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ARE LOST.

9 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE WAYFINDING

STRATEGY. DESIGN.

WHAT IS WAYFINDING?

Often, signage is confused for wayfinding. While signage is an important component of any wayfinding system, effective wayfinding is a much broader concept. Done effectively, it incorporates architectural design, surfaces, finishes, landmarks, lighting and signage to make buildings and public spaces easier to navigate and easier to use.

At its essence, wayfinding is about helping people get from where they are to where they want to go. Quickly and easily.

At its best, it enhances the brand experience and creates return visitors.

CREATING EFFECTIVE AND DISTINCTIVE WAYFINDING

PROCESS

Engaging the wayfinding design consultant early in the architectural process is important to successful wayfinding within any building or public space.

A successful program comprises four phases:

1. Strategy – site research and analysis, interviews, overall strategy development
 2. Design – system design, initial cost estimates for implementation
 3. Documentation – sign location and messaging, preparation of bid documents
 4. Implementation – bid submittal support, fabrication and installation
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NINE TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE WAYFINDING

1. BE MEMORABLE.

Position memorable landmarks at key decision points. They function as easy reference points for visitors and brand stewards.

2. BE CLEAR.

Use simple language that's easily understood.

3. BE TACTILE.

Use varied floor coverings and architectural finishes to distinguish primary traffic areas, public areas and private areas.

4. BE BRIGHT.

Avoid subtle corporate color palettes. Look for high contrast color combinations to aid comprehension.

5. BE CONSISTENT.

Standardize names for locations and destinations. Establish consistent information hierarchies for all signage.

6. BE HEARD.

Establish audible sounds at signaled intersections. Utilize audible landmarks such as water fountains near information areas and key decision points.

7. BE SPECIFIC.

Utilize standardized "you are here" maps within the system. The most important component of getting somewhere is knowing where you are.

8. BE COMMON.

Utilize generally accepted and recognizable iconography where appropriate.

9. BE DISTINCTIVE.

Supplement wayfinding systems with environmental design elements that enhance your brand and establish your personality and identity.

SOURCES //

ARTICLES: @issue. "Can You Read Me Now?" Volume 11, No. 1, Fall 2005.

ONLINE RESOURCES: Signweb.com. "Wayfinding is Not Signage." John Muhlhausen. April 4, 2006.

WE ARE A STRATEGIC DESIGN FIRM.

No, not that kind. We don't work with blueprints, floral arrangements, industrial machinery or red-carpet gowns.

For over 35 years, we've helped create brands and the communications materials that grow them. We take a brand and give it a personality; a voice; a visual language.

WE MAKE BRANDS STAND OUT.

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