

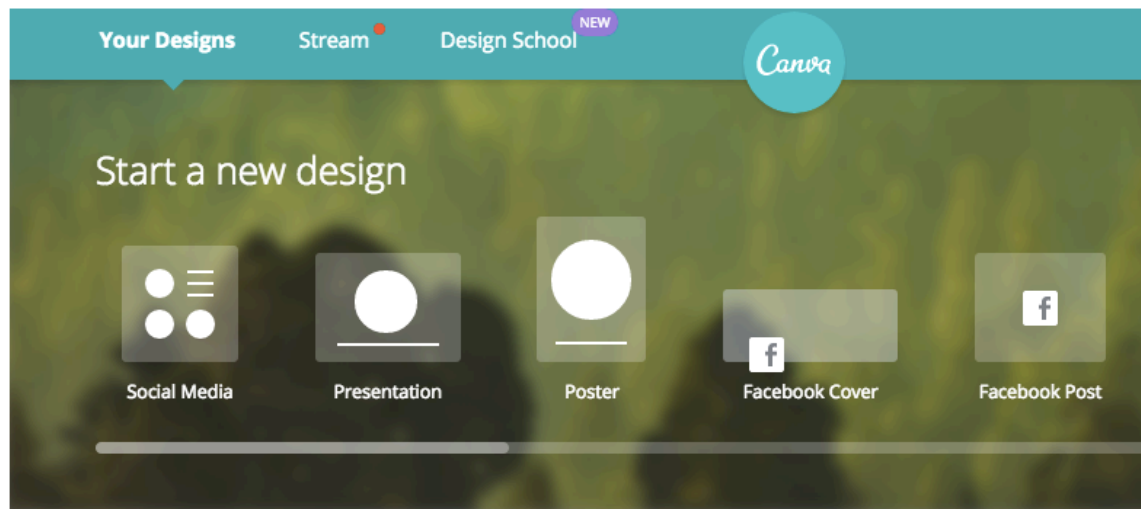
All You Need to Get Started on Canva

May 27 By: Guest Blogger Denise Byrd



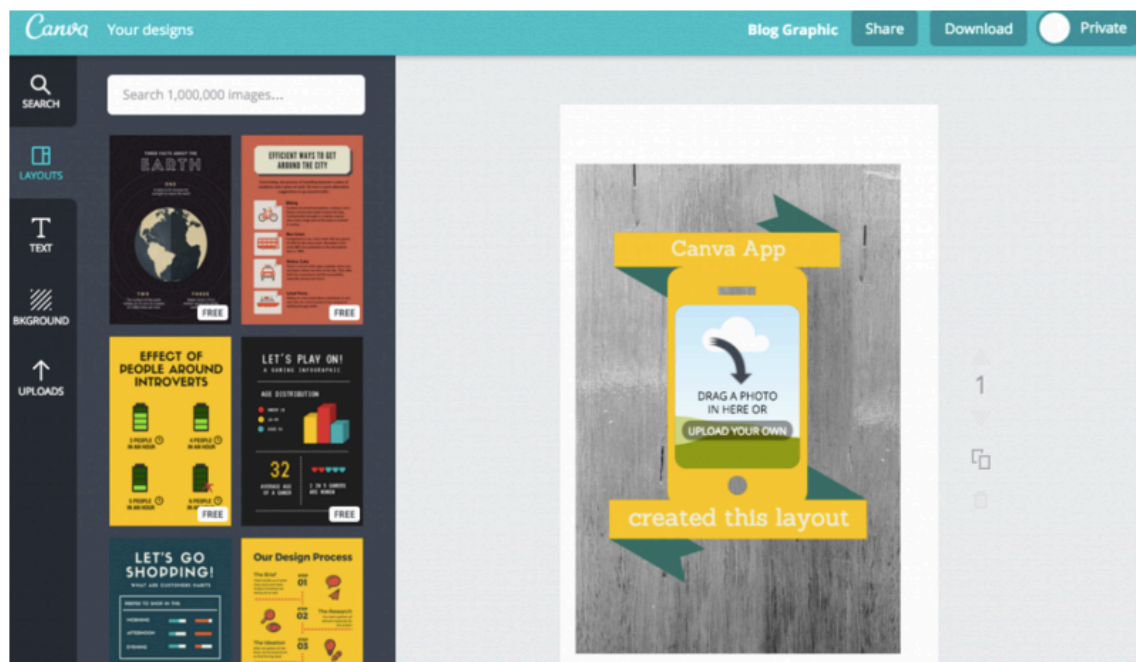
You do not have marketing staff or an agency creating all your outgoing communications. It's also likely that numerous staff members generate your social posts not just those with a design background. And your content is on strategy but it can sometime look less than exciting. If this sounds like your organization, then you will be thrilled to discover [Canva](#), a free, online design tool that can help nonprofits create eye-catching layouts, easily.

Canva uses drag and drop technology and tons of pre-designed templates for social media posts, email headers, flyers and more. They seem to add a new feature monthly (most recently infographics) as the user base has grown to over two million according to the [constantly ticking counter](#) on their website.

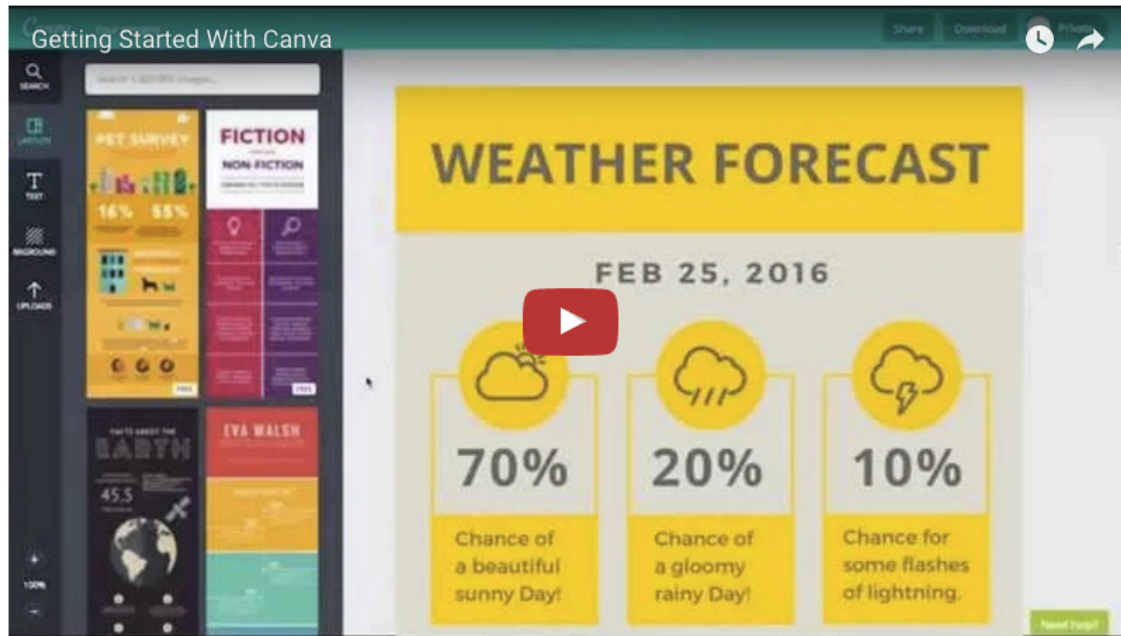


Getting Started

If you're not familiar with design software, Canva makes using layers with backgrounds and text overlays unintimidating.



After choosing a medium, a huge assortment of pre-designed templates appears. All you have to do is choose one, then switch out the copy and/or background. You can either share directly to Twitter or Facebook, or download the image to share on Instagram (and other sites).



Tips on Backgrounds

One caution: some backgrounds are free and most are not, so pay attention to the background imagery in terms of fees (backgrounds are only a dollar). I suggest you build a library of your own photos to use as backgrounds as soon as you get started. Snap photos of moody skies, colorful patterns in nature and other graphic elements that align with your nonprofit's vision. All you need is decent-quality resolution as Canva has a photo effects tool to brighten and tweak your uploads.

Don't Mess with the Fonts

Unless you are skilled designer, I recommend not moving around the font layers on the page initially. Sure you'll want to get creative but, when starting out, you might find you've moved things around so much that the layout no longer looks perfect. And then you'll have to start all over again.

Become the Designated Designer

If you do want to up your design skills, there's the free designschool.canva.com. Here you can read up on trends in design and get guidance on font pairings, color theory and more. And look out for Canva for Work if you plan on extending your Canva use beyond the occasional email header or social post. Canva's Head of Communications, Zach Kitschke didn't want to give away too much info at the time of this post but he did say "Canva for Work will make it easier for brands to ensure every piece of marketing material or document is on-brand."

I'd guess a lot of nonprofits could benefit from a tool to keep their messaging on point, especially if it fits within their budget.

