



SOROPTIMIST
Best for Women

*Improving the lives of women and girls
through programs leading to social
and economic empowerment.*

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE AMERICAS

SIA Graphic Identity and Style Manual

The purpose of the “Graphic Identity & Style Manual” is to foster federation-wide unity and accuracy with regard to writing and design. To brand Soroptimist as an organization that improves the lives of women and girls, and to create a strong and consistent visual identity, all clubs should have the same look as the federation. Writing and design are two important channels of communication that not only affect the way Soroptimist projects its character, but shape the public's attitudes and behaviors toward the organization. Writing and design are fundamental to branding the organization's identity (who an organization is) and image (how an organization is perceived)—two prime concerns that drive communications activities in the majority of profit or nonprofit entities.

Graphic Identity

This graphic identity section provides guidelines on using the logo in all of the organization's visual communications. A consistent graphic identity system reflects an organization's visual tone—not only in terms of its logo, but the words, fonts, colors, and design elements it uses.

Logo, Tagline and Mission Statement

The official Soroptimist logo serves as the “face” of the organization. In 2003, SIA commissioned a major membership/marketing study to help the organization remain competitive in today's climate. Kerr-Downs Research provided SIA with several recommendations, one of which was to establish a firm branding strategy in order to boost awareness of SIA and its work. Establishing and reinforcing a branding strategy is the cornerstone of all SIA public awareness activities. An organization's brand is its “essence”—what it does, how it does it, what value that brings to the public, and how well it delivers on its mission.

A strong visual identity is an important branding strategy and one that must be undertaken with careful consideration. In this regard, Kerr-Downs recommended the SIA reconsider its previous logotype and tagline, as both failed to distinguish the organization. It was also recommended that SIA discontinue using the Soroptimist emblem on its materials—as the emblem has limited appeal, particularly among younger women and women of diverse nationalities.

SIA's visual identifier, the “S” logo, incorporates the “Best for Women” tagline. “Best for Women” is the translation of the word “Soroptimist.” Because the word “Soroptimist” is a difficult name, it helps that the tagline is a translation of the word. The tagline describes both the qualities of Soroptimist membership and the work Soroptimists do on behalf of other women. Together, the “S” and the tagline create the visual element that represents the organization.

The Soroptimist mission statement reads: “Soroptimist improves the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment.” This statement best describes what the organization seeks to accomplish.

Usage

It is important to Soroptimist’s branding efforts that all levels of the organization use the logo, tagline and mission statement consistently. Consistent and proper use of the logo communicates a professional, organized identity for Soroptimist. It also helps to brand the organization as one that improves the lives of women and girls.

SIA uses the “S” logo on all materials, including stationery, business cards, documents and the website. Clubs and members should also use this logo on all publicity materials, without altering it in any way. Nor should clubs or regions create a unique or different logo as it would interfere and compete with SIA’s logo and branding strategies. Members should read the “SIA Use of Registered Trademarks,” available in the Federation Information section of the website, for more information.

SIA provides the logo in two file types, jpeg and eps. Due to extreme compression, jpeg files can easily be transmitted over the Internet and viewed using home computers. This file type is best used for flyers, newsletters, club stationery or anything a club creates on a personal computer. The logo is available for download in this format in the Public Awareness section of the website. Eps files are better for printing shirts, banners, large posters and other items that require high-resolution graphics. Since most home computers do not contain the necessary software to create eps files (such as Adobe Illustrator), members may not be able to view eps files on their computers; therefore, members should contact headquarters to obtain the logo in an eps format.

The logo is available in color (PMS 659) or black. Avoid making the logo smaller than .75” in height because doing so will make the “Best for Women” tagline too small to read easily.

Style

The most important aspects of Soroptimist style are consistency and clarity. When communicating, the federation, regions and clubs must be consistent in language to cultivate unity throughout the organization. In addition, simplicity is always better. The more commas, clauses, abbreviations and jargon in a sentence, the more difficult it is to understand. The secret of style is that it doesn't matter how intelligent a sentence sounds if readers can't understand it.

This section spells out the basics of SIA’s style for editorial and business writing to make all communications within the organization as consistent and clear as possible.

Professional editors and writers have produced hundreds, if not thousands, of books about grammar, structure, word usage and common misspellings. These basic guidelines do not seek to replicate their content. For those with "sticky" grammar and usage questions, *The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law* (AP style book), *The Chicago Manual of Style* and *Woe is I* are all excellent sources of information.

Effective communication means constructing messages that inform or persuade a target audience. Use the following “Soroptimist semantics” examples to effectively communicate the Soroptimist mission to Soroptimists, non-Soroptimists, media, and the public.

Organizational Mission

Soroptimist is an international volunteer organization for business and professional women who work to improve the lives of women and girls, in local communities and throughout the world.

Slogan/Tagline

Best for Women

Loosely translated, Soroptimist means “best for women,” and that’s what Soroptimists aims to be: women at their best, helping other women to be their best.

Boilerplate Paragraph

This is a “definition” of Soroptimist that is used as a standard paragraph at the end of news releases or other materials that require and explanation of Soroptimist:

Headquartered in Philadelphia, Pa., Soroptimist <Soroptimist.org> improves the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment. Its major program, the Soroptimist Women’s Opportunity Awards, provides cash grants for women seeking to improve their lives with the help of additional education and training. Since 1972, the award-winning program has disbursed more than \$25 million to tens of thousands of women, helping them to achieve their educational goals. Soroptimist, a 501(c)(3) organization that relies on charitable donations to support its programs, also powers LiveYourDream.org—an online community offering offline volunteer opportunities in support of women and girls.

Jargon and "Buzz" Words

When organizations and companies develop their own internal dictionary of jargon, these words often spill over into materials that are not meant for the eyes and ears of an external audience. For instance:

- A non-Soroptimist audience will not understand words such as "federation" and "region" without having some further explanation.
- While phrases such as "international goodwill and understanding" and "advocacy, awareness and action" are part of the Soroptimist vernacular, these present more internal information than a person in an "outside" audience needs to know. Do not use these phrases to describe Soroptimist. Instead, use the mission statement.
- Use the words "business and professional women" to describe who Soroptimists are. Previously used phrases, such as "executive and professional women," "executive and professional business women" an "executive and business women" do not clearly define Soroptimist’s members.
- Use the words “international volunteer organization” to describe what Soroptimists do, rather than “international volunteer service organization” or “international volunteer civic organization.” Service and civic clubs are considered organizations using old models. Soroptimist has worked hard to carve out an identity as a modern organization and does not want to be considered part of the service club industry.

Basic Writing Guidelines

The following rules represent the standard style used in *Best for Women* magazine, and should also be applied to the style in other materials, such as newsletter articles and publicity materials. Notice the differences between internal and external language. When writing for an internal audience, it is okay to use abbreviations, but when communicating to the public, it is important to spell everything out.

Federation Names

- The word "federation" is not capitalized. It does not appear in the official federation name of Soroptimist International of the Americas, nor is it a proper name.
- Internal: Abbreviate federation names (after first reference) with slashes. Abbreviate Soroptimist International of the Americas to SIA.
Example: Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland = SI/GBI
Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific = SI/SWP
Soroptimist International of Europe = SI/E
- External: When talking about Soroptimist International of the Americas to an external audience, call it "Soroptimist." If talking about one of the other three federations use its entire name.

Region Names

- Capitalize the word "Region" when part of the full region name, such as "The Desert Coast Region recently awarded its region-level Soroptimist Women's Opportunity Award."
- When used as an adjective, keep it lowercase, such as "The Soroptimists held their region conference at the Marriot Hotel last week."
- The word "regional" should never be used in any reference.

Club Names

- Internal: Club names can be written in one of two ways: Soroptimist International of Center City or SI/Center City.
- External: On first reference, write the full name. On second reference, use the phrase "the Anytown Soroptimists" as an alternative to the full club name.

Board of Directors

- When referring to Soroptimist's Board of Directors, capitalize the words "Board" and "Directors." However, when using the word "board" as an adjective, such as in "board members" or "board decision," keep it lowercase.

Titles

- Titles, Soroptimist and otherwise, are only capitalized when they appear before an individual's name. Always lowercase a title when it appears after an individual's name, is set off from a name with commas, or is used without an individual's name.

Examples: President Sharon Fisher attended the dinner.

Sharon Fisher, president of Soroptimist, attended the dinner.

Soroptimist's president attended the dinner.

Reference to other Soroptimists

- Internal: In order to promote friendship and goodwill, Soroptimists should refer to each other by first name in materials intended for a Soroptimist audience. For instance, SI President-elect Alice Wells is referred to as "SI President-elect Alice" throughout an article, rather than "Dunning." When referring to non-Soroptimists in internal materials, follow AP style when using their names. For example, if mentioning speaker Dr. Susan Love, do not refer to her as "Susan." Once her full name is used in the first reference, refer to her as "Dr. Love."
- External: When referring to a Soroptimist in materials intended for an external audience, such as a news release or media advisory, follow AP style and refer to her by her last name only (see Maria Shriver example above).

Soroptimist Programs

- Always capitalize the names of Soroptimist programs. Do not abbreviate program names (Soroptimist Women's Opportunity Awards, Soroptimist Violet Richardson Award, Soroptimist Club Grants for Women and Girls, etc.), nor put the names in quotation marks. Note that Founders Day and Governors Round Table do not use an apostrophe. In this context, the word "founders" is plural, not possessive.

Writing Web Addresses

- When writing web addresses, it is not necessary to include the "http://" beginning portion. However, include the "www" portion if the address starts that way because now web addresses can start in ways other than "www." Also, web addresses should appear in greater than/less than brackets. If the address falls next to a punctuation mark, the brackets let the reader know that the punctuation is not part of the address. Example: For more information, please visit <www.soroptimist.org>.

Contact Information

- The words "e-mail" and "fax" are lowercase and do not appear in all capital letters. Capitalize the words "World Wide Web," "Internet" and "the Web."
- When writing Soroptimist or club contact information, follow this example:

Soroptimist International of the Americas
1709 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Phone: (215) 893-9000
Fax: (215) 893-5200
E-mail: siahq@soroptimist.org
Web: <www.soroptimist.org>

United States

- The abbreviation for the words "United States" (U.S.) may be used when the phrase is used as an adjective. When the phrase is used as a noun, it should be spelled out. Examples: I have U.S. citizenship. [U.S. describes citizenship.] The United States is a member of the United Nations. [United States is the subject of the sentence.]

Numbers

- Spell out numbers less than 10 and use figures for numbers more than 10. Example: seven, eight, nine, 10, 11, 64, 125.
- Use figures with times except for "noon" and "midnight" (use "a.m." and "p.m." lowercase to express time of day). Example: 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3:30 p.m.
- Spell out "first" through "ninth." Starting with 10, use figures. Example: first, ninth, 10th, 22nd, 33rd, 41st
- Do not use "st," "nd," "rd," or "th" with dates. Examples: "International Women's Day is March 8."