & other content.</p>
<h3>Social Media</h3>	<p>The Lead Center maintains the SBDC Network Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, and LinkedIn accounts.</p>	<p>Great Falls, Wolf Point, Helena, Butte and Missoula have sporadically updated Facebook pages. It is advised to not begin a new Facebook account because of time management and page competition issues.</p>	<p>Commonly used hashtags are: #mtsbdc #sbdc #mtsmallbiz</p>	<p>Linked In Groups are: 1. Advisors (Private) 2. Fans 3. Advisory Board (Private)</p> <p><i>Please note: Because Commerce is the host of the SBDC website, LinkedIn cannot be registered to us as a business page.</i></p>
<h3>Email Blasts</h3>	<p>Email blasts are an effective medium to reach client email addresses in Neoserra for marketing purposes.</p>	<p>Each SBDC must maintain and utilize their own free Constant Contact account with SBDC template.</p>	<p>Client lists must be updated in Constant Contact at least quarterly. Questions on this or on e-blasts in general are directed to the PR Specialist.</p>	<p>See page 10 for network email blast template.</p>
<h3>Flyers & Ads</h3>	<p>Flyer templates to market trainings & events by each center are located on Dropbox and must be utilized when marketing with flyers.</p>	<p>A generic half card flyer for the network is available on Dropbox and sent to service centers when the Lead Center prints them. Centers may also have them printed.</p>	<p>Centers may choose to run ads through a variety of mediums, but must send final proofs to the Lead Center for approval.</p>	
<h3>Other</h3>	<p>Business cards and nametags are issued through the Lead Center and given at the time of hire and as needed.</p>	<p>Press releases released through MDOC are written by the Lead Center and shared with service centers to also distribute through their host.</p>	<p>SBDC branded banner and table cloth must be displayed at all trainings, workshops and events that SBDC personnel staff.</p>	

Core Competencies and Offerings

Core Competencies

Financial Analysis

Business & Strategic Planning

Business Management

Market Plan & Research Assistance

Trainings & Workshops

Entrepreneurial Development

Start-Up Assistance

SBDC core competencies are capabilities that help us achieve a competitive advantage and are critical assets to our success. They differentiate us from the rest of the market.

When publishing our core competencies, use this list.

TRAININGS & WORKSHOPS

Evaluate A Business Idea

Profit Mastery

PeerSpectives (old)

QuickBooks

CoreFour Business Planning

Business Mentoring (Thought Patterns, Growth Wheel, Financial Matters, Marketing Matters)

ProfitCents Financial Analysis

FastTrac & NxLevel

Miscellaneous Conferences

Our expert level trainings and workshops also differentiate us from the rest of the small business consulting market.

When publishing our trainings & workshops, use this list.

Communication Templates

The following messages are intended for use on official SBDC documents. When creating SBDC materials, please use the appropriate messages for the corresponding party.

MTSBDC Tagline: “Guiding Montana Businesses to Success”

Core Messages:

“The Montana Small Business Development Center...

- ...provides a strong return on investment.”
- ...contributes to strengthening Montana’s economy.”
- ...achieves a measurable impact for entrepreneurs.”
- ...services are available statewide.”

“The MTSBDC provides...

- ...tools and guidance to help businesses succeed.”
- ...free one-on-one business consulting.”
- ...no/low-cost trainings and workshops.”
- ...gateways to other helpful resources.”

Current/Previous Start-up & Existing Clients:

“The MTSBDC...

- ...consultants value building personal relationships with clients first.”
- ...is with you every step of the way.”
- ...will give you honest and helpful advice about your business.”
- ...is a trusted partner.”
- ...ensures your business’ excellence.”
- ...is willing to go above and beyond for our clients.”
- ...are local consultants with invaluable knowledge.”
- ...cares about your business.”
- ...offers a variety of high level, applicable small business trainings.”

Potential Start-up & Existing Clients:

“The MTSBDC...

- ...is highly recommended by bankers.”
- ...consultants value building personal relationships with clients first.”
- ...has consulted over 10,000 Montana businesses since 1989.”
- ...offers the guidance, advice and business perspective you need.”
- ...answers everything you need to know about running your business.”
- ...consults you on shortcomings and gaps.”
- ...is a free business consulting service you can turn to.”
- ...will give you honest and helpful advice about your business idea.”
- ...is willing to go above and beyond to ensure your success.”
- ...are local consultants with invaluable knowledge.”

Staff:

“Working for the MTSBDC...

- ...gives you the satisfaction of helping small businesses succeed.”
- ...connects you with inspirational entrepreneurs.”
- ...ensures tremendous professional development and personal growth.”
- ...is a dynamic career where no two days are the same.”

Communication Templates, Continued

Resource Partners:

“Collaborating with the MTSBDC...

- ...enhances the success rate of small businesses.”
- ...helps you reach over 10,000 entrepreneurs and counting.”
- ...connects you with statewide expert consultants.”
- ...gives your organization useful knowledge on Montana’s small business community.”

Press/Media:

“The MTSBDC...

- ...is a regional source for new business openings, ribbon cuttings and successes.”
- ...professional consultants have their pulse on new employers, job creation and how business gets done in your community.”
- ...are experts on the issues impacting entrepreneurs in your region.”
- ...keeps communities engaged and in-the-know about unique, new and start-up businesses.”

Lenders:

“The MTSBDC...

- ...consults both existing and start-up businesses to ensure they are bank ready.”
- ...provides the tools, advice and guidance for entrepreneurial success.”
- ...has the difficult conversations with struggling entrepreneurs.”
- ...makes your job easier.”
- ...is a referral source for your clients.”
- ...is thorough, cooperative and bank compatible.”
- ...ensures every entrepreneur has the tools to succeed.”
- ...and banks are a solid public/private partnership.”

Corporate Sponsors/Investors/Legislature:

“The MTSBDC...

- ...provides a strong return on investment to Montanans.”
- ...strengthens Montana’s economy one new business start and job created at a time.”
- ...grows business’ bottom lines.”
- ...creates jobs, starts businesses, and produces big impacts.”
- ...consults businesses that may not succeed on their own.”

Communication Templates, Continued

ABOUT THE SBDC (SHORT)

The Montana Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) are a network of ten centers positioned throughout the state to ensure that residents of every county have access to small business assistance. The SBDCs offer free, confidential consulting and free or low-cost training to both existing and start up entrepreneurs.

ABOUT THE SBDC (LONG)

The Montana Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network is a strategic partnership between the Small Business Administration, the Montana Department of Commerce, local economic development organizations and the Montana higher education system. The Lead Center is located in the Montana Department of Commerce and supports ten centers around the state that provide free, confidential, one-on-one business counseling and low-cost training programs to small businesses and entrepreneurs. The Montana SBDC Network has been servicing the Montana small business community since 1989.

The SBDC Directors and Business Advisors assist clients every day with the preparation or fine-tuning of business plans, financial management, operations assistance, loan applications and marketing initiatives. SBDC training seminars cover timeless small business issues such as cash flow management, as well as new and emerging trends such as the use of social networking sites to market small business.

The SBDCs are dedicated to helping small businesses throughout Montana achieve their goals of growth, expansion, innovation and success. The SBDC Network combines the resources of federal, state and local organizations with that of the educational system and private sector to meet the specialized and complex needs of the business community.

Preferred Terms & Titles

Business Advisor or Business Consultant—The advisor at a regional SBDC center who is not the Director must be referred to as this title.

Montana Small Business Development Center Network—The official name for the collective SBDC regions and Lead Center.

SBDC Director or SBDC Regional Director—The Business Advisor or Business Consultant who is also the Director at the location must be referred to as this title. The latter is the preferred term so as to clarify the region each center serves.

SBDC State Director—Official title for the MDOC State Director at the Lead Center

SBDC Associate Director—Official title for the MDOC Associate Director at the Lead Center

Marketing & Public Relations Specialist—Official title for the MDOC position at the Lead Center

ASBDC Recommended Communication Templates (2015)

Are you looking to grow or start a business? Is your business profitable? Would you like to increase revenues?

Where can you turn when you need business help? When you don't know the steps to start-up, or how to access financing, or what it takes to attract new customers? When you have a dream, but aren't sure how to make it a reality?

Find the help you need with Montana Small Business Development Centers. Whether you're just starting out, experiencing growing pains, or ready to take your business to the next level, MTSBDC is here for you. Become one of the millions of entrepreneurs who have overcome challenges, discovered new opportunities and unlocked their potential with us.

-
1. Montana Small Business Development Center is for all small businesses.
 - All stages, all types, all industries – all across Montana.
 - MTSBDC is in your community, easily accessible in-person and online.
 - From restaurants and value added agriculture to technology to the arts, MTSBDC is ready to help.

 2. We are Montana's trusted small business resource.
 - Business has changed dramatically in the last 25 years, and your MTSBDC has been there throughout, helping small businesses achieve their goals and succeed.
 - Montana SBDC is poised for the future. We help entrepreneurs start and grow businesses, create jobs, increase prosperity and contribute to economy.
 - The MTSBDC network includes dedicated business advisors working in partnership with universities, economic development professionals, chambers of commerce, lenders, investors and entrepreneurs themselves.

 3. Montana SBDCs deliver results.
 - Businesses that partner with MTSBDCs get started, get loans, grow sales and prosper.
 - MTSBDCs have a track record of more than 25 years and hundreds of satisfied businesses.
 - MTSBDCs will stay by your business' side, helping you not just survive, but thrive.

 4. Montana Small Business Development Centers want YOU to be the next success story!
 - MTSBDC helps you to turn your dreams into reality.
 - The sky's the limit – from start-up to global success.
 - MTSBDC works with you to keep your business strong so you can make an impact in your community and on the economy.