Visual Design

Scott Klemmer

TAs: Marcello Bastea-Forte, Joel Brandt, Neil Patel, Leslie Wu, Mike Cammarano

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ONE MINUTE AND FIFTY-TWO SECONDS WITH NEVILLE BRODY AND RICK POYNOR

HELVETICA
A DOCUMENTARY FILM
BY GARY HUSTWIT
Gill Sans, designed by Eric Gill and released by the Monotype Corporation in 1928
Step 3

The Solution

The ClearRx system Adler designed for Target includes bottles for pills and liquids and a measuring syringe. Here’s the pill bottle that hits shelves in May.

(1) Easy I.D.
The name of the drug is printed on the top of the bottle, so it’s visible if kept in a drawer.

(2) Code red.
The red color of the bottle is Target’s signature—and a universal symbol for caution.

(3) Information hierarchy.
Adler divided the label into primary and secondary positions, separated by a horizontal line. The most important information (drug name, dosage, intake instructions) is placed above the line, and less important data (quantity, expiration date, doctor’s name) is positioned below.

(4) Upside down to save paper.
Klaus Rosburg, a Brooklyn-based industrial designer hired by Target, came up with an upside-down version that stands on its cap, so that the label can be wrapped around the top. Every piece of paper in the package adds up to one eight-and-a-half-by-fourteen-inch perforated sheet, which eliminates waste and makes life easier for pharmacists.
Quotes: Mihai Nadin

“Method helps intuition when it is not transformed into dictatorship. Intuition augments method if it does not instill anarchy. In every moment of our semiotic existence, method and intuition complement one another.”
The Importance of Patterns

Key options

- Design patterns
- Designing by example

- Users will work well with UI’s that build upon concepts that they are familiar with

Web Design Patterns

- Web patterns important and persistent(!)


Figure 2.10
These screen shots illustrate the evolution of the homepages of CNN, MSN, Yahoo!, and Google from 2001 to 2006. Note that the core structure and the underlying design patterns used by these Web sites have not changed over the years. For the most part, the only major change to these Web sites has been an increase in information density.
Figure A1.1

L. L. Bean gives customers a sense of familiarity because the categories on the site (left) are similar to what they find in L. L. Bean’s physical stores and catalogs. The bright colors, clean layout and navigation, and picture in the center work together to draw people in.

Figure C1.1

MSNBC gives readers a broad selection of topics to explore, while highlighting news of general interest. With its clearly distinguished links, customers need only a quick glance to see how to navigate the site. Subsections highlighted in the navigation bar show more detailed areas of interest. Readers can customize the news by entering a zip code to get local news.

[www.msnbc.com, June 16, 2006]
1-800-flowers.com highlights several kinds of featured products, including “Florist Designed,” as well as specials like “DOUBLE POINTS!” and “SAVE 10%.” The attractive photographs also give the flowers a seductive quality.
Jan Tschichold’s Revolution

• Champion of Modernist Typography

Die Neue Typographie
Berlin, 1928

Bauhaus school
Dessau, 1925-26
“In anything at all, perfection is attained not when there is no longer anything to add, but when there is no longer anything to take away.”
## Type Classifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sans Serif</th>
<th>Serif</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Optima</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fenice Bold</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman</td>
<td><strong>answ</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obliqouted</td>
<td><strong>answ</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True italic</td>
<td><strong>answ</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. *Weight and character distortion in obliquted type*
Asymmetric Typography

How blocks used to be arranged in magazines. Schematic, thoughtless centering of blocks (= ugly).

The same blocks, correctly arranged in the same type-area. Constructive, meaningful, and economical (= beautiful).
Grid Systems

- A key pattern for implementing rationality, modernism, asymmetry
- Note that no elements are “centered”
Quotes: Bringhurst & Tufte

“Some space must be narrow so that other space may be wide, and some space must be emptied so that other space may be filled.”

- Robert Bringhurst
  *The Elements of Typographic Style*

“Information consists of differences that make a difference.”

- Edward Tufte
  *Envisioning Information*
Small Multiples

- Economy of line
- Many similarities enable us to notice differences
International Women’s Day

Echeverría, Heriberto  1971
March 8 - International Women’s Day

Diaz, Estela  1974
March 8 - International Women’s Day

Cuban Poster Art Gallery, http://www.sims.berkeley.edu/~lcush/GenCat.html/
SMALL MULTIPLES

Reid Miles, Blue Note Cover

Freddie Hubbard, Duke Jordan, Sam Jones, Art Taylor

Blue Note

TRUE BLUE TINA BROOKS

84041

STEREO

THE FINEST IN JAZZ SINCE 1939

Blue In and Out

Gabriel Blue

Alice Blue

Blue Note

Sticks like Blue

Blue Away

True Blue

Too Blue
Tree Maps (PhotoMesa)
Design Galleries

Figure 15: A DG for a particle system.
Design Galleries

Figure 13: A DG with different opacity transfer functions.
Color Spaces

Color Plate 5  RGB and HSV cubes. (a) The RGB cube has fully saturated colors along the edges connecting the RGB vertices to CMY. Grays run through the center diagonally between the black and the white vertices. Note that the top of the HSV cone can be seen as a projection along the white-black diagonal of the RGB cube. (b) The HSV cube has maximally saturated colors along the hue axis, with saturation and value at their maximum value. Grays run along the value axis and have no hue or saturation components.

Color Plate 6  Use of a double-hexcone color space in a 2D color picker. (a) In a double-hexcone HLS space, the white vertex is pulled up to create a cone symmetrical to the one formed by the black vertex. (b) MetaCreations Painter uses a circle from the middle of an HSL space with a cross section of the space showing the area between a given hue and the white and black extremes of the double hexcone. (Painter is a registered trademark of MetaCreations. These materials copyrighted 1998.)
Technology-Centered Colors

- Nice Hex codes, “evenly” distributed
- But yowch! Lime green and hot pink?
Human-Centered Colors

- Munsell (left): Perceptually based
- Pantone (right): Functionally based

*Color Plate 8  Slices through the Munsell color space. The swatches are arrayed at perceptually determined brightness positions, but the shape of this space lacks the geometric convenience of a cube or hex-cone. (Photo provided courtesy of GretagMacbeth)*

*Color Plate 3  Color-matching systems. Color naming and printed reference swatches ensure consistent color matching.*

Anne Spalter, *The Computer in the Visual Arts*
Color is problematic

- On-screen color varies widely from device to device for two reasons
  - The device may not be able to display that color (e.g. \#AF5234), replacing it with something else
    - Web safe sometimes helps here
  - The presentation of that color
Announcements

- Flash Lite Tutorial Sequence 6p-8p Tonight (Hewlett 200) Thursday (Hewlett 201)
- It will be Recorded
- Remember to sign up for experimental participation (there’s listings now)
Further Reading

- Kevin Mullet and Darrell Sano, *Designing Visual Interfaces*
- Edward Tufte’s books and course
- Anne Spalter, *The Computer in the Visual Arts*
- Robin Williams, *The Non-Designer’s Design Book*
- Typography
  - Jan Tschichold, *The New Typography*
  - Robert Bringhurst, *The Elements of Typographic Style*
  - http://www.adobe.com/type/
Further Reading

- Color: Charles Poynton, *A Technical Introduction to Digital Video*
  - also his SIGGRAPH course
  - web http://www.inforamp.net/~poynton/
- Typography on the web
  - http://www.microsoft.com/typography/