



# Co-Branding Guidelines—HTAX

Version 1.3 — July 2021

# OVERVIEW

If you have a need that is not addressed in these guidelines, contact the Experience Columbia SC marketing team to discuss other partnership opportunities.

Any and all use of the Experience Columbia SC name, assets, or messaging must be approved by the Experience Columbia SC marketing department. Please do not make any decisions on your own.

Please send all materials  
for approval to →

Kelsey Carmichael  
Director of Marketing  
Experience Columbia SC  
1101 Lincoln Street | Columbia, SC | 29201  
[kcarmichael@experiencecolumbiasc.com](mailto:kcarmichael@experiencecolumbiasc.com)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## About Co-Branding

5 Overview

## Messaging Toolkit

8 Voice & Tone

9 Dos & Don'ts

10 Messaging Toolkit: Descriptions

11 Messaging Map: By Audience

12 Messaging Checklist

## Co-Branding Guidelines

14 Co-Branding Logo Use: Quick Guide

15 Partnership Asset Use: Quick Guide

16 Logo Color

## Using the Columbia SC Logo

17 Columbia SC Logo

18 Backgrounds & Images

19 Minimum Clearspace & Size

20 Clearspace Examples

21 Logo Placement

22 Incorrect Use

## Using the Experience Columbia SC Logo

23 Experience SC Logo

24 Backgrounds & Images

25 Minimum Clearspace & Size

26 Clearspace Examples

27 Logo Placement

28 Incorrect Use

## Co-Branding Checklist

29 Checklist

## Partner Badge

31 Window Cling / Sticker

32 Web Badge

33 Web Badge: Placement

34 Made in Columbia Sticker

# WELCOME

We're so glad you could join us. These guidelines will introduce you to the basic elements that make up the Experience Columbia SC brand and demonstrate how to use our assets as a co-branding partner.

Partnering with city departments, local brands, and events is a tremendous opportunity to share and sustain our brand purpose – to attract visitors, promote cohesion and foster pride in our residents – while also introducing Columbia SC to new audiences.

# ABOUT CO-BRANDING

Co-branding is a strategic relationship between two or more brands working together to achieve a desired goal. Co-branding can encompass a wide range of marketing activities including partnerships, promotions, and sponsorships.

# ABOUT CO-BRANDING WITH EXPERIENCE COLUMBIA SC

The majority of our brand assets (color palette, fonts, Capital C, etc.) are not to be used by co-brand partners.

Our assets and logos belong to our organization and are not to be repurposed or reinterpreted in any way. Please treat them with respect.

For example, do not use the color palette or elements from the Columbia SC logo to create a look-a-like identity.

# CO-BRANDING MESSAGING TOOLKIT

# MESSAGING TOOLKIT: VOICE & TONE

When crafting your own messaging, whether it is spoken in person or via video, written in social media posts, on a website or in advertisements, your messages should always reinforce our personality—vibrant, optimistic and friendly.

## Voice & Tone

Experience Columbia SC is the energetic, friendly guide to a region brimming with growth, creativity and the anticipation of what's next. Tone of voice in our messaging and communications reflects the enthusiastic confidence of its position as a mid-size, manageable Southern city with a unique mix of traditional and new, where the established co-exists alongside fresh ideas and exciting opportunities. Above all, our messaging piques the interest of its audiences with language that reinforces the destination's essence: **look forward to the unexpected, urban South.**

Voice and tone establishes how we should use language consistently to engage our audiences across communications. This language is not intended to be used as-is for external audiences.

# MESSAGING TOOLKIT: DOS & DON'TS

When developing your own messaging around our partnership, these Dos & Don'ts will help guide your writing style and ensure you're able to communicate on behalf of Experience Columbia SC appropriately.

## Messaging **DOS**

- DO** think about your audience and what they care about.
- DO** be warm, welcoming, and sincere.
- DO** speak directly to the reader.
- DO** keep your writing authentic and conversational.
- DO** avoid hyperbole and exaggeration.
- DO** share your passion and excitement.
- DO** keep it short, sweet and simple. No one wants to read too many words.
- DO** break up long sentences. Don't drag on.

## Messaging **DON'TS**

- DON'T** use clichés, especially if they are Southern in nature.
- DON'T** put on airs or false formality.
- DON'T** use fluffy, meaningless or generic adjectives (amazing, stunning, gorgeous).
- DON'T** overwhelm readers with too many facts or dry data. Go for spirit instead.
- DON'T** sound like an infomercial.
- DON'T** use puns.

# MESSAGING TOOLKIT: DESCRIPTIONS

The most succinct spoken and written pitch about Columbia SC offers an opportunity to make a lasting first impression. We have provided the following text for use where brief descriptions about Columbia SC are needed.

## Tagline (written)

*The Real Southern Hot Spot*

## Short Description (spoken)

In the heart of South Carolina, tradition and tomorrow pair perfectly in the state's capital city. With evidence of renewal everywhere, Columbia SC is the real Southern hot spot that leaves you looking forward to what's next.

## Description (50–75 words)

In the heart of South Carolina, tradition and tomorrow pair perfectly in Columbia. It's a modern city where stately buildings buzz with new businesses, and centuries-old sites give rise to fresh perspectives. It's a creative hub that's fed by university and capital city communities – all this in the midst of surrounding natural beauty. With dynamite shopping, food and tons to see and do year round, it's the real Southern hot spot that will leave you looking forward to what's next.

# MESSAGING MAP: BY AUDIENCE

To engage different audiences with relevant and direct messages, the following themed pitches are available for use.

## Media (Default)

### Pitch:

Welcome to the new, modern South where tradition and tomorrow pair perfectly. Columbia SC is a creative hub fed by university and capital city communities—all this amidst surrounding natural beauty. It's the hippest city you've never heard of. With evidence of renewal everywhere hinting at what's next, Columbia SC is the real Southern hot spot.

## Urban Escapists

### Pitch:

See a side of the South you haven't before. In Columbia SC, tradition and tomorrow pair perfectly. With evidence of renewal everywhere hinting at what's next, Columbia SC is the real Southern hot spot. Seriously, it's the hippest place you've never heard of.

## Families

### Pitch:

Columbia SC has a superpower: it makes everyone happy! With an affordable mix of hotels, lodging options, and plenty of top-notch family-friendly restaurants, it's the ideal getaway destination for family vacations or quick weekends away.

## History Buffs

### Pitch:

For more than 250 years, Columbia SC has pushed itself and its people forward. From the Revolutionary War through the Civil Rights era and beyond, our collective struggles and rich history have resulted in our unique culture.

## College Aficionados

### Pitch:

You haven't seen a college game until you've been to Columbia SC. Count on the Gamecocks to extend a warm welcome to fellow sports fans—even if you're not dressed head to toe in garnet and black.

## Business Travelers

### Pitch

There's nothing cookie cutter about Columbia SC. From delighting in the legendary mustard-based barbecue to knocking around town, there's something for everyone. And travelers find that the logistics are as friendly as the people.

## Meeting Planners

### Pitch:

For an accessible, affordable destination with big-city amenities and a small town feel, Columbia SC is the ideal place for small to mid-size events. The mix of hotels provide lots of options, and with three interstates that intersect the city and a regional airport, getting here is straightforward. With evidence of renewal everywhere hinting at what's next, Columbia SC is the real Southern hot spot.

## Sports Event Planners

### Pitch:

Sports have always given the good people of Columbia SC reason to rally. While the Gamecocks may have the home advantage at USC events, Columbia plays host to sports and competitions for all ages and skill levels from all over who benefit from the region's predictably sunny days, gracious charm and good old-fashioned kindness. From football, baseball and basketball to quidditch, lacrosse and bridge, Columbia SC is the ideal destination for sporting events.

Feel free to copy and paste these pitches as they are, or adapt them to better fit your specific context.

# MESSAGING CHECKLIST

The following is a short checklist when using co-branded messages.

<b>If you've written your own content based on our voice &amp; tone:</b>	<b>If you're using messaging copied directly from this guide:</b>
Is the language uncomplicated and conversational?	Is the message appropriate for the intended audience?
Is the message appropriate for the intended audience?	Does the chosen pitch language make sense within the context of your communication?
Does the language reinforce the personality attributes—vibrant, optimistic and friendly?	

# CO-BRANDING GUIDELINES

# CO-BRANDING LOGO USE: QUICK GUIDE

## Columbia SC



### When to Use

The Columbia SC logo should be used only by H-tax recipients and other organizations for out-of-market advertising where the city of Columbia SC is being promoted.

### Suggested Applications

- Print Collateral
- Advertising
- Direct Mail
- Billboards
- Posters

### Minimum Size

Print: **.5 in.**  
Digital: **30 px**

### Guidelines

Begin on page 18

## Experience Columbia SC



### When to Use

The Experience Columbia SC logo should be used for local, in-area partnerships with the tourism bureau where the (DMO) Experience Columbia SC organization is being referenced.

### Suggested Applications

- Brochures
- Print Collateral
- Advertising
- Event Banners
- Direct Mail
- Website Footers
- Industry Events
- Email Signatures

### Minimum Size

Print: **.5 in.**  
Digital: **30 px**

### Guidelines

Begin on page 25

# PARTNER ASSET USE: QUICK GUIDE

## Window Cling



### Overview

The Experience Columbia SC partner badge is available to our local partners as a marker to help visitors discover and experience what Columbia SC has to offer.

### Applications

Store-front windows & doors

### Example Use



## Partner Website Badge



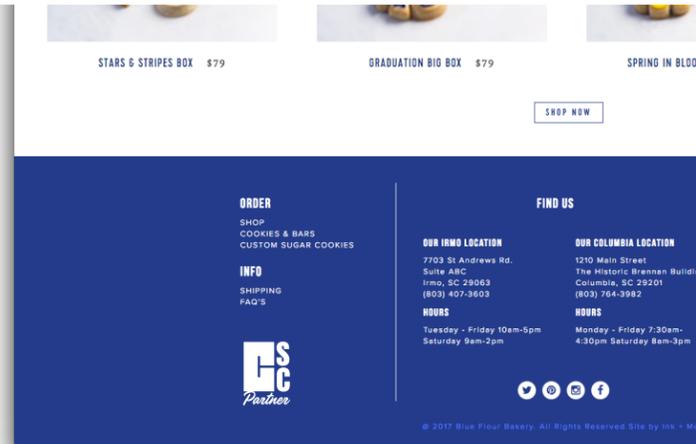
### Overview

The Experience Columbia SC partner badge is available to be used on websites and other digital applications.

### Applications

Website footer  
Email newsletter footer

### Example Use



## 'Made in Columbia SC' Sticker



### How to Use

The "Made in Columbia SC" sticker is available to partners to highlight local products made in Columbia.

### Applications

Retail packaging  
Clothing hang-tags  
Included in promotional materials

### Example Use



# LOGO COLOR

The primary logo color palette uses Columbia red, navy, and cream.

Our Columbia red was inspired by the brick buildings and roads found throughout the city. It's powerful, confident and gives a nod to our heritage. Our navy harkens back to the South Carolina state flag.

The cream color is a warm neutral that binds together the Columbia Red and navy and balances the palette.

## Pantone®

The Pantone® Matching System is an industry baseline used to choose solid colors that can be consistently reproduced from printer to printer.

## CMYK

Colors printed with screens or dots are referred to in the industry as CMYK or Process color. CMYK stands for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and K for Black.

## RGB & HEX

RGB & HEX color is used for display devices using the RGB color space such as websites and digital displays. HTML colors are defined using a hexadecimal notation (HEX).

### Columbia Red

Pantone 179 C

Pantone 485 U

CMYK C: 0 / 87 / 85 / 0

CMYK U: 0 / 74 / 74 / 0

RGB: 244 / 88 / 72

Hex: #F45848

### Navy

Pantone 3035 C

Pantone 3025 U

CMYK C 100 / 30 / 19 / 76

CMYK U 99 / 14 / 12 / 45

RGB 10 / 60 / 78

Hex #0A3C4E

### Cream

Pantone 7499 C - 30% Tint

Pantone 7499 U - 40% Tint

CMYK C: 1 / 2 / 9 / 0

CMYK U: 0 / 2 / 11 / 0

RGB: 254 / 248 / 232

Hex: #FEF8E8

# COLUMBIA SC LOGO

The Columbia SC logo is the primary identifier for Columbia SC and should be used by H-tax recipients and other organizations for out-of-market advertising where the city of Columbia is being promoted.

To ensure color accuracy in print or on screen, use the appropriate logo files labeled CMYK or RGB.



## Available Files

[CSC\\_Primary\\_RGB.eps](#)

[CSC\\_Primary\\_CMYK\\_C.eps](#)

[CSC\\_Primary\\_CMYK\\_U.eps](#)

[CSC\\_Primary\\_PMS\\_C.eps](#)

[CSC\\_Primary\\_PMS\\_U.eps](#)

# BACKGROUNDS & IMAGES

Examples for using the Columbia SC logo on color backgrounds and images are shown here.

The full color logo is the most recognizable asset and should be used wherever possible. It is preferred that the full color logo appear on a white background.

Use the reversed Columbia SC logos when placing it on a dark colored background or image.

If a one-color logo is needed, use of the solid white logo on dark background colors is preferred.

Only use solid black versions when color is not an option.

When placing the Columbia SC logos on an image, make sure that there is adequate contrast and that the image doesn't obscure the lockup.

**NOTE:** placing the logo over a complex or busy background is not recommended.



Primary logo on white backgrounds



Reversed version on dark color backgrounds



Solid white logo on dark color backgrounds



Primary logo on light-colored uncluttered imagery



Reversed version on dark imagery



Solid white logo on a black background



Solid black logo on a white background

# MINIMUM CLEARSPACE & SIZE

## Overview

Minimum clearspace refers to the area surrounding the logo lockup that must be kept clear of any adjacent text or graphic elements.

## Logo Clearspace

For the Columbia SC logo the clearspace area is always equal to  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the overall height of the Capital C.

## Minimum Size

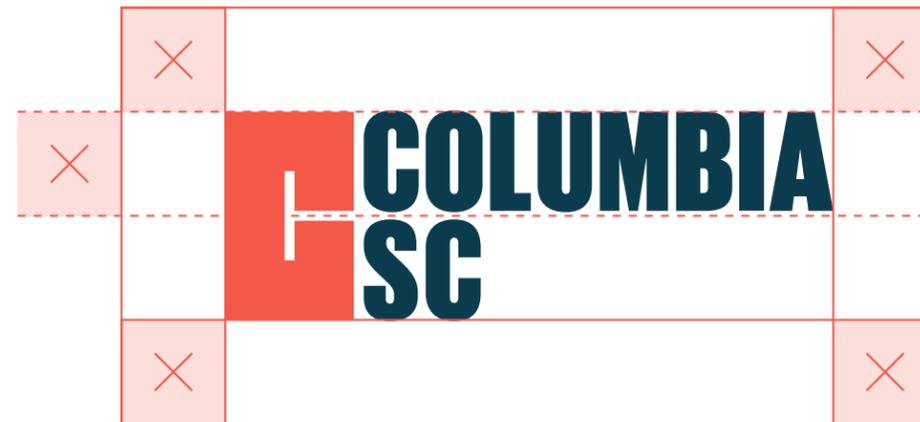
### In Print

For use in print, the logo should never be reduced below the minimum height of .5"

### Digital

Do not reduce the logo below the minimum height of 30px in digital applications.

### Minimum Clearspace



### Minimum Size



# CLEARSPACE EXAMPLES

Allowing space for the Columbia SC logo to breathe is critical in co-branding materials.

Minimum clearspace rules ensure logos do not interfere with one another and that the relationship between them remains clear.

In the top example, the Indie Grits logo is too close to the Columbia SC logo, creating unnecessary tension. The bottom example shows correct use of the logo and clearspace.

**INDIE GRITS**  
*Indie Grits*

**COLUMBIA  
SC**



Here the Indie Grits logo is too close to the Columbia SC logo.

**INDIE GRITS**  
*Indie Grits*

**COLUMBIA  
SC**



Here both logos have enough space that they don't compete with one another.

# LOGO PLACEMENT

## Partner Dominant Communication

The placement of logos communicate brand dominance. The dominant partner brand is always on the left or on top.

While design execution will most often be driven by the partner brand's visual system, it's critical that the Columbia SC logo is protected and appropriately placed.

**Follow these rules when placing the Columbia SC logo with a dominant partner logo:**

- The default is to use the full color logo on a white background whenever possible.
- The two logos should be the same visual size.
- Do not use any visual divider between the logos or any extra design elements.



Preferred horizontal placement



Alternate vertical placement

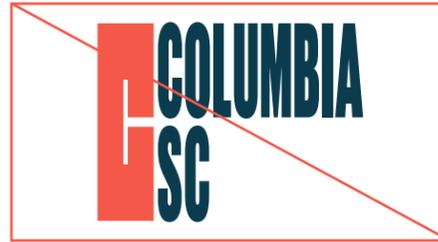
# INCORRECT USE

To preserve the integrity of the logo and the Columbia SC brand, the Columbia SC logo must be used correctly and consistently in every application. The logo should not be reinterpreted or misrepresented.

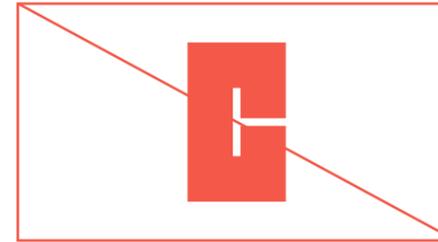
Altering, distorting or redrawing it in a way that's not allowed weakens the brand and degrades what it represents.

Here are a few examples of some of the more likely mistakes to illustrate how NOT to use the Columbia SC logo.

**DON'T stretch or scale disproportionately**



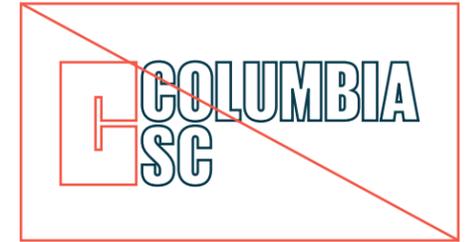
**DON'T use the symbol without the logotype**



**DON'T create a gradient logo**



**DON'T outline any part of the logo**



**DON'T add a drop shadow**



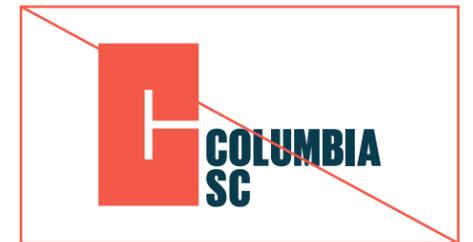
**DON'T rotate the logo**



**DON'T add any words or messages**



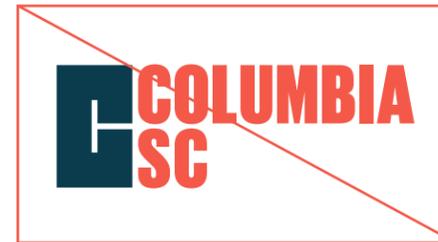
**DON'T change the proportions of the logotype or symbol**



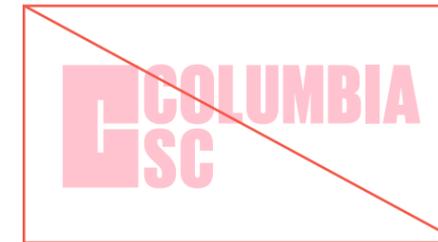
**DON'T use the symbol as a window when used as the logo lockup**



**DON'T switch the color of the symbol and logotype**



**DON'T use non approved colors**



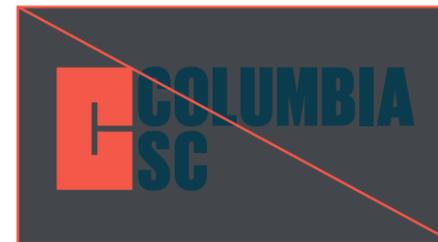
**DON'T rearrange or modify the logo elements**



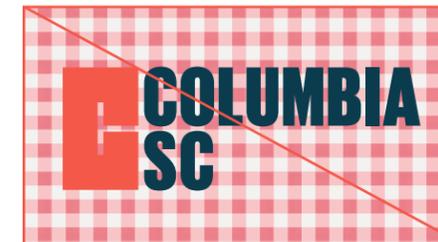
**DON'T use a low-resolution logo when a high resolution is needed**



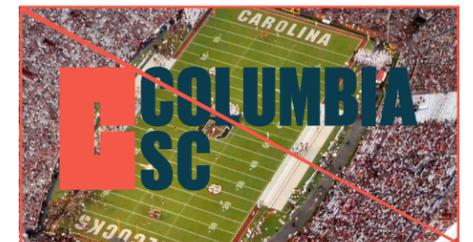
**DON'T place the logo on color without sufficient contrast**



**DON'T place the logo on pattern backgrounds that limit legibility**



**DON'T place the logo on photo backgrounds that limit legibility**



# EXPERIENCE COLUMBIA SC LOGO

The Experience Columbia SC logo is the primary identifier for the DMO (Destination Marketing Organization) and should be used for local, in-area partnerships with the tourism bureau where the Experience Columbia SC organization is being referenced.

To ensure color accuracy in print or on screen, use the appropriate logo files labeled CMYK or RGB.

## Available Files

[CSC\\_DMO\\_RGB.eps](#)

[CSC\\_DMO\\_CMYK\\_C.eps](#)

[CSC\\_DMO\\_CMYK\\_U.eps](#)

[CSC\\_DMO\\_PMS\\_C.eps](#)

[CSC\\_DMO\\_PMS\\_U.eps](#)



# BACKGROUNDS & IMAGES

Examples for using the Experience Columbia SC logo on color backgrounds and images are shown here.

The full color logo is the most recognizable asset and should be used wherever possible. It is preferred that the full color logo appear on a white background.

Use the reversed Experience Columbia SC logos when placing it on a dark colored background or image.

If a one-color logo is needed, use of the solid white logo on dark background colors is preferred.

Only use solid black versions when color is not an option.

When placing the Experience Columbia SC logo on an image, make sure that there is adequate contrast and that the image doesn't obscure the lockup.

**NOTE:** placing the logo over a complex or busy background is not recommended.



Primary logo on white backgrounds



Reversed version on dark color backgrounds



Solid white logo on dark color backgrounds



Primary logo on light-colored uncluttered imagery



Reversed version on dark imagery



Solid white logo on a black background



Solid black logo on a white background

# MINIMUM CLEARSPACE & SIZE

## Overview

Minimum clearspace refers to the area surrounding the logo lockup that must be kept clear of any adjacent text or graphic elements.

## Logo Clearspace

For the Experience Columbia SC logo the clearspace area is always equal to  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the overall height of the Capital C.

## Minimum Size

### In Print

For use in print, the logo should never be reduced below the minimum height of .5"

### Digital

Do not reduce the logo below the minimum height of 30px in digital applications.

### Minimum Clearspace



### Minimum Size



# CLEARSPACE EXAMPLES

Allowing space for the Experience Columbia SC logo to breathe is critical in co-branding applications. Minimum clearspace rules ensure logos do not interfere with one another and that the relationship between them remains clear.

In the top example, the City of Columbia logo is too close to the Experience Columbia SC logo, creating unnecessary tension. The bottom example shows correct use of the logo and clearspace.



We Are Columbia

**EXPERIENCE  
COLUMBIA SC**



Here the City of Columbia logo is too close to the Columbia SC logo.



We Are Columbia

**EXPERIENCE  
COLUMBIA SC**



Here both logos have enough space that they don't compete with one another and maintain a clear relationship

# LOGO PLACEMENT

## Partner Dominant Communication

The placement of logos communicate brand dominance. The dominant partner brand is always on the left or on top.

While design execution will most often be driven by the partner brand's visual system, it's critical that the Experience Columbia SC logo is protected and appropriately placed.

**Follow these rules when placing the Experience Columbia SC logo with a dominant partner logo:**

- The default is to use the full color logo on a white background whenever possible.
- The two logos should be the same visual size.
- Do not use any visual divider between the logos or any extra design elements.



Preferred horizontal placement



Alternate vertical placement

# INCORRECT USE

To preserve the integrity of the logo and the Experience Columbia SC brand, the logo must be used correctly and consistently in every application. The logo should not be reinterpreted or misrepresented.

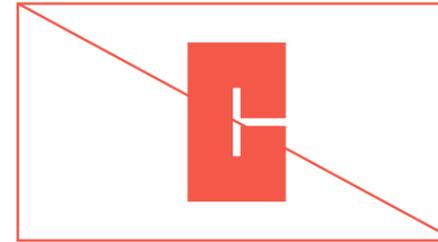
Altering, distorting or redrawing it in a way that's not allowed weakens the brand and degrades what it represents.

Here are a few examples of how **NOT** to use the Experience Columbia SC logo.

**DON'T stretch or scale disproportionately**



**DON'T use the symbol on its own without the logotype**



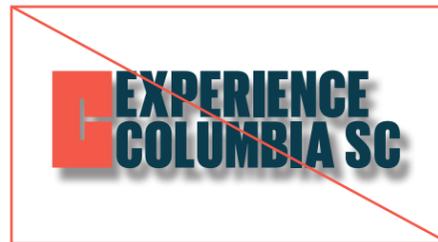
**DON'T create a gradient logo**



**DON'T outline any part of the logo**



**DON'T add a drop shadow**



**DON'T rotate the logo**



**DON'T add any words or messages**



**DON'T change the proportions of the logotype or symbol**



**DON'T use the symbol as a window**



**DON'T switch the color of the symbol and logotype**



**DON'T use non approved colors**



**DON'T rearrange or modify the logo elements**



**DON'T use a low-resolution logo when a high resolution is needed**



**DON'T place the logo on color without sufficient contrast**



**DON'T place the logo on pattern backgrounds that limit legibility**



**DON'T place the logo on photo backgrounds that limit legibility**



# CO-BRANDING CHECKLIST

The following is a short checklist of the essentials when using logos for co-branded marketing

Logo	Co-branding
Are you using the correct logo file for accurate color reproduction?	Are you using the correct logo for your co-branded marketing?
Are you following the clearspace and minimum size guidelines?	Have you followed the clearspace and minimum size guidelines for co-branding?
Have you reviewed the incorrect use examples to avoid misusing the logo?	Is the logo being used appropriately in your marketing materials?
	Have you sent your materials to the Experience Columbia SC Marketing Department for review?

# CO-BRANDING PARTNER BADGE

# EXPERIENCE COLUMBIA SC PARTNER BADGE

## Window Cling / Sticker

The Experience Columbia SC partner badge is available to our partners as a tool to help visitors discover and experience what Columbia SC has to offer.

It is available for use as a window cling, sticker and for digital applications such as on your website.

We encourage our partners to place the sticker or cling on a window or surface near the entrance in a prominent location at their place of business.

Contact our offices to request your badge and learn more about using it.

**For the window cling & sticker, contact:**

Judie VanPatten  
Partnership Services Manager  
jvanpatten@experiencecolumbiasc.com



# EXPERIENCE COLUMBIA SC PARTNER BADGE

## Web Badge

The Experience Columbia SC partner badge is also available to be used on partner websites and other digital applications.

When possible use of the primary 2-color badge is preferred. Otherwise, a solid white version is available for use on solid background colors.

To maintain legibility, the badge should never be used at a size smaller than 90px high.

**Contact our offices to request the web badge and learn more about using it.**

**For the digital file:**

Kelsey Carmichael  
Director of Marketing  
kcarmichael@experiencecolumbiasc.com



Primary Badge (2-color)



Secondary Badge (white)



Minimum Size

# EXPERIENCE COLUMBIA SC PARTNER BADGE

## Placement Guidelines

The web badge is intended to be used as a supporting element. For example, in the footer of your website or at the bottom of an E-mail template.

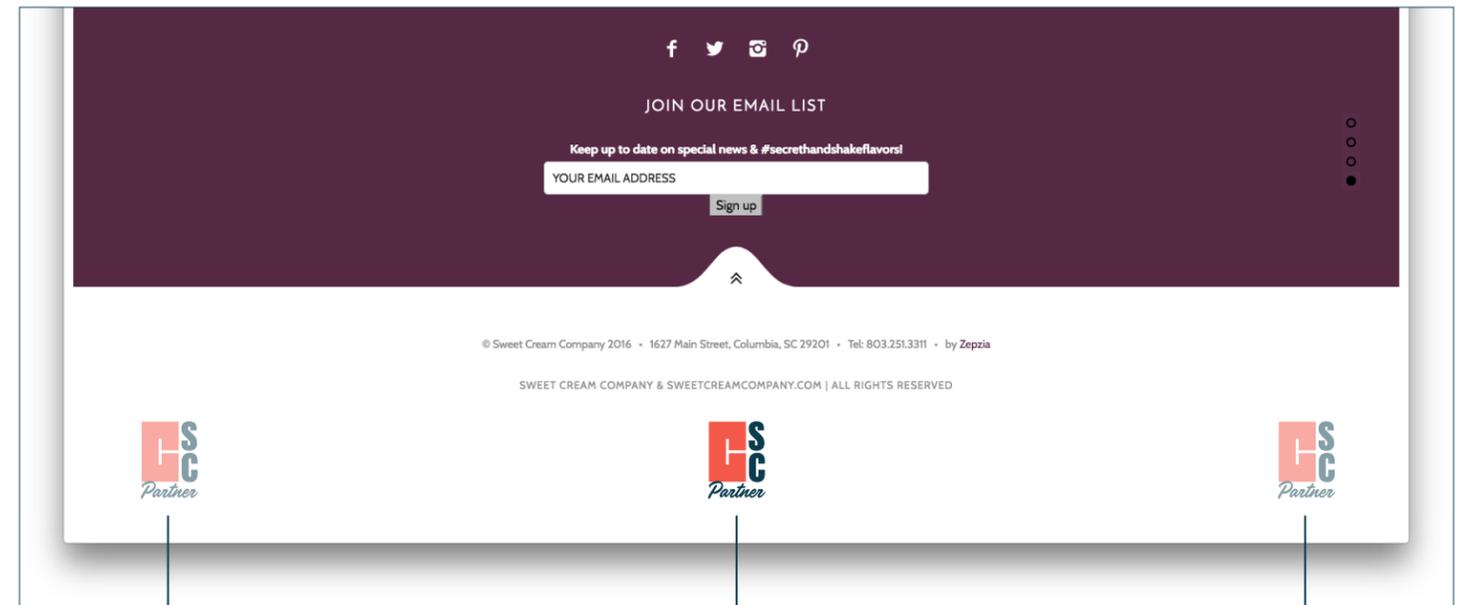
We encourage our partners to link the badge graphic to our URL:

<http://www.experiencecolumbiasc.com/>

Contact our offices to request the web badge and learn more about using it.

**For the digital file:**

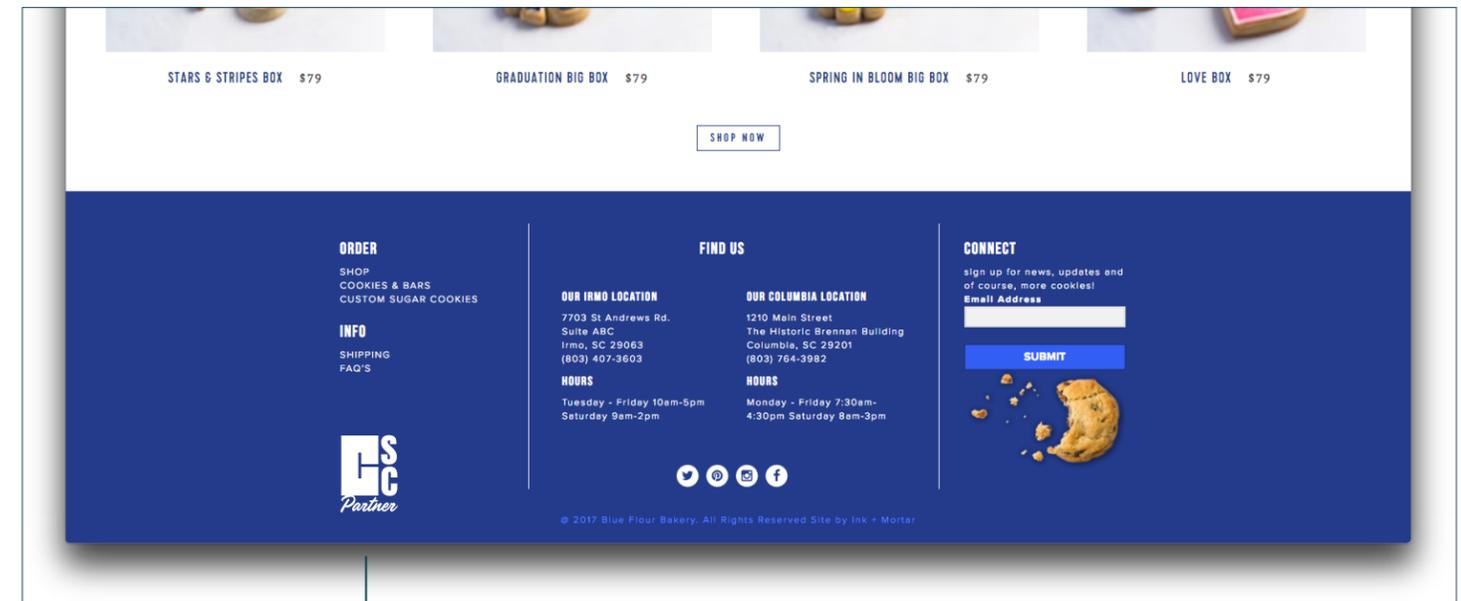
Kelsey Carmichael  
 Director of Marketing  
 kcarmichael@experiencecolumbiasc.com



Secondary Placement - Left

Primary Placement - Center

Secondary Placement - Right



Secondary Placement - Left  
 White badge on partner color background

# MADE IN COLUMBIA SC STICKER & TAG

The "Made in Columbia SC" sticker is available to our partners to highlight local products made right here in Columbia.

Contact our office to inquire about using this asset for your product or promotional event.

**'Made In Columbia SC' sticker & tag contact:**

Kelsey Carmichael  
Director of Marketing  
kcarmichael@experiencecolumbiasc.com

\*Sticker designed by local Columbia design and screenprinting studio The Half and Half

[thehalfandhalf.com](http://thehalfandhalf.com)



These example mock-ups do not represent the final product and are for reference only.

Please direct any questions regarding this guide to the Experience Columbia SC Marketing Department.

Please send all materials for approval to →

Kelsey Carmichael  
Director of Marketing  
Experience Columbia SC  
1101 Lincoln Street | Columbia, SC  
[kcarmichael@experiencecolumbiasc.com](mailto:kcarmichael@experiencecolumbiasc.com)