



Guidelines for the
North Central Enterprise Region
Visual Identity

February 2010

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Introduction

The North Central Enterprise Region encompasses a diverse range of companies, organizations, attractions and opportunities. The logo is not the brand – but it does represent the brand. Over time, what the logo comes to represent will depend on the ability of all stakeholders to provide positive experiences and live up to the promises of the brand. People do not rely on logos to help them decide where to live, where to visit, or where to invest. They rely on what they hear from others, and what they themselves experience when they try to get to know a place. In other words, North Central stakeholders have to demonstrate, through all they do, that this Region is truly a place that is “Within Reach. Beyond Expectation.”

Most often, the North Central logo and slogan will be displayed along with a stakeholder’s own logo and slogan. The North Central logo was designed with this in mind – to complement, rather than compete with, the messaging of the stakeholder. Using the logo and slogan – and most importantly, using them correctly – is an important way to show stakeholder buy-in of the brand and a commitment to fulfilling the brand promises.

This guide is meant to assist with professional practices in logo usage and brand development. It is very important that the logo and messaging be used as intended, by those who have the right to do so. If you or your authorized agents/suppliers have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the North Central office, who will be pleased to be of assistance.

The Name

Unlike the name for a specific product, the name for our Region plays a different role than a typical brand name. Several considerations had to be kept in mind:

- Our name for the Region has to apply to a multitude of different companies and organizations, in many sectors of tourism and economic development.
- Both the words “North” and “Central” are strong, positive words with the connotations that communicate the brand identity expressed through consultation with the stakeholders. “North” connotes adventure, unspoiled wilderness, newness, resources and major development potential. “Central” connotes accessibility, connectivity, being “at the hub”, “where the action is” and “the meeting place,” which harkens to our historic significance.
- Given that North and Central have these preferred connotations, they also immediately identify the location of our region within Saskatchewan. To use any other descriptor, such as “Discovery Region” means we will have to expend significant investment, over time, before anyone will ever know where we are. This is avoided by the use of North Central.
- Our name will most often be used in conjunction with other brands, and we do not want to be in conflict with these. We are not replacing or rebranding any existing brands for any of our stakeholders. Entities within our Region such as Elk Ridge Resort, Town of Spiritwood, Batoche, Northern Lights Casino, City of Prince Albert or Prince Albert National Park will continue to develop and promote their own particular brand. We believe these brands would be much more willing to share their space with another brand that helps to identify where they are, rather than possibly confusing the description of what they are.
- North Central as a name has staying power. It will be just as relevant in 50 years as it is today. A different descriptor may grow tired or seem outdated over time.
- The place brand names that work best are those that concentrate on geography rather than mood or other descriptors. Names such as “Napa” or “Okanagan” are all natural names for a geographic area. Our Region has no such traditional or obvious geographic identifier.

The Name *(continued)*

- North Central is inclusive of all our stakeholders. We must remember that not all our stakeholders are in boreal forest, or by a river or lake; we are fortunate to also have tremendous historic sights that better fit under the “central” than the “north” descriptor – but work best, in fact, as “North Central”. Furthermore – and unlike a specific product or service – our brand development does not and cannot focus on one or two particular attributes.

Thus, our official name would remain as North Central Enterprise Region, while our trade name would often be shortened to North Central. (For example, we would answer our phone as, “Good afternoon, North Central.”) In the logo, the North Central words are prominent.

The Logo

The new logo for North Central was created with important parameters and considerations in mind. The process included an in-depth exploration of the brand identity of the region, which included consultation with the many and diverse North Central stakeholders. Eight initial concepts were presented to a steering group consisting of 12 stakeholder representatives with a solid understanding of logos and their purposes. From these concepts, there emerged one clear “winner” (chosen as the favorite by 11 of the 12 in the group, with one “reserving judgement”). This concept was then refined to its present, finished version.

Unlike a product logo, the North Central logo is a place brand logo, which means it must:

- Be applicable to a wide range of activities, locales, organizations and initiatives within the Region. It cannot, for example, be just for a northern tourist destination, or for an industrial zone, but for everything.
- Work with other logos that are much more specific. The North Central logo would be placed along the logo for an all-season resort, or for an economic development organization. The goal is that it not compete with, but complement, that logo.

As with any logo it must also:

- Be easy to reproduce, in a wide variety of formats ranging from a billboard to a pen.
- Work well in black and white, or in reverse, as well as in color.

Specifically about the North Central logo:

- In this case, using the shape of the province made sense – especially given that the Region is perfectly positioned within this shape. This allowed us to say “Saskatchewan” without having to use the word. This works especially well when used with other logos, as it will, because it serves a very practical purpose of showing where the Region is – and its strategic advantage within the province.
- The star shape denotes not one focus, but many, that together form a powerful and enduring economic strength. Each point of the star points to places within the Region, to denote the importance of inclusiveness.
- The star has been designed to have a more organic rather than simply geometric representation. It can denote a snowflake (all-season resort opportunities); a flower (nature); and of course the symbolism of the star as being “bright and powerful”.

The Logo *(continued)*

- The N letter, while denoting north, also emphasizes the north-south interaction that is so important to the Region. This is further emphasized by the small arrow at the bottom of the N. Within the shape of the province, the N is actually seated in the south, to further emphasize the centrality of the Region and the north-south interaction.
- The slogan – “Within Reach. Beyond Expectation.” – is optional when using the logo.
- The logo, overall, has deliberately adopted a more formal, “organizational” connotation, to emphasize that North Central is above all an enterprise region, an organized body that supports and develops the Region’s many diverse attractions, resources and opportunities.

Note: A Logo is Not a Brand

Is the Toyota logo a good one? What about Burger King? And what is the logo for the Okanagan – or is there one? Have logos ever been a factor in your choice of tourist destination? Oftentimes, we tend to overemphasize the importance of logos. There is also the mistaken idea that logos “instantly” have meaning. The truth is, logos – like names – have little or no real brand significance at the outset. The Nike swoosh became a powerful selling symbol only after years of careful development of the brand through athlete endorsement, shoe quality, and consistently powerful messaging. We do not buy anything because of a logo – but rather what that logo, over time, has come to represent.

What the North Central logo comes to represent ultimately relies on the stakeholders of the North Central Enterprise Region. Careful brand-building by the Region, done in the right way and for years, not days, will attach itself to the logo and truly define “what the logo means.”

The Slogan

As stated earlier, slogans are much more temporary than logos or names. However, some slogans have remained in place for many years. As long as it is relevant to the evolution of the brand, there is an advantage to staying with a slogan rather than succumbing to the urge to change it just for the sake of change.

The slogan will appear only with the name and logo, and never in isolation.

This slogan – or theme – captures the principal brand messages expressed during the brand identity meetings and interviews with stakeholders. That is, the North Central Region is the ideal place to experience and access northern Saskatchewan, while at the same time remaining connected. The branding consultation clearly pointed out the attractiveness of the Region as a place that is at once accessible – in terms of distance, technology and affordability – but also puts you in touch with nature and history. This slogan sends the message that you can come here and be welcome here – but that what you find will exceed what you were hoping for. The slogan applies as much to tourism as it does to other areas of economic development. Just as importantly, it emphasizes the unique juxtaposition of the words in our name, which tells people we are both “North” and “Central” – we are both “within” and “beyond”.

In the development of the slogan, several options were developed and tested with select individuals from outside the Region and the province. By far the most popular choice was *Within Reach. Beyond Expectation.*

Key Messages of Our Brand

The key messages for our brand are those which we need to emphasize above all others, because they serve to distinguish North Central. In other words, they are the compelling reasons why those in our target audience would choose our Region specifically over others.

The key messages serve to unify the stakeholders of the Region, while encouraging each stakeholder to continue to develop their own specific brand. The key messages of the Region do not contradict the advertising and promotion of any of its constituents.

Key messages need to be constantly repeated, but in many different ways. They need to be demonstrated as well as declared. They must also resonate with our target audience as being truthful and readily verifiable. Therefore, key messages are not meant to be slogans – but any slogan should reflect the key messages.

- **Hub of the North**

We are the main service area for northern Saskatchewan – the “north - south meeting place”. The phrase “gateway to the north” has been used for many years to describe the City of Prince Albert. There is significant potential, especially in the resource industries such as mining and forestry, for future development. The area is also the centre for many different government organizations, notably in health and education.

- **Saskatchewan’s Premiere All-Season Resort Destination**

We have a distinct competitive advantage in offering first-class, all-season resort destinations. Some of the province’s best-known tourism attractions – including Prince Albert National Park and Batoche – are located here. The Region benefits from being in the transition zone from prairie to parkland to boreal forest. The Region is easily accessible for visitors from within Saskatchewan and beyond. That, combined, with the diversity of attractions, makes North Central an ideal place for touring and vacationing.

- **A Canadian Focal Point for Aboriginal Culture, Advancement and Partnership**

The Region is home to Canada’s largest First Nation Tribal Council – Prince Albert Grand Council – as well as Muskoday First Nation and James Smith First Nation. Within the next ten years, Prince Albert is predicted to have the highest percentage Aboriginal population – 50% - of any urban centre in Canada. There are significant initiatives, planned or existing, being developed by and with First Nation and Métis peoples.

Key Messages of Our Brand *(continued)*

- **Affordable Choices for a Desired Lifestyle**

The growing number of retiring baby boomers who still want to remain active will find this Region attractive, and we are already witnessing those who have moved to the Region after living and working in larger urban centres. Another significant group is the “Next Generation”, also known as “Gen Y”, who share many of the same desires to be in a more natural environment, but still be technologically, and globally, connected to and in proximity to “big city” amenities. A major advantage compared to other places is North Central’s affordability.

The above key messages will be delivered collectively by the Region’s stakeholders. It certainly is not the intent that each stakeholder deliver all of these, but rather the messages that are relevant to that stakeholder. A resort hotel, for example, will focus on the all-season resort destination message; an economic development officer might focus on the “hub of the North” messaging, and so on.

As a general rule of thumb:

- Show benefit – not feature. In other words, talk about them, and not about you. Showing an aerial photo of your community might be interesting to you, but it means nothing to your target audience. Think about what your target audience wants, and show that.

Effective advertising is not bragging; it is not talking about what you are proud of. It is solving problems, such as, Where’s a different place I can visit to learn and experience new things this year? Where could I move where my family will enjoy a better quality of life? Where could I successfully start a business – or expand my business?

The major benefits of the Region are expressed when we:

- Show people experiencing things – doing, enjoying, succeeding. Avoid static shots.
- Be specific and focus on the unique. A photo of a lake at sunset is beautiful, but does it compel anyone to visit your specific lake? This is where you can distinguish yourself from the cliché, by showing people experiencing your lake, for example.
- Periodically review this Guide and the North Central Branding Report. This will help to keep you focused and consistent in your messaging. The more you learn about place branding, the better!

Design Guidelines

By necessity, some of the terms in this guide are technical. However, they will be easily understood by qualified printers, the media and graphic designers, who should observe the guidelines and not attempt to otherwise alter North Central's visual identity or any of its elements. Any questions should be directed to the North Central office, who will be pleased to provide assistance.



North Central Enterprise Region Logo Standards and Production Guidelines

Clear Space

The logo is intended to stand alone. If possible, the area around the logo indicated by the grid should be clear of any other printing, as shown at the right. The grid is never shown. No other graphics, type, or illustrations should enter the clear space.

To ensure standardization, do not modify the logo by adding type or altering the proportions of the design. No variations on the arrangements of the components should be used. Only use the North Central Enterprise Region logo in the formats shown here.

Colours

The North Central Enterprise Region logo colours are Pantone 349 C Green and Pantone 124 C Yellow. The Pantone Matching System (PMS) is used to ensure consistency in colour applications. Pantone 349 C Green and Pantone 124 C Yellow may be broken down into process inks, for process (four-colour) printing. The breakdown is as follows: C-100, M-0, Y-91, K-42 for Pantone 349 C Green and C-0, M-28, Y-100, K-6 for Pantone 124 C Yellow.

The logo colours should not be replaced with any other colours without approval, and then only when material limitations cannot be overcome. Black or reverse versions of the logo are also acceptable.

Reproduction

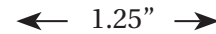
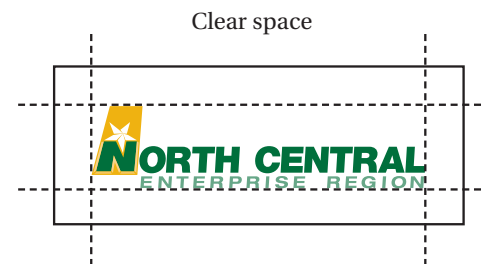
Always use official logo files to ensure good reproduction of the North Central Enterprise Region logo. Never distort or alter the North Central Enterprise Region logo. Use only as defined in these guidelines.

The North Central Enterprise Region logo should not be printed any smaller than 1.25" wide. Television and web logo reproduction should be a minimum of 144 pixels wide.

If black is the background color in reproduction, or if the background color is greater than 50% greyscale, then use the 'reverse' version of the logo.

Fonts

The official typeface is Helvetica Neue. Use Helvetica Neue as the primary typeface to provide continuity through all North Central Enterprise Region material. When Helvetica Neue is unavailable the use of similar typefaces (eg. Univers, Folio) is recommended.



Design Guidelines *(continued)*

Primary Option for Footer

The footer is a solid white curvilinear shape placed in the bottom right corner of the document requiring the logo.



Although not a strict rule, an appropriate placement for size is 3/5's of a page or advertisement width.

Secondary Option for Footer

This is to be used if the document the footer is to be placed on a white background. The coloured line delineates between the document content and the clear space for the logo.



Although not a strict rule, an appropriate placement for size is 3/5's of a page or advertisement width.

Tertiary Option for Footer

This is to be used if the document the footer is to be placed on has busy graphics or where a solid white shape might be distracting



Although not a strict rule, an appropriate placement for size is 3/5's of a page or advertisement width.

Design Guidelines *(continued)*

Primary Option for Header

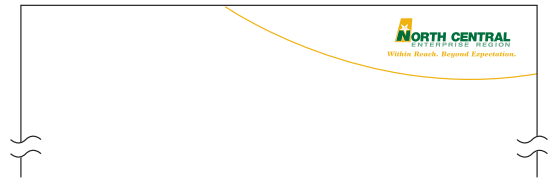
The header is a solid white curvilinear shape placed in the top right corner of the document requiring the logo.



Although not a strict rule, an appropriate placement for size is 3/5's of a page or advertisement width.

Secondary Option for Header

This is to be used if the document the header is to be placed on has a white background. The coloured line delineates between the document content and the clear space for the logo.



Although not a strict rule, an appropriate placement for size is 3/5's of a page or advertisement width.

Images

In the Branding Report and elsewhere, we emphasize the four Key Messages of the brand (see pp. 7-8) that stakeholders need to deliver. Each of the stakeholders can do this in their own way, and obviously some will concentrate on one key message over another. By “delivering the key message” we do not mean repeating the wording – but rather demonstrating, through experiences, etc., the reality of the key message.

The Four Key Messages are:

- The Hub of the North
- Saskatchewan’s Premier All-Season Resort Destination
- A Canadian Focal Point for Aboriginal Culture, Advancement and Partnership
- Affordable Choices for A Desired Lifestyle



Images *(continued)*

IMAGE IDEAS:

- Show people experiencing one of the four Key Messages
- Photos need to be welcoming, inviting, intriguing – “drawing you in”.
- Concentrate on activity, movement – positive engagement.
- Our target audience needs to be able to see themselves “in the picture”.
- Avoid the cliché “northern” shot
- Remember, also, that this Region has ALL TOPOGRAPHY – rolling parkland, farmland, and northern forest. It is in what is called the transition zone, from prairie to boreal forest.
- The area is also rich in history – Batoche is in the Region. The whole “western” appeal is big as well.
- Show all seasons – not just summer.



Sample North Central Advertisements

Attention

Interest

Desire

Action



Experience
the true north – strong and free.

**TrueNorth
LODGE**

One visit to TrueNorth Lodge will change your view of the world, and of yourself. No matter what the season, it's yours to enjoy. Try snowshoeing in the winter moonlight; birdwatching in spring; fishing and camping in summer; and hiking the glorious autumn trails.

For more information, visit www.truenorthlodge.com, or call us at 0-000-000-0000.

NORTH CENTRAL
ENTERPRISE REGION
Within Reach. Beyond Expectation.

Sample North Central Advertisements *(continued)*

This sample advertisement illustrates the elements of an effective print advertisement for a stakeholder in North Central. While you can vary from this format and style, you should ensure that the general principles are followed.

ATTENTION

Effective graphics draw attention to the advertisement and grab attention. People looking at magazines, web sites or any media are in their “hunting and gathering” mode. They are scanning the landscape, trying to pick out things that will address their needs.

Would you rather look at a photo of an empty ski slope, or of people skiing on that slope? A good photograph should show people experiencing something and help to tell a story – rather than just a static shot such as scenery. (For example, rather than show a picture of a forest, show a picture of a family enjoying a picnic in the forest.) Remember that people, and especially faces, have the strongest appeal and interest for any reader. Humans like looking at other humans, especially those with interesting or attractive features, and doing interesting things.

One more note: It is better to show one strong image rather than a collage. Clean, simple advertisements are more effective than cluttered disorganized attempts to cram everything into a limited space. The purpose of an advertisement is not to tell the whole story, but rather to motivate people to find out more. This is especially true now that web sites have made it easier than ever to follow up on what interests you.

INTEREST

The headline needs to relate to the graphic and present a benefit to the reader. Talk about what your intended audience is looking for, rather than just speaking about yourself. The headline must motivate and intrigue the reader sufficiently to read the body copy (text).

If you do not intend to have your name used prominently elsewhere in the advertisement (as is the case with our example), then it is always a good idea to include your name in the headline.

DESIRE

The body copy should explain the headline by expanding on the promise to the reader. This is where you need to keep in mind the four Key Messages of the Region, and see how you can deliver at least one of the Key Messages in your own words. In this example, the Key Message is “Saskatchewan’s premiere all-season resort destination.”

ACTION

End with a call to action. Once the reader is motivated, how can they act on their interest?

Sample North Central Advertisements *(continued)*

The North Central Visual Identity

The curves in the advertisement add interest and are a deliberate design technique for North Central's advertising. Again, keep in mind that the sample advertisements are illustrations rather than strict templates. Depending on your design talent, the sample advertisements are open to variations by the individual stakeholder.

The North Central logo and slogan should appear smaller than a stakeholder's logo/name, and as a rule should be placed as illustrated, in the bottom right-hand corner. The logo is meant to complement, rather than compete with, the brand identities of our stakeholders.

Sample North Central Advertisements *(continued)*



Illustration of a full page, 1 colour advertisement (not actual size)

This example uses a tertiary footer placed on busy graphics, where a solid white shape might be distracting. This also demonstrates using a single spot colour for print materials.

Sample North Central Advertisements *(continued)*



Experience
the true north – strong and free.

One visit to TrueNorth Lodge will change your view of the world, and of yourself. No matter what the season, it's yours to enjoy. Try snowshoeing in the winter moonlight; birdwatching in spring; fishing and camping in summer; and hiking the glorious autumn trails.

For more information, visit www.truenorthlodge.com, or call us at 0-000-000-0000.

**TrueNorth
LODGE**

NORTH CENTRAL
ENTERPRISE REGION
Within Reach. Beyond Expectation.

Illustration of a half page advertisement (not actual size)

This example uses the primary footer option. It is a solid white curvilinear shape placed in the bottom right corner of the document displaying the logo.

Sample North Central Advertisements *(continued)*



Illustration of a horizontal B&W advertisement (not actual size)

This example uses the secondary footer option. The solid line delineates between the document content and the clear space for the logo. The background image in this example isn't busy enough to warrant use of the primary or tertiary footers.

Sample North Central Advertisements *(continued)*

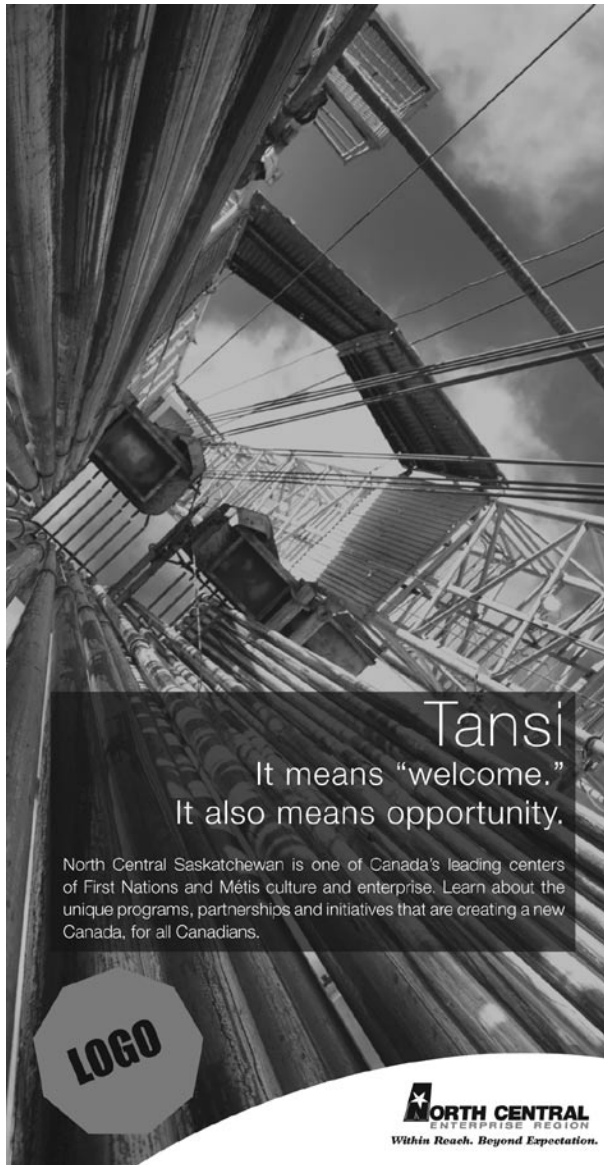


Illustration of a vertical B&W advertisement (not actual size)

This example uses a tertiary footer placed on busy graphics.

Sample North Central Billboards



Illustration of a horizontal billboard (not actual size)

This example uses the secondary footer option placed on a white background. The coloured line delineates between the document content and the clear space for the logo.

Sample North Central Billboards *(continued)*



Illustration vertical billboard (not actual size)

This example uses the secondary footer option placed on a white background. The coloured line delineates between the document content and the clear space for the logo.

Improper Usage

Do not place the logo in a shape. _____



Do not compress the logo. _____



Do not extend the image. _____



Do not skew the image. _____



Do not extract the icon. _____



Do not add elements to logo. _____



Do not change colour of logo. _____



If unsure, contact North Central to receive specific instructions on how to use the logo.

