

Virginia Building & Code Officials Association

brand manual

The logo for the Virginia Building & Code Officials Association (VBCOA) features the acronym 'VBCOA' in a large, bold, dark green sans-serif font. The letters are set against a light green background that includes a faint grid pattern and a silhouette of the state of Virginia.

Better Buildings. Safer Communities.

Welcome to the Brand Manual

table of contents

Welcome to the VBCOA brand manual.

Introduction

As a statewide network of building safety professionals, we are dedicated to ensuring the safety of all who live, work, and visit the Commonwealth of Virginia. It's why we are in business.

Our brand is our most valuable asset to achieving this goal. It represents what we stand for, the beliefs and values on which we operate, and why we do what we do. As we communicate to our various audiences, it's important to maintain this image in every interaction. From code development meetings to community presentations, media campaigns to print materials, we need to be consistent about promoting the values of VBCOA.

This manual is a tool to help guide and strengthen the body of visual communications that will build VBCOA into a highly recognized and respected brand. It contains guidelines, rules, and examples for maintaining our brand in all of our communications.

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Welcome to the Brand Manual

how to use this manual

“You can have brilliant ideas, but if you can’t get them across, your ideas won’t get you anywhere.”

Lee Iacocca
Former CEO, Chrysler

Getting started

The VBCOA brand means something. Whether it’s text in brochures or a field inspection, all of our messages must reflect the key elements of our brand. Put simply, it’s who we are.

The key to managing our brand is consistency and education. The first step is to educate all of our internal audiences about the VBCOA brand. The second step is paying close attention to all of the messages we send out. Are they consistent? Do they accurately reflect our brand?

So keep an open mind, and realize that the better we know ourselves, the better we can tell others about our company.

Using this manual

The VBCOA brand manual establishes official policy and standards for the design and text of all publications, stationery, signage, and other applications, including the Web.

Adhering to these standards will help ensure that communications from every employee speak with a clear and uniform voice that best represents the image and brand of VBCOA.

This manual establishes consistent visual and editorial policies and covers many applications of the visual identity system, including proper usage of the logo, colors and fonts to use, and more.

Questions regarding how to use any of the brand elements should be directed to Heather Toro Derrick, Communicate Consulting at hderrick@communicateconsulting.com.

What is a Brand?

the basics of branding

“A brand is a person’s gut feeling about a product, service or organization.”

Marty Neumeier

Author, *A Dictionary of Brand*

What is a brand?

All industries have buzzwords that are used daily but rarely understood. Brand is one of them in the marketing world. According to The Inter-brand Glossary (October 2006):

“A brand is a mixture of attributes, tangible and intangible, symbolized by a trademark, which if managed properly, creates value and influence. ‘Value’ has different interpretations: from a marketing or consumer perspective it is the promise and delivery of an experience; from a business perspective it is the security of future earnings; from a legal perspective it is a separate piece of intellectual property.”

What is not a brand?

A brand is not a logo, an advertising campaign, a slogan, or even a product.

Instead, according to Marty Neumeier, a brand is a gut feeling about a product, service or organization. It’s a person’s gut feeling because brands are defined by individuals, not companies, markets or publics. It’s a gut feeling that must resonate with all stakeholders: employees, shareholders, customers and partners.

In other words it not was YOU say it is, it’s what THEY say it is.

Why do we need a brand?

According to Brandchannel.com, “Brand Called You” by Steven Van Yoder, brands have a number of strategic functions:

- Differentiate from the competition.
- Position a focused message in the hearts and minds of target customers.
- Persist and be consistent in marketing.
- Customize services to reflect the brand.
- Deliver messages clearly and quickly.
- Project credibility.
- Strike an emotional chord.
- Create strong user loyalty.

“A product is made in a factory; a brand is made in the mind.”

Walter Landor
Founder, Landor Associates

The three parts of a brand

1. Behavior

A brand starts with behavior; a code of conduct toward clients, the public, subcontractors and suppliers, and each other. It should be a part of everything we do, from the way we answer the phones, to the products and subcontractors we choose. Brand behavior is the brand brought to life; therefore, we must live our brand. If we're going to sing it, we gotta bring it.

2. Appearance

Appearance, or “look and feel,” has to do with graphic design elements, including our logo, color palette, typography, and more. All of our marketing efforts must be consistent and work together, not as single pieces.

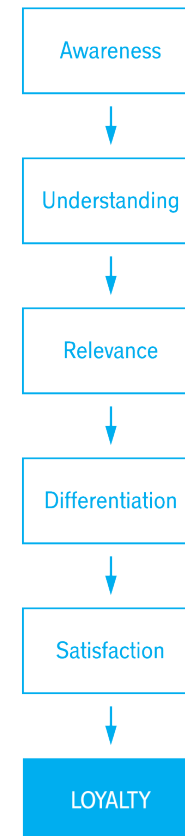
3. Language

Language, or “tone and manner,” involves our company's entire system of verbal communication. This includes ad copy, taglines, website content, press releases and presentations. As with look and feel, these verbal expressions must be consistent and recognizable.

The brand continuum

The value of a good brand begins with loyal, repeat customers, therefore our ultimate goal is building customer loyalty.

The way to do that is the continuum shown below from Interbrand (October 2006). We have to make sure customers become aware of the brand, understand it, find it relevant to their lives, distinguish it from the competition, then choose our brand and experience customer satisfaction.



The VBCOA Brand

positioning statements

Brand Promise

VBCOA is a statewide network of building safety professionals dedicated to the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of all persons who live, work, or visit the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Positioning statements

The Virginia Building and Code Officials Association (VBCOA) is a statewide organization of building safety professionals dedicated to the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of all persons who live, work, or visit the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Since 1929, we have worked to foster partnerships among all groups associated with the construction industry. By working together we can build better buildings and safer communities.

In order to promote safety in building and construction across the Commonwealth, VBCOA promotes the understanding and uniform interpretation and enforcement of regulations relating to the fire protection and structural adequacy of buildings and the safety and health of the occupants.

Our strength is our members. Being a member of VBCOA means you're a leader in the building safety profession, and you're part of an organization that is recognized nationally for their efforts to improve the building code.

Tagline

The VBCOA mission and positioning statements are captured in our tagline and internal mantra:

Better Buildings. Safer Communities.

If we plug this into our three parts of a brand, the implications are clear:

1. Behavior

We portray the skill, competence and character expected of a member of the building safety profession.

2. Appearance

The look and feel of all our communications materials will reflect a professional, building safety organization.

3. Language

We care about the safety of all those who live, work and visit our communities. That's why all of our messages speak to real people. We're committed to protecting people and their property.

Our Mission

To protect the health, safety, and welfare of all persons who live, work, or visit the Commonwealth of Virginia by providing a statewide network of building safety professionals.

Brand Drivers/Values

Professionalism

We portray the skill, competence and character expected of a member of the building safety profession.

Safety

Our job is to ensure the safety of all people who live, work, and visit the Commonwealth and their property. We are building safety professionals first and foremost.

Community

We are good stewards of our local community because we live and work here too. We care about the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of all people who live, work, or visit our communities.

Customer Service

Whether we're working with local officials or a homeowner, we are patient, understanding, and willing to help. Sometimes there may be more than one right answer to a problem, and we are both flexible and creative in solving a code issue.

Resource and Education

We're trained professionals who know exactly how the code will effect a project. We're both a resource in building and development issues and a source of continuing training and education.

Leadership

As an organization we have been a leader in the building safety profession for over 80 years. We have a strong, diverse membership and leadership that are nationally recognized for their contributions to the improvement and understanding of building code development.

Partnering

As an organization, it is our goal to foster communication between all groups associated with the construction industry. We believe that by working together we can provide a safer built environment.

The VBCOA Brand target audiences

Who are we talking to?

In order to conduct our business on a daily basis, there are key audiences that we interact with. These audiences are vital to the success of VBCOA and are prioritized in order of importance.

Primary Audiences

Building and Code Officials

This audience includes building and code officials employed in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Members: This includes current members and past members of VBCOA

Non-members: This includes officials who are not affiliated with VBCOA

Citizens

This audience includes citizens who live and work in various localities across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Contractors

This audience includes both large and small commercial and residential builders and developers

Design Professionals

This audience includes architects, engineers, land surveyors and consultants who are involved in the design of commercial and residential structures.

Secondary Audiences

Elected Officials

This audience includes all local and state elected government officials, such as mayors, city council members, state and federal representatives.

Local Government Administration

This includes officials and employees who are appointed or hired by the Commonwealth of Virginia, such as town managers and Commonwealth attorneys.

State Agencies

This audience includes all state agencies such as DHCD.

Tertiary Audiences

Partners

This audience includes other industry-specific organizations that are involved in the construction industry.

Media Contacts

This audience includes local and national news media and industry specific media. These are groups who can help VBCOA connect to the above audiences.

Talk to our audiences

The way we approach a homeowner is different than the way we would approach an engineer. The following messages describe the key messages we want to communicate to each specific audience.

Primary Audiences

Building and Code Officials

Members: As a member of VBCOA, you're a leader in the building safety profession. And we have the training, networking, and resources to help make your job easier – plus a whole network of professionals across the state to support you. Let's work together to build better buildings and safer communities.

Non-members: It's not always easy being a building safety professional – but what you do is important to keeping the people who live, work, and visit our state safe. And we have the training, networking, and resources to help make your job easier and advance your career – plus a whole network of professionals across the state to support you. Let's work together to build better buildings and safer communities.

Citizens

You want you and your family to be safe. So do we. That's why it's our job to make sure your home, your kid's school, your work, or even the place where you buy your groceries, is a building that will ensure your health, safety, and well-being. So come talk to us before you start that next project, we have the knowledge and expertise to help you do it. Let's work together to build better buildings and safe communities.

Contractors

No one likes for their job to get held up. It costs you time, money, and your patience. We can help you get it right the first time, with expertise and knowledge in building safety and local codes. So you get a safer, better quality project, and a little more of that time, money, and patience back. Let's work together to build better buildings and safer communities.

Design Professionals

It's your job to design buildings that are innovative, functional and sustainable - and the last thing you want are limits on that good design. That's why we want to help you design buildings that promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of its occupants with expertise in building safety and local codes. Let's work together to build better buildings and safer communities.

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The VBCOA Brand

high level messages

Talk to our audiences

The way we approach a homeowner is different than the way we would approach an engineer. The following messages describe the key messages we want to communicate to each specific audience.

Secondary Audiences

Elected Officials

Your constituents depend on you to represent them and their interests. We can help you promote community and economic development by ensuring the safety of all those who live, work and visit your community. By supporting your building officials participation, we can ensure this community is known for promoting safety and community development, not costly, dangerous government oversight. Let's work together to build better buildings and safer communities.

Local Government Administration

Strong community support depends on making sure all government employees are doing their job properly. We can help you promote community and economic development by ensuring the safety of all those who live, work and visit your community. By supporting your building officials participation in our organization, we can ensure this community is known for promoting safety and community development, not costly, dangerous government oversight. Let's work together to build better buildings and safer communities.

State Agencies

It's your job to make sure our built environment promotes the health, safety, and well-being of all citizens. So is ours. By supporting us, we can help you balance the law with community development. Let's work together to build better buildings and safer communities.

Tertiary Audiences

Partners

You're an expert in your industry and care about how code development affects your profession. It's our goal to foster communication between all groups in the construction industry. We believe that by working together we can balance the law with development. Let's work together to build better buildings and safer communities.

Media Contacts

Message catered to audience and occasion.

Talking about ourselves

The following sentences, organized by common questions we've received, describe in greater detail how VBCOA is ensuring better buildings and safer communities.

These statements are meant to supplement the messages contained in our mission and positioning statements, as well as high level messages.

WHO	WHAT THEY CARE ABOUT	WHAT WE WANT TO TELL THEM
Building & Code Officials	My work can be time consuming and overwhelming. Why should this be part of my job?	We are building safety professionals like you. By being a part of VBCOA, we can provide your required trainings for free, as well as resources to make your job easier.
	Will my local government administration support my involvement?	We are a professional organization that is vital to doing your job properly and efficiently. We have the support of local and state government, and we will go to bat for you when you need it.
	Why should I care about code development and uniformity?	Consistency and predictability allows for all parties in the construction industry to be educated in building safety and local codes. That way they're happy and you're happy, too.
	Other localities don't understand the issues we face in my community.	While we have our differences, we need to work together so that we can combat state mandates and other industry pressures that will make our jobs harder.
	Why should I work with other localities?	Chances are, if you run into a problem, someone else in the state has too. Being a member means you have a whole network of professionals to support and help you. Visit other regions and use our resources so you don't have to go it alone or recreate the wheel. Together we can save each other time and patience.
	How can being a member benefit me personally and professionally?	VBCOA has 80 years of experience and national recognition for code development. We can provide you exposure on a state and national level, ensuring your job security and career advancement. Go technical.
VBCOA Members	What can VBCOA do for me both professionally and personally?	VBCOA has 80 years of experience and national recognition for code development. We can provide you exposure on a state and national level, ensuring your job security and career advancement.
	Other localities don't understand the issues we face in my community.	While we have our differences, we need to work together so that we can combat state mandates and other industry pressures that will make our jobs harder.
	Why should I work with other localities?	Chances are, if you run into a problem, someone else in the state has too. Being a member means you have a whole network of professionals to support and help you. Visit other regions and use our resources, so you don't have to go it alone or recreate the wheel. Together we can save each other time and patience.

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The VBCOA Brand

detailed messages

Talking about ourselves

The following sentences, organized by common questions we've received, describe in greater detail how VBCOA is ensuring better buildings and safer communities.

These statements are meant to supplement the messages contained in our mission and positioning statements, as well as high level messages.

WHO	WHAT THEY CARE ABOUT	WHAT WE WANT TO TELL THEM
VBCOA Members continued...	Why should I change how I do my job or care about uniformity?	Consistency and predictability allow for all parties in the construction industry to be educated in building safety and local codes. That way they're happy and you're happy, too. Be open-minded and stick together as a profession.
	What resources do you have for me?	We're here for you – so use us! We can provide free required trainings, resources, networking, lobbying code development on your behalf, and partnerships with other organizations.
	How is the organization benefiting my profession?	We have a strong, diverse membership and leadership to guide us down a path that will improve the image of our profession, increase membership, ensure uniform compliance, and promote community and economic development. <i>Go technical.</i>
Citizens	What is your job?	When we do our job, nothing happens. We ensure the safety of all people who live, work, and visit the Commonwealth. That means you can live your lives without thinking twice.
	Why should I come to you before I start a project?	We're building safety professionals who are trained and certified. So you can come to us and ask us questions before you go to the home improvement store. In the end, by coming to us first, we can save you time, money, and avoid problems.
	Aren't you just going to tell me I can't complete my project?	This is your home and your investment. We want you to get the best quality that fits your budget. Because we're experts in building safety and local codes, we can find options for you so you can still get your project done.
	What happens when a code issue stops my project?	We want to help you without endangering you. That's why we have to balance the law with your project. So we'll take the time to explain to you the why and help you figure out the how. <i>Stay general.</i>
Contractors	Why should I come to you before I start a project?	It's easier to ask permission than to beg forgiveness. By coming to us first, we can help you go through your project and anticipate any problems, so you don't lose any time or money once you start construction.

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Talking about ourselves

The following sentences, organized by common questions we've received, describe in greater detail how VBCOA is ensuring better buildings and safer communities.

These statements are meant to supplement the messages contained in our mission and positioning statements, as well as high level messages.

WHO	WHAT THEY CARE ABOUT	WHAT WE WANT TO TELL THEM
Contractors continued...	Will you hold up my job site?	Contrary to popular belief, we actually want your project to pass smoothly and quickly. That's because we have a lot of work on our plates, too. By coming to us early, you can get it right the first time and avoid costly delays.
	How can I speed up the process?	By being educated on building safety and local codes, you can anticipate problems and design a structure that will pass smoothly. And if all else fails, we're your go-to guy for information and resources.
	How can you ensure consistency in code enforcement?	As an organization, it's our goal to foster communication between all groups associated with the construction industry. We balance the law with project development, and VBCOA is nationally recognized for our involvement in code development. We don't change the codes, but we can work together to ensure that the codes will positively affect our community. Start general, then go technical on a project level.
Design Professionals	Why should I consult you before I design a project?	We respect your work to design a built environment that is healthy, safe, and promotes well-being. That's our mission, too. We're technical experts in building safety and local codes, so we can help you avoid issues that will cost your project time and money.
	Will you prevent me from incorporating new designs and products in my project?	Ultimately, we have the same goal – to create a project that satisfies the client. We're flexible and willing to work with you during the design phase to create options and find creative solutions.
	How can you ensure consistency in code enforcement?	As an organization, it's our goal to foster communication between all groups associated with the construction industry. We balance the law with project development, and VBCOA is nationally recognized for our involvement in code development. Go technical.
Elected Officials	How do you impact my community?	We care about your community because we live here, too. Our job is to ensure our built environment is healthy, safe and promotes the well-being of all people who live, work, and visit your community.
	How does your work improve our local government's image with constituents?	This organization is good for your constituents because it ensures that your building officials are trained and certified. That means you have skilled professionals on the front line, preventing costly damages, while promoting economic development so that businesses can operate safely and legally.

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The VBCOA Brand

detailed messages

Talking about ourselves

The following sentences, organized by common questions we've received, describe in greater detail how VBCOA is ensuring better buildings and safer communities.

These statements are meant to supplement the messages contained in our mission and positioning statements, as well as high level messages.

WHO	WHAT THEY CARE ABOUT	WHAT WE WANT TO TELL THEM
Elected Officials continued...	<p>How do I support you?</p> <p>Why should we care about paying attention to code in economic development projects that are good for our community?</p>	<p>Make sure all of your building officials are trained and members of VBCOA. Together, we can ensure this community is known for promoting safety and well-being, and not for costly, dangerous government oversight.</p> <p>All building codes are state mandates, and we want to get the law right the first time. Think of us as insurance, by including us early in the project, we can make sure the project is completed without the chance of future costs due to natural disasters, accidents or catastrophes.</p> <p>Go general.</p>
Local Government Administration	<p>How do you impact my community?</p> <p>How does your work improve our local government's image with constituents?</p> <p>How do I support you?</p> <p>Why should we care about paying attention to code in economic development projects that are good for our community?</p>	<p>We care about your community because we live here, too. Our job is to ensure our built environment is healthy, safe and promotes the well-being of all people who live, work, and visit your community.</p> <p>This organization is good for your constituents because it ensures that your building officials are trained and certified. That means you have skilled professionals on the front line, preventing costly damages, while promoting economic development so that businesses can operate safely and legally.</p> <p>Make sure all of your building officials are trained and members of VBCOA. Together, we can ensure this community is known for promoting safety and well-being, and not for costly, dangerous government oversight.</p> <p>All building codes are state mandates, and we want to get the law right the first time. Think of us as insurance, by including us early in the project, we can make sure the project is completed without the chance of future costs due to natural disasters, accidents or catastrophes.</p> <p>Stay general.</p>
State Agencies	<p>How do you ensure that code enforcement is uniform and consistent?</p> <p>How do you balance code enforcement with economic and community development?</p>	<p>We offer training and certification to ensure that building safety professionals across the state are educated and informed.</p> <p>We appreciate the balancing act you have to do between enforcing the law and promoting community development. We're here to support you by balancing uniform compliance with completing projects that are good for the community.</p>

Continued on page 15...

Talking about ourselves

The following sentences, organized by common questions we've received, describe in greater detail how VBCOA is ensuring better buildings and safer communities.

These statements are meant to supplement the messages contained in our mission and positioning statements, as well as high level messages.

WHO	WHAT THEY CARE ABOUT	WHAT WE WANT TO TELL THEM
State Agencies continued...	How can we trust that your organization will be able to promote and enforce code development?	We're still here – 80 years means we have the experience and dedication to keep our organization going strong. We have a strong, diverse membership and leadership to guide us down a path that will improve the image of our profession, ensure uniform compliance, and promote community and economic development. <i>Go technical.</i>
Partners	How can you help promote code development for my industry?	We're the communication link with all parties in the construction industry. So we can work together to make sure the code won't negatively affect your industry.
	How can you help support our organization?	We're here for you. We can help promote your organization through recognition, financial support, and partner resources.
	Will you balance the law with what I have to do?	We also need your resources and expertise to support our organization. By working together, we can serve both of our industries.

Using the Logo artwork and logo placement

'A trademark is a symbol of a corporation. It is not a sign of quality... it is a sign of the quality.'

Paul Rand
American Graphic Designer



Area of isolation

A minimum amount of white space around the logo is required. Use the distance from the bottom of Virginia to the VBCOA lettering as the unit by which to measure the area of isolation.

This area of isolation protects the logo from other imagery, graphics, and page trim.

About the artwork

The logo consists of three basic parts: the Virginia map, a globe segment relating to ICC, and the initials of Virginia Building Code Officials Association.

It is made up of two colors and white: Pantone (PMS) 577U and Pantone (PMS) 3425U (see color palette).

Grayscale Logo

For black and white publications, or when color is not an option, there is a grayscale version of the logo available.

If using the grayscale version of the logo on a solid background color, the background must provide adequate contrast.

In grayscale, lettering is black and the Virginia map is 30% black screen.

Size of the logo

Depending on usage, the size of the logo will change. The logo should be sized for clear legibility with the minimum amount of white space around it. This will often be more visually appealing than a logo that is sized too large for the space available, making it cluttered and harder to read. Let good taste be your guide when sizing the logo.

Primary logo



Alternate logo



Minimum size requirements

For ideal legibility, the minimum width of the logo is 2 inches.



Typography

what fonts to use

Type families

The typefaces (or fonts) used in the VBCOA brand are Franklin Gothic Black and Myriad Pro. A blend of the two fonts can be used for all communications.

Franklin Gothic Black

The Franklin Gothic type family is a sans serif font with extra bold weight. It serves as the main font used for the Association name on letterhead, in all caps 14 point.

Franklin Gothic Black
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Myriad Pro

This is a clean, simple font that suggests efficiency and professionalism. It is very versatile and can be used for headlines, sub-headlines and body text. It's also a font family that is fairly accessible on most computers.

Myriad Pro Light
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Myriad Pro Regular
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Myriad Pro Semibold
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

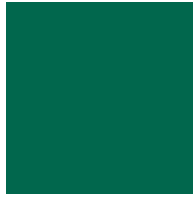
Myriad Pro Bold
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Myriad Pro Italic
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

The VBCOA Brand color palette

Color Palette

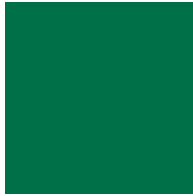
The colors used in the VBCOA brand can be used for all communications.



Pantone 555C
CMYK 75-0-60-55
RGB 0-103-78
HEX # 00674e



Pantone 7518C
CMYK 0-40-55-60
RGB 126-84-58
HEX # 7e543a



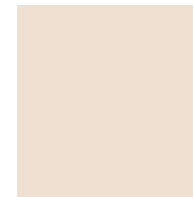
Pantone 3425U
CMYK 100-0-78-42
RGB 0-112-74
HEX # 00704a



Pantone 479C
CMYK 30-48-57-0
RGB 184-139-115
HEX # b88b73



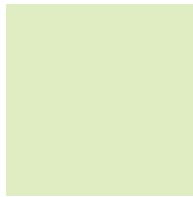
Pantone 556C
CMYK 42-0-33-27
RGB 114-164-146
HEX # 72a492



Pantone 482C
CMYK 5-11-15-0
RGB 239-223-210
HEX # efd2d2



Pantone 577U
CMYK 24-0-46-10
RGB 180-204-149
HEX # b4cc95



Pantone 365C
CMYK 12-0-29-0
RGB 226-237-195
HEX # e2edc3

