

Web Site Content Style Guidelines

Proper Use of Headings (H1 – H6)

It is fairly important to use proper headings (*Heading 1* through *Heading 6*) in order to designate a particular section/subsection of content on a given page. On the web, headings do not just serve a visual purpose (i.e. to look larger/bolder than other nearby text)—they also help with general usability, web accessibility (for people with screen readers and other assistive technologies), and search engine optimization (to improve findability in Google/Yahoo/etc.). Follow these general guidelines when using headings in Sitefinity:

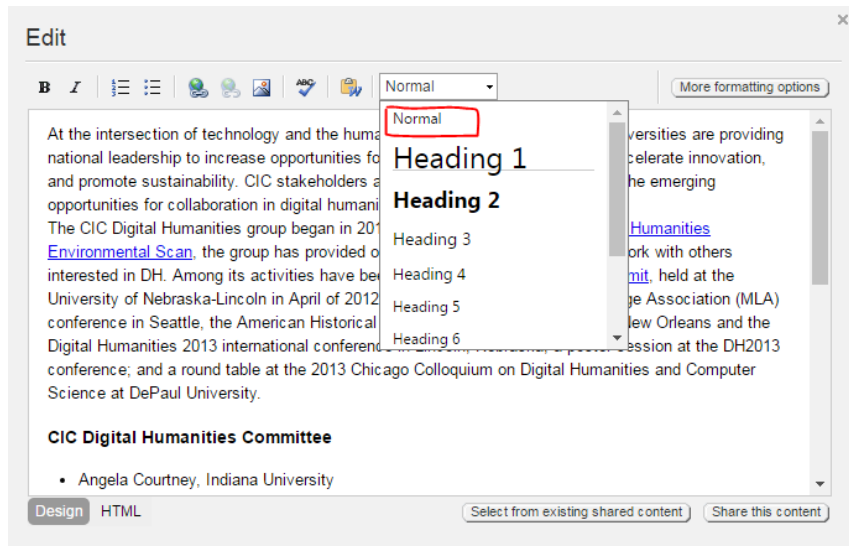
- **Only use H2 – H6 headings.** Generally, H1 is a special heading, because any given page is supposed to have only one *Heading 1*—and it is already being included with whatever *Page Template* is already assigned for the given page. So, generally speaking, **just use H2 – H6.**
- **Follow a hierarchy.** If you have a block of content that starts with an H2, then the following heading (if there is one) should either be another H2, or an H3. In that example, another H2 signals that the next section is at the same “level” as the preceding section, while an H3 signals that it’s a sub-section of the containing section. And so on.
- **Use of H2 in the right side-column.** The custom styling rules that are built into the BTAA template automatically cause any H2 text found in the right side-column to display a thick blue bar underneath such a heading. Therefore, if you want to have multiple sections in the side-column with each being underlined with the blue bar, simply type the section title and make it an H2. You can also use headings H3-H6, and while they will visually stand out (bolder/larger), they will not display the blue underlying bar.

The screenshot shows a website navigation menu with the following items: [unities](#), [Collaborative Projects](#), [Student Opportunities](#), [News & Publications](#), and [Calendar & Events](#). Below the menu, there is a main content area on the left and a right side-column. The main content area features a large heading: **Measuring the Impacts of Innovation, Competitiveness, and Science**. Below this heading is a paragraph of text. The right side-column contains a section titled **UMETRICS RESOURCES** with an H2 heading. Below this heading is a list of links: [Connected CIC Report April 2015](#), [Impact of Midwest Research Far-Reaching: Federal Cuts Will Be Felt as Far Away as California and New Hampshire](#), [New Data Show the Immediate Value of Scientific Research](#), [UMETRICS Funded Grants](#), [UMETRICS Synthesis document](#), [March 2013 UMETRICS meeting document](#), [UMETRICS Presentation \(Weinberg\)](#), and [UMETRICS Video \(AIR\): Long Story Short: Can We Fix the "Hit or Miss" Approach to Investing in Science?](#). Below this list is another section titled **Building an Institute for Research on Innovation and Science (IRIS)** with an H2 heading. Below this heading is a link: [IRIS homepage](#). Below this link is another link: [Incubated by CIC, New Institute for Research on Innovation and Science Launches in 2015](#). Below this link is a section titled **Principal Investigators:** with an H3 heading. Below this heading are two links: [Julia Lane](#) American Institutes for Research and [Bruce A. Weinberg](#) Ohio State University.

- **Avoid using “bold” button to designate a subtitle.** Bolding text has its place, and that is primarily to highlight a particular word/phrase/sentence in order to make it stand out WITHIN its own paragraph—not to serve as a heading/subheading itself. For that, use H2 – H6, whenever possible (unless perhaps bolding the beginning part of the given paragraph or something like that).

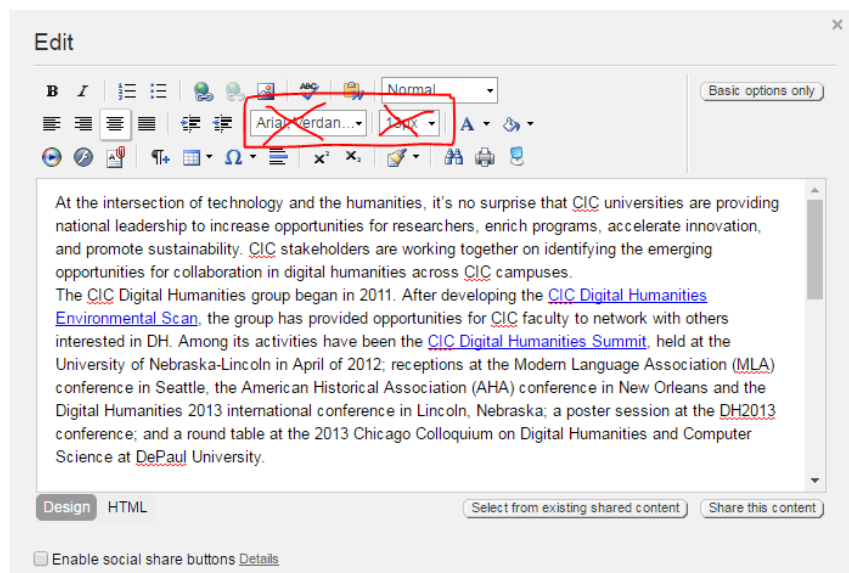
Proper Use of Paragraphs

By default, if a section of text isn’t a heading H1 – H6, then it should be designated as “Normal” in Sitefinity text editor. This marks it as a proper “paragraph” in HTML terms (i.e., a “<p>” HTML tag). This is also a good way to turn a particular heading into a paragraph (if needed), simply by highlighting the desired text and selecting *Normal* in the dropdown menu.



Fonts and Font Sizes

While Sitefinity text-editing tools do provide a way to change a font type and/or a font size, **this should be avoided at all costs** (except perhaps in rare situations)!



Copying-Pasting Text from Word/Email/PDF/etc. into Sitefinity

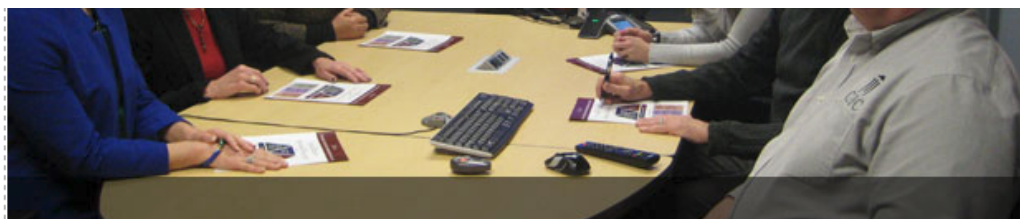
It is a common occurrence to copy-paste text and other content from another source into the Sitefinity editor. This is perfectly fine thing to do, but it comes with certain dangers—the **pasted content often carries with it more than just the seemingly harmless text, bolding, and links**. Usually it carries invisible font specifications, font sizes, and other unnecessary styling rules. Things may appear normal in the Sitefinity text editor—but remember, it isn't until the content is published (or previewed) that potential visual glitches might show up.

For that reason, and in order to ensure consistent look and feel everywhere, it should ALWAYS be a practice to IMMEDIATELY use the **Format Stripper** button in order to clean up the pasted content AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. While the “Strip All Formatting” option will do the most thorough job of leaving nothing but the pure text itself, it will also strip out bolding, italics, hyperlinks, etc.—and sometimes it's valuable to keep those when copying-pasting. So, you can use other “strip formatting...” options as needed. But, **it is a good general rule to use “Strip All Formatting” whenever possible**. Remember, things like bolding, italics, paragraphs, headings, and other simple tweaks can easily be re-added by using the Sitefinity editor buttons.

Placing Widgets into Proper Regions

In the Sitefinity page editor, one can drag and drop various widgets within the page easily. However, things can easily get out of whack if the widget doesn't land in a proper **region**. Unfortunately, Sitefinity doesn't make it always obvious to drop a widget exactly where needed. So, some caution is warranted, or things may end up in regions that are originally intended for something else—which can cause all kinds of display issues.

The best thing to do is to drag the widget until the highlighted yellow region shows up **AND displays the NAME of the desired region**. Only then release the mouse-click in order to drop the region in the place.



Drop here
MainText

Content block

Content block Edit More

The member universities of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation collaborate to advance their academic missions, generate unique opportunities for students and faculty, and serve the common good by sharing expertise, leveraging campus resources, and creating innovative programming.

The CIC offers a highly collegial headquarters office and the ability to work with some of the best leaders in American higher education. The staff has a genuine appreciation for research universities in general, and the CIC universities in particular. Skilled in synthesizing information from many discussions into focused areas for action, the CIC team possesses the abilities to distinguish great ideas from the mediocre, deftly handle both concepts and personalities; and have the wherewithal to move projects from idea to action with autonomous groups and individuals.




Typically, follow the following rules for where to place and where not to place widgets:

DO place widgets in these regions	DO NOT place widgets in these regions
<p>MainText MainContent SideContent</p>	<p>PageHeading OnPageNavigation CicSchoolPicturesArea MainWideArea AdditionalPageStyles GoogleAnalyticsPlaceholder SideNavigation</p>

Exceptions to the above can occur when a web developer/designer/administrator is making changes to page templates or in other special cases. But as a general rule, everyday content editors should only be placing things in the designated regions listed above on the left.

Feature Boxes

The custom-built CIC/BTAA **Feature Box** widget comes in 3 different styles:

<p>Layout 1</p>	<p>Includes: heading, text blurb, image, and a “learn more” hyperlink. The image is also a clickable hyperlink which goes to the same location as :learn more.”</p> <p>Medium size feature box.</p> <p>Should be used as a go-to style for using a single or multi-feature box setup, and can be used in the MainContent/MainText region, or in the right side-column as well.</p>	
<p>Layout 2</p>	<p>Includes: heading and image only. The image is a clickable hyperlink.</p> <p>Smallest size feature box of the three styles.</p> <p>Can be used as a single or multi-feature box setup.</p>	
<p>Layout 3</p>	<p>Includes: heading, text blurb, image, and a “learn more” hyperlink. The image is also a clickable hyperlink which goes to the same location as :learn more.”</p> <p>Largest size feature box of the three styles.</p> <p>Primarily intended and designed for use on the site HOME PAGE.</p>	

Placing Feature Boxes in Multi-Box Layouts

Sitefinity comes with built-in “Layout” widgets which can be used to divide a given region into multiple subregions. This can be useful for placing any content (in this case, Feature Boxes) into rows of three, for example, or any other combination of rows.

To drop a common 3-piece feature box setup, open a Sitefinity page in Page Editor, switch the page editing mode from the standard “Content” mode to the “Layout” mode (in upper-right corner), and drag drop the “33% + 34% + 33%” layout widget onto the *MainText* region. Then switch the mode back into the **Content** mode, and drop 3 brand new *Feature Boxes* into the respective columns in the layout.

Caution about Using Sitefinity Layout Widgets

These layouts can create complications and should therefore only be used when absolutely necessary, such as to achieve the 3-column sub-layout in an existing content region. By default, content blocks and other widgets should be dropped straight onto predesignated template regions (as described on the previous page), without the use of Sitefinity sub layouts, whenever possible.

Using Proper Images for Feature Boxes

Feature boxes expect certain image dimensions for an ideal, clean look and feel. Follow these rules for each layout:

Style	Width	Height	Comments
Layout 1	186 px	134 px	
Layout 2	162 px	112 px	But could use layout 1 image dimensions, because they will downscale automatically.
Layout 3	299 px	160 px	

General Content Cleanup Guidelines

Generally speaking, to troubleshoot and fix up visual glitches, follow these guidelines:

1. Check side column content:
 - a. Look for:
 - i. Are there extra-wide or inconsistent gaps?
 - ii. Are there seemingly unnecessary blue underlying bars without any content?
 - iii. Are there odd-looking font types or sizes?
 - b. Fix by inspecting HTML of the designated content blocks:
 - i. Look for empty HTML tags (such as opening and closing H2 HTML tags with no content inside).
 - ii. Look for unnecessary line breaks (which may show up in the form of `
` HTML tags and/or empty paragraphs (usually “`<p></p>`” or “`<p> </p>`”).
 - iii. Look for font-family or font-size specifications.
2. Check for Main Content:
 - a. Look for:
 - i. Are there extra-wide or inconsistent gaps?
 - ii. Are there odd-looking font types or sizes?
 - b. Fix by inspecting HTML of the designated content blocks:
 - i. Look for unnecessary line breaks (which may show up in the form of `
` HTML tags and/or empty paragraphs (usually “`<p></p>`” or “`<p> </p>`”).

- ii. Look for font-family or font-size specifications.