

2.5 STYLE GUIDES

Style guides in UI design are like detailed manuals that explain how a product or website should look and feel. They help designers, developers, and others follow consistent design rules for colors, fonts, icons, and more.

The need for style guides includes:

1. Making sure everything in the design looks the same and works well.
2. Saving time and effort by giving a reference for designers and developers to follow.
3. Keeping a consistent brand image by defining how logos and colors should be used.

The stages of creating style guides are:

1. Doing research about the brand and target audience.
2. Creating the visual elements like colors and icons for the design.
3. Making a library of reusable components like buttons and cards.
4. Writing down all the design rules and guidelines in a document.
5. Testing the design with real users and making improvements.
6. Integrating the style guide into the design and development process.

By using style guides, UI designers can create a user-friendly and cohesive interface that represents the brand well and gives a positive user experience.

Why do you need UI style guides?

For many reasons, developing a UI style guide is crucial when designing your digital product. If you are creating your digital product for the first time without any prior design, a style guide will help you streamline your design process and help you stay organized and in line with your brand design guidelines. Since your UI design is part of your brand design, it is good for you to have a consistent design, so it impacts your brand visibility. A UI style guide helps you to save time when making design decisions and prevent back and forth. Importantly, these guidelines also ensure that all your designers (new or old) understand what to include and avoid when designing your product UI.

A style guide drives your business success by creating positive user experiences (for example, if you have an e-commerce site, consistent branding on your site interface will make it easy for your customers and potential customers to navigate the site easily, find what they want, and

complete payment). Finally, a style guide is helpful when growing a design team from scratch. In addition, they come in handy when onboarding new designers to the groups, providing them with all the essential information they need to quickly adopt the look and feel of the product features, colors, and brand guidelines to the UI design.

Difference between UI Style Guides and Design systems

UI style guides are set rules with a complete list of user interface design's do's and don'ts. Unfortunately, it is often easily confused with the term "design system," different design guidelines, designers use. If you don't know what design system means, here's a definition. A design system is a complete list of design principles, standards, and documentation that guides designers and developers to design consistent products and increase sales. It is an all-encompassing design document that contains design style guides, design patterns, technical specifications, and component libraries to improve product and brand consistency. A style guide is an element of a design system that lists out rules regarding the brand and visual style of products. The critical difference between a UI style guide and a design system is that the former focuses on the product's overall aesthetics. At the same time, the latter specifies how different design components within the design aesthetics look and function.

Benefits of UI Style Guides for Users and Design Teams

A UI style guide benefits the UI users and not just the design team. First, it makes it easier for users to understand the digital product. Second, it builds coherent experiences that help users feel comfortable using your product. Third, adding intuitive features can help users interact with your digital products without reading instructions. Consistent branding increases brand recognition and helps users recognize another website or application developed by your company. It enhances brand loyalty. Creating your own UI style guide provides clear instructions or guidelines for designers to follow when designing the product's UI features. It helps to save the time designers will spend seeking guidance from product supervisors or leaders. It offers developers and designers easy access to a library of approved assets and elements that should be included in the products. It encourages and improves collaboration between designers and developers since they are all on the same page regarding design requirements. It reduces the stress and burnout that comes with creating suitable designs.

What should be included in a Style Guide?

- Typography
- Colors

- Iconography
- Layouts and Grids
- Components

Typography: The typography section of your UI style guide contains guidelines on the fonts to include in your designs. It should have the following: The specific font to use in all your product UI designs. A list of font sizes and weights to show visual hierarchy. Additional guidelines on the fonts as well as colors and links fonts to include in the design. It also states the font's compatibility on different browsers and screen sizes to ensure that it appears the same to all users.

Colors: Colors are an essential part of the visual brand, and UI design that sets the mood for brand expression improves brand recognition and enhances solid emotional connections with customers. However, your choice of colors can make or mar your user engagement success. Since cohesive color schemes are significant for ensuring consistency, communicating with users, and making the user interface attractive and engaging, your UI style guide must outline the accepted color palette and scheme used in the guide.

Iconography: Icons represent objects, symbols, or concepts with specific meanings universally recognized in a creative design. Icons are essential elements of UI that can be used to provide a simple and easy way to improve the accessibility of a product user interface. Usually, for UI designs, icons are paired with typography to explain or guide users on what the different icons used on the site mean and where they will lead them. In other situations, icons can organize similar functions like navigation, controls, tools, data, and many more.

Layouts and Grids: Layouts and grids are essential UI design elements that indicate where and how different visual aspects of digital products are placed. So, the UI style guide must contain complete information and standards for acceptable layouts and grids to ensure consistency of the design project and help users move from page/screen to page/screen. Also, considering the different guidelines available on different screens, devices, and search engines, including clear instructions on the different layouts and grids, can help your digital product appear the same across different screen sizes.

Components: The last on our list is the components you choose for UI designs and how they will all be displayed to enhance user experience and avoid confusion across your products. An excellent way to have consistent components in your UI design is to create design systems alongside your UI style guides to understand better how every design component would look. Although we have already listed some of the components above, it is equally important to include all the elements that would make UI design simple, accessible, and functional.

Examples of Style Guides

Pockie eCommerce Design System



Smart Home System



Mobile look design

