KNOWLEDGE BASE ARTICLE

Customizing the QR Code Design: Shape, Colors, Gradient and Corners

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Introduction

A QR code on a poster or a page of the intranet is part of the design, and a black-and-white square rarely fits it. QR Code Generator lets you change the shape of the dots, the colors and the corner markers of the code. The settings are in the collapsible sections below the data tabs, and every change is shown in the preview at once. This article describes the sections **Shape**, **Colors**, **Corner Square**, **Corner Dots** and **Error Correction** and gives the rules that keep a styled code readable.

All sections are collapsed when the web part opens. Click the name of a section to expand it.

Default design

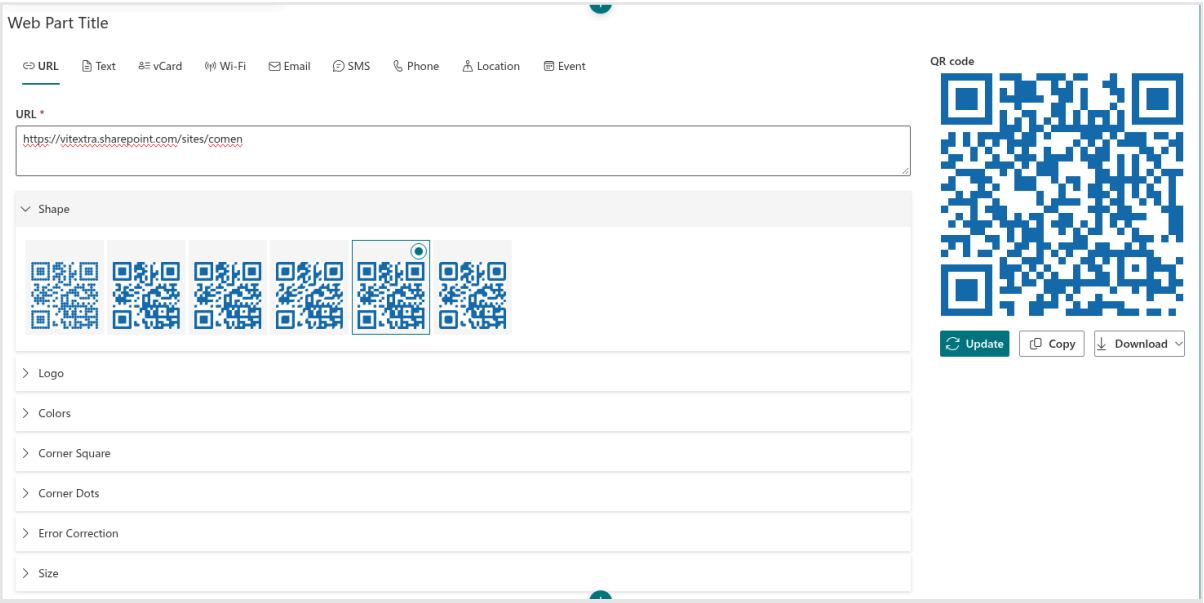
A new web part starts with the following design:

Setting	Default value
Shape of the dots	Square
Color of the dots, corner squares and corner dots	Blue, #166aae
Background Color	Fully transparent
Gradient	Off
Type of the corner squares and corner dots	**Square**
Error Correction	**Quartile**

Shape

The **Shape** section sets the style of the small dots that carry the data. The six styles are shown as pictures, and a click on a picture selects the style:

- separate round dots;
- rounded — neighboring dots merge into lines with rounded ends;
- classy — dots with two cut corners;
- classy rounded — the same with smoother corners;
- square — the classic look of a QR code;
- extra rounded — lines with strongly rounded ends.



The Shape section with six dot styles

The shape changes only the look of the code. The encoded data and the number of dots stay the same.

Colors

The **Colors** section contains two color pickers:

- **Color** — the color of the dots;
- **Background Color** — the color of the area behind the code.

Each picker has a color field, a hue slider and a transparency slider, and below them the **Hex**, **Red**, **Green**, **Blue** and **Transparency** boxes for exact values. To use a corporate color, paste its code into the **Hex** box.

With the transparency of the **Background Color** at 100, the code has no background and takes the color of whatever is under it: the section of the page, a slide, a printed sheet.

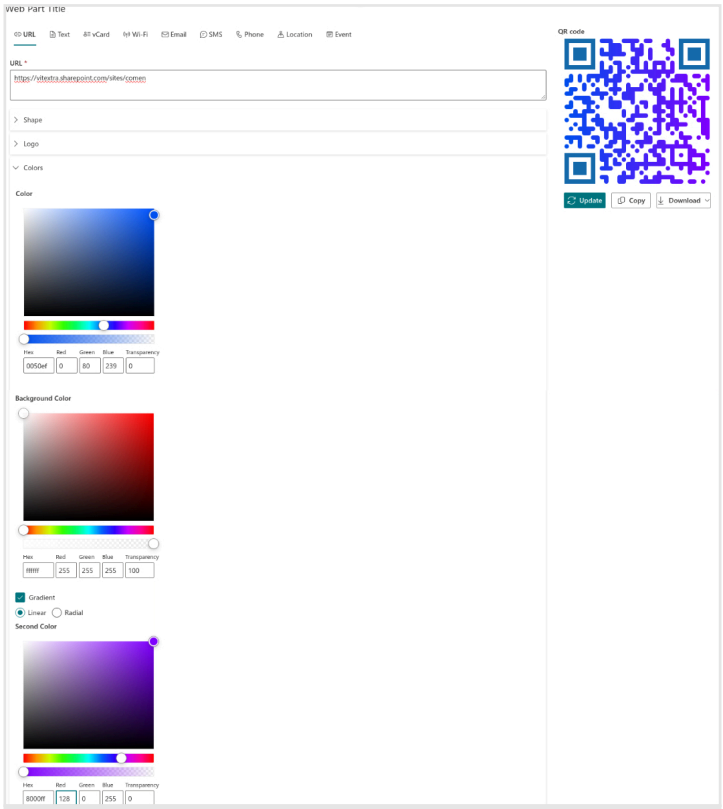
Gradient

Select the **Gradient** check box to fill the dots with a transition between two colors instead of a single color. Two more settings appear:

- the type of the gradient — **Linear**, from the left edge of the code to the right one, or **Radial**, from the center to the edges;
- **Second Color** — the color in which the gradient ends. The gradient starts with the color set in **Color**.

The gradient applies to the dots only. The corner squares and the corner dots keep

their own colors.



The Colors section with a linear gradient

Corner Square and Corner Dots

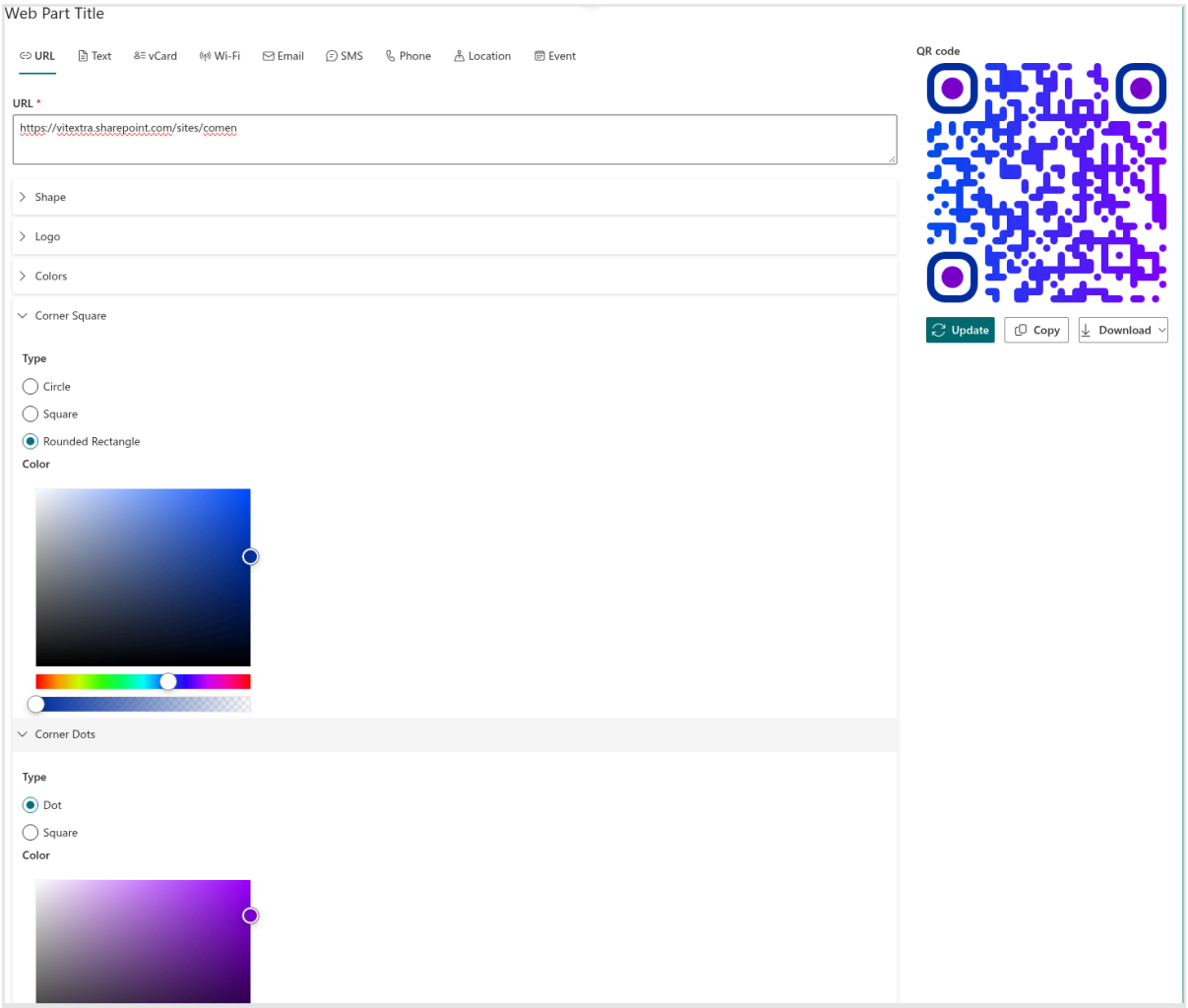
Three corners of every QR code hold the position markers, by which a scanner finds the code and determines its orientation. A marker consists of an outer frame and an inner dot, and each has its own section.

Corner Square — the outer frame:

- **Type** — **Circle**, **Square** or **Rounded Rectangle**;
- **Color** — the color of the frame.

Corner Dots — the inner dot:

- **Type** — **Dot** or **Square**;
- **Color** — the color of the dot.



The Corner Square and Corner Dots sections

Note

The color of the dots in the **Colors** section does not change the markers. To recolor the whole code, set the same color in three places: **Colors** > **Color**, **Corner Square** > **Color** and **Corner Dots** > **Color**.

Error Correction

A QR code carries redundant data, which lets a scanner read it even when a part of the code is dirty, damaged or covered. The **Error Correction** section sets how much redundancy is added.

Level	Share of the code that can be restored	When to use
Low	About 7%	Long data on a clean screen, when the code

Level	Share of the code that can be restored	When to use
		must be as sparse as possible
Medium	About 15%	Codes on screens and good-quality prints
Quartile	About 25%	The default; suitable for most codes, including codes with a small logo
High	About 30%	Codes with a large logo and prints that may wear out

A higher level makes the code more robust and, for the same data, denser: it needs more dots, and each dot becomes smaller.

Keeping the code readable

A scanner needs contrast and clear markers more than it needs beauty. A few rules protect a styled code from failing:

- **Dark on light.** The dots must be clearly darker than the background. A light code on a dark background is not read by every scanner.
- **Mind the transparent background.** A code with a transparent background takes the background of the place where it is used. A blue code that is readable on a white page disappears on a dark section or a dark slide. If you do not know where the code will be used, set an opaque light **Background Color**.
- **Do not make the dots transparent.** The transparency slider of **Color** lowers the contrast in the same way as a pale color does.
- **Check both ends of a gradient.** Both **Color** and **Second Color** must contrast with the background; a gradient that fades into a light tone makes a part of the code unreadable.
- **Keep the markers distinct.** The corner markers must contrast with the background at least as well as the dots.
- **Leave a margin.** When you place the code in a layout, keep an empty area around it of about four dots in width.

Warning

Test every styled code with at least two different smartphones before it is printed or published. The preview in the web part is 300 pixels wide; also test the code at the size and from the distance at which it will actually be scanned.

Summary

The design sections of QR Code Generator change the shape of the dots, the colors, the gradient and the corner markers, while the **Error Correction** level sets the reserve of robustness. The design is saved with the page together with the data, so a code styled once keeps its look for every visitor.

Tip

To place a logo in the center of the code, see KB10266. How to Add a Company Logo to a QR Code. The size of the image and the file formats are described in KB10267. Downloading and Copying a QR Code: PNG, JPEG, SVG and WebP.