

# WHITE PAPER: A GUIDE TO LIGHT POLE BANNERS



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## Introduction

Light Pole Banners, a.k.a. street pole banners, are used frequently along streets and avenues in municipal areas, on university campuses, tourist areas, sports venues, malls, parks, and downtown areas. Sprucing up a bland area with these banners is not only more attractive, and it can also be great for business. People like to go places that are bright and cheery, and bright colored outdoor banners will accomplish that. They add atmosphere to any street or neighbourhood. It is a great way to drive traffic or increase exposure!

This white paper has been written to provide a guide for any client exploring the option of investing in light pole banners. We will discuss three key attributes of size, fabrication, and design. And finally, for your reference, we’ve included some images of what we believe to be some good light pole banners.

## Banner Size

The size of your street banner should be optimal for pedestrian and drivers to see while they are navigating through your parking lot. Drivers will look at your pole banner for two to four seconds. Be sure to make it big! Remember that a six-foot by three-foot banner will appear small from 100 feet away. Banners might look giant when you are standing next to one, but the visual impact shrinks quickly when they’re installed fifteen feet in the air and viewed from the driver seat of a vehicle passing at thirty miles per hour.

- 18” wide banners are best suited for smaller, decorative lamp posts around 8’ to 12’ high
- 24” or 30” wide banners work well with medium to large posts around 14’ to 20’ high
- 36” wide banners are sized for commercial lamp posts around 20’ to 30’ high

Banners typically come in the different sizes depicted in the table below.



Pole Size	Banner Width	Banner Length
Small	18”	24”
		36”
Medium	24”	36”
		48”
		60”
	30”	36”
		48”
		60”
Large	36”	72”
		48”
		60”

You can have single or double banners on each post. The double banners allow you to extend the size of your canvas, so you have more space for your messaging. It stands to reason that the hardware for a double banner is more expensive than a single banner – although it is typically less than 2 X cost of the single.

Consider the load rating of the light pole when making your single vs double decision. Most light poles will be strong enough to handle a 2 ft. x 4 ft. or 2 ft. x 5 ft. banner on both sides, but you’ll want to check with your local resources to confirm. The poles should be strong enough

to handle the wind load, like what a flagpole would be able to support.

## Banner Fabrication

Pole banners should last, on average, 3 years or longer. However, the sun, wind, and weather will affect longevity negatively, so professional installation is a must where wind and weather are concerned. Sunny climates will reduce the life expectancy of any pole banners, vinyl or polyester.

### Hardware

The hardware used for street pole banner is comprised of a few different elements – the base, the rod, and steel bands.

- Aluminum cast base made to fit square, round, or multi sided poles
- 40" long stainless-steel bands and aluminum base will not rust while keeping your banner secured
- Strong and durable  $\frac{3}{4}$ " rods with will secure your banner on top and bottom. These rods are typically made from lightweight fiberglass and will reduce the wind load on banner.
- Banners will have sewn seams and pole sleeves finished with grommets at the top and bottom for a secure fit.
- A 3" pole pocket size sewn into the top and the bottom of the banner will accommodate a 1" pole
- Grommets are 'buttonholes' in the banner that are typically metal or plastic. Cable ties are looped through the grommet and around the post to keep the banner from "walking" off the pole. They may not always be necessary.



Most pole banners are double sided banners, that is, the graphic is printed on both sides of the material. You can have single sided banners – they are less expensive alternative used primarily in locations where visibility is only important from one direction – for example, on a one-way street.

A risk with double sided printing is shadowing will occur. Shadowing occurs when you have a double-sided banner and the sun or bright light is behind it, making the darker portions of the print on the sunny side appear in the lighter areas of the shadow side.

### Material

You have a choice of materials for your banner – fabric, vinyl or mesh. These are all-weather materials designed for extended use outdoors. Each of these materials includes elements to mitigate the risk of shadowing on double sided banners.

### Vinyl banners

Vinyl banners come in various weights, most commonly for double-sided banners, the material weight is about 17oz. to 22 oz. and for single sided banners, 13 to 18 oz. Vinyl banners are typically the cheaper alternative. They are weatherproof, mildew resistant and UV treated to resist fading. Vinyl is the most popular material solution for light to moderate wind areas. It has a shiny, reflective finish with high quality, full color digital print. It is an **opaque white substrate which prohibits both shadowing or curling.**



### Mesh banners



Mesh banners are ideal for high wind areas. The material allows wind to pass through the banner, easing tension on hardware. These banners are typically made from 12 oz. industrial strength mesh vinyl & UV resistant inks. The fabric will be single-ply with a block-out print feature used to ensure digital imprint is vibrant on each side and will not show through. **The ultimate in weatherproofing and longevity, block out mesh banners are the tough but attractive option for areas with harsh weather or if you just want your banners to last longer.**

### Fabric banners

Fabric banners can be made from screen-printed fabrics or dye sublimation printed polyester fabrics. Dye sublimation printing of cloth banners creates vivid colors with a soft, textured look. A simple 3-piece construction using a lightweight “silver blackout” fabric will alleviate shadowing with fabric banners. These are the most expensive of the three material solutions – most clients will select the vinyl or mesh banners for an outdoor light pole because the textured look of the fabric is not visible 20 ft in the air.



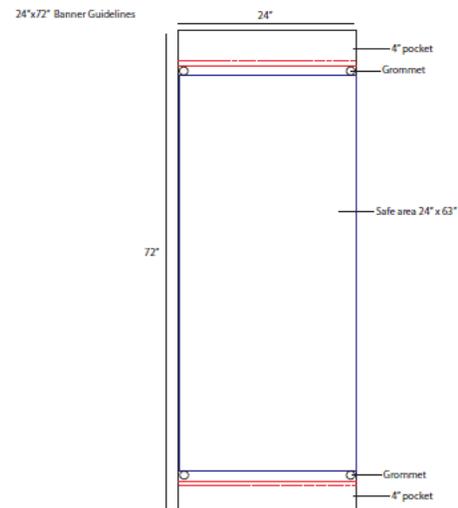
## Banner Design

Designing your banner can be a fun and creative experience. Templates are available that will help guide your design.

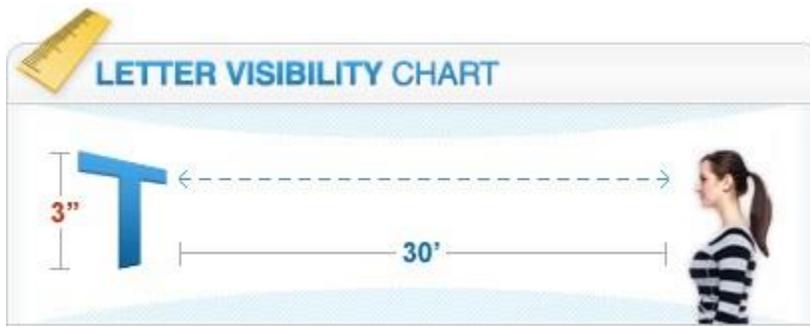
Pole banner signage should be designed for a two second view. There are some proven design principles that you can follow to ensure maximum impact of your graphics.

### Brevity is key.

If you say too much, you have said nothing at all. Many organizations fall into the “too much information” trap. They want to include sponsor logos, dates, times, phone numbers, and catchy copy. Apt and precise wordings that convey exact meaning of your product would have a greater reach. Keep your message short and sweet. Less is more — [Intuit](#) says a business sign should not have more than seven words.



### Large Legible Text



For every distance of 10 feet the height of the lettering should at least be one inch.

Create a hierarchy of information for your banner. The most important information should be the largest and the least important information should be

the smallest.

Depicting all text in capital letters detracts from the visibility of your banner. Using all capitals complicates and strains the eye and collapses the structure of readability. A 15% increase in letter height is required when all upper-case letters are used instead of the more legible alternative of upper- and lower-case letters with initial caps.

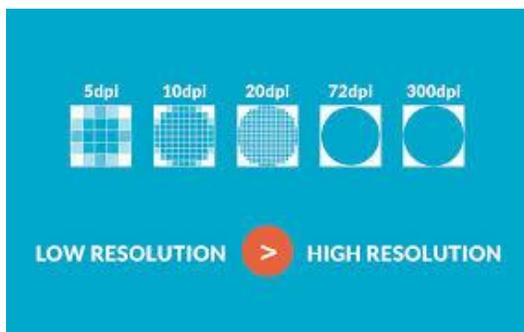


You also need to think about the font that you're using along with the weight of that font. There are a lot of different fonts out there and it can be tempting to choose an overly flamboyant one but when it comes to banners, you always need to factor in readability. Typically, bold sans-serif fonts



will be more readable than serif fonts.

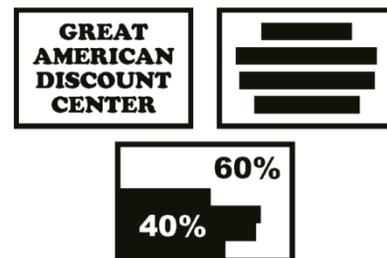
### Use High Quality Images



The aim with most large vinyl banners is to attract attention (often from a distance), you need to do everything you can to draw the focus of passers-by to your banner. High-quality graphic images can act as a focus point for your banner and therefore, will often entice passers-by to cast a glance in your direction. Not only do high-quality graphics help to draw attention, but they can also help to reinforce your message and/or communicate an emotion without the need for any more text.

### Negative Space

Negative space is the area of a layout in between and around the letters and images. The human eye works with the brain to see words as shapes instead of recognizing each individual letter. Having enough space around these shapes allows our brain to identify and understand the word/shape more quickly. The sign industry has determined a rule of thumb around use of negative space. A ratio of 40/60 is the standard for maximum legibility: 40% coverage with text or image and 60% negative space.



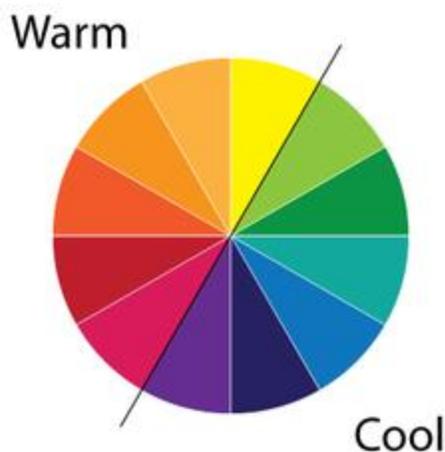
## Bright Colours

Choosing bright and vibrant colours that are trendy, significantly draws more attention from the crowd. Fewer colours are better: a dominant colour with proper contrasts and highlights against the lighter shade suits the perfect colour game.

The intended placement of your banner is likely to affect the choice of color scheme (or even the entire design) used for your banner. Ideally, the color scheme of your banner should be highly contrasting in comparison to its placement.

The amount of contrast in color of text to background also helps increase legibility. Consider speed limit signs which are typically black text on a white background. Although this may seem a bit boring it is the highest amount of contrast you can have from background to text. The more contrast there is between

text and background the better. Treating text this way helps it to “pop” off the sign and be even more readable, especially when viewed from a distance and/or while moving.

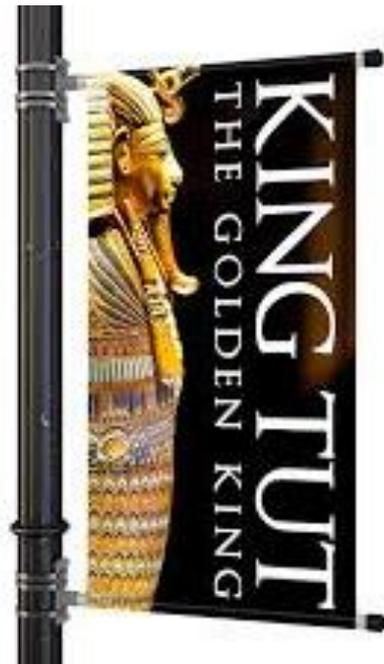


Colors can also be subjective, and have different associations in different cultures, so make sure to study your target audience when selecting your colors. Below is a list of colors and the kinds of emotions they typically evoke in viewers.

- **Red** -- associated with danger, passion, anger, excitement, speed, and love. The most powerful color and attractive to all audiences, also known to stimulate appetite. Use in moderation.
- **Orange** -- associated with vitality, happiness. Not as overpowering as red and it energetic, inviting, and friendly (it's a great color for a call-to-action button.)
- **Yellow** -- associated with humor, sunshine, optimism, energy. Touches of yellow can capture a viewer's attention and it's even more energetic than orange and red and should be used judiciously – too much yellow is irritating to a viewer's eyes because it reflects more light than any other colour.
- **Green** -- associated with health, freshness, wealth, the environment, growth, nurturing, and new beginnings. It's the easiest color on the eyes.
- **Blue** -- associated with safety, trust, clarity, serenity, intellect, formality, elegance, truth, refreshment, coldness, masculinity.
- **Purple** -- associated with luxury, royalty, extravagance, wisdom, magic, ambition, femininity, and creativity. It has a soothing, calming effect on a viewer.
- **Pink** -- associated with love, sweetness, femininity, and babies. The most feminine color.
- **Black** -- associated with exclusivity, evil, mystery, power, prestige, grief, and formality. It's traditional, and corporate and black text on a white background is the most readable color combination.
- **White** -- associated with purity, cleanliness, modernity, sterility, simplicity, honesty, innocence, virginity, goodness.
- **Brown** -- associated with nature, wood, leather, and humility. Balances out stronger colors, and good for background colors and textures.

- **Gray** -- associated with neutrality and practicality. When used as a background it intensifies other colors.

Examples Of Good Light Pole Banners



And that concludes our white paper on light pole banners. We have described the key concepts involved in banner design, fabrication, and sizing. It is our hope that this information will help you to create the right solution for you to brighten your outdoor space and help communicate your advertising messages.

And of course, [Image360 Calgary South](#) would be happy to help you create your light pole banner solution!