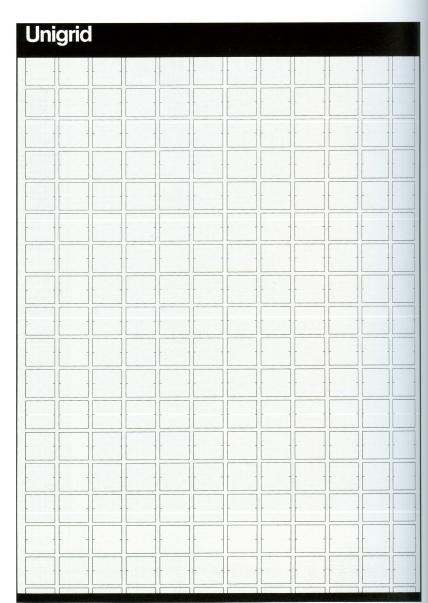


Ten basic publication formats are derived from the Unigrid structure.

The United States National Park Service (NPS) developed the Unigrid System as a design system to unify the design of hundreds of site folders, while bringing harmony and economy to its publications program. Unigrid (Fig. 8) is based on a sheet 965 by 1270 millimeters (about 16.5 by 23.5 inches), which folds into twelve panels that are 99 by 210 millimeters (about 4 by 8.25 inches). Ten basic formats (Fig. 9) can be derived from the Unigrid ranging from one-panel leaflets to twelvepanel foldout broadsides. Each side of a folder is treated as a unified graphic surface that is completely unfolded by the user, just as one fully opens a map. The fold lines and the panels they create become background rather than a dominant structure, because the typical folder user quickly unfolds it to its full size; users rarely open a folder panel by panel. These standard formats permit great production economy because paper can be purchased in volume in two flat sizes or in web rolls. Most folders are printed in five of the available formats, further simplifying planning.

Grid modules for the folder formats measure 7 picas wide and 80 points high. Vertical spaces between modules are 1 pica wide; horizontal spaces between modules are 10 points high. Horizontal measurements are always made in picas, while vertical measurements are always made in 10-point units or modules. These spatial intervals provide a structure for organizing type, illustrations, photographs, and maps into an orderly whole.

Helvetica was selected as the type family for the Unigrid System because of "its crisp, clean details and typographic texture that make it aesthetically pleasing and easy to read." It was also determined that Helvetica would strengthen and unify the NPS map series that accompanies the folder program. Other considerations are Helvetica's clearly defined hierarchy of sizes and weights with predictable results, large x-height with good line strength and consistent color, and outstanding printing characteristics. Text type is usually set in 8/10 or 9/10 Helvetica or Helvetica Medium in columns two or three modules wide (15 or 23 picas wide, measuring two or three modules plus spatial intervals between them). Text type is often



8.

The Unigrid was created by Massimo Vignelli (consulting designer), Vincent Gleason (art director), and Dennis McLaughlin (graphic designer).

10 and 11.

Copy the Unigrid on the preceding page onto transparent material and place it over these folders to study the underlying structure of the designs.

12.

The black bars and consistent typography on folder covers become a visual identification.



than indentations, is used to separate paragraphs. Captions are set one or two modules wide (7 or 15 picas wide) in 7/7, 7/8, or 8/9 Helvetica Regular or Medium, and may be either roman or italic. This variety of weight, posture, and leading provides flexibility to create a value and texture that complements and contrasts with other typographic and pictorial elements. Captions are set rag right, and this helps create a strong separation between text and captions, as do contrasts between text and caption textures, weights, and line lengths.

justified, and columns are aligned top and bottom

to create horizontal movement. Sometimes the last column will run short. One line space, rather

Major display type can be set in 12-, 18-, or 24-point Helvetica Medium and is often positioned 10 points above the related text on a horizontal band of white space, frequently 40 points high, running above the text. The variety of display sizes gives the designer the flexibility needed to create appropriate scale relationships between display type, the size of the folder, image sizes, and density of text type. The margin below the text type is always a spatial interval at least 20 points high.

The cover panels of all folders have a 100-point black band that bleeds at the top and on both sides. Titles reverse from this bar and are set in standard sizes of Helvetica Medium for park names with fewer than twelve letters. When site designation and location appear reversed from the black bar, these are set in 12/14 or 8/9 Helvetica Medium and align on the seventh grid module. Service designations are the same size and align on the tenth grid module. Cover panel type is always positioned 10 points down from the top edge of the band. This horizontal black band with its standardized title type becomes a consistent visual identification device for the National Park Service. Horizontal movement is accentuated through the placement of the type, the horizontal margins, and internal bars that divide the space into zones of information. These bars correspond

to the title bar and may be complementary colors, contrasting colors, or black. These bars are 25 points wide, and one is always placed across the bottom of the folder. Display type is sometimes reversed from the bars.

The Unigrid System emphasizes clarity by clearly separating the elements. Type seldom overlaps images, and maps are not obscured by picture inserts or overlaps. Neutral grays and beiges, used to create backgrounds behind text areas or unify groups of images, are part of a standard palette of twenty-four colors, created from four-color process inks and a limited selection of secondary colors. This color palette creates continuity between various park publications.

Planning layouts are created using computergenerated typography, images, map windows, and the master grid sheets. A typesetter with a contract to set National Park Service typography uses electronic page makeup to format and position type, rules, and bars, providing repro-quality output for mechanicals.

Standardized formats and typographic specifications enable National Park Service designers to focus on content and design, rather than developing formats and specifications for each project. The Unigrid System is flexible, permitting unique solutions appropriate to specific messages, while leading to consistent graphic excellence and a unified visual identification.

Massimo Vignelli was the inventor and remains consulting designer for the Unigrid System. The program gained its vitality because the original design team remained intact over the first dozen years, and included Vincent Gleason (chief), Melissa Cronyn, Nicholas Kirilloff, Linda Meyers, Dennis McLaughlin, Phillip Musselwhite, and Mitchell Zetlin.

