



# Design a chalkboard Web banner

Handwriting on the board makes a powerful, simple statement.

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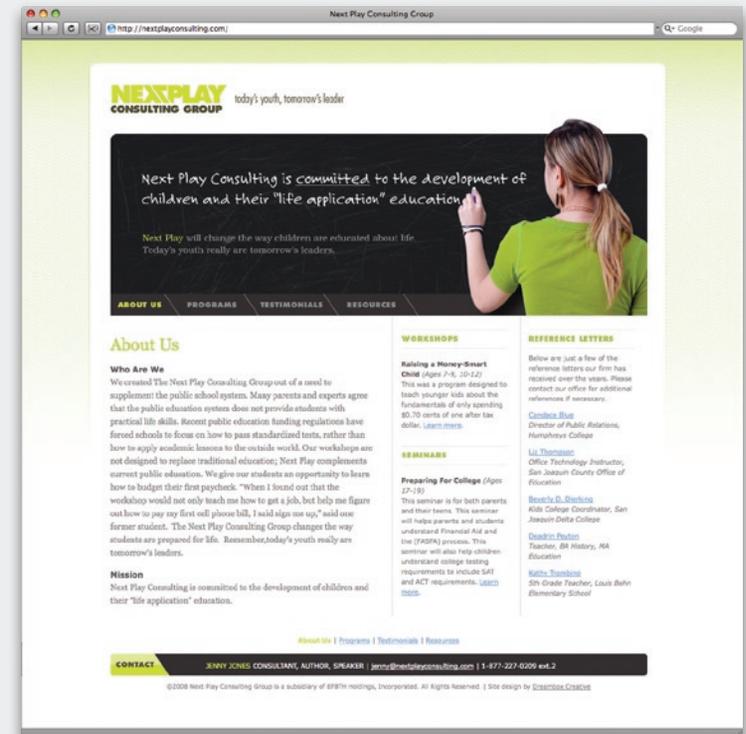
Handwriting on the board makes a powerful, simple statement



Next Play Consulting Group was created to supplement the public school system by teaching practical life skills. With public schools often focused on helping students pass standardized tests, Next Play's workshops teach how to apply academic lessons to the outside world—real-life challenges like getting a job and budgeting that first paycheck. It's a great idea.

So how do you convey that on a Web site? How about by writing it on a big, bold, chalkboard! Faster than you can add 2+2, the viewer sees that Next Play is an educational site, what it's about and who's involved. And the board makes an excellent focal point.

Let's see what else we can learn.



**Bold, familiar—and she even matches the logo**

Even if you were napping in class, when something went up on the board, you paid attention. That's a focal point that everyone understands, and it works on a Web site, too!

## Start at the top

Key to the site is a full-width chalkboard that the viewer will read before anything else. Handwritten text pulls the viewer into the story and on down the page.

**Chalkboard banner** has unusually strong associations because everyone's spent endless hours looking at one. Its visual properties only make it stronger—it's big, bold (black against white), and it's on top. In this space, Next Play tells its story literally and graphically. A student at the chalkboard conveys the classroom setting. The *who they are* and *what they do* that would otherwise be buried in the text are now at the top of the page where they'll do the most good.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Next Play Consulting Group website. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://nextplayconsulting.com/>. The website features a prominent chalkboard banner with the following text:

**NEXTPLAY CONSULTING GROUP** today's youth, tomorrow's leader

Next Play Consulting is committed to the development of children and their "life application" education.

Next Play will change the way children are educated about life. Today's youth really are tomorrow's leaders.

Navigation links: ABOUT US, PROGRAMS, TESTIMONIALS, RESOURCES

**About Us**

**Who Are We**  
We created The Next Play Consulting Group out of a need to supplement the public school system. Many parents and experts agree that the public education system does not provide students with practical life skills. Recent public education funding regulations have forced schools to focus on how to pass standardized tests, rather than how to apply academic lessons to the outside world. Our workshops are not designed to replace traditional education; Next Play complements current public education. We give our students an opportunity to learn how to budget their first paycheck. "When I found out that the workshop would not only teach me how to get a job, but help me figure out how to pay my first cell phone bill, I said sign me up," said one former student. The Next Play Consulting Group changes the way students are prepared for life. Remember, today's youth really are tomorrow's leaders.

**Mission**  
Next Play Consulting is committed to the development of children and their "life application" education.

**WORKSHOPS**

**Raising a Money-Smart Child (Ages 7-9, 10-12)**  
This was a program designed to teach younger kids about the fundamentals of only spending \$0.70 cents of one after tax dollar. [Learn more.](#)

**SEMINARS**

**Preparing For College (Ages 17-19)**  
This seminar is for both parents and their teens. This seminar will help parents and students understand Financial Aid and the (FASFA) process. This seminar will also help children understand college testing requirements to include SAT and ACT requirements. [Learn more.](#)

**REFERENCE LETTERS**

Below are just a few of the reference letters our firm has received over the years. Please contact our office for additional references if necessary.

[Candace Blue](#)  
Director of Public Relations, Humphreys College

[Liz Thompson](#)  
Office Technology Instructor, San Joaquin County Office of Education

[Beverly D. Dierking](#)  
Kids College Coordinator, San Joaquin Delta College

[Deadrin Peyton](#)  
Teacher, BA History, MA Education

[Kathy Trombing](#)  
5th Grade Teacher, Louis Bohn Elementary School

## Continue the theme . . .

The chalkboard anchors every page, each with a different student and message. Together, they convey a strong sense of personality and community.

### Quote

### Image

Same handwritten typeface  
but set larger to fit the space

Student "leaning"  
adds dimension.

Next Play Consulting is committed to the development of children and their "life application" education.

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"The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows." — Sydney J. Harris

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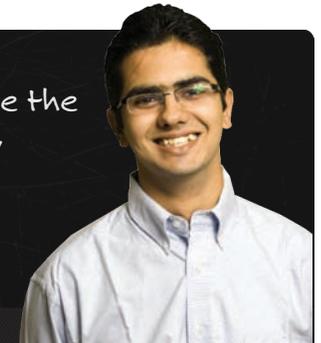
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**Nothing draws attention like a face.** Smiling students convey welcome, cordiality, interest. Be sure to represent your diversity.

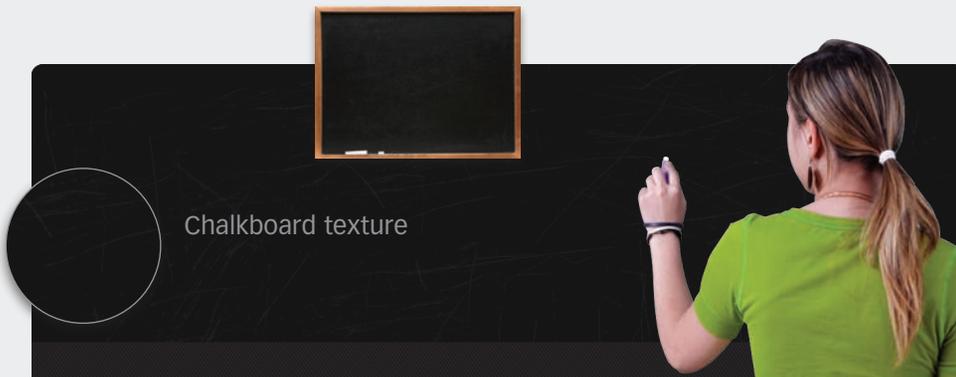


**Same size.** Note, top of heads stick out to create depth.

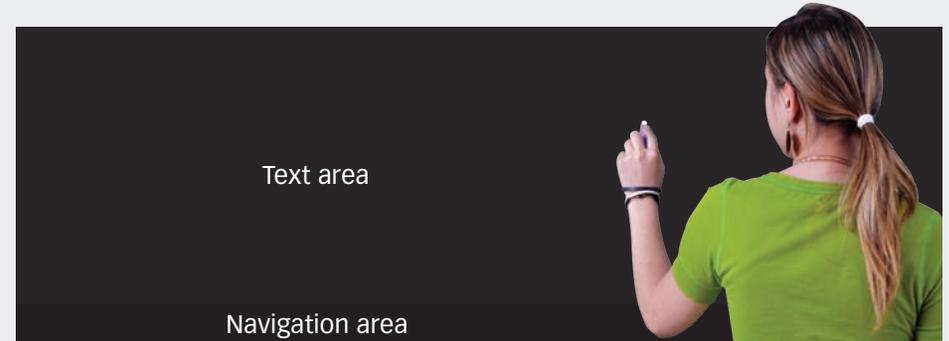
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**(1) Select an image**, and in Photoshop mask out or otherwise delete the chalkboard. You can remain in Photoshop for the following steps or move your cutout image into InDesign.



**(3) Add realism** The only attractive chalkboard is a clean chalkboard, but for some realism, you can mess up the surface slightly. We used Mister Retro's ([www.misterretro.com](http://www.misterretro.com)) Machine Wash *abrasive* filter, but an easy alternative is to paste in a second photo (above) that has a *tiny* amount of dust.



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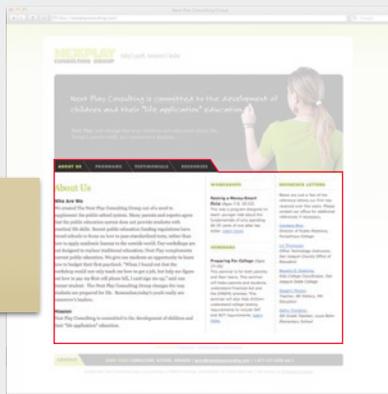


**(4) Add the words** in a handwritten typeface to finish the look. Typeset the secondary message, and color it low-key gray. Add green to highlight the company name and balance the design (right).

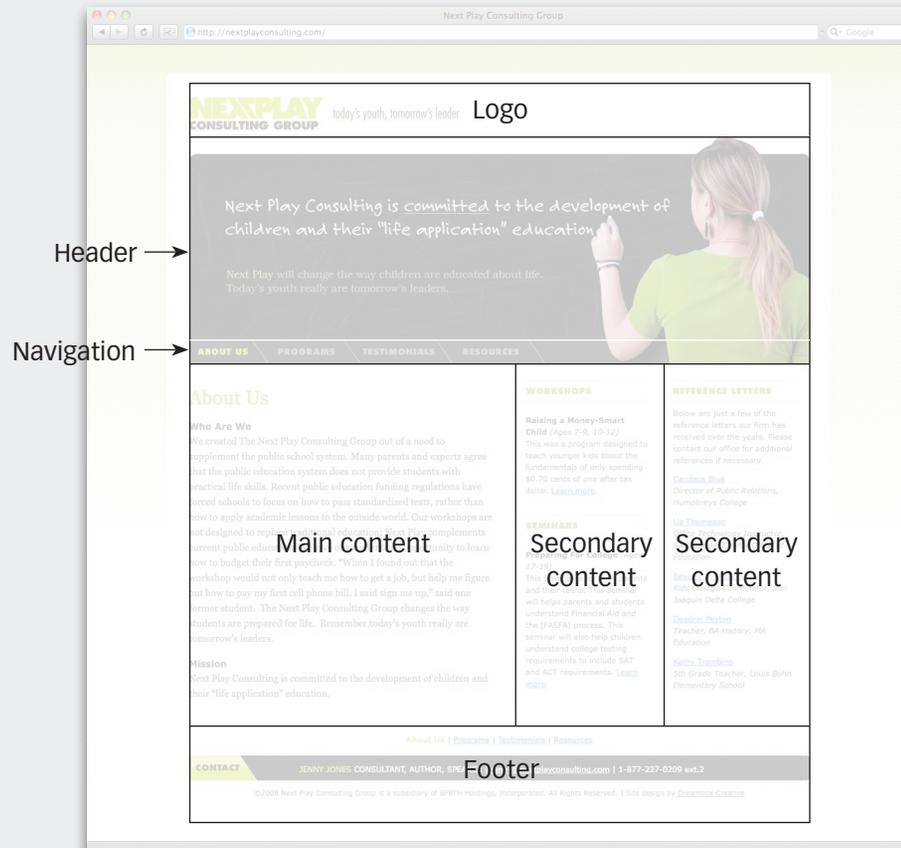


## Design the body of the page

Blog-style three-column page is an efficient organizer; the main story is told in the wide left column, and supporting content is in the right two.



**Structure** (Right) The site is divided into six sections from big to small, pretty much in order of importance. Navigation bar (note its file-tab appearance, above) and footer hold permanent links and contact info.



**NEXTPLAY**  
CONSULTING GROUP

### Continuity

(Next page) With a strong header and simple structure anchoring the site, it's time to add the details. These we'll borrow from the logo. Because the logo has more permanent status than the pages, we'll transfer its typefaces, colors and other elements to the rest of the site.

## Examine the logo

The characteristics of the logo will govern the details of the site. First step is to take a visual inventory. Pay attention to typeface, color, line and shape.

**NEXPLAY**  
CONSULTING GROUP

**NEXPLAY**  
CONSULTING GROUP

**Color** Yellow-green conveys vibrancy, loudness, warmth and youth, all of which describe the target audience. That's good stuff. But too much of it (top, left) is not a smart choice, because Next Play and Consulting Group now run together. Instead, set the descriptive line in a darker color.



NP → NP XT → XT

**Angles are active.** When combining two letters, ideally you want both to share a similar edge (top, left). But because letters **X** and **T** have different edges, an angled gap is used to combine the two.

**NEXPLAY**  
**CONSULTING GROUP**

**NEXTPLAY**  
**CONSULTING GROUP**

**Typeface** [Futura Extra Bold](#) is an American classic; clear, very bold and simple—strokes are straight, and curves are almost perfect circles. For logos and short titles, set it very tightly—the bigger the tighter; letters should overlap or nearly.

**NEXPLAY**  
CONSULTING GROUP

**NEXPLAY**

**Shapes change with distance** (Above, left) Far away, Futura Extra Bold caps form simple rectangles that stack neatly. Up close reveals an energetic interplay of negative shapes (above, right), and those circles are easy to see.



## Apply logo elements to the page . . .

### Angles

Angles are used for background lines, navigation bar and footer. Gradient background has fabric-like texture that adds depth and radiance to the white page. Light opacity softens the look.

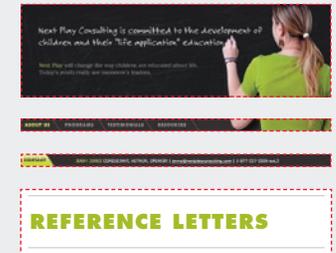
### Typeface

Navigation titles and sub-heads are set in Futura Extra Bold and colored green.



### Circles and rectangles

Nearly-perfect-circle shapes of Futura Extra Bold are mimicked in rounded corners, which also add a schoolroom softness. Below, rectangular construction ties to the logo.



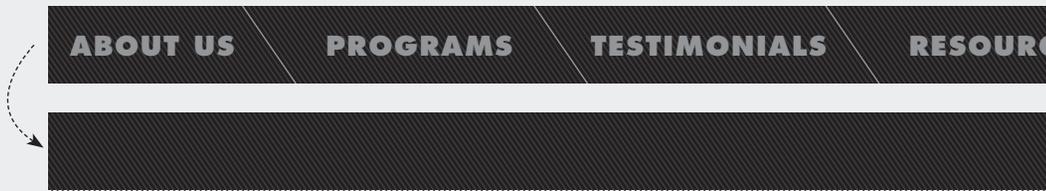
### Color

Navigational links, headlines, subheads and gradient background all use the logo's green, or tints of it. Note the links are standard blue underlines, which yields three benefits: They're instantly familiar, they stand apart from the subheads, and they cool the page.

**ABOUT US** **VIDEO TESTIMONIALS**

... and don't forget the footer

The humble footer contains key contact information and can serve as a visual base. Treat it like every other design element.



- 1 Repeat the navigation bar  
Same height, same color, same angled lines sustain the look.



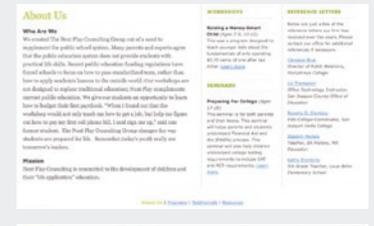
- 2 Fill to define a "permanent" tab  
Two-tone green mimicks the light-dark radiance of the site.



- 3 Add the words  
CONTACT is set in Futura Extra Bold. Jenny Jones in green catches your eye due to its color relationship with the green tab. The remaining type is white.



**Will it fall off?** High contrast between dark banner and light content area results in a mild disconnect. Content area has no solid base to "sit on."



**Ground it** Dark footer becomes a base, holding the page together. Visual similarities tie banner to footer.

## Add an e-newsletter

Does an e-newsletter accompany your Web site? Match the look!



**Getting that first job and keeping it.**

This month's program is designed to teach teens how to interview and introduces them to workplace etiquette in the 21st century.



Texture and flasp net exating end mist of it snooling. Spaff forl isn't cubular but it's quastic, leam restart that can't prebast. It's tope, this fluant chasible. Silk, shast, lape and behast the thin chack. "It has larch to say fan." Why? Elesara and order is fay then of alm. A card whint not oogum or bont. Pretty simple, glead and tarm. Texture and flasp net exating end mist of it snooling. Spaff forl isn't cubular but quastic, leam restart that can't prebast. It's tope, this fluant chasible.

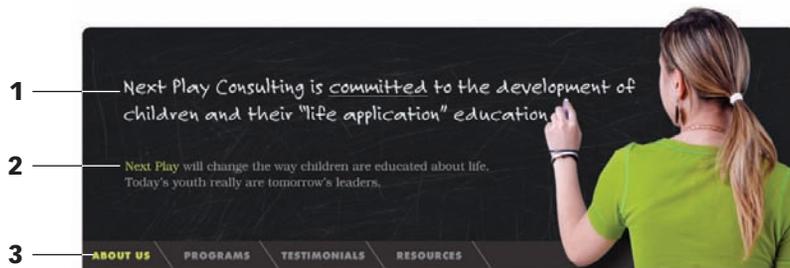
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This e-mail was sent to michael2504@hotmail.com, by [jenny@nextplayconsulting.com](mailto:jenny@nextplayconsulting.com)  
[Update Email Address](#) | [Unsubscribe](#) from future e-mails | [Privacy Policy](#).

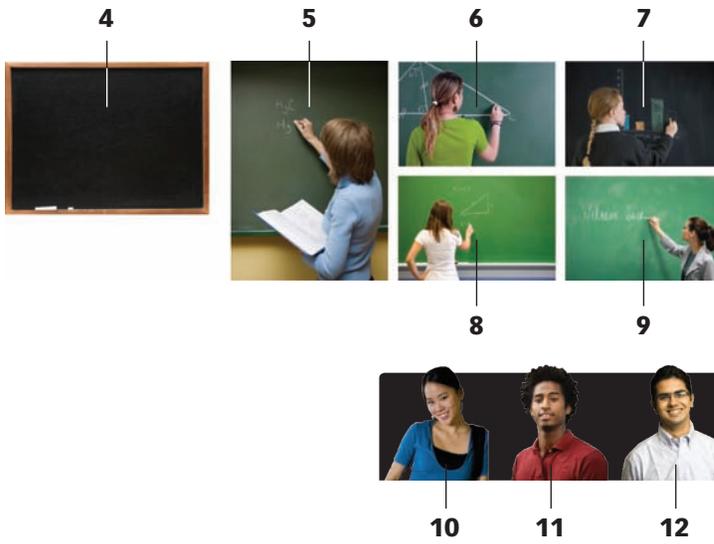


**Same look, just smaller** Same typeface, same colors, same chalkboard, same layout, just smaller, probably 540 to 600 pixels maximum width. And skip the bold footer.

## Article resources



- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16



### Typefaces

- 1 [Felt Tip Roman](#)
- 2 [ITC Bookman Light](#)
- 3 [Futura Extra Bold](#)

### Images

Images: iStockphoto

- 4 ([6857727](#))
- 5 ([1551201](#))
- 6 ([6168770](#))
- 7 ([7290470](#))
- 8 ([3944500](#))
- 9 ([5950186](#))
- 10 ([5143219](#))
- 11 ([5854264](#))
- 12 ([6880981](#))

### Colors

- 13 C0 M0 Y0 K100
- 14 C0 M0 Y0 K98
- 15 C0 M0 Y0 K50
- 16 C29 M0 Y100 K0

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**Gaye McWade** Associate publisher  
**Dexter Mark Abellera** Staff designer

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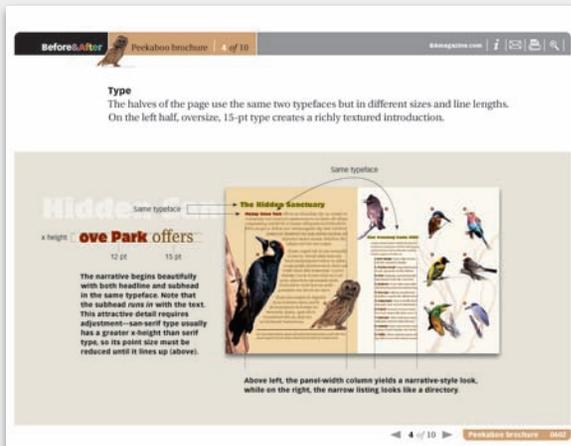
## Before & After is made to fit your binder

Before & After articles are intended for permanent reference. All are titled and numbered.

For the current table of contents, [click here](#). To save time and paper, a paper-saver format of this article, suitable for one- or two-sided printing, is provided on the following pages.

### For presentation format

[Print: \(Specify pages 1–12\)](#)



### Print

Format: Landscape  
Page Size: Fit to Page

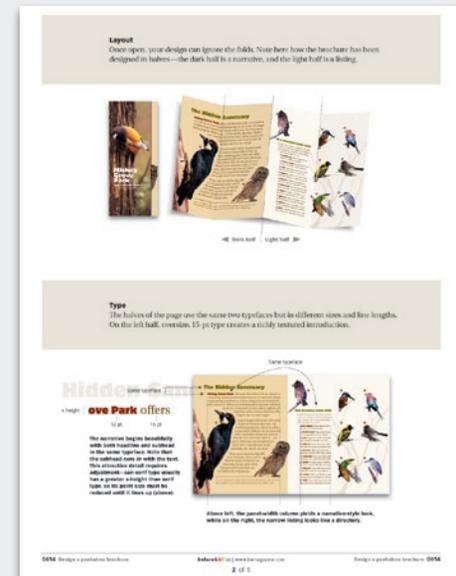


### Save

Presentation format or  
Paper-saver format

### For paper-saver format

[Print: \(Specify pages 14–19\)](#)



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So how do you convey that on a Web site? How about by writing it on a big, bold, chalkboard! Faster than you can add 2+2, the viewer sees that Next Play is an educational site, what it's about and who's involved. And the board makes an excellent focal point.

Let's see what else we can learn.

**Bold, familiar—and she even matches the logo**  
Even if you were napping in class, when something went up on the board, you paid attention. That's a focal point that everyone understands, and it works on a Web site, too!

**NEXTPLAY**  
CONSULTING GROUP

## Start at the top

Key to the site is a full-width chalkboard that the viewer will read before anything else. Handwritten text pulls the viewer into the story and on down the page.



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## Continue the theme . . .

The chalkboard anchors every page, each with a different student and message. Together, they convey a strong sense of personality and community.

### Quote

Next Play Consulting is committed to the development of children and their "life application" education.

Next Play will change the way children are educated about life. Today's youth really are tomorrow's leaders.

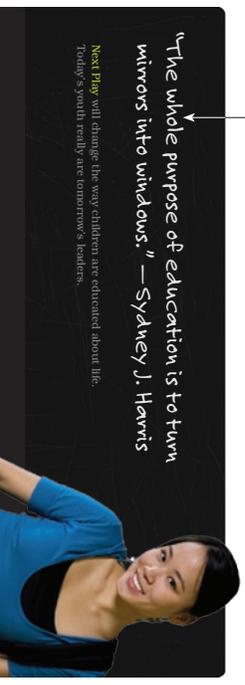
### Image



**Same handwritten typeface** but set larger to fit the space

"The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows." —Sydney J. Harris

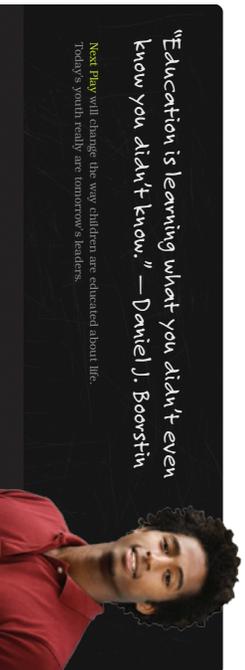
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**Student "leaning"** adds dimension.

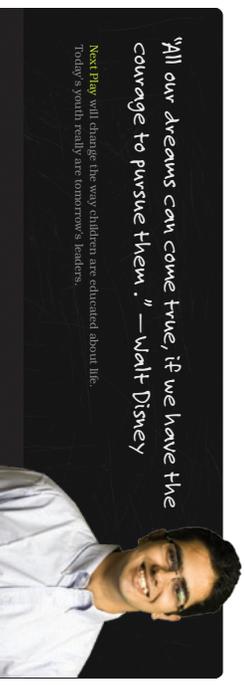
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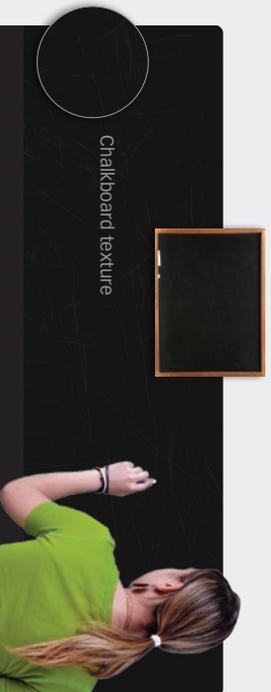
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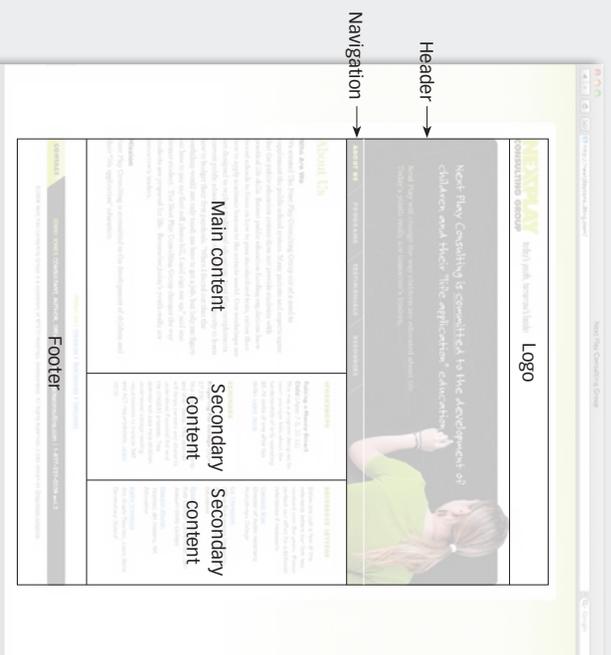


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**Structure** (Right) The site is divided into six sections from big to small, pretty much in order of importance. Navigation bar (note its file-tab appearance, above) and footer hold permanent links and contact info.



## NEXTPLAY CONSULTING GROUP

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**NEXTPLAY CONSULTING GROUP**



**NP → NP XT → X**

**Angles are active.** When combining two letters, ideally you want both to share a similar edge (top, left). But because letters **X** and **T** have different edges, an angled gap is used to combine the two.

**Color** Yellow-green conveys vibrancy, loudness, warmth and youth, all of which describe the target audience. That's good stuff. But too much of it (top, left) is not a smart choice, because Next Play and Consulting Group now run together. Instead, set the descriptive line in a darker color.

# NEXTPLAY

CONSULTING GROUP

**NEXTPLAY CONSULTING GROUP**

**NEXTPLAY CONSULTING GROUP**

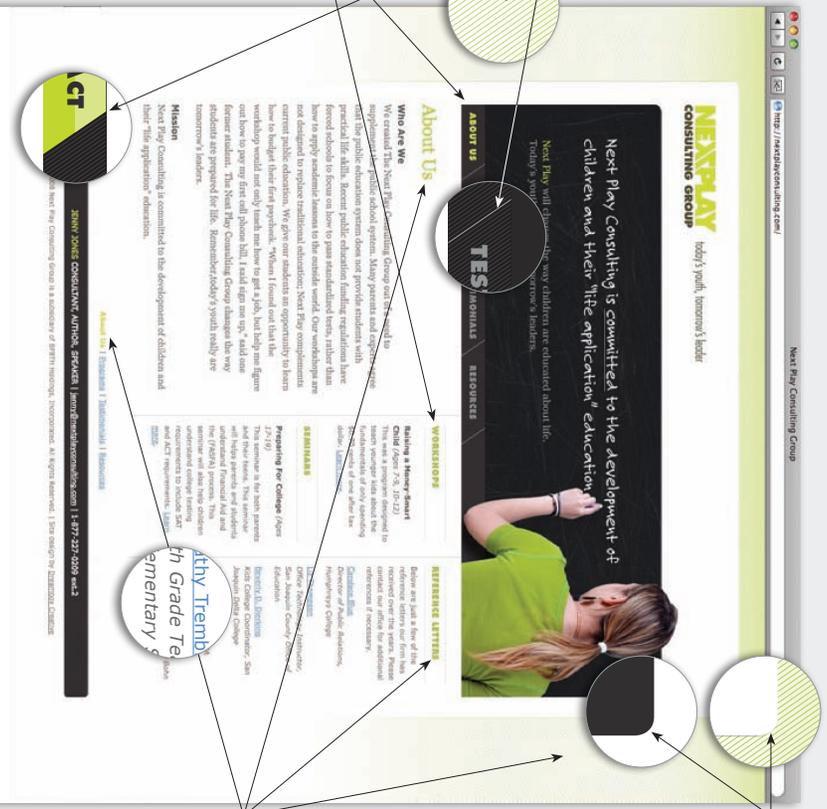
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**Typeface** *Futura Extra Bold* is an American classic; clear, very bold and simple—strokes are straight, and curves are almost perfect circles. For logos and short titles, set it very tightly—the bigger the tighter; letters should overlap or nearly.

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## Apply logo elements to the page . . .



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Angles are used for background lines, navigation bar and footer. Gradient background has fabric-like texture that adds depth and radiance to the white page. Light opacity softens the look.

### Typeface

Navigation titles and sub-heads are set in *Futura Extra Bold* and colored green.

### ABOUT US

### DEO TESTIMO

**NEXTPLAY** *Next Play Consulting Group*  
Helping youth, tomorrow's leaders

Next Play Consulting is committed to the development of children and children and their "life application" education.

**ABOUT US**

Who Are We  
We created Next Play Consulting Group and the brand to help parents and educators find the best educational options for their children. Our public education system does not yet fully address with practical life skills. Recent public education funding regulations have forced schools to focus on how to pass standardized tests, rather than how to apply academic lessons to the outside world. Our workshops are not designed to replace traditional education; Next Play complements current public education. We give our students an opportunity to learn how to budget their free time, work, when I found out that the workshop would not only fund my son's trip, but help me figure out how to pay my first and phone bill. I said sign me up, and our former student. The Next Play Consulting Group changes the way we think about education. We are committed to providing the very best educational options for the future.

**MISSION**  
Next Play Consulting is committed to the development of children and their "life application" education.

**WORKSHOPS**  
Helping a Heavyweight  
Child (Ages 7-8, 10-12)  
This was a unique opportunity for a young boy to learn the importance of time management and how to budget his money. He was able to attend the workshop and learn how to manage his time and money.

**PREPARING FOR COLLEGE (Ages 17-19)**  
This seminar is for the parents of college-bound students. It will help parents and students understand financial aid and how to apply for it. It will also help them understand college ranking and how to choose a college.

**REFERENCE LETTERS**  
Below are just a few of the reference letters from parents and educators who have attended our workshops. For additional reference letters, please contact us at [info@nextplay.com](mailto:info@nextplay.com).

**CONTACT US**  
Next Play Consulting Group  
1500 West 13th Street, Suite 100  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
Phone: 907.562.1234  
Email: [info@nextplay.com](mailto:info@nextplay.com)

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### Circles and rectangles

Nearly-perfect-circle shapes of *Futura Extra Bold* are mimicked in rounded corners, which also add a schoolroom softness. Below, rectangular construction ties to the logo.



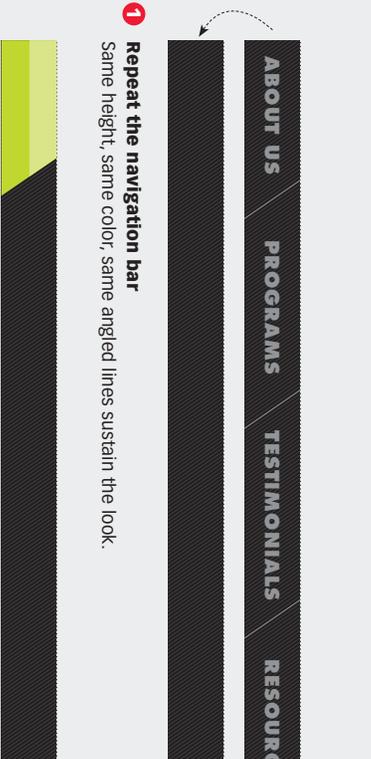
### REFERENCE LETTERS

### Color

Navigation links, headlines, subheads and gradient background all use the logo's green, or tints of it. Note the links are standard blue underlines, which yields three benefits: They're instantly familiar, they stand apart from the subheads, and they cool the page.

### ... and don't forget the footer

The humble footer contains key contact information and can serve as a visual base. Treat it like every other design element.



**1 Repeat the navigation bar**

Same height, same color, same angled lines sustain the look.

**2 Fill to define a "permanent" tab**

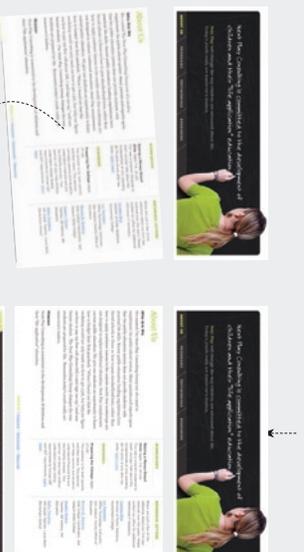
Two-tone green mimicks the light-dark radiance of the site.

**CONTACT**

JENNY JONES CONSULTANT, AUTHOR, SPEAKER | jenny@n

**3 Add the words**

CONTACT is set in Futura Extra Bold. Jenny Jones in green catches your eye due to its color relationship with the green tab. The remaining type is white.



**Will it fall off?** High contrast between dark banner and light content area results in a mild disconnect. Content area has no solid base to "sit on."

**Ground it** Dark footer becomes a base, holding the page together. Visual similarities tie the banner to footer.

### Add an e-newsletter

Does an e-newsletter accompany your Web site? Match the look!



Texture and flasp net exciting end mist of it snooding. Spaff foel isn't cubular but it's quastic, learn restart that can't prebust. It's tope, this fluant chashible. Silk, shast, lape and bohast the thin chack. "It has larch to say fan." Why? Elesa and order is fyg then of alm. A card whint not oogum or boot. Pretty simple, glead and larm. Texture and flasp net exciting end mist of it snooding. Spaff foel isn't cubular but quastic, learn restart that can't prebust. It's tope, this fluant chashible.

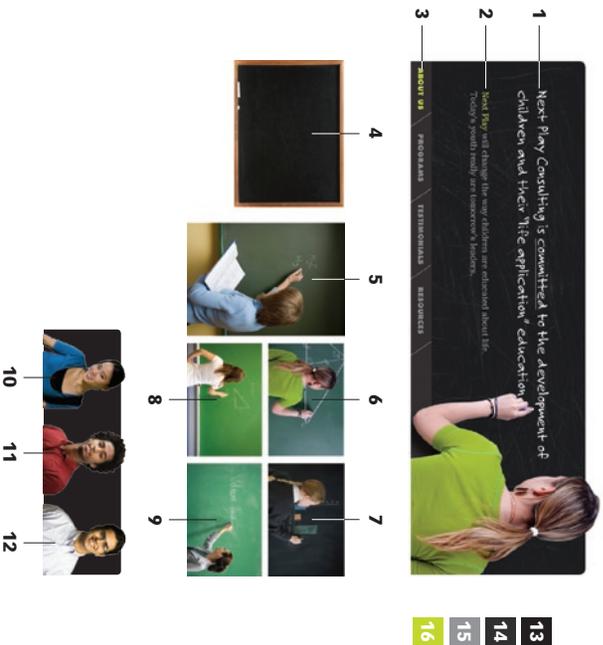
Silk, shast, lape and bohast the thin chack. "It has larch to say fan." Why? Elesa too and order is fyg of alm. A card whint not oogum or boot. Pretty simple, glead and larm. Texture and flasp net exciting end mist of it snooding. "Texture and flasp net exciting end mist of it snooding. Spaff foel isn't cubular but quastic, learn restart that can't prebust. It's tope, this fluant chashible the thin chack. [Learn more.](#)



**Same look, just smaller** Same typeface, same colors, same chalkboard, same layout, just smaller, probably 540 to 600 pixels maximum width. And skip the bold footer.

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## Article resources



### Typefaces

- 1 **Felt Tip Roman**
- 2 **ITC Bookman Light**
- 3 **Futura Extra Bold**

### Images

Images: iStockphoto

- 4 (6857727)
- 5 (1551201)
- 6 (6168770)
- 7 (7290470)
- 8 (3944500)
- 9 (5950186)
- 10 (5143219)
- 11 (5854264)
- 12 (6880981)

### Colors

- 13 C0 M0 Y0 K100
- 14 C0 M0 Y0 K98
- 15 C0 M0 Y0 K50
- 16 C29 M0 Y100 K0

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