BLUF Promo Tools User Guide

Introduction

The new BLUF promo tools are designed to assist event organisers in creating images to promote their events online.

At present, there are two tools available, a logo pack generator and a poster generator. Together these help to make sure you can create a promo, either from scratch, or with just a few clicks.

Getting started

These new tools are part of version 5 of the BLUF website and software, which is presently under development. Before using them, here's what you need:

1. Your BLUF login details - email address and password

2. A Passkey to validate your access to admin functions

3. Permission to use the Promo Tools; contact webmaster@bluf.com to have the necessary permission added to your account.

Once permissions have been added to your account, if you have not done so before (which is the case for most users), you will need to generate a Passkey. This is a secure bit of information stored on your mobile device or computer, which is used to validate you. It means that even if someone obtains your password, they will not be able access admin function.

Most modern web browsers, including on mobile, support Passkeys, and they are also supported in popular password managers like BitWarden. When the site requests a Passkeys, your browser will show the matching Passkeys; you just select the correct one - some devices will ask for a fingerprint or other id - and you'll be verified.

To create a Passkey in the first place, you need to visit the Promo tools web site at https://services.bluf.com/promo

On the first page, you will a line that says "If you have not yet created a passkey for BLUF v5, Click here first."

Click the link, and you will be asked to sign in on the new v5 login site, and asked to add a Passkey. Follow the instruction in your browser. If you have a U2F key (like a FIDO key), you can use that as a PassKey.

When you see the message that the PassKey has been aded to your account, click Continue to return to the Promo Tools.

Using Promo Tools

Once you have had permissions added to your account and set up your passkey, open your web browser and go to https://services.bluf.com/promo

On the front page, you will see two buttons: Create a logo pack and Create a poster.

Click one of these; you will be asked to log in with your BLUF credentials, and then to verify your identity with your passkey.

Clicking the BLUF logo at the top of the the screen will return you to the main page.

Note that while the pages will work on mobile, the poster tool, in particular, is not optimised for mobile devices, and is best used on a laptop or desktop system.

Creating a logo pack

When you click to create a logo pack, you will see a page with a box for you to type the name or region that you want to appear on the logo, like 'London' or 'New England'

Type the name into the box, and click Preview.

You will see a screen like this, showing the standard BLUF logo with your name added to it, and a BLUF roundel with the name added.
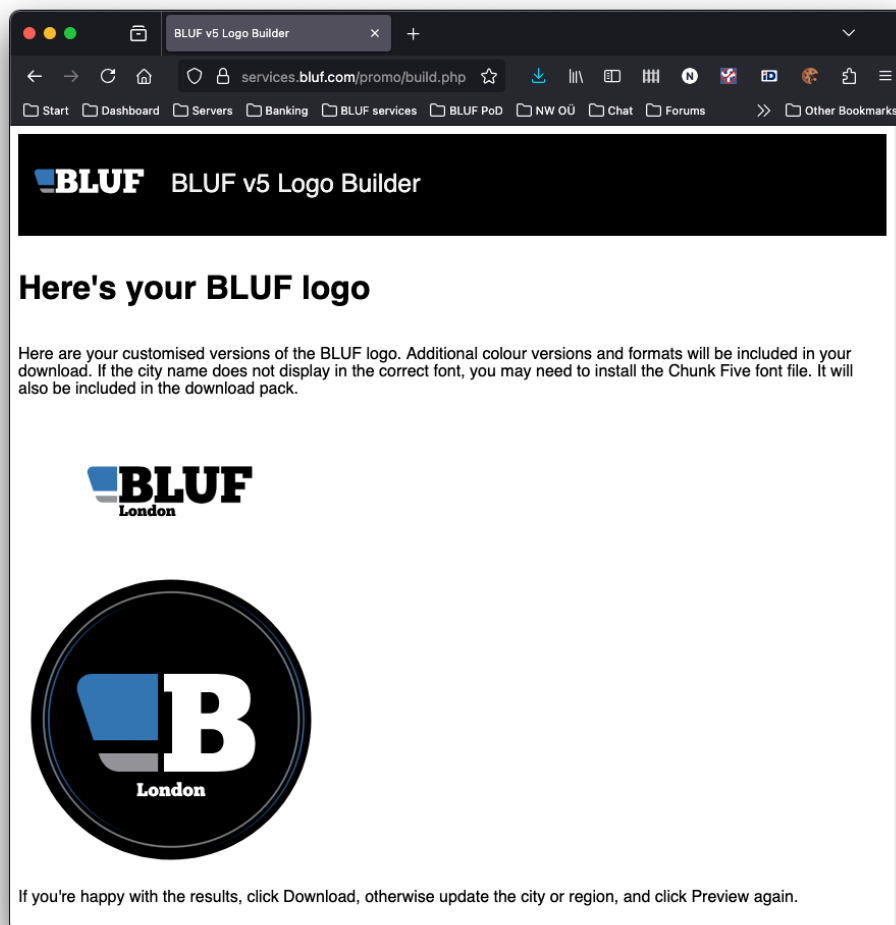
If you want to amend the text, retype it in the box below the images and click Preview again.

If you are happy with the result, click Download and the full logo pack will be generated, and downloaded to your computer. This will include four versions of the logo:

- Standard BLUF logo with black text

- Standard BLUF logo with white text

- BLUF roundel with city name in white

- BLUF roundel with city name in blue

Each version will be supplied as a PNG file, with a transparent background, and as an SVG file.

The logo pack zip file will also contain font files, which you will need if you want to use the SVG format, and a fonts.css file, which can be included on your website if you want to use the SVG versions of the logo. Additional information will be in the README.txt.

For most purposes, the PNG version of the logo is likely to be sufficient; the images are supplied at a fairly large size, and can be easily made smaller to fit with the rest of any material your are designing.

Please try to avoid using the PNG files at so large a size that they start to pixellate, and look round round the edges of the text. If you need larger images, you should use the SVG versions, which are supported by most graphics packages. You will need to install the BLUF typeface if you do not already have it on your system, and in most cases you should be able to use the ChunkFive-Roman.ttf file from the fonts folder of the zip file.

Creating a poster

The poster builder is designed to make it as simple as possible to create a poster that can be used to promote a BLUF event on social media, for example Instagram or BlueSky. You do not need any graphical design skills, and much of the work will be done for you, to create a PNG image that can be shared.

To ensure that not all our posters look the same, there are a few options available, but since it's all based on a simple template, there will be a commonality to the look, and if you have time and skills, you can probably achieve something better with a proper design app. Nevertheless, this provides a great way to get information about your event out there.

When you click Create a poster from the main page, you will see a selection of images that can be used for the background. These have all been sized and cropped appropriately, and we have obtained permission to use all of them, so you do not need to contact models or photographers yourself (which is something you must remember to do if not using the poster builder).

The images are displayed in a random order each time you start the poster builder, to help ensure more even usage. You will also see a 'Last used' date below each image. Try not to use images that have been used recently, so that we don't have lots of near-identical posters.
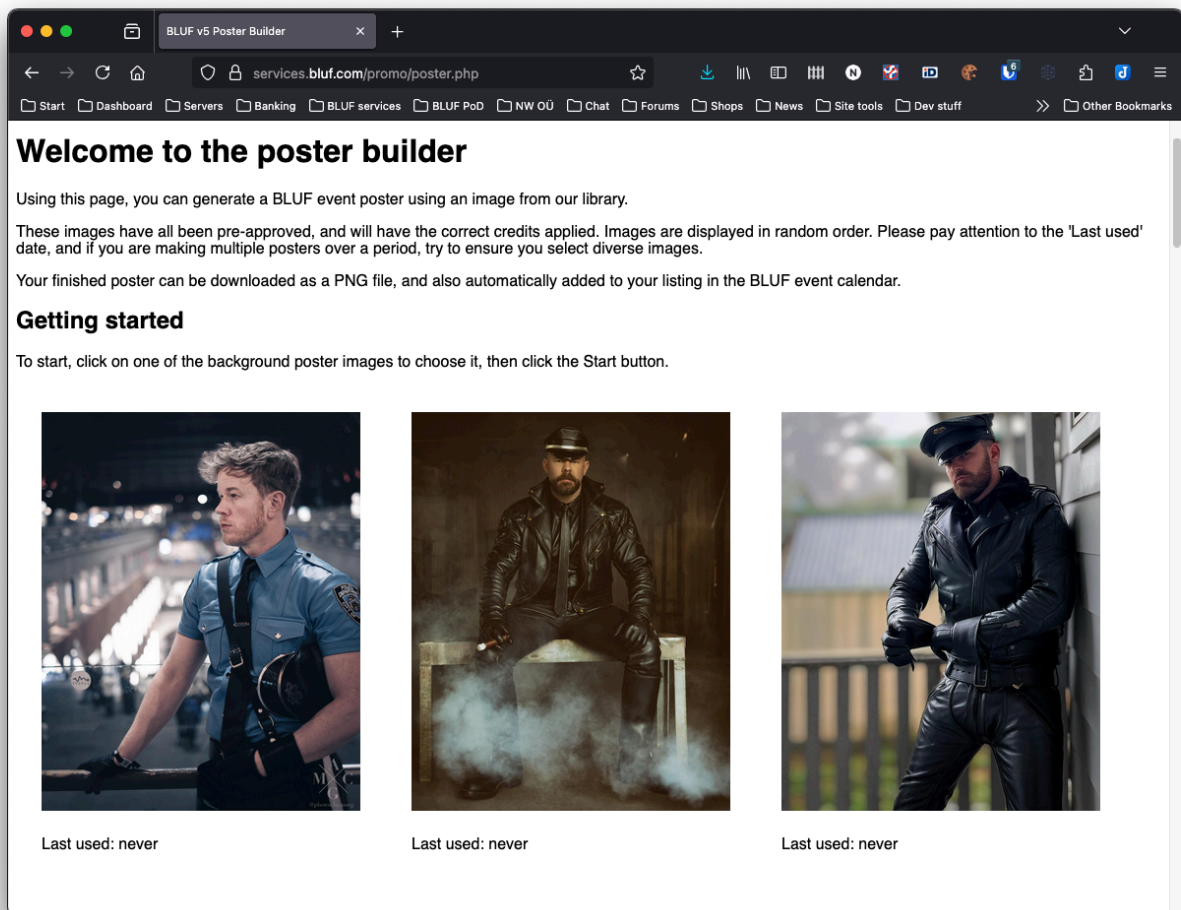
Additionally, if you are hosting a number of events, try to ensure you use a variety of different models; members appreciate seeing someone they can relate to on our event promos. Click an image to select it, and then scroll to the bottom of the page and click the Start button.

When you click Start you will see the main Poster Builder screen, which looks like this:
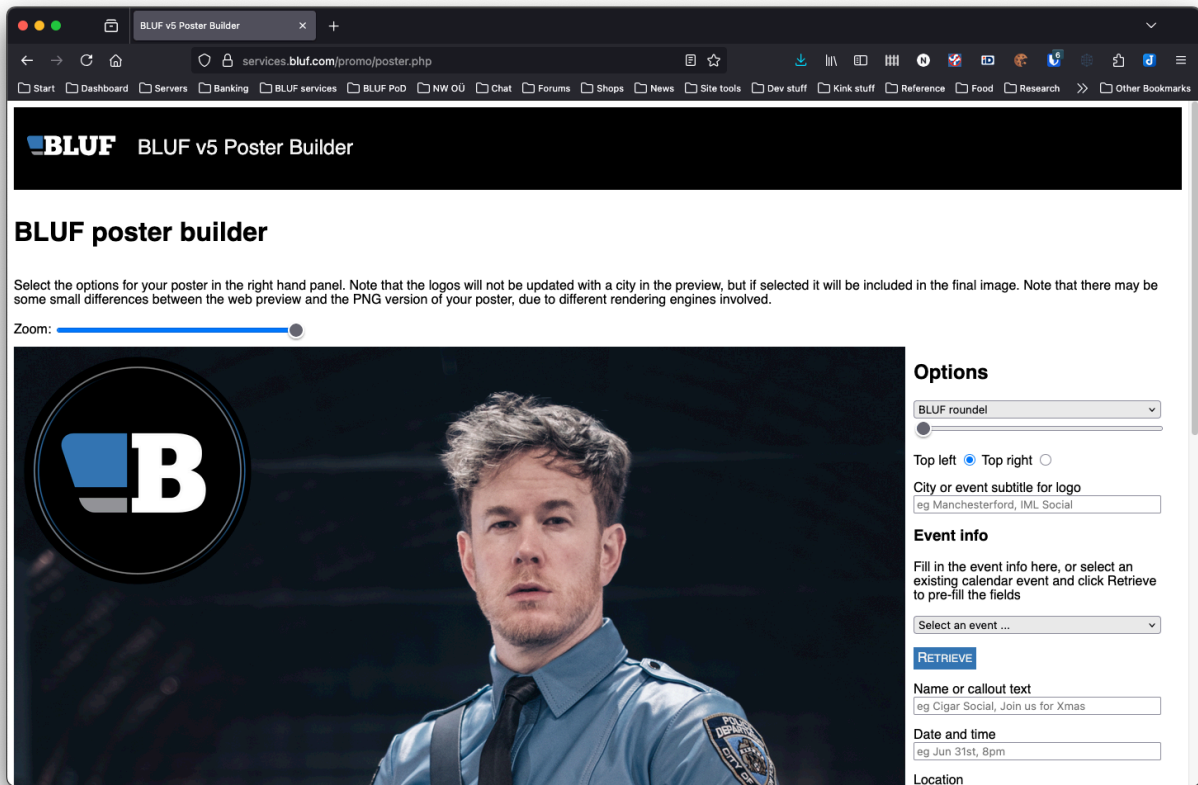
The slider at the top left will reduce the size of the preview image so that you can see more of it. The panel on the right contains options that you can use to create your poster.

Note: the logos shown on the poster won't have any city name displayed in the preview, but it will be added to the poster generated.

The first option is a drop down menu that lets you choose which version of the BLUF logo you want. You can have the BLUF roundel, or the standard logo in black or white. Choose the version that works best with your selected image, and then select whether it should appear top left, or top right.

The slider allows you to adjust the size of the logo. If you change the logo, recheck the size, to ensure that it is positioned correctly.

The next item 'City or event subtitle for logo' is the word or words you want added to the logo. This will usually be your city name, but could be used for part of the event name, eg IML Social or something like that. Remember, this will be added to the final image, but won't be displayed in the preview.

Adding event info

The quickest way to create your poster is by using the event information from the BLUF calendar. To do this, your event must already have been added to the calendar by our admin team. You will then be able to click the menu and select your event, then click Retrieve to fetch the details.

If your event is not yet in the calendar, you can simply fill in the information yourself in the boxes provided.

'Name or callout text' is usually the name, but if for example you have added the name to the logo, you might put something else here, like "Gear up!" Or 'Join us!"

'Date and time' is obvious; if loaded from the calendar, this will be in a standard format which includes the year and the time in 24 hour clock. In many cases, you will want to make this shorter, so edit the text to suit.

'Location' is where you should enter the information for the venue; rather than using commas between parts (street name, city) you should use a new line, to ensure the generated poster is as close as possible to the preview.

The 'Extra text' box allows you to add a small amount of additional information, which might be info about a cover charge, meeting point, or other details needed. You can omit this.

Next, you will find the Dresscode choice. This has two options, relaxed, or strict dresscode, and you cannot change the actual text, just choose one of the two pre-defined options.

To set the colour of the text, click on one of the colour boxes - black, white or blue. This will update the colour of all the text elements on your poster.

To use different colours for different bits of the text, click Show advanced, and then you can select an item from a menu, before clicking the colour.

Please try to ensure that all text on the image is legible, in particular the photo credit and the BLUF information, which are bottom left and bottom right hand side, respectively.

When you have made changes to any of the texts, click the Update texts button, which will redraw all the text elements.

If you would like more space between the logo and the rest of the text, you can use the slider labelled 'Offset text from logo.' Move it to the right to move all the text down the image. Make sure it does not run into the photo credit, especially if you have entered the optional extra text.

When you are satisfied with your poster, click the Download button. This will generate a PNG file 2000x2500 pixels.

If you selected an event in the BLUF calendar, you can also tick the box to have the poster added to that event. You will be asked to confirm you want to do it, and if so, the calendar will be updated. This will also queue the poster for our social media systems, scheduling a post with 'New in the BLUF calendar' and the details of the event.

Quick 3 step guide to promoting your event:

1. Add your event to the calendar, either via the front side of the site (Community -> Add event) or via the Admin pages, or by emailing to events@bluf.com

2. When the event has been added to the calendar and accepted as an official event, use the Promo tools to generate a poster, based on the calendar information

3. Tick the box to update your event, and then click Download. You'll be sent the poster, and the image will be shared on our automated social media accounts, within 24 hours.