A Phone, a Tennis Ball, and a Wardrobe

Tools for Designing Effective Slide Presentations

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1) WHAT'S THE VALUE OF DESIGN?

- Design permeates everything around us and we encounter it regardless of age, location, gender, etc.
- Design allows us to stand out, be unique and get our message heard more clearly
- It is a set of tools that help you engage with an audience
- Design is NOT an afterthought (i.e. "decoration"). Design is the process you go through to get to the end result.

2) THE DESIGN PROCESS

- The "Squiggle"*
    1) Examine your audience
    2) Conduct research
    3) Sketch and PLAY!
    4) Refine prototypes
    5) Finalize design

UNCERTAINTY / PATTERNS / INSIGHTS   CLARITY / FOCUS

RESEARCH   CONCEPT | PROTOTYPE   DESIGN
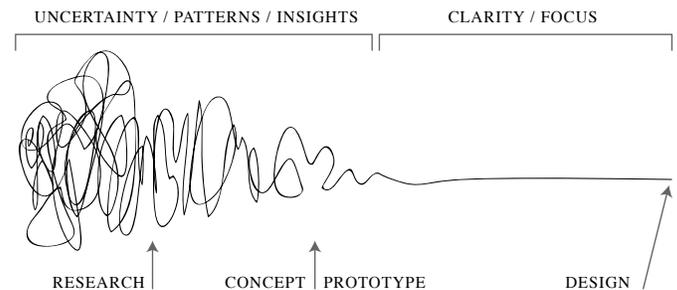
- Consider starting off the computer
    • Computers can be overly frustrating providing a barrier to quick idea formation
    • They tend to force you into a single direction too early

3) BASIC DESIGN TIPS FOR PRESENTATIONS

- Everyone is creative
- Design is a language that needs learning and repetition to master.
- Learn to appreciate and consume quality design. This will influence how you see your own presentations.
- Practice active design consumption.
- Consistency is KEY. Create a visual hierarchy.

Gestalt Principles of Design

- Contrast (size/color/shape) - Think of a tennis ball in the middle of a large court
- Similarity - Think of website links. They look the same for ease of use.
- Proximity - Think of people in an orchestra and how they're grouped.
- Alignment - Think of a grid. They allow a structure behind the scenes for consistency.
- White space (area left unused)

Color

- Some colors have specific meanings in various cultures and industries
- Colors imply emotion/feeling. What do you want yours to be?
- How to pick a color scheme?
    • Look at other "designed" items/images for reference (magazines, cars, websites, NATURE)
    • Check in your closet for colors that you like and reflect your personality
    • Look at works of art for creative schemes
- In general, limit colors to 3-4
- Consider color contrast and avoid colors that "vibrate" against each other

* Squiggle via Central (www.centralstory.com)

T

serif
(Times)

T

sans-serif
(Helvetica)

Fonts
  - A serif is a design element found on the end of the strokes on some fonts.
    Fonts with serifs include Times, Georgia, Palatino, Baskerville
  - Popular fonts without serifs (sans-serif) include Helvetica, Arial, Verdana, Futura
  - A display typeface might include a script font or other "decorative" fonts
  - In general, limit fonts to one serif font and/or one sans-serif font in a presentation
    and avoid display fonts unless there is a really good reason.
  - Think about contrast, keep it consistent and consider readability (it's type, after all!)

Images
  - A picture really is worth 1000 words
  - Create your own (iPhone, digital camera, drawings)
  - Consider resolution (72 DPI for screen, 200+ DPI for print)
  - Keep the "look" of the images consistent
  - Do not flip them if at all possible!
  - Don't steal (but there are good alternatives - see references. Don't forget attribution!)

Graphs/Charts
  - Keep them clean and as clear as possible
  - Strip out unnecessary information
  - Personally, I'd avoid the 3-D effects, if possible
  - Consider using text or imagery to represent the information instead

When in doubt, consult with a professional!

CONCLUSION
  - Start your design work at the beginning. It's not the "decoration", it's at the core.
  - Be consistent - make design choices and stick with them
  - Understand visual hierarchy and use it
  - Keep it simple and use a handout, if necessary

RECOMMENDED READING & RESOURCES
  Slide:ology: The Art and Science of Creating Great Presentations - Nancy Duarte
  Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery - Garr Reynolds
  The Non-Designer's Design Book (3rd Edition) - Robin Williams
  D.I.Y.: Design It Yourself - Ellen Lupton
  Blah Blah Blah: What To Do When Words Don't Work - Dan Roam
  Design As Art - Bruno Munari
  Stratepedia Blog (my design tips) - http://blog.stratepedia.org/author/dgnojek
  Good Magazine (source for infographics) - www.good.is
  istockphoto.com - inexpensive photography
  compfight.com - search Flickr for Creative Commons content (please use attribution)
  kuler.adobe.com, colorschemedesigner.com - online color scheme tools
  KU Powerpoint Template and resources: http://identity.ku.edu/

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