Research, Write, Publish | Desktop Publishing

Graphic Design

Key Concept
When you go to the library, how do you choose what to read? What catches your eye? Your first impression of any publication is based on how it looks. Graphic design is the art of creating publications that make strong impressions on readers.

Graphic design uses type and graphics to make text more visually appealing. Desktop publishing provides the technology tools to create a publication. Graphic design provides the knowledge and skills to use the technology tools effectively.

A quality publication both catches the eye and is easy to read. It grabs your attention and communicates a message quickly and effectively. Can you produce a quality publication? You can when you know the basic principles of graphic design.

Look Ahead
Task: Use the principles of graphic design to improve the appearance of your brochure.

Goal: Make your brochure as visually appealing and easy to read as possible.

You may want to review an example of a final brochure before you begin.

See the example: Final Brochure
Vocabulary

Words to Remember
This page gives basic definitions for some important terms that can help you learn graphic design. You can get a more complete definition of each term from Fact Monster*.

New Words
Alignment: Specific arrangement of type and graphics in a publication.

Balance: Overall distribution of type and graphics on a page to create a desired effect.

Contrast: Type or graphics that work together to create a desired effect; also, study two (or more) people, groups, places, events, ideas, actions, or objects to identify distinctive characteristics.

Graphic Design: The art of using type and graphics to communicate information with a desired effect.

Proximity: How close together type or graphics are arranged in a publication or presentation; usually used in design to create a desired effect.

Repetition: Type or graphics used more than once to create a desired effect.

White Space: An area of a publication with no type or graphics.

Review Words
Audience: The people who read a publication or view a work of art, performance, or presentation.

Brochure: A short publication that describes or promotes a product, idea, opinion, organization, or event.

Desktop Publishing: Using a computer to design and print a publication that includes text and graphics.

Graphics: Using pictures and other visual elements to communicate information.

Publication: A printed work distributed to an audience.

Type: A style of letters and numbers used in a publication or presentation.
Exploration

Learning from the Web
How can you make your narrative essay publication catch the eyes of your readers? Explore some Web sites about graphic design. Learn how to use graphic design to attract readers to your publication.

While you explore the following Web sites, think about the guiding questions. You may want to take notes to help you answer the questions. If you think of other questions about using graphic design, keep those in mind too.

Guiding Questions

- What are the most important concepts to remember about graphic design?
- How can you use graphic design to attract readers to your narrative essay publication?
- How can type and fonts affect attractiveness and readability?

Web Sites

- Desktop Publishing and Graphic Design* from About*
- Principles of Design* from About*
- Examples of Principles of Design* from About*
- Rule of Thirds* from About*
- How to Choose Fonts for Headlines* from About*
Information

What to Know
This page summarizes some of the information from the Web sites you explored. This information helps you learn what you need to know for this activity about graphic design. You may want to take notes to help you remember the most important points. You can return to the Web sites for more exploration if you want to learn more.

Principles of Design
A quality publication looks good, is easy to read, and communicates a message. Graphic design is the art of using type and graphics to produce quality publications. Like any art, no strict rules can guarantee success. Fortunately, you can rely on some design principles that help in most cases.

Principles of Design
Six basic design principles can help you create a quality publication. These principles are *guidelines*, not rules. Creative graphic designers often “break the rules” to create interesting effects. However, the six principles can help you design a publication that captures your audience’s attention and is easy to read and understand.

The six principles of graphic design are:

- **Alignment** makes your publication easy to read. Well-aligned type and graphics complement each other without obstructing other elements.

- **Balance** sets the tone for a publication. An even distribution of type and graphics can make a publication more soothing or serious. An uneven distribution of type and graphics can make the publication more active or amusing.

- **Contrast** directs a reader’s attention to a specific place or idea. Differences in size and appearance of type or graphics can create eye-catching contrast.

- **Proximity** uses space to show how type and graphics are related. Placing two elements close together suggests a close relationship or agreement. Placing elements far apart shows a weaker relationship or tension.

- **Repetition** helps a reader navigate through a publication. If every type and graphic looks different, a reader will get lost quickly. If similar elements have the same look, readers can follow along easily.

- **White space** gives a reader’s eyes a rest. If every inch of a publication is filled with type or graphics, the reader may become overwhelmed. White space does not have to be white. It can actually be any color as long as the space is empty and a reader does not have to focus on it.
**Rule of Thirds**
One easy way to make sure your designs look good is to use the rule of thirds. Think about a tic-tac-toe game. Imagine that every page is divided into nine equal pieces, like a tic-tac-toe game drawn over the entire page. The *rule of thirds* says that a design looks better if it is arranged on this kind of grid. The four points where the four horizontal and vertical lines intersect can be used to align the features of the design.

**Type and Fonts**
Type and fonts can have dramatic effects on both attractiveness and readability. Type should match the tone of the publication. Fonts should be easy to read and appropriate for the intended audience and purpose. Using a whimsical font in a serious publication confuses and distracts readers, and may even offend them. On the other hand, using a formal font in a publication meant to entertain may cause readers to lose interest.

Contrast between headlines and body text also can contribute to both attractiveness and readability. Many experts believe that body text is easier to read in serif fonts (like Times New Roman). You can make headlines stand out from body text by using sans serif fonts (like Tahoma). You can add more contrast by making headlines bold, changing their color, or increasing their size. Of course, you should always use fonts and effects wisely and consistently.
Task

What to Do
Complete the following task to show what you have learned about graphic design. While you work through the task, think about whether you are achieving the goal. You may want to review an example of a final brochure before you begin.

Task: Use the principles of graphic design to improve the appearance of your brochure.

Goal: Make your brochure as visually appealing and easy to read as possible.

See the example: Final Brochure

1. Open the word processing or desktop publishing file that contains your brochure.

2. Add the images that you found to enhance the message and visual appeal of your brochure. Make sure that you are using the images legally.

3. You may also want to add clip art to your brochure, but only if the clip art enhances both the message and visual appeal. You may use clip art provided with your word processing or desktop publishing application. You may also find clip art on the following Web sites.

Clip Art Sources

- Discovery School’s Clip Art Gallery* from Discovery School*
- Clipart for Kids* from Kidz Page*
- Classroom Clipart*

Use the principles of graphic design to improve the appearance your brochure. Make the brochure as visually appealing and easy to read as possible.

Remember to save your brochure often while you work.

Review the checklist and revise your brochure to make sure it is complete.

If you have access to a printer, print at least one copy of your brochure.

Ask someone to read your brochure. Discuss the reader’s reaction to your brochure. You may want to ask the following questions during your discussion.

- What parts had the most and least visual appeal?
- Were any parts difficult to read?
- What was the message of the brochure?
- What, if any, actions did the brochure move the reader to take?
Can You Help Me On My Next Journey?

The ad on the Internet travel site said, “You will experience golden beaches with glistening sand caressed by the gentle roll of the Indian Ocean,” so I decided I needed a break from work and I would spend Christmas 2004 in Sri Lanka at the exquisite Palms Hotel. Little did I know I would become involved in what has become the deadliest disaster in modern history. My friend and I survived, but many did not. I questioned why I survived and others didn’t. I then realized that my next journey would be to return to Sri Lanka and help those who were still suffering.

We need your help!

Tsunami Relief
Sri Lanka

SRI LANKA EXPERIENCE

December 26, 2004 started out like any other day in paradise. It was about 10:28 A.M. and we were lying on the sun-drenched beach soaking up the golden rays of the sun, when we heard ear-piercing screams. My friend and I jumped up and we couldn’t believe what we saw! What was seconds earlier, a gentle rolling ocean, turned into a man-eating monster.

“What was seconds earlier, a gentle rolling ocean, turned into a man-eating monster!”

http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/NaturalHazards/shownh.php3?img_id=12643

http://www.sxc.hu/photo/311255
How Can You Help?

TSUNAMI RELIEF
Donations

The Tsunami Relief Agency and I invite you to help in any way that you can. After surviving the tsunami I realized that there is nothing more important than helping others in need. Approximately 229,000 people were killed, 30,000 in Sri Lanka alone and many people were left homeless with nowhere to go.

Tsunami Relief will accept donations of any amount. All the money will be sent directly to Sri Lanka to help those in need. There is much work to be done and your money will help make the lives of so many people better. Remember, all money will go directly to those in need to help supply them with fresh water, food and a place to stay.

It is the mission of the Tsunami relief agency to serve all those in need. If you are unable to donate money you can still help. We are looking for volunteers to journey with me to Sri Lanka to help with cleanup and rebuilding. With your help many people will be able to return to their homes and have clean water and fresh food to eat. You could help Sri Lanka return to the land of golden beaches and gently rolling oceans.

I believe President Bush was right when he said, “Americans have a history of rising to meet great humanitarian challenges and of providing hope to suffering peoples.” Let’s continue this tradition. To volunteer please call 312-555-0125.

We clung to the tree for dear life. It took about two hours for the water to subside. We climbed down carefully and knew immediately that we needed to help. We ran into a Doctor who quickly set up a makeshift hospital in our devastated hotel lobby. We did what we could. Everything was destroyed for miles and there was no place for anyone to stay. Later, the Red Cross came and set up temporary headquarters a few miles from our hotel and we were able to help deliver fresh food and water for those who needed it. Helping others kept us busy so we were not able to dwell on our small problems.

On our way home we realized how lucky we were to be alive. There were many wonderful people who helped us. Now, I would like to return the favor, but I will need your help!

I will never be the same after this experience and I am hoping that the opportunity for you to help will also be life changing.

Please journey with me to Sri Lanka, so together, we can make a difference!