

IBM

Bodoni Manual

Part 2:

The right use.

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The right use.

To make the right choice is one thing,
to make the right use of the Bodoni is another.

*The Bodoni typeface demands a Bodoni typography
– matched to its typical features.*

Above all else, “typical” here means that:
Bodoni is not compact like most modern typefaces,
such as the “Times”.

This is so, first, because of the extreme contrasts
between the horizontal hairstrokes and the strong verticals,
and second, because the upper and lower cases
take up a lot of space.

These are the main reasons why the Bodoni
needs more space, more air to breathe than any other typeface.

This need – functional and aesthetic – may stand at odds with
today’s economic realities:

Printing space is far more expensive today
than in the days when the Bodoni was first cut.

The goal is to search for a synthesis
of what the Bodoni typeface demands
and the circumstances confronting the typographer daily.

The following samples are set
with Berthold equipment (Berthold Fototype)
for which the designations used here are valid.

All other things being equal,
the best execution of the Berthold-Bodoni can be achieved
by using Berthold or Alphatype photocomposing equipment.
If other kinds of equipment are used,
care should be taken to ensure
that interpretations of the Berthold-Bodoni typeface
are as close as possible to the original.

On the following pages, we have attempted to deal with every parameter the typographer has to consider in preparing IBM print advertising.

Samples not crossed out are the preferred usage.
Samples crossed out with light red bars can be used – depending on the designer's special needs.
Samples crossed out with full red bars are the ones that should never be used.

The terms used here are not all customary; they follow their own logic:

Spacing; letter, word and line spacing (6–31)
Type size; type size in relation to column width (33–43)
Justified/unjustified text (45–49)
Negative printing (51–57)

spacing roman lower case

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype -3, enlarged from 36 point

spacing roman lower case

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype -2, enlarged from 36 point

spacing roman lower case

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype -1, enlarged from 36 point

spacing roman lower case

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype +-, enlarged from 36 point

spacing roman lower case

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype +1, enlarged from 36 point

spacing italic lower case

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype -3, enlarged from 36 point

spacing italic lower case

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype -1, enlarged from 36 point

spacing italic lower case

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype +-, enlarged from 36 point

spacing italic lower case

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype +1, enlarged from 36 point

spacing italic lower case

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype +3, enlarged from 36 point

The advantage of all strict didactic rules
is that they help to avoid poor quality.
The disadvantage is that they necessarily limit
the designer's freedom.

There will always be special occasions
demanding special solutions.

What is wrong for general use
may be right in an exceptional case.

All the samples marked as such
will show only that the impossible is possible,
when executed by a designer who is master of his craft.

Letter spacing for headlines – exceptional case.

e x t r e m e s p a c i n g o n s p e c i a l o c c a s i o n s

All samples are set with text setting equipment in 36 point, the maximum size available, and then enlarged.

The spacing is programmed.

For large-size characters, headline setting equipment is preferable.

Not only is the technical quality better,

but the spacing can also be adjusted in a superior manner – letter by letter.

This is especially important when capitals are to be set.

Contrary to lower case characters, capitals need generous space.

And since, generally speaking, capitals are less easy to read, large quantities of them should be avoided.

SPACING ROMAN CAPITALS

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype -3, enlarged from 36 point

SPACING ROMAN CAPITALS

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype -1, enlarged from 36 point

SPACING ROMAN CAPITALS

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype +-, enlarged from 36 point

SPACING ROMAN CAPITALS

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype +1, enlarged from 36 point

SPACING ROMAN CAPITALS

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype +3, enlarged from 36 point

SPACING ITALIC CAPITALS

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype -3, enlarged from 36 point

SPACING ITALIC CAPITALS

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype -1, enlarged from 36 point

SPACING ITALIC CAPITALS

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype +-, enlarged from 36 point

SPACING ITALIC CAPITALS

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype +1, enlarged from 36 point

SPACING ITALIC CAPITALS

Berthold-Bodoni Fototype +3, enlarged from 36 point

Letter spacing for headlines – exceptional case.

E X T R E M E
S P A C I N G

ON SPECIAL
OCCASIONS

Letter spacing in headlines is different from letter spacing in text.

The latter is a type size to be read, the former is a typeface to be looked at. Headlines leap to the eye, whereas the eye must work to read text.

The dividing line between text and headline sizes cannot be strictly defined.

But it is not wrong to declare anything smaller than 14 point a text size and anything larger than 14 point a headline size.

The optical characteristics of small sizes are different from those of big sizes.

Generally speaking: the bigger the size, the more compressed it should be set, and vice versa.

This is true not only of letter spacing, but also of word and line spacing.

Indeed, the more space there is between the lines, the easier the text is to read.

Note: The exceptional cases for letter spacing in headlines mentioned previously are not valid for text setting, because for text, the conditions of readability are more rigid.

Letter spacing in text.

Prince Modupe wrote of his encounter with the written word in his West African days:

The one crowded space in Father Perry's house was his bookshelves. I gradually came to understand that the marks on the pages were trapped words. Anyone could learn to decipher the symbols and turn the trapped words loose again into speech. The ink of the print trapped the thoughts; they could no more get away than a doomboo could get out of a pit. When the full realization of what this meant flooded over me, I experienced the same thrill and amazement as when I had my first glimpse of the bright lights of Konakry. I shivered with the intensity of my desire to learn to do this wondrous thing myself.

In striking contrast to the native's eagerness, there are the current anxieties of civilized man concerning the written word. To some Westerners the written or printed word has become a very touchy subject. It is true that there is more material written and printed and read today than ever before, but there is also a new electric technology that threatens this ancient technology of literacy built on the phonetic alphabet. Because of its action in extending our central nervous system, electric technology seems to favor the inclusive and participational spoken word over the specialist written word.

Spacing -2 (Berthold Fototype)

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Spacing -1 (Berthold Fototype)

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Spacing +- (Berthold Fototype)

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Spacing +1 (Berthold Fototype)

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5 units (Berthold Fototype)

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10 units (Berthold Fototype)

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20 units (Berthold Fototype)

Line spacing in text.

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+ - points lead

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+ 1/2 point lead

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+ 1 point lead

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+ 2 point lead

Line spacing in text – exceptional case.

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+ 8 point lead

Concerning type size:

please note that the Bodoni has a small “x-height” because of its long ascenders and descenders.

It always looks somewhat smaller than most other typefaces: a 10-point Bodoni looks like a 9½- or even 9-point Times.

For this reason, it is advisable to set the text as big as possible for reading comfort.

As mentioned in Part 1 of this manual, in the times of Giambattista Bodoni, every degree – from 4 to 72 point – was cut individually. The letter forms were adapted to the optical needs of the respective size.

With modern typesetting systems, the letter forms remain the same for all sizes.

But in more sophisticated systems (like Berthold Fototype) there exists a so-called character compensation.

The effect is that smaller sizes are set automatically less compact than larger ones.

As result smaller columns contain fewer letters, and are not simply reduced from the standard size – as the following samples show.

Type size.

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7 point

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10 point

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12 point

The ratio of type size to column width –
i.e., the number of letters per line –
is one of the most important considerations for readability.

Too many letters necessitate a long trip
back to the beginning of the next line.

This unwanted effect can be diminished by additional leading,
or it can be overcome by using bigger type sizes.

Too few letters per line produce another unwanted effect:
very irregular word spacing. With too few letters,
the text image becomes restless and unsatisfactory.

This condition can be corrected
by specifying that narrow columns be set unjustified.
An example of how this works appears on page 49.

Also in this chapter exceptional cases are possible.
In the intermediary stage, between headline and text size,
more letters per line than recommended are still easily readable
– for advertising not an unimportant factor.

Type size in relation to column width.

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60 letters per line

48 letters per line

36 letters per line

24 letters per line

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60 letters per line, 1/2 point lead

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60 letters per line, 3 point lead

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84 letters per line, 24½ point, 9½ point lead

Different word spacing will result in narrower or wider distances between the words. But, because every line has to be adjusted to the same length, these distances vary from line to line.

A composed text of a given length is always a compromise between form and content, between the rectangular text block and the message it carries. This compromise can be shifted in favor of the content by choosing an unjustified setting. In the case on the following pages, the word spacing remains equal. Bad separations (hyphenated words) are avoided. With sophisticated photocomposing equipment all separations can be eliminated.

Please note, by the way, that the setting of this text follows another principle, which can be used only when the copy is properly written: it's unjustified with an open end. That means: the lines are not determined by a fixed length, they follow the rhythm of the language.

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Negative (or reverse) printing – especially in large blocks – is difficult to read and should be avoided. However, sometimes a particular execution will leave no alternative.

If it is necessary to print in reverse, the inconveniences can be diminished by paying special attention to optical conditions. To minimize the strong, radiant effect of white letters on a dark background, increase the letter spacing. And, it will also help if the minimal lead spacing is increased as well.

Small letter sizes, which are barely acceptable in positive printing, will be unacceptable in negative printing.

Also, in negative printing, the designer must make sure that the execution is not too light, because, as the following examples show, all the hairstrokes are in danger of breaking.

Spacing in negative printing.

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spacing -l

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spacing +-

Type size in negative printing.

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Printed too light

Print advertising has been called a three-legged stool.
The illustration, the headline and the copy
all have an important role to play in conveying the message.

The use of Berthold-Bodoni in the headline and in the body copy
will help steady two of those three legs.

Properly used and widely implemented,
it can help bring a sense of consistency and style
to IBM's advertising throughout the world.

This manual was developed
to help IBM advertising people and advertising agencies
understand and appreciate the use of Berthold-Bodoni
in IBM print advertising and promotional material.

