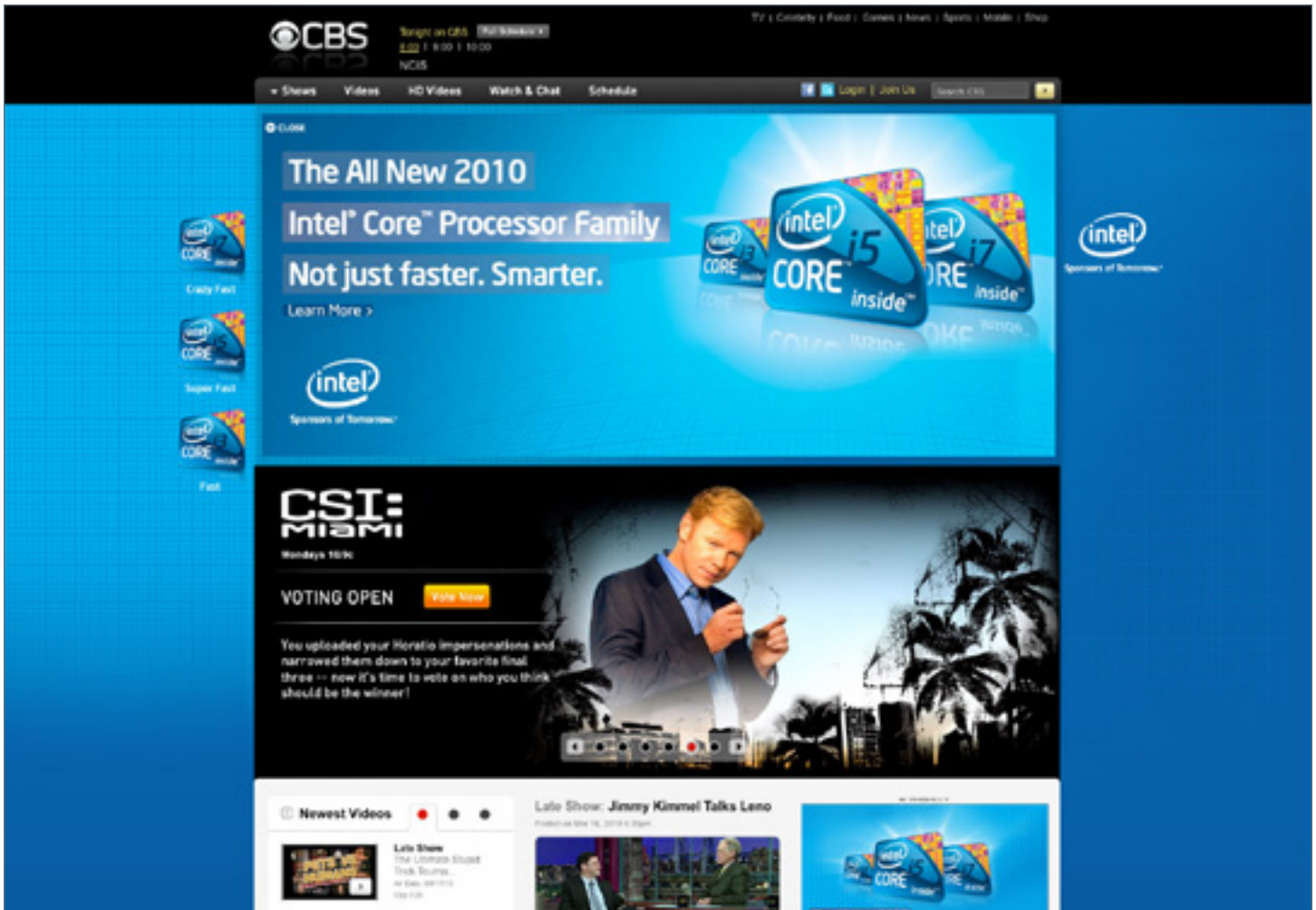




## Universal skin guidelines

# What is a skin?



## What is a skin?

A skin is a static background visual that serves as a branded border for a web page's clickable ad units. Skins enhance clickable units in the same way a frame enhances a painting - focusing the viewer's attention on the painting but not becoming the focus of attention.

## Note

Though visuals in this document reflect CBS.com only, shown examples apply equally to all CBS Interactive sites supporting a Universal skin. Templates for specific sites can be downloaded on page 5.

## Scrolling

CBS Interactive skins are 'scrolling' i.e. when the user scrolls down the page, the masthead, content and skin move upwards.

## Skin delivery specifications

Format: JPEG

File size: 150k or less

Dimensions: 1600 x 1000px

Bottom fade: to Hex Code

## Contact

For questions about skins, please contact the CBS Interactive Marketing and Creative team at: [cbi\\_skin\\_questions@cbsinteractive.com](mailto:cbi_skin_questions@cbsinteractive.com)

# Effective skins



## Working with a skin's safe area

Although the skin has maximum dimensions of 1600 x 1000px, we recommend keeping the key imagery within the designated "Safe Area" approximately 1200px wide and 600px deep.

On most user's screens the 'fold' is approximately 600px from the top of their browser (this includes the site's masthead). Unless the user scrolls down they are unlikely to see anything below that.

Since the largest screen setting for most users is likely to be 1280px wide, anything beyond that should be seen as a 'bonus' viewable only by those with extremely large monitors.

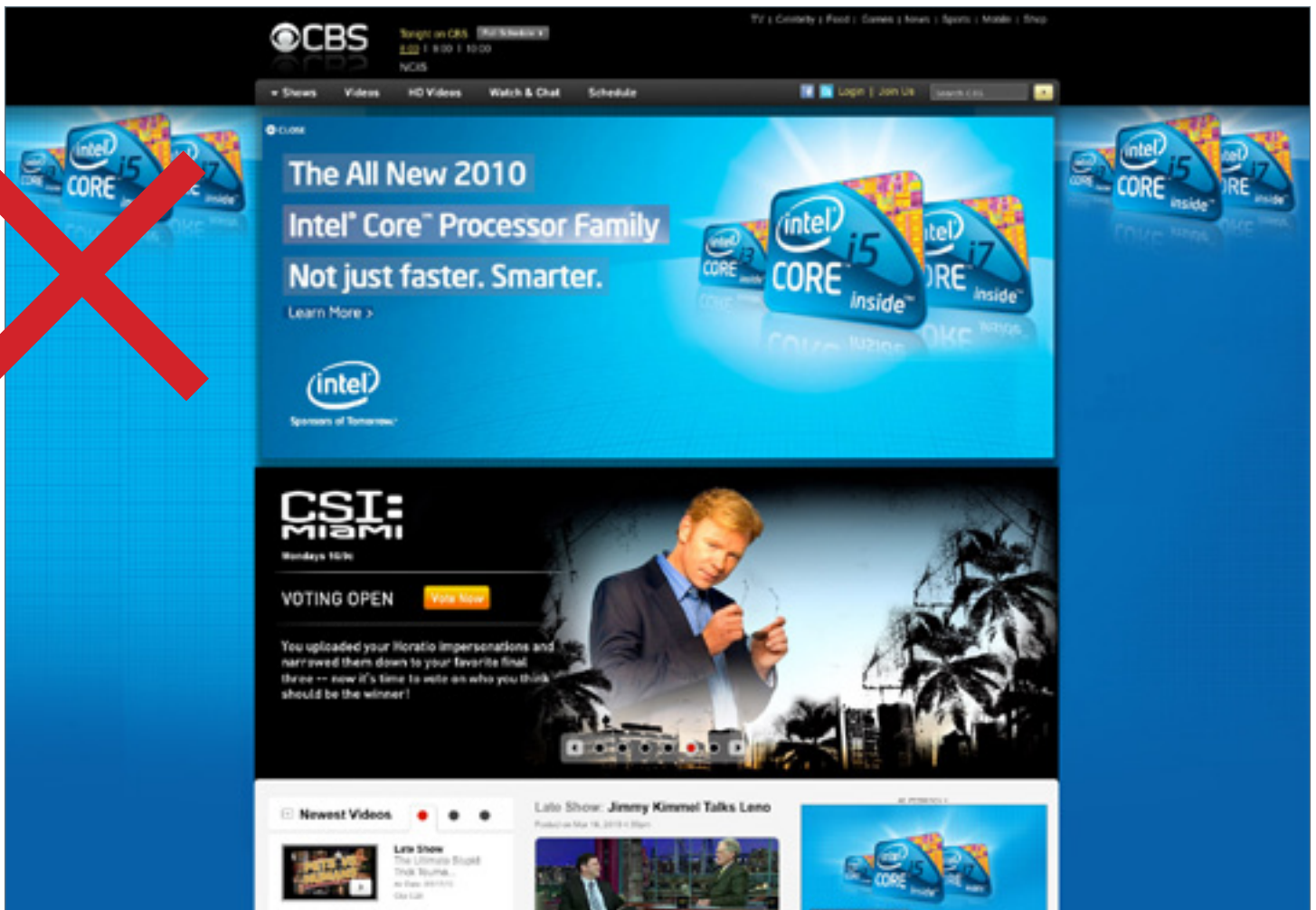
For these reasons, logos and product shots need to be placed in the 1200px wide by 600px deep 'Safe Area' in order to create a user experience that will work across multiple browsers and screen resolutions.

## Balance between content and advertising

In order to create the best possible user experience, the page's content should not be overwhelmed. The skin should not be dominated by large blocks of solid color, especially if the colors are jarring. Graphics, gradients, secondary art, product shots etc. should be used in order to make the skin more interesting.

CBS Interactive reserves the right to refuse skins that interfere with the content or the users' experience.

# Ineffective skins



## Avoiding repetition

Skins should be treated like a frame for a painting - complementing the main art but not repeating it. Exact duplication of ad units in the skin is not permitted by CBS Interactive. There are two main reasons for this:

1. When messaging and imagery from the ad units repeats in the skin, a negative user experience is created as all the units compete for their attention. Toned down skins allow the user to focus on the messaging of the ads.
2. Exactly repeating an ad unit's imagery in the skin makes it look clickable. Less clickable looking skins steer a user's attention towards the ad units (not the skin) and therefore is likely to create a higher CTR.

For these two compelling reasons, it is important to keep the key artwork in clickable ad units and not the skins. Any branding imagery beyond these i.e. the skin, should be seen as a 'bonus' to the user experience.

Duplication of imagery on both sides of the skin is only allowed when using none of the imagery from the ad units.

# Photoshop templates

## Choosing a template to download

Although the final skin is easily interchangeable on any site within CBS Interactive, multiple photoshop templates are provided below so that skins and ad units can be designed and mocked-up on the most appropriate page.

Simply click on the logo below for the site you need.

## Entertainment & Lifestyle:



## Tech, Business & News:



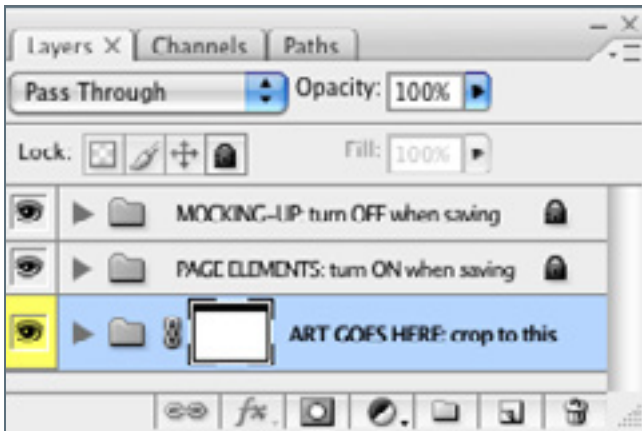
## CBS Sports:



## Games & Metacritic:



# Inside the photoshop template



## MOCK-UP FOLDER - turn OFF to save:

These folders are for creating mock-ups and must be turned **OFF** when saving the *final* file.

## SKIN SAFETY AREA

This folder indicates how much of the skin is visible to the average user.

## MASTHEAD

The masthead is for mock-up purposes only and cannot appear in the *final* JPEG.

## CONTENT/ADS

This folder indicates some key units and their relationship to the page's content e.g. 728x90 or 970x418 units. There are 2 layers inside each sub folder:

**Ad Unit** - example ad unit for reference.

**Content** - indicates where the site's content will appear.

## PAGE ELEMENTS - turn ON to save:

This folder contains mandatory page elements (content shadows and gradient fading to a hex code) for the final file. Do not move/remove either of them. This folder must be turned **ON** when saving the final file.

**Shadows: select one** - these give a separation to the site's content. If there is more than one shadow layer select the appropriate one for the ad unit being used and make sure the others are turned "off".

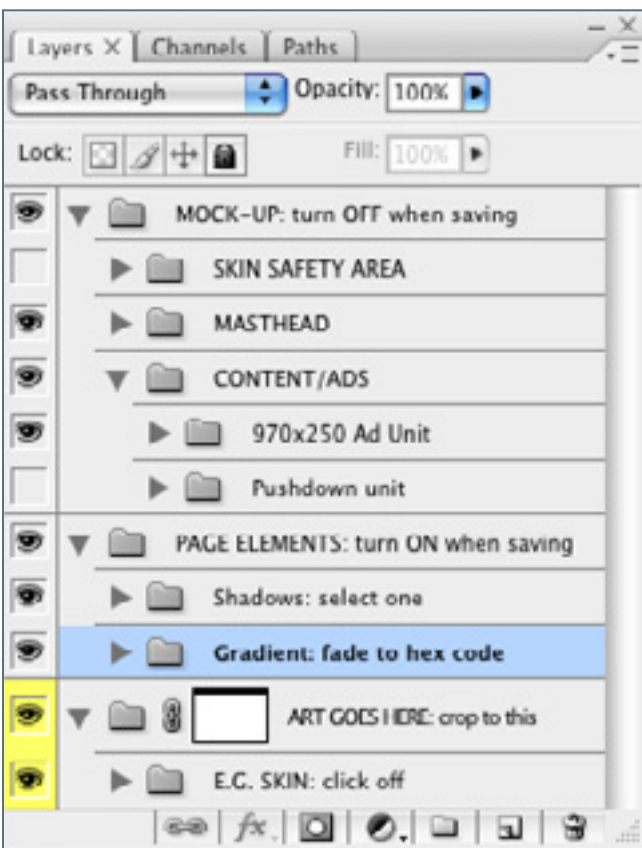
**Gradient: fade to hex code** - this transitions the bottom skin into the background color (Hex code) of the page.

## ART GOES HERE: crop to this

Highlighted in yellow and the only unlocked folder, this is the main blank canvas for your artwork. In order to produce the final 1600x1000px skin for ad serving, select this folder's mask and crop to it.

## E.G. SKIN: Click off

This folder has an example skin for reference. Click this folder **OFF** when saving final file.



# CBS Interactive requirements

## Using imagery

- Large product shots and logos may not be tiled/repeated.
- No nudity or profanity.
- CBS Interactive reserves the right to refuse skins that interfere with our users' experience or does not conform to the requirements set out in these guidelines.



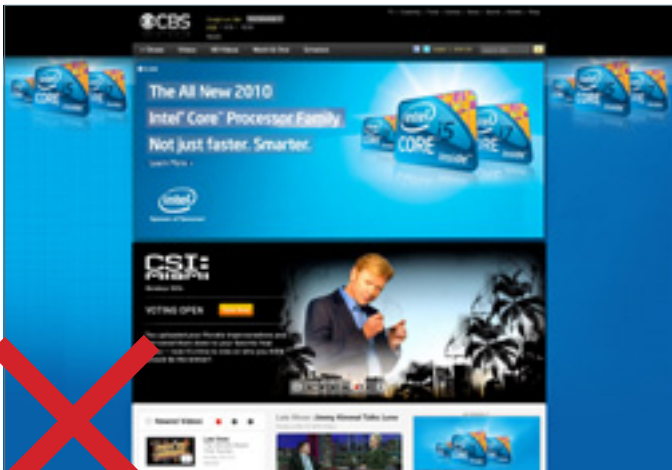
## Working within the safe area

- All imagery should be placed within the designated 1600 x 1000px "Safe Area".
- Logos and product shots should be kept within this 'safe area' to provide the best experience.
- See page 3 for more details.



## Repeating ad imagery in the skin

- Skins should not be a direct duplication of the ad units found on the page. Ad units can duplicate each other.
- If none of the imagery from the ad units appear in the skin it may be repeated in both sides of the skin.
- See page 4 for more details.

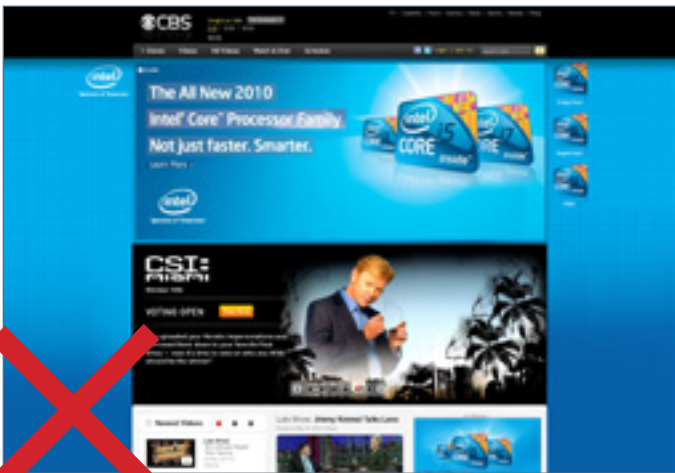


# CBS Interactive requirements



## Using copy in the skin

- The skin area is not active. Any copy or calls to action should be kept in the clickable ad unit e.g. the pushdown/sliver and not in the skin.
- Pricing information in the skin is not allowed and should be found in the clickable ad units.



## Logos

- Logos must not compete with CBS Interactive's branding and should only appear on the right side of the skin.



## The “perfect” skin

- The “perfect” skin focuses the user's attention towards the page's clickable ad units and does not distract from them as the skin is non-clickable.

# Final file for delivery



Final JPEG (1600 x 1000px) is 150k or less

## Checklist before saving final file

- Does the artwork and copy conform to CBS Interactive's requirements?
- Are these layers hidden?
  - **SKIN SAFETY AREA**
  - **MASTHEAD**
  - **CONTENT/ADS**
  - **E.G. SKIN**
- Are these layers turned on?
  - **SHADOWS: select one**
  - **GRADIENT: fade to hex code**
- Is your artwork in the **ART GOES HERE** folder only?
- FOR APPROVAL ONLY:** Show the page, skin and all other ad units on the page flattened into one JPEG.

## Saving your files for ad serving

- 1 Right click on the mask of the **ART GOES HERE: crop to this** folder to highlight the 1600 x 1000px skin area.
- 2 Crop the canvas to 1600 x 1000px as indicated above. The Safety Area, Masthead, Content and Example should not be visible in the final JPEG.
- 3 Click 'Save for web' and adjust quality in order to produce a JPEG under the 150k file size limit.
- 4 The layered Photoshop file (PSD) used to create your skin must be submitted to CBS Interactive in case any adjustments need to be made.

## Submitting for approval

When submitting a skin for CBS Interactive's approval it must be saved as a JPEG with all the ad units in place with their default image/last frame showing in order to assure that the ads, skin and page's content are working in conjunction with each other.