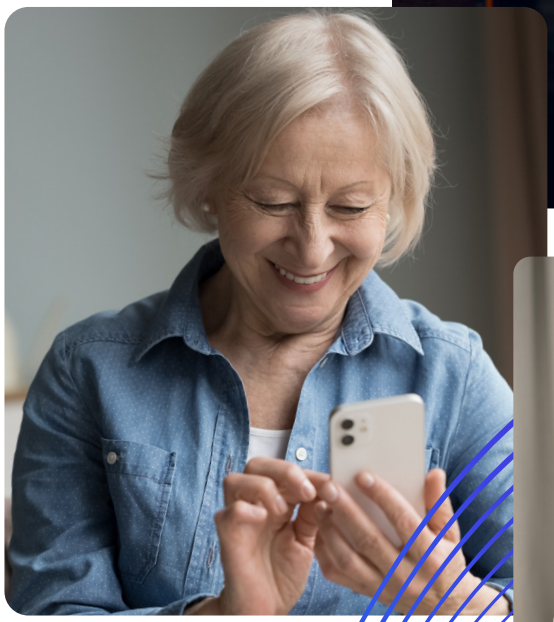
connectUS



Campaign Brand & Messaging

10.30.23

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Introduction

Our brand is the holistic representation of how we are seen in the world.
The ConnectUS brand is far more than just our logo or tagline.
Our brand is our core promise, our identity, and mission.

This document contains messages and tools to help us describe our mission, and to ensure our organization's external presence is aligned with our purpose and the way we want to be seen in the world. Our brand encompasses who we are on the inside — our personality and our values — as well as who we are on the outside — our external messages and our visual presence. The following guidelines will ensure we use compelling and consistent messaging and that we create an impactful and cohesive visual identity to ensure that all of our audiences understand our work and our impact.

These guidelines are a launching point for our brand to evolve and grow beyond.

Brand Personality

Brand Personality Summary

Our messaging framework and visual identity build on the brand personality attributes listed below. We present them here as a reminder of the attributes that ring most true to the ConnectUS brand. These attributes are not intended for public consumption, nor are they pieces of the ConnectUS official brand language and messaging. These should serve as a guide, a North Star, to help align on what we want the brand's message and visual identity to evoke when someone looks at our branded content and materials.

Our Brand Attributes (Tone, Values, Sentiments)

Trustworthy, Approachable, Energetic
Human, Purposeful, Genuine
Bridge Builder, Community Partner
Imaginative, Change-Maker, Impactful, Doers
Humble, Inclusive, Understanding
Passionate,Consistent, Reliable

Messaging Frame-

Introduction

The purpose of the Messaging Framework is to provide a suite of compelling messages for ConnectUS to use in our campaign to advance digital equity in Central Ohio. The messages can be adapted and deployed across different media channels as needed, and can serve as a foundation for communications generally, from media interviews to speaking engagements.

What Are Messages?

Messages are concise statements that communicate purpose. They should convey information and emotion, opening the door to understanding and moving people to action. Messages should be framed to introduce the big ideas and values that engage the listener and foster support.

Good messages **are:**

- True
- Succinct
- Sticky
- Believable
- Supported by facts but full of emotion
- Connected to people's core values

Good messages **do:**

- Inspire interest
- Invite people in
- Make a connection
- Gear up for more information later
- Make clear asks

Good messages **do not:**

- Explain a process
- Replace deeper accurate description
- Convey complicated ideas

Our Core Messages

Our core messages include the foundational language for advancing our overall goals across key audiences. They articulate our values, identify our mission and set a vision for what we hope to achieve.

Note that these are intended to be part of a generative and flexible framework – not necessarily the final messages, but a guiding foundation from which to adapt. Additionally, individual messages are not likely to be deployed the way they are organized below, i.e., in a list, but rather used as messaging principles that will be adapted for audience and channel.

Values

Our values are the bedrock beliefs and principles that steer how we talk about the digital divide in Central Ohio. These values are intended to be applicable to all of our key audiences, to ensure consistency and alignment in our communications.

Digital Equity for All:

Every resident should have equitable access to the resources, devices and skills required to thrive in the digital age, regardless of income or background.

Individual Opportunity & Empowerment:

Every resident should have equitable access to the resources, devices and skills required to thrive in the digital age, regardless of income or background.

Regional Prosperity & Connection:

Closing the digital divide will fuel Central Ohio's economic development, enriching the entire region by empowering residents to connect with the broader community, regional opportunities, and essential services.

Affordability & Accessibility:

Quality digital experiences should be available at an attainable price and on a variety of device types, focusing on low-income households and communities historically left behind.

A Bias Toward Action:

We strive not only to raise awareness but to inspire and mobilize residents towards individual and community action, fostering a movement united by the goal of digital equity.

Mission & Vision

Our Mission Statement articulates the core purpose, while our Vision Statement describes long-term goals. Along with our values, these ideas should be at the heart of everything we do. They're not just words on paper; they indicate commitments that drive our organization's actions.

Mission Statement:

Advance digital inclusion in Central Ohio and close the digital divide by ensuring that everyone has equitable access, resources and skills for full participation in the digital age.

Vision Statement:

A digitally equitable Central Ohio, where universal access to information technology ensures full participation in our society and unlocks opportunities for all.

A Note on Regional Terminology

We have chosen to use the term 'Central Ohio' rather than 'Franklin County' or 'Columbus' to allow for a more flexible and inclusive messaging framework. This reflects a desire to create messages that can speak to the digital divide not just within city limits, but to the broader region which includes both urban and low-density communities, each with their unique perspectives, challenges and opportunities.

Your Key Audiences Overview

KEY AUDIENCE #1

Residents

Comprises a diverse set of communities facing unique challenges related to connectivity, device access, and digital skills. See additional segmentation below.

KEY AUDIENCE #2

Priority Populations (Segments)

These specific community groups – or "Priority Populations" – face unique challenges in accessing and utilizing digital technology. Below we outline ways to tailor messaging to each.

- Historically Underrepresented
- Housing Insecure
- Older Adults
- Veterans
- Disabled
- Justice-Involved
- New Americans
- Students
- Low-Density Communities

KEY AUDIENCE #3

Digital Equity Coalition Partners & Peers

Comprises peer organizations, policymakers, business leaders, philanthropic entities, and educational institutions, all aiming to advance digital equity in Central Ohio.

KEY AUDIENCE #1

Residents

Comprises a diverse set of communities facing unique challenges related to connectivity, device access, and digital skills. See additional segmentation below.

Messaging Goal:

Increase awareness and inspire participation in digital inclusion programs.

Guiding principles when speaking to residents:

Simplicity and Clarity

Use clear, concise language that speaks directly to the core needs of residents, without technical jargon. The aim is to ensure that everyone, regardless of technological knowledge, can understand the call to action.

Friendly Tone and Voice

Maintain an empathetic and encouraging tone that resonates with the unique challenges faced by different sub-groups of residents. Use language that fosters a sense of partnership and belonging.

Highlight Benefits and Incentives

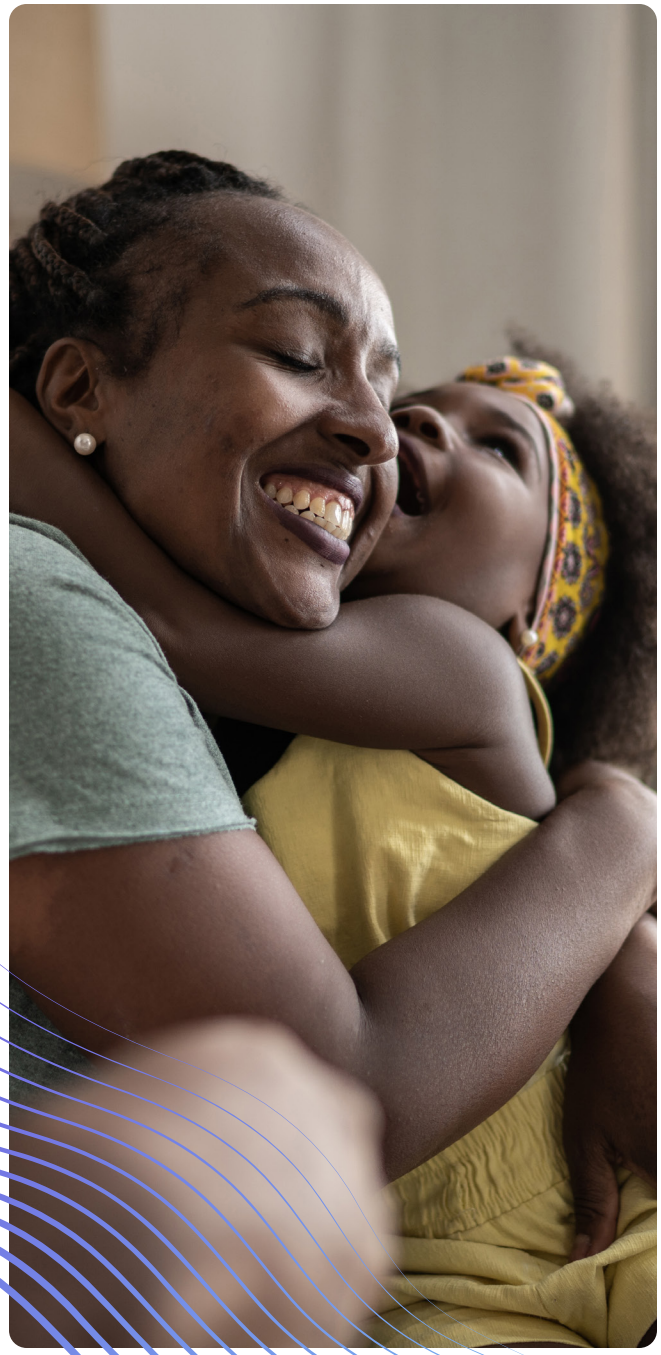
Emphasize the specific advantages, such as free programs or low-commitment training, directly linked to overcoming each group's unique challenges. Make the value proposition explicit.

Emphasize Collaboration

Frame calls to action as an invitation to actively participate in building a digitally inclusive community, not just as a recipient of services.

Targeted Messaging

Tailor messages to reflect the specific needs and barriers of each community group. Recognize their unique challenges and aspirations, and avoid one-size-fits-all solutions.



KEY AUDIENCE #2

Priority Populations (Segments)

These specific community groups – or "Priority Populations" – face unique challenges in accessing and utilizing digital technology. Below we outline ways to tailor messaging to each.

PRIORITY POPULATION

Historically Underrepresented

Those who have been denied access and/or suffer from systemic discrimination.

Unique Challenge:
Systemic barriers to accessing technology and skills training.

Example Solutions:
Implement proactive outreach programs to provide tailored skills training, device access, and connectivity within these communities.

Example Calls-to-Action:
"Let's work together to break down barriers to technology."

"Your voice and perspective are vital to shaping our digital future."

Messaging Considerations

- Use inclusive language that recognizes diversity. Emphasize empowerment and equal opportunity.
- Highlight community collaboration and support.
- Avoid language that portrays programs as requiring intense commitment or as endeavors that can result in failure.

PRIORITY POPULATION

Housing Insecure

Those who are experiencing one of several different dimensions of accommodation problems.

Unique Challenge:
Unstable living conditions making consistent access to technology difficult.

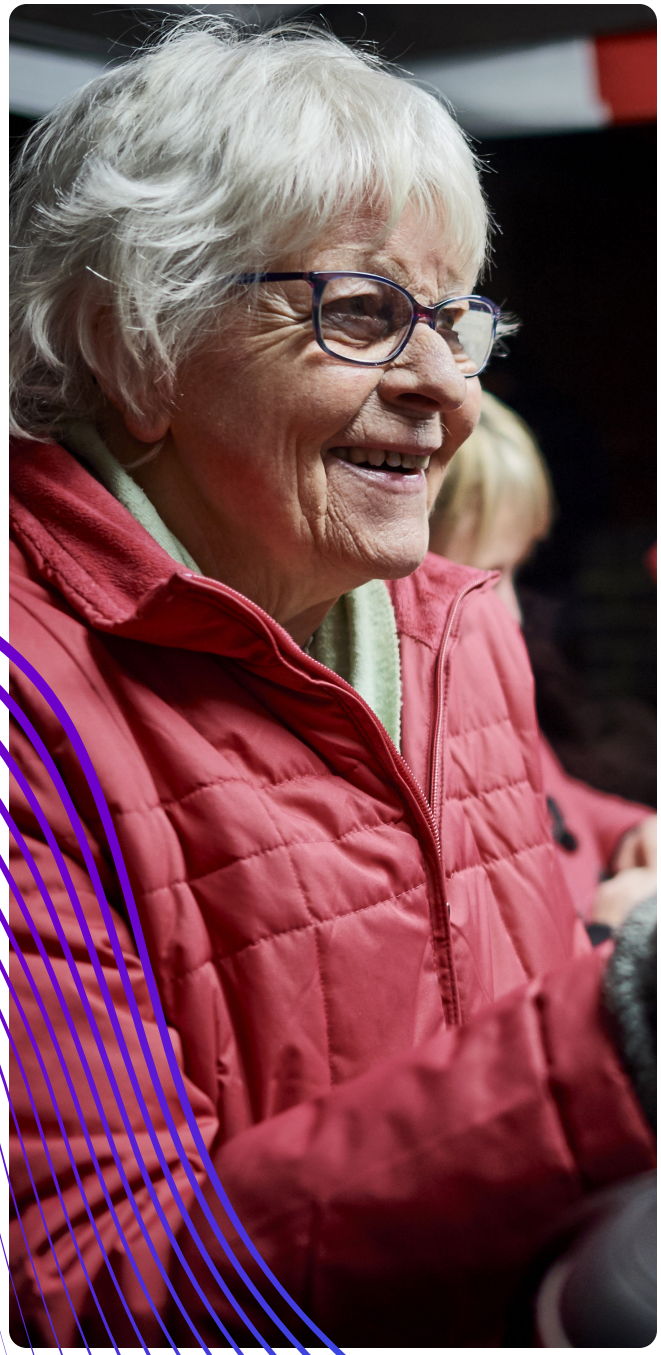
Example Solutions:
Create accessible community technology centers or provide portable devices with affordable connectivity plans.

Example Calls-to-Action:
"Access technology when and where you need it."

"Discover programs to help keep you connected."

Messaging Considerations

- *Stress the practical benefits of accessible technology.*
- *Offer assurance of consistency and stability in services.*
- *Use an empathetic tone to recognize their unique circumstances.*
- *Emphasize when programs or services are free.*



PRIORITY POPULATION

Older Adults

Individuals who are 65 years of age or older.

Unique Challenge:
Lack of familiarity or comfort with modern technology.

Example Solutions:
Offer specialized workshops and one-on-one assistance to help older adults become comfortable with digital tools.

Example Calls-to-Action:
“Explore the digital world at your own pace with one-on-one assistance.”

“Technology doesn’t have to be intimidating; join our dedicated workshops and learn with friends.”

Messaging Considerations

- Use clear and non-technical language.
- Highlight ease of use and personalized assistance.
- Emphasize connection to family, friends, and community.

PRIORITY POPULATION

Veterans

Those who served in the active military, naval, or air service.

Unique Challenge:
Reduced familiarity with current digital tools in use in the workplace.

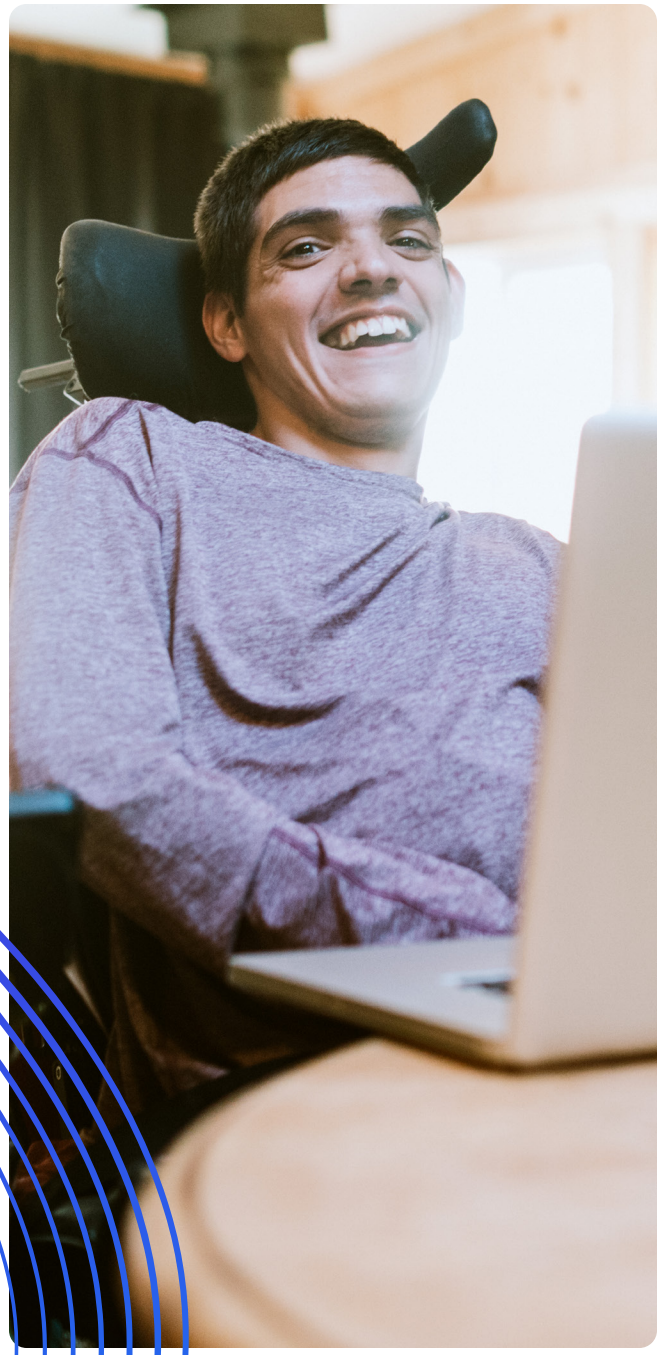
Example Solutions:
Develop transition programs that include targeted tech-skills training, tailored to match veterans' unique experiences and workplace needs.

Example Calls-to-Action:
"Supercharge your career with the digital skills you need."

"Get your skills up to speed with our programs for veterans."

Messaging Considerations

- Acknowledge their service and unique experiences – name and speak to them directly as veterans.
- Emphasize opportunities for career advancement and reintegration.
- Offer clear pathways to gaining new digital skills.



PRIORITY POPULATION

Disabled

Those with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Unique Challenge:
Limited availability of accessible devices or training.

Example Solutions:
Provide devices equipped with accessibility features and offer training programs designed to accommodate different abilities.

Example Calls-to-Action:
“Our devices and training programs are designed for everyone.”

“Accessibility should never be an afterthought. Discover technology for you.”

Messaging Considerations

- *Focus on accessibility and tailored solutions.*
- *Use empowering language that emphasizes abilities rather than limitations.*
- *Stress inclusivity and equal access.*

PRIORITY POPULATION

Justice-Involved

Those who have had interactions with the criminal justice system as a defendant.

Unique Challenge:
Stigma and systemic barriers in accessing digital skills and employment.

Example Solutions:
Offering dedicated workforce reintegration programs that include technology skills training, mentorship, and support.

Example Calls-to-Action:
“Take control of your future with new digital skills.”

“Your path to success starts here!”

Messaging Considerations

- Use respectful and non-judgmental language.
- Emphasize opportunities for growth, development, and reintegration.
- Highlight community support and collaboration.

PRIORITY POPULATION

New Americans

Residents from abroad who have recently moved to the United States.

Unique Challenge:
Cultural and language barriers in navigating the digital landscape.

Example Solutions:
Creating multilingual resources and community-driven support networks that foster digital literacy and inclusion.

Example Calls-to-Action:
“Join our multilingual programs to build new connections and skills.”

“Gain new digital skills in your language.”

Messaging Considerations

- Use simple, clear language, considering potential language barriers.
- Reach priority populations in their native languages with translated or multi-lingual messaging.
- Highlight opportunities for learning, community involvement, and interpersonal connection.
- Stress inclusivity and the welcoming nature of the services provided.

PRIORITY POPULATION

Students

Those engaged in PreK-12, vocational or trade school, and higher education.

Unique Challenge:
Low-income students may lack the appropriate devices, access or environments to learn online.

Example Solutions:
Establish partnerships with schools, local businesses, and technology providers to facilitate access to necessary devices and internet services.

Example Calls-to-Action:
“Level up your tech skills with our free training.”

“Unlock your potential – sign up for our digital classes now.”

Messaging Considerations

- *Refer to students specifically.*
- *Highlight affordability and assistance programs.*
- *Emphasize educational benefits and future opportunities.*
- *Use an energetic and encouraging tone to resonate with a younger audience.*

PRIORITY POPULATION

Low-Density Communities

Those who live in Central Ohio but away from the city center.

Unique Challenge:
Geographical distance and limited infrastructure limit the availability of reliable, high-speed internet access.

Example Solutions:
A direct mail campaign to low-density communities, emphasizing the importance of high-speed internet and digital know-how, and highlighting the available programs and incentives to get connected.

Example Calls-to-Action:
“Get connected for a better tomorrow.”

“Everyone, everywhere should have high-speed internet access.”

Messaging Considerations

- Use “Central Ohio” in your language to be more inclusive of these residents, as opposed to referring to only Columbus.
- Avoid terms like ‘rural’ or ‘country,’ which can be perceived as pejorative or condescending. Opt for “communities” instead.
- Emphasize that internet access is more than a convenience, but essential to personal and professional advancement today.

KEY AUDIENCE #3

Digital Equity Coalition Partners & Peers

Comprises peer organizations, policymakers, business leaders, philanthropic entities, and educational institutions, all aiming to advance digital equity in Central Ohio.

Audience Goal:

Unite stakeholders under a shared vision and inspire participation in coalition action to achieve digital equity in Central Ohio.

Guiding Messaging Principles for Digital Equity Coalition Partners:

Note that our review of your existing materials found that you already achieve your messaging goals for this audience. These are guiding principles for how to maintain your messaging with coalition partners over time:

Emphasize Coalition Action and Alignment with a Greater Mission:
Highlight the significance of collaboration, aligning individual efforts with the broader mission of advancing digital equity in Central Ohio. Showcase partnerships as essential to a movement that drives societal change.

Use a Professional Tone, Backed by Data and Research:
Convey both urgency and opportunity in an optimistic and professional tone. Support statements with relevant data and research, emphasizing an evidence-based approach to closing the digital divide.

Highlight Impact and through Storytelling:
Utilize success stories, profiles, and tangible examples to demonstrate how coalition efforts are making real change. Illustrate the growth and momentum of the movement, emphasizing the human impact on priority populations.

Frame Calls-to-Action as Long-Term Commitment:
Position engagement and collaboration as continuous and evolving, rather than one-off initiatives. Communicate that each partner's unique strengths are vital to the shared mission, and that the journey toward digital equity is a collective endeavor.

Visual Identity

Logo

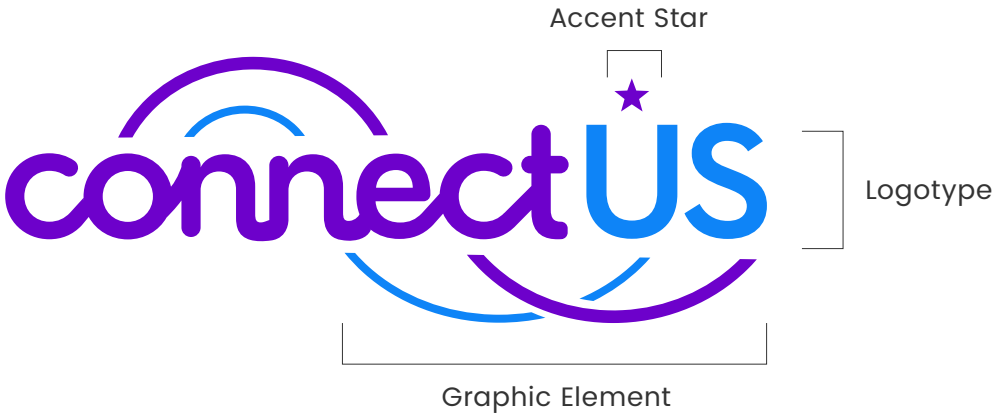
The primary logo lockup is composed of the logotype, the accent star and the graphic wave element. This lockup should be the primary logo used on all collateral.

The ConnectUS logo should primarily be displayed in sky blue and action magenta, as depicted here.

In instances of design conflict, alternative color combinations are acceptable, and outlined on the following slides.

Logo Anatomy

1. Our **logotype** set in a custom typeface.
2. The **accent star** acts as a connective element and a nod to the ColumbUS logo.
1. The **graphic element** is comprised of “connective” elements around the logotype.



Clearspace

The minimum clearspace allowance around all sides of the logo is equal to the c-height of the ConnectUS wordmark.

Logo With Tagline

This option may be used in special circumstances. The tagline is set in Poppins.

Color Variations

While the primary logo colors should be used whenever possible, in certain situations when alternate color versions of the ConnectUS logos are introduced, these examples demonstrate the correct color variations to use.

If shown on a color or black background, logotype should be white.

Incorrect Usage

The success of the brand depends on the ConnectUS logo maintaining a consistent appearance in all communications.

In order to preserve the integrity of the logo, the following examples illustrate how it should not be used.

Logos must never be placed on overly busy backgrounds or patterns.

Incorrect Usage

Do not change the transparency of the logomark or logotype.

Do not change the proportions of logo elements.

Do not change the weight of the type or change the font.

Do not use more unapproved colors in the logomark.

Do not adjust the positioning of the logo.

Do not add effects or treatments to the logo.

Brand Colors

The primary colors are purple and blue. They are accompanied by secondary colors of dust rose, light blue, lilac, and yellow.

The purple evokes vibrancy and creativity. In contrast, the blue represents balance, trust and innovation, reflecting our commitment to building bridges in our communities, to push boundaries of digital access solutions while maintaining a calm, empathetic approach. Together with the accent colors, this set represents inclusivity, digital connectivity and an exciting new future for digital equity in Columbus Ohio.

Tints of each color may be used to create color contrast and legibility.

Always ensure color combinations are accessibility compliant. Check color contrast here.

Primary

Dark Purple
Hex: 1D033E
RGB: 29, 3, 62
Pantone 275 C
CMYK: 53, 95, 0, 76

Purple
Hex: 6D01CB
RGB: 109, 1, 203
Pantone 2091 C @90%
CMYK: 73, 87, 0, 0

Blue
Hex: 0E84F7
RGB: 14, 132, 247
Pantone 2173 C @98%
CMYK: 76, 47, 0, 0

Dust Rose
Hex: DECEEF
RGB: 222, 206, 239
Pantone 531 C
CMYK: 7, 14, 0, 6

Lilac
Hex: ABB4FF
RGB: 171, 180, 255
Pantone 2716 C
CMYK: 33, 29, 0, 0

Light Blue
Hex: 79D7F7
RGB: 121, 215, 247
Pantone 305 C @75%
CMYK: 46, 0, 2, 0

Yellow
Hex: FFD856
RGB: 255, 216, 86
Pantone 116 C @78%
CMYK: 0, 13, 78, 0

Neutrals

Black
Hex: 000000
RGB: 0, 0, 0
CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 100

Black 50%
Hex: 808080
RGB: 128, 128, 128
CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 50

White
Hex: ffffff
RGB: 255, 255, 255
CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 0

Typography

Our digital identity consists of 3 typefaces Poppins, Noto Sans, and Roboto Mono.

Poppins is a geometric sans typeface. It serves as our primary typeface to be used for all materials.

Poppins is available on **Google Fonts**.

Noto Sans is a sans typeface used for copy in small sizes like body copy and captions. It is designed to be legible at small sizes and pairs well with Poppins.

Noto Sans is available on **Google Fonts**.

Italic versions of all weights may be used.

Roboto Mono is a monospaced typeface that naturally has a digital feel to it. It pairs well with Poppins and is to be used as an accent type treatment.

Roboto Mono is available on **Google Fonts**.

Italic versions of all weights may be used.

Primary Typography

Poppins Regular

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@#$%?&*(+

Headlines

Poppins Medium

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@#$%?&*(+

Buttons

Secondary Typography

Noto Sans

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@#$%?&*(+

Body Copy, Links, Labels, Captions

Roboto Mono

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@#$%?&*(+

Supporting Accents

Type Hierarchy

This chart demonstrates how our type system could be used. The chart is meant to convey how the different levels of type hierarchy work together.

Our typography choices are meant to achieve visual balance and flexibility across multiple brand communications.

This is one example of our type hierarchy system in use.

EYEBROW

Eyebrow: Roboto Mono Semiold 17/24pt, All caps, 150 kerning

Headline

Headline: Poppins Regular 60/60pt

Subheadline

Subheadline: Poppins Regular 30/33pt

Body Copy - Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore listor magsnsti et dolore magna aliqua. Quis nostru ut enim ad minim veniam quis nostrud exercitation ullam laris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate.

Body Copy: Noto Sans Regular 15/23pt

Emphasized Body Copy: Noto Sans Bold, Action Magenta

> "Pull Quote - Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisci, magna aliqua."

Pull-Out Quote: Poppins Regular, 15/23pt, Indented

Caption - Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore.

Photo Caption: Noto Sans Regular, 12/16pt

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore.

CTA Button

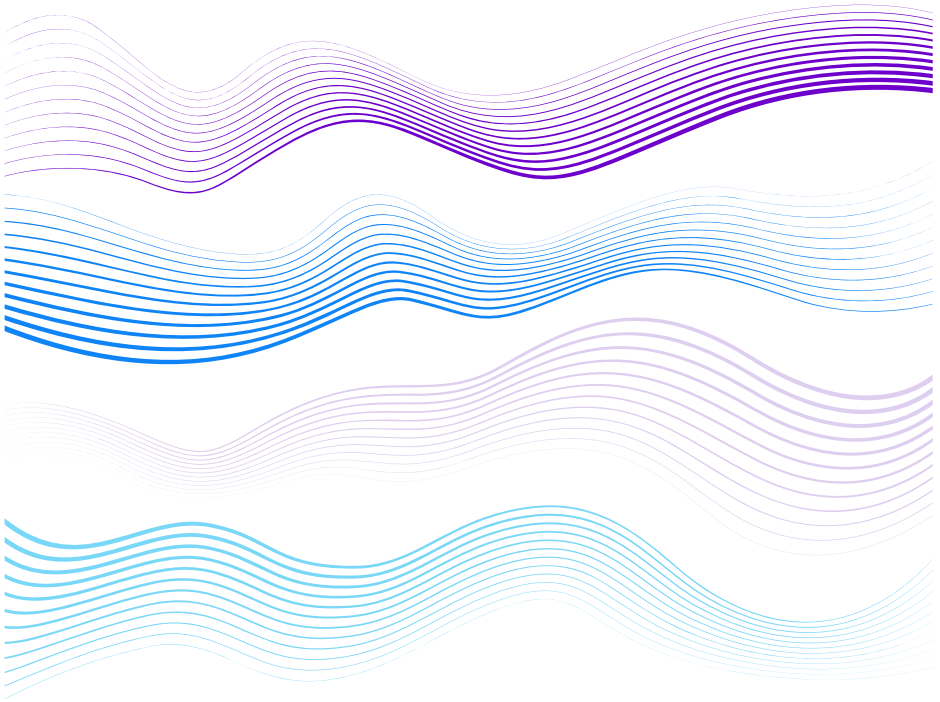
Call to Action Button: Poppins Medium, 28/26pt, Magenta Button with rounded corners

Graphic Elements

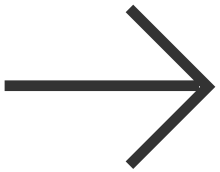
Our visual language includes connection wave graphic that may be used to highlight photography or as an accent element in the background.

Modern and thin arrow accents may be used for CTAs and to convey forward movement.

Interweaving Connection Graphic



Arrow Accents



Photography

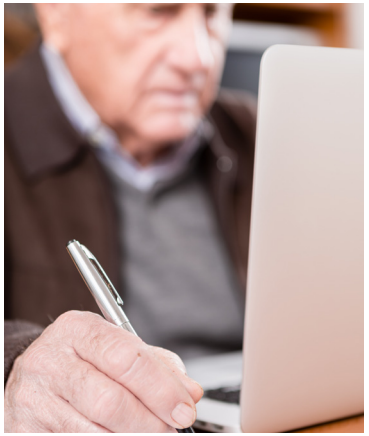
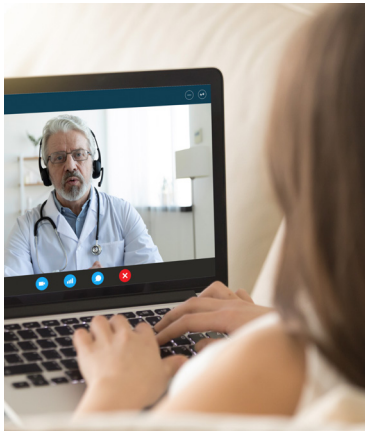
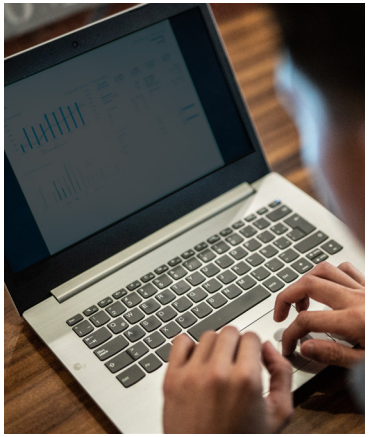
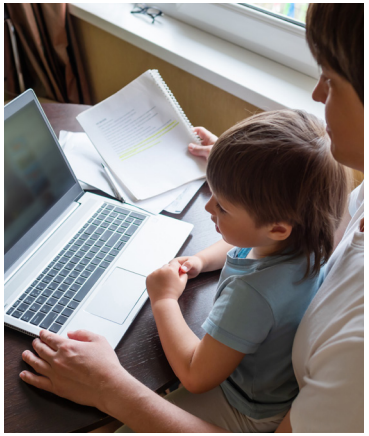
Choose photography that conveys our brand attributes in action. The photography we use should reflect our key audiences. The photography should be authentic, inspiring and positive.

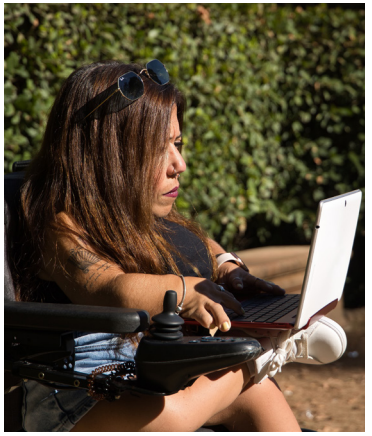
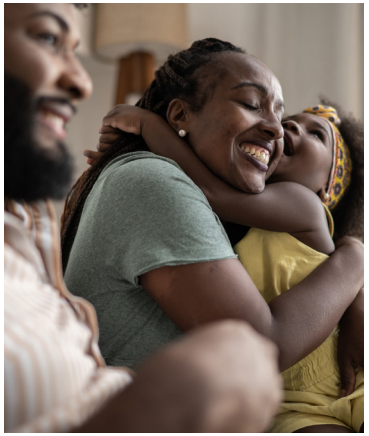
Photography should include a mixture of stock photography, professional photography and organic photos can be used.

Some color corrections may need to happen to clothing or backgrounds to ensure there is color harmony.

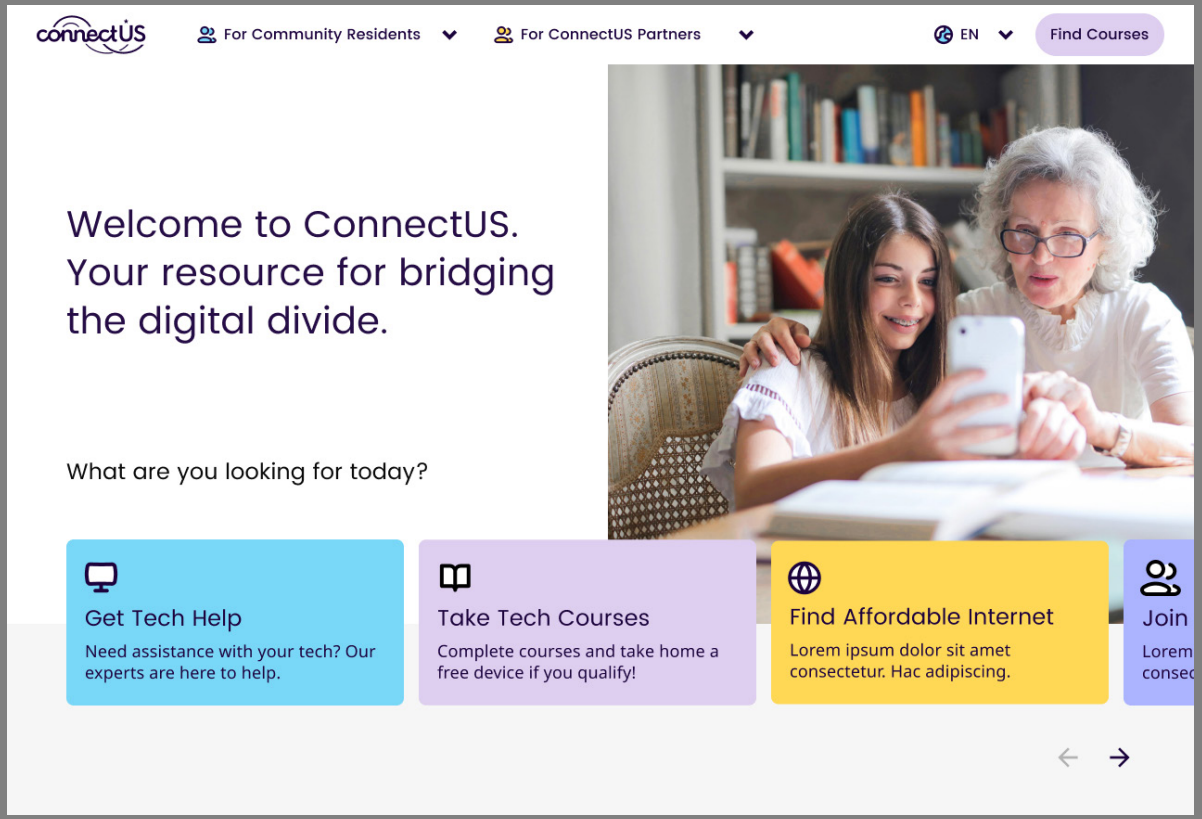
Show the diversity of Central Ohio.

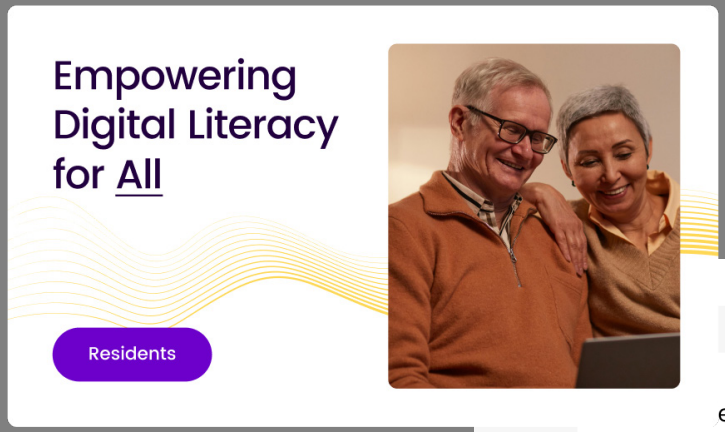
Stock images are okay to use.

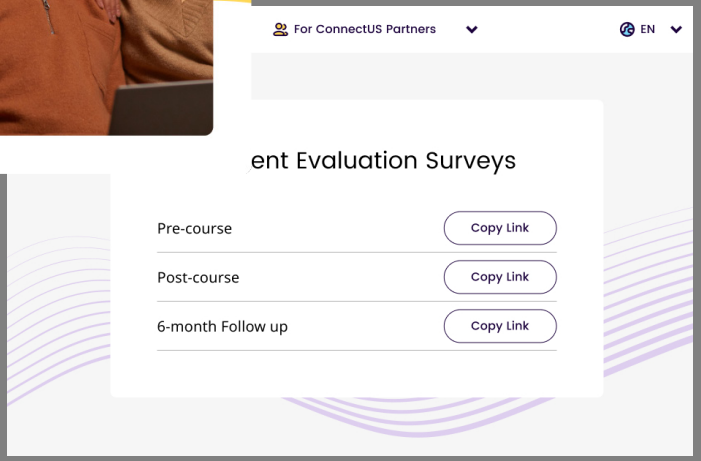





Brand Collateral Examples







Thank you!

Questions?

Contact: aam@SmartColumbus.com