

1. Subject of the workshop.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION – HOW TO DESIGN A NEWSLETTER

2. Goal of the workshop.

Be able to point out the typical design mistakes and know how to improve the design by using the tips that were provided during the workshop.

3. Theoretical input for the workshop.

4. Structure of the workshop

(slide) Goodmorning

I am Lotte Neiryndck.

First of all I would like to apologize for my English, please give me a sign if anything is unclear, then I can try to explain!

After I got my master diploma in graphic design I started in the book-business. During those months I designed several art catalogues, a novel and even some cookbooks. After that great experience I found my spot at REDSTAR DESIGN in Antwerp (slide), a sub-division of the advertising agency LDV United that specializes in brand design. The great thing about my job is that it goes further than just designing a logo, its about giving a clear image, a very own identity to an entire corporation. This goes from letterheads to packaging, sometimes even interior design. With as result that the customer recognizes immediately the brand they are dealing with. The most important thing to achieve this is: CONSISTENCY. Stick to the guidelines you created, always use the same colours, the same typefaces, the same photography style and so on.

The best thing you can do when you have to design a newsletter is start with deciding exactly those things. Cause like they say "A good start is the job half done!".

Jeffrey already created a great visual style for the Europe Direct newsletters which you can use as a guide on how to create your own versions. I will get back on this later when I'll discuss the designs with you.

In the next hour I will provide you with tips and tricks on how to improve your graphical skills, starting with the main question 'What is graphic design?' (slide) A quote of Oscar Wilde seemed appropriate here (slide) : 'It is very much more difficult to talk about something than to do it.'

What I want to say with this is that I had a hard time narrowing down the wideness of what graphic design is to its essential core that can help you improve your design. Designs in which you obviously already putted a lot of hard work, energy and motivation to translate the dry information into an attractive newspaper.

So, 'What IS graphic design?'(slide) It is the most universal of all 'arts'. It is all around us, explaining, decorating, identifying: imposing meaning on the world. (slide)

Graphic design performs a number of functions. It sorts and it differentiates –it distinguishes one company, organization or nation from another. It informs. It acts out our emotions and help us shape the how we feel about the world around us.

The designer 'Paul Rand' wrote:

"...graphic design, in the end, deals with the spectator, and because it is the goal of the designer to be persuasive or at least informative, it follows that the designer's problems are twofold: to anticipate the spectator's reactions and to meet his own aesthetic needs."

What is a graphic designer? (slide)

The graphic designer is someone who makes sense of the material, translating it with the forms and codes of the visual language. There job is to: (slide)

- Invite the receiver to read.
- Reveal the content of the text.
- Visualize the structure of the text
- Attach the correct visual elements to the text.

I splitted some theory en tips up in following categories: (slide)

- People read
- Stick to the grid
- Typography is king
- Tips and tricks

1

People read (slide)

FORM FOLLOWS FUNCTION. (slide) This means in print design: If you're working on something that contains textual content concentrate on the content.

You should use typography as an element to make an attractive design, however you should always aim for optimal readability.

"Focus on the needs, sometimes the best ideas are behind the most obvious needs."

Visualizing the structure of the text is one of those essential things that need to be done to guide the eye of your spectator.

There are some conventional design laws to create this hierarchy:

- * Headings and titels to be read first;
- * introductions before the main text;
- * contents pages;
- * the introductory that explains the article;
- * subheads;
- * foreign words in italic;...

The most simple device to create hierarchy is to adjust the size of the title or most prominent element. This can also be done with space, colour, different typfaces, embolding and so on.

2

Stick to the grid (slide)

As more letters, images or anything else are placed, the more complicated relationships become. This process can be managed by the use of a grid (slide)
-THE INVISIBLE FRAMEWORK THAT ORGANISES GRAPHIC MATERIAL ON A SURFACE.

Using its proportional relations, composition guidelines for the base of your design is a good idea.

The purpose of a grid is twofold:

* **First**, it helps the designer choose how to arrange the elements on each page, by limiting the choices. The grid can be as complex and nuanced as it needs to be, but in designing the grid, the designer is creating the character of her design, choosing a set of physical values and rejecting others.

* **Secondly**, the grid brings a unity to a design. Even if the content is different on each page, the document will have a coherent look.

(!) The grid system, like all workable systems, must be interpreted as freely as necessary. It is this very freedom which adds richness and a note of surprise to what might... be potentially lifeless.

Don't always go for the standard 3-column setup. A 7 column setup offers a lot of playful combinations... 2 column overlaps, a 3/3/1 setup with a sidebar and so on...

3

Typography is king (slide)

If the typographical setup is bad, no amount of lines or other elements will fix it. The fonts you use the most in your project set the voice for its overall feel: don't pick the first font you like; think about what voice it should have and the best way to communicate this to your target audience. You can have a lot of fun with the basic well designed fonts: Helvetica, Swiss or Akzidenz Grotesk will save you from the worst typographic horror-scenarios.

There are two main families in typefaces: (slide)

- SERIF (with example of uppercase and lowercase)
- SANS SERIF (with example of uppercase and lowercase)

The serif typefaces are the oldest, they go back to the time when books were handwritten with calligraphic pens by monks. The first printable version of a typeface was in the 15th century by Johann Gutenberg, typefaces kept evolving till the 17th / 18th century when most famous typefaces like Bodoni and Baskerville saw daylight. The evolving of typefaces will never stop of course. These variants of the serif typefaces are still favorites when a font-choice has to be made for novels, long text even of course an example we see every day: Newspapers.

The serif is the ideal choice for longer text since they are very easy for the eye to recognize.

For Titles or shorter text you could also choose a sans serif, they are younger.

Even if the safest choice is to use everything in serif, everything in sans serif or the titles in sans serif and the text in serif (I would not recommend to use serif for the titles and the sans serif for the text) Of course it is not the amount of text or your personal

favorite that forces you to choose one or another, it is the content which you have to reveal that defines whether a serif or a sans serif should be chosen. (slide)

After choosing a serif or sans serif there is another choice to be made (slide)

Each typeface has four groups of characters:

- UPPERCASE
- LOWERCASE
- (- NUMBERS)
- (- SPECIAL SIGNS)

The terms 'upper-' and 'lowercase' come from the physical splitting of a typeface into capitals and small letters, kept in a case (slide)

Ideal length of a sentence: (slide) 66 characters (including the white spaces).

When you work with several columns it's 40 to 50.

If you are worried about the readability of your text you can:

- Use paragraphs.
- By making the leading larger.

If designed well, a sentence up to 90 characters is acceptable for an interrupted text. (for example bibliographic content).

(slide)

4

Tips and tricks

A. Amount of content

(slide) If you have some kind of idea that there's too much on your page; there is indeed too much on your page. Define what's really necessary and remove any visual noise. It's corny but it's true: less is more. If they make you cram too much content on one page, tell them.

B. Overprint is fun

(slide) Is your budget limiting you to only 2 Pantone (PMS) colors? No problem. Try to experiment with overprint options to get a look with more depth with a limited color palette.

You can even work with photographs with only 2 Pantone's, just do them in duotone or monotone.

C. Think outside the paper

(slide) The human mind fills in gaps and will see the bigger picture if you aim for it. Using the border of your paper can be great fun and another tool to work with.

Obviously, this is not the final solution to all your design problems. It should help you to see that your work doesn't end at the edge of the paper.

D. Paper size standards are great.

(slide) But don't let them hold you back. Square booklets, for instance, make for a more interesting reading experience, while smaller sizes (A5 for example) are much

easier to take with you. Fly away from that standard A4 and take some risks.

E. Invert

(slide) Need to give a bigger impact to a quote or logo? Invert it. White on black (or on any dark color for that matter) will always give your design or typography more strength.

Be careful with smaller type sizes (8pt. and lower) as these will be possible problems for your printer as ink always flows around a little when just printed. This effect is called trapping. Of course this all depends on what kind of paper it's printed on, printing speed and other factors. Ask your printer about exceptions.

F. Be demanding about photographic content

(slide) You should always demand high quality source material to work with. When working with photographic content for example the "trash in, trash out" rule applies. A good photo can take your work to another level, a badly lit low resolution photo will ruin your work. Most clients will send you what they have for grabs... bug them a bit and they'll magically come up with better materials.

Wisdom:

- Simplicity is beautiful
- Less IS more
- If you want to break the rules you'll have to know them first.
- Focus on the needs, sometimes the best ideas are behind the most obvious needs.
- Create like a God, command like a king, work like a slave.