

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

CITY OF PERTH

MARCH 2023



WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

PERTH CBD

Wayfinding signage refers to the visual cues (signs, symbols, maps, etc.) that are used to help people navigate a location. These signs are designed to be clear, concise, and easy to understand, and use universally recognisable symbols and colours. When you follow a

sign to the bathroom or figure out where you are in a shopping centre, you are using wayfinding signage. Wayfinding signage can be found

in a wide range of environments, including transportation hubs, hospitals, museums, shopping centres, parks, and office buildings.

This case study will use the upgraded Murray Street Mall as a showcase for what successful wayfinding signage looks like! Our contribution was a part of the City of Perth's \$800,000 project, bringing life to the Murray Street Mall and surrounding area.

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Project: City of Perth Wayfinding

Location: Perth CBD

Environment: External

Client: City of Perth

Date: March 2023

Features: Totem signage, pole-mounted directional signage, heads-up mapping, landmark building illustrations, 5-minute circle walk, detailed and overview maps.

WHY IS WAYFINDING NEEDED?

Wayfinding is necessary to help people navigate unfamiliar environments. Without effective wayfinding, people can become lost or disoriented, leading to stress, frustration, and even potential safety hazards. Wayfinding is particularly important in large, complex environments, such as shopping centres, airports, and hospitals, where incorrect navigation could have extreme (potentially life-threatening) consequences. Wayfinding is also important in outdoor environments, such as parks or cities, where there are many landmarks and points of interest to navigate.

By creating a seamless travel experience, wayfinding signage astronomically improves the experience of a pedestrian in a new or a familiar setting. Effective wayfinding signage limits confusion and removes the need to frantically juggle online and physical maps, before resorting to asking a stranger for help.

Overall, wayfinding is essential for creating a positive user experience in any environment, and makes people feel more comfortable, confident, and in control.



CBD WAYFINDING

There are some environments where wayfinding creates benefits that are unparalleled. A busy, pedestrian-oriented CBD area is one of these environments. Consistent wayfinding encourages pedestrians to walk, eliciting the multitude of social and economic benefits that come with walking as opposed to vehicle transport, including decreased traffic, less noise pollution, and an increase in public health. From a safety perspective, the more people that are walking in the community, the safer it is.

Additionally, with the increased number of pedestrians that come with great wayfinding, CBD areas boom with all kinds of foot traffic, greatly benefitting the community's economy as more people travel to retail and hospitality venues.

WHAT MAKES GOOD WAYFINDING?

Successful wayfinding is so much more complex than a big red arrow pointing in one direction. Excellent wayfinding signage is not only informative, but also aesthetically pleasing, so it blends into the environment whilst being found easily. Successful wayfinding is a multifaceted process, and the need for it is non-negotiable. So, how do you ensure that wayfinding signage is going to meet the needs of its stakeholders? Signs & Lines have created this in-depth case study to explore exactly what requirements are needed to deliver a perfect result.



CLARITY

Clarity is essential for effective wayfinding, because it ensures that people can easily understand the information presented.

Clear wayfinding signage reduces the risk of confusion and misinterpretation, which is particularly important in environments where safety hazards exist.

For example, the use of consistent, universal pictograms (such as the no-smoking or no-bicycling symbol) indicate clearly to pedestrians which activities aren't allowed. This universal consistency is of paramount importance in CBD locations where tourists may not understand English. As such, clarity and consistency in wayfinding signage is vital.

WAYFINDING MAP ESSENTIALS

Maps are an integral element of wayfinding and should not feel like a treasure hunt to a mystery location. They should be clear, concise, and easy to read and follow. The following features outline what makes a successful map.



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HEADS-UP MAPPING

Heads-up mapping refers to when a map is oriented in the reader's perspective, rather than in a traditional northerly direction.

This negates the need for a reader to orient themselves and instead provides straightforward directions. This type of map is featured on a totem in the Murray Street Mall, and aligns itself with the reader's perspective by being oriented in a North-Easterly direction rather than a Northern direction. The increased understanding elicited by this sign showcases the value of a heads-up mapping experience.

LANDMARK BUILDING ILLUSTRATIONS

Landmarks play a crucial role in helping people decipher their location and orientation. Not only do they provide a recognisable marker to help with direction, but they also encourage people to visit places of historical and symbolic significance. It is imperative that the map is not overcrowded with landmark illustrations, to avoid confusion and oversaturation. This Murray Street map includes many of these illustrations, including the iconic Yagan square and the picturesque Government House and Gardens, two prominent landmarks that allow people to establish their location and the direction they are facing.

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THE 5-MINUTE CIRCLE WALK

Wayfinding maps are designed to be interpreted as easily as possible.

5- minute circle walks are a brilliant way to achieve this requirement. They feature a red circle that expresses the distance someone would walk in five minutes. This innovative method of expressing scale gives the map a dimension beyond just location. Our map in the Murray Street Mall also features popular destinations outside the 5-minute circle. For example, by reading this map, people will know that they are a 5-minute walk from St George's Cathedral, and a 9-minute walk from Royal Perth Hospital.

DETAILED AND OVERVIEW MAPS

Supplying maps of different scale can prove invaluable, as they cater for people who want to explore further, and therefore appeal to a larger number of people. For example, our map in the Murray Street Mall incorporates two maps of different scale. The main image is a large-scale map of the CBD, whilst a smaller scale version is also available for those who need it. It provides less detail, but shows a larger area, which expands the map's audience beyond those only looking to travel in the immediate vicinity. The two maps draw from one another, with the smaller-scale map revealing the larger-scale map's position in relation to landmarks like King's Park and Perth Stadium.

CONSISTENCY

It is crucial for wayfinding signage to be consistent, as this improves recognition, engagement, and interpretation. For these reasons, it was vital our Murray Street project remained consistent in design, regardless of the type of sign.

This project features both totem signs and pole-mounted directional flags, two vastly different types of signs. Whilst both utilise digitally printed artwork, the directional flags are little over half a metre in height, compared to the totem signs which tower at 3-metres!

The directional flags are attached seamlessly to existing light poles via stainless-steel strapping, whilst the free-standing totem signs feature a fabricated steel frame and baseplate, which are installed into concrete footings.

Notice how, despite the different styles and dimensions, both sign styles feature a consistent design. Continuity is ensured by a repeated use of colours, fonts, symbols and proportions, with the utilisation of different styles of signs allowing for minimal disruption to the area.

VISIBILITY

There's no point in having clear, concise wayfinding if you can't find the wayfinding signage itself! Making the wayfinding signage visible is crucial to reaching its full potential, and visibility can be achieved through the utilisation of creative sign placement and sign style.

Our Murray Street totem signs are a great example of how to maximise the visibility of wayfinding signage. The bright-red panels atop the signs identify their wayfinding purpose, whilst the white, illuminated, acrylic text stands out against the background. These wayfinding signs stand at 3 metres-tall, which makes them hard to miss! Despite their towering height, the map sits at an accessible height for all. Additionally, our signs ensure maximum visibility through their position in central locations in the Murray Street Mall. These locations all achieve maximum visibility through direct exposure to sunlight, as well as being LED illuminated for overcast days and nighttime.

PEDESTRIAN MANAGEMENT

When installing in an area as busy as Perth's CBD, public adherence is essential for ensuring safety. Therefore, extensive planning was undertaken to ensure minimum pedestrian interference during the installation phase. Here at Signs & Lines, we specialise in the efficient and high-quality completion of all elements of sign installation. With the Murray Street project in Richard's capable hands, we were confident the project would be managed in a safe, time-effective manner, and we were not wrong. Thanks our capable project managers, all installation was completed in under a week.

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THE FINAL WRAP

Signs & Lines has done an exceptional job in installing wayfinding signage for Murray Street Mall in Perth's CBD. The company's expertise and attention to detail has resulted in a highly effective signage system that has improved the overall user experience for both pedestrians and drivers in the area.

By focusing on key factors such as visibility, accessibility, safety, and compliance, Signs & Lines has created a system of wayfinding signage that is clear, consistent, and easy to use. The company's use of highquality materials and attention to detail has ensured that the signage is durable and able to withstand the elements, ensuring that it will remain effective for many years to come.

Overall, Signs & Lines has demonstrated its expertise in wayfinding signage and has set a high standard for future installations in Perth's CBD. Murray Street Mall now has a wayfinding signage system that is safe, efficient, and highly effective, making it easier for people to navigate through the area with confidence and ease.

Wayfinding signage isn't all we excel at. At Signs & Lines, whatever your signage query is, we have the solution. For more information or inspiration give us a call on +618 9274 5151 or email admin@signsandlines.com today

We're ready to start talking!
Speak up now about your next project or idea.





Talk to the team at Signs & Lines today.

t: +618 9274 5151
+614 0719 9576

e: admin@signsandlines.com

Signs & Lines, 5 Meliador Way, Midvale, Perth WA 6056

www.signsandlines.com

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