



Powerlane

Typeface Specimen Guidebook // September 2012

Caution

Sharp Corners

No curves

THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH

right angles

BOXY, BUT GOOD

Just a little bit edgy

Powerlane

A constructivist typeface family from Sketchbook B

Thin	<i>Thin Oblique</i>
Light	<i>Light Oblique</i>
Regular	<i>Regular Oblique</i>
Medium	<i>Medium Oblique</i>
Semibold	<i>Semibold Oblique</i>
Bold	<i>Bold Oblique</i>
Extra Bold	<i>Extra Bold Oblique</i>
Black	<i>Black Oblique</i>
Extra Black	<i>Extra Black Oblique</i>
Outline	<i>Outline Oblique</i>

The road to Powerlane starts with an episode of *Firefly*.

In the sci-fi television series *Firefly*, a futuristic government — the Alliance — has skyscraper-like spaceships. Joss Whedon remarks in the episode commentary that they were designed to look awkward and inefficient. The kind of ships that a bureaucratic central government would create. I wondered what the Alliance's typefaces would look like. I created an odd looking modular stencil font with triangular pieces aligned at 45 degree angles and named it Alliance. Some of the resulting letter shapes from this experimental design became the foundation of Powerlane.

Around the same time, while preparing a lecture on graphic design history, I found a web site with 1920's Russian constructivist posters. I loved the bold, angular type designs and created Power Grid as a modular design on Fontstruct.

I constructed a custom version of Power Grid for my friend Marius to use with his Secret Species project, adding a lower case and

expanding the character set. But that version was never released to a wide audience. In fact, Marius and I are the only two people that ever had a copy. I was never completely happy with the lower case. The modular structure didn't allow enough flexibility. My plan was to release an improved Power Grid 2.0 design with a better lower case, small caps and more weights.

Power Grid 2.0 never happened. Instead, I started to redraw everything from scratch — abandoning the strict modular structure and refining the concept significantly.

The end result is Powerlane.

Powerlane features nine weights from Thin to Extra Black. Regular and Oblique versions. Plus an outline variation. OpenType small caps and a few alternate character designs. Powerlane is all straight edges and lots of right angles, but still friendly. And oddly approachable.

Evolution of Powerlane letterforms

alliance

ADVERTISEMENT

power grid

ADVERTISEMENT

powerlane

ADVERTISEMENT

regular and oblique

upright / *slanted*

nine weights

P / P / P / P / P / P / P / P / P

outline versions

WARNING / WARNING

opentype small caps

***lowercase* / LOWERCASE**

stylistic alternatives

Quip / Quip / quip / quip

Constructed

Straight Lines

Robotic

RESEARCH

Science Fiction

Fusion

Powerlane Thin

[illegible]

Powerlane
Thin Oblique

[illegible]

72 point

A shocking amount

60 point

A shocking amount of energy

48 point

A shocking amount of energy

36 point

A shocking amount of energy is created

30 point

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy

24 point

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy hamster.

18 point

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy hamsters in wheels. Smart g

14 point

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy hamsters in wheels. Smart grids ensure intelligent distribution of power throughout a service area. Brownouts are far too common in this part of the city. Should I purchase an electric car? Steam power ushered in the industrial

12 point

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy hamsters in wheels. Smart grids ensure intelligent distribution of power throughout a service area. Brownouts are far too common in this part of the city. Should I purchase an electric car? Steam power ushered in the industrial revolution. I hate it when the battery in my laptop dies. Faster-

Powerlane Light

[illegible]

Powerlane
Light Oblique

[illegible]

72 point

Smart grids ensure

60 point

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48 point

Smart grids ensure **intelligen**

36 point

Smart grids ensure intelligent distribut

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Smart grids ensure intelligent distribution of power throug

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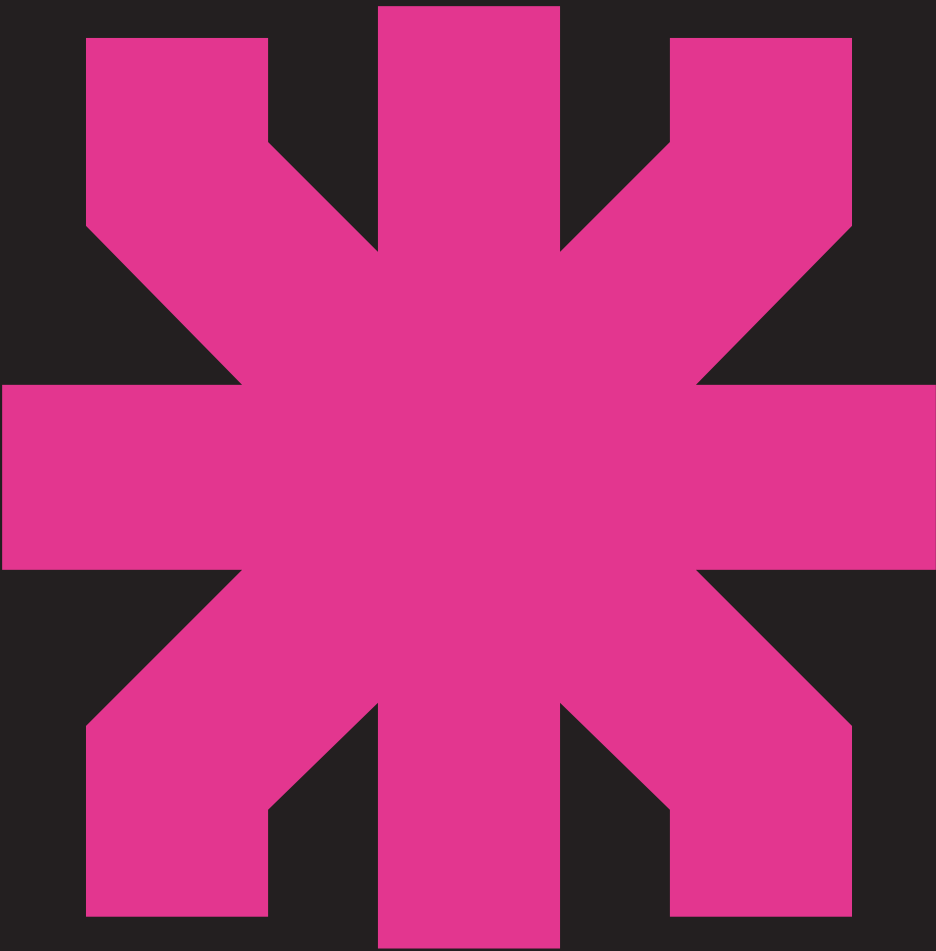
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100%

Pure Energy

RESEARCHING

Futuristic

Power Sources

Full power to starboard engines

Powerlane Regular

[illegible]

Powerlane
Regular Oblique

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72 POINT

Brownouts are far

60 POINT

Brownouts are far too

48 POINT

Brownouts are far too common

36 POINT

Brownouts are far too common in this

30 POINT

Brownouts are far too common in this part of

24 POINT

Brownouts are far too common in this part of the city. Should I

18 POINT

Brownouts are far too common in this part of the city. Should I purchase an

14 POINT

A shocking amount of energy
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in wheels. Smart grids ensure
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Brownouts are far too common
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purchase an electric car? Steam

12 POINT

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Should I purchase an electric car? Steam
power ushered in the industrial revolution.
I hate it when the battery in my laptop dies.*

Powerlane Medium

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Powerlane Medium Oblique

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Steam power ushered in the industrial
revolution. I hate it when the battery in

HYDROGEN

Solar Panels

Wind

TURBINES

Fuel Cells

GEO THERMAL



Powerlane
Semibold

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*Powerlane
Semibold Oblique*

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72 point

Smart grids ensure

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Smart grids ensure i

48 point

Smart grids ensure intelligent

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Smart grids ensure intelligent distribution

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Smart grids ensure intelligent distribution of power

18 point

Smart grids ensure intelligent distribution of power throughout a ser

14 point

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of power throughout a service area.
Brownouts are far too common in this
part of the city. Should I purchase an
electric car? Steam power ushered
in the industrial revolution. I hate it

**Powerlane
Bold**

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***Powerlane
Bold Oblique***

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Brownouts are far too common in this part of the

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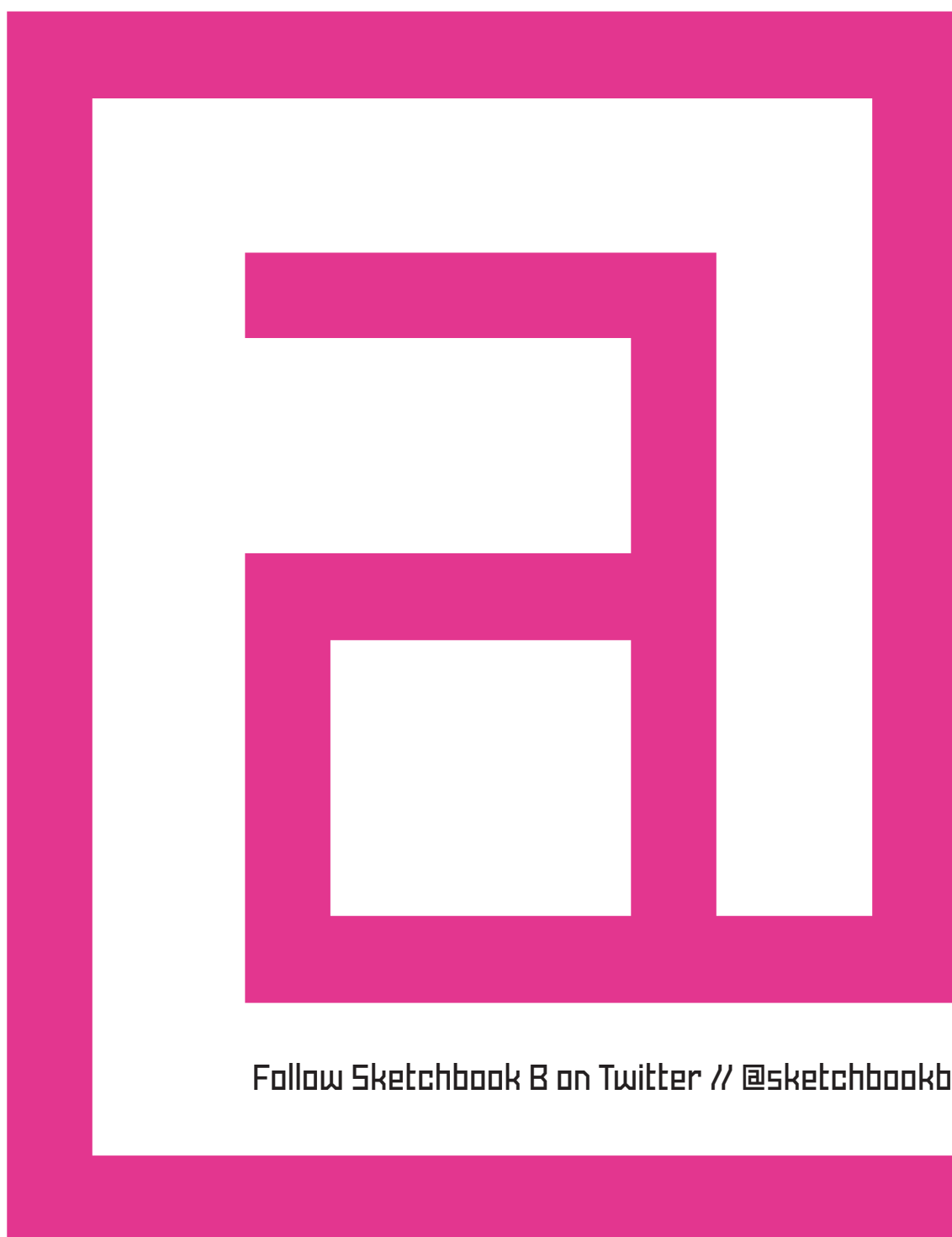
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Steam power ushered in the industrial*





skinny or



Powerlane Extra Bold

[illegible]

***Powerlane
Extra Bold Oblique***

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purchase an electric car? Steam

Powerlane Black

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***Powerlane
Black Oblique***

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Smart grids **ens**

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36 point

*Smart **grids** ensure intelligent*

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18 point

Smart grids ensure intelligent distribution of power througho

14 point

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I have a very
important
question

Ich weiß nicht

{TRANSLATION: "I do not know"}

Knowledge is power

The more you know...

Powerlane Extra Black

A Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ B C Č Ď
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***Powerlane
Extra Black Oblique***

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72 point

Brownouts are

60 point

Brownouts are far

48 point

Brownouts are far too

36 point

Brownouts are far too* **COMMON*

30 point

Brownouts are far too common in the

24 point

***Brownouts* are far too common in this part of**

18 point

Brownouts are far too common in this part of the city. Should I

14 point

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy hamsters in wheels. Smart grids ensure intelligent distribution of power throughout a service area. Brownouts are far too common in this part of the

12 point

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy hamsters in wheels. Smart grids ensure intelligent distribution of power throughout a service area. Brownouts are far too common in this part of the city. Should I purchase an electric car? Steam

Powerlane Outline

[illegible]

Powerlane
Outline Oblique

[illegible]

96 POINT

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy people.

84 POINT

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy people.

72 POINT

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy people.

60 POINT

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy people.

48 POINT

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy people.

36 POINT

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy people.

30 POINT

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy people.

24 POINT

A shocking amount of energy is created by happy people.



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