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## Typography as a statement of Design

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### ABSTRACT

While alphabet was created as a way to communicate through written symbols, it now serves another purpose; to create design. There is a science or a scientific purpose behind different functions of typography for example, kerning, leading, columns, point size, line length, etc. It is much more than just letters and words on a page. In much the same way that tone of voice can alter a message, typography has power to communicate a great deal simply through the forms of the letters and their layout on a page. The functions of typography help in to understand and interpret a written message.

Typography as a function of design is a very important element in itself. Typography is like fashion, or furniture. With rare functional exceptions, the world doesn't "need" new clothing or furniture designs, but people want to look different or evoke a particular feeling or fit with a particular "look", and there are trends and styles.

This paper explain the effects of font choices in visual perception and visual communication, and furthermore mentions the letter and font specifications that should be act accordingly in written documents for the message that is the essence of the communication to be understood better.

**Keywords** - *Typography, Advertisement, visual perception.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Typography is a major function to design. Typography is the art or process of setting and arranging typefaces to stylize the appearance. A font is another word for typeface.

When it comes to advertising, what's being said can be a bit less important than how it's said? In no case is this truer than in the case of typography based advertisements, which are common in print advertising and gaining popularity even in television and other video mediums. Typography can do everything from adding meaning to drawing attention, and using it right can mean the difference between mediocrity and stardom in the world of advertising.

Typography matters because it helps conserve the most valuable resource of designer. Attention is the reader's gift to designer. That gift is precious and finite. Functional properties of type require that the reader identifies words and knows their meaning; the semantic properties require that the reader extracts information from the characters' shapes in addition to the message content. The specific shape of a typeface may elicit an emotional or cognitive reaction in the reader; a sense of mood, personality or beauty. In this way, type can provide more meaning than that which the designer has control over in his choice of words.

Thus, these functional as well as semantic properties help to develop a specific sense of mood, personality or beauty as mentioned above. They attract a reader's attention, present information in a pleasing and effective manner, help the reader understand information, and to rank data in order of significance. They also help to make an ad more attractive which easily catches reader's attention.

### 2. MEANING OF TYPOGRAPHY

On originating from the Greek words of "typos" (form) and "graphia" (writing), typography means to write in accordance with form. Typography comprising typefaces, type size, line length, spacing and other similar factors is both a visual, functional and artful arrangement of the other elements relevant with the letter and literary-visual communication and a design language, so understanding that was created with these members. Making the message convincing, typography is an essential element of written communication. Crisp (2012:12) frames typography as a system of interrelated concerns. Today typography is considered to be an art by some and is defined as visual and functional arrangements to make writing legible by others. Martin Solomon (1995) considers typography to be an art and expresses his opinion like this: "Typography is the art of

mechanically producing letters, numbers, symbols, and shapes through an understanding of the basic elements, principles, and attributes of design.” Beatrice Warde (1956), too considers typography as an effective tool in both art and communicating.

### 3. TYPE & EXPRESSION OF IDEAS

#### 3.1. Typography

Choice of font for expressive purposes Typography has a central role in kinetic typography that is relevant to time. A full understanding of typographic applications will serve to direct the designer in choosing suitable a typeface with which to express and communicate a message. Each typeface has its own aesthetic, expressive qualities, as evidenced by visual attributes of its letterforms. It is important for students to know the basic classifications of typefaces, for there a son that each type category has distinct, functional qualities. Within any category, each typeface has its own individual identity because of different proportions and a variety of line weights, widths, directional slants and so on. These individual qualities clearly determine that each typeface demonstrates a different use and purpose for expression. A well-combined variety of typefaces bring variations of expression and harmony to the design. Awareness of these classifications is an essential tool in developing a designer's ability to select an appropriate typeface that enhances the expressive message in typography.

#### 3.2. Form

The use of typography is the primary means of presenting ideas and messages for expressive communication in typography. In this case, typography has a dual role: to represent a concept, and to do so in a visual form. This interplay of meaning and form brings a balanced harmony into the stage both in terms of function and expression. Displaying type as a form provides a sense of a letterform's unique characteristics and abstract presentation. When a typeface is perceived as form, it no longer reads as a letter because it has been manipulated by distortion, texture, enlargement, and has been extruded into a space. Space becomes an active live stage and brings a new dimension to our visual environment. The following example demonstrates how a letterform can be altered through enlargement to the point that it becomes abstract and details become magnified.

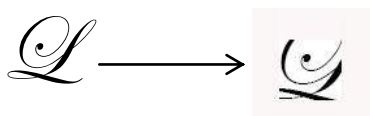


Figure 1. Details of Letter Form

#### 3.3. Expressive Meaning

It is important to grasp the purpose of type itself. Its physical form has its own expressive personality as well as being able to interpret meaning and guide stories. The physical characteristics of type, such as light or bold, round or square, short or long, wide or narrow, slim or heavy, make their own personal impression. Some of them look beautiful, delightful, fresh, ugly, angry, formal, casual, loose or stiff. It is as though each typeface has its own purpose for existence. Type also serves to represent the expression of various actions. Letterforms can appear to walk, run, jump, hide, climb, dance, fly, stand, rise, hang, float, sink, or crash. They can be quiet or loud, surprised, or appear to be shouting or crying. Each typeface represents its own expressive meaning through its strong personality. Letters separate from type; have meaning as soon as they are combined as words or sentences. Sometimes they are used subjectively, while at other times they support their neighboring letters. It is important to use an appropriate character to express the meaning of a concept, a meaning that is consistent with the typeface, its case, size, position, weight, color and space. Well-balanced and appropriate typefaces, narrative structure, and movement can reinforce the meaning in a kinetic typographical environment.



Figure 2. Expressive Meaning Space

#### 3.4. Style-Content Harmony

The presentation style of a script directly affects how the constructed message is perceived in the brain. The characters that make up the writing are powerful communication tools because the cognitive figures contain enables to have meaning in very different dimensions than visual elements. Cognitive perception comprises all we perceive, learn and think about. The graphic designer should consider both cognitive and visual values when presenting the data in a written environment. The empty and non-used area surrounding the graphical and script elements in a design is called the white zone. Defended as a modern design value by the Swiss typographer Jan

Tschichold, the white zone provides the space that helps different design elements to breathe and is defined to be “the lungs of good design”. In style-content harmony, the white zone balance should be kept well (Wong, 2011). The two basic functions of typography are:

### 3.4.1. Readability

It is basically about getting and keeping the interest of the reader, more about appeal and how the typography of a text will engage your reader and encourage them to read more. When dealing with the readability of your text you will consider: paragraphs, headings, graphics, or bullet points. This is the function where you have more freedom in unleashing your creativity and being flashy.

### 3.4.2. Legibility

This is more about the font design, and about what the human eye prefers and finds easy as opposed to reading text with more effort (which at the very least is tiring or frustrating). And losing readers because of a choice on a less legible font can hurt. In this case, you will want to stick to a font that is practically unnoticeable (the more your reader focuses on the font the less he will grab from your message).

As you move from highest to lowest level readability decreases and legibility increases. For a blog post for example your title will be the highest level: intriguing, grabbing attention, getting your reader to want more, you have most freedom to play around with less legible fonts here. On the second level you will have headings, quotes, captions: same as before, you will want to intrigue the reader into asking for more detailed information. And finally, on the third level you have the main content, your text, where your primary goal is to make it legible, so the reader can focus on your message.

## 4. TYPOGRAPHY DESIGN ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER FOR PRINT ADVERTISEMENT DESIGN

### 4.1 Color Contrast

Good color contrast may seem like an elementary concept, but there are some easily overlooked things to note when selecting colors for your typography and overall design. One of the most common mistakes (and the easiest to fix) is putting black text on a white background – this is too much contrast! If you look at most well designed websites, you’ll notice the black text on the white background isn’t really black – it’s grey. This technique takes down the contrast and makes it easier for the viewer to read. Contrast is not achieved simply by finding two very different colors. Just because two colors are different doesn’t mean they will provide good contrast if their value is the same.

A simple test to see if your design has enough contrast is to convert it to grey scale. This will allow you to easily see the value of the colors, which in the case of contrast, is much more important than color.

In the image below, even though the colors are very different, once they are converted to grey scale, you can see that their values are so close the words become almost impossible to read. This tells you these colors are not a good pair.



Figure 3. Color contrast

If you design on a computer like most of us, it’s a bit more technical, but just as easy. In Photoshop, after flattening your work, select: Image>Adjustments>Desaturate. In Illustrator you do this by selecting your design, then select: Edit>Edit Colors>Convert to Grayscale.

### 4.2. Font Size, Font Family and Font Type

Print design and web design differ here – mainly due to their respective mediums. In print design, 10pt font for body copy is generally accepted, but on the web, we deal in pixels. The equivalent of 10pt is 13px and this is a good size to stick with for body copy on the web. Anything smaller than these sizes will be too small for the average viewer to read.

Of course, keep your audience in mind. If you’re designing a website or brochure for a more mature audience, make your type bigger – your viewer will be happy you did.

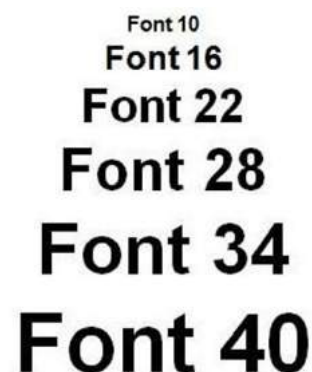


Figure 4. Font Size

The font family composes all sizes and styles of a typeface. A font family basically comprises roman, italic (or oblique), bold, and bold italic type scripts.

All variations of a designed font with respect to weight or width compose a family. Every font family has a name. These names are sometimes the name of its designer (Bodoni, Garamond etc.); and sometimes it is named after the place it was created (New York, San Francisco etc.).

Some fonts are solely created for a single publication and its readers. Vogue is a font that is created for the fashion magazine. Times Roman is created for The Times of London magazine and the name of the magazine was shortened to name the font (Bergsland, 2012).



Figure 5. Font Family

In order to make ease in specifying the specialties of writing, specialists categorized fonts into defined groups. Still it is difficult to say that there is a complete uniformity. Font types can be reviewed in four main groups: Serif - Sans-serif - Hand Writing - Decorative.

#### 4.3. Serif

The top and bottom corners of the letters have serif marks like extremities that give these scripts the name of serif or footed. These lines keep the figure of each letter the same and make the transition from one letter to another easier. Writings in this group have subgroups such as roman, classic roman, new roman, square serif, round serif etc.

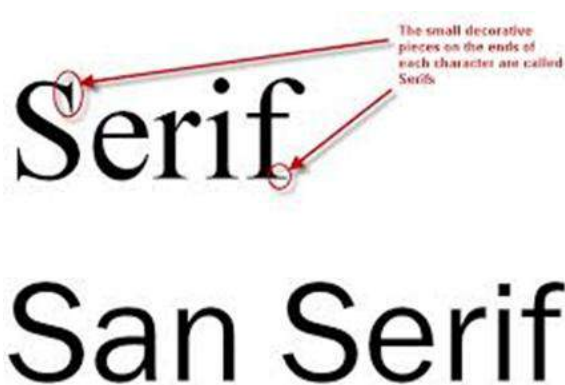


Figure 6. Serif and San Serif

#### 4.4.Sans-Serif

These typefaces do not have serifs; the letter ends have a straight look. The thickness of each letter is the same; that is there are no thin or thick lines. They can be used in every script. This type of writing is divided to subgroups of Gothic and single line sans serif writing. The specification of Gothic writing has a thickness difference in lines; especially the curved parts of the letter are thinner. Single line sans-serif fonts have no thick-thin lines. These types of scripts are preferred for titles and able to be easily read from afar. Helvetica and Arial are examples of these fonts.

#### 4.5. Hand Writing

The fonts that fall into this category have four sub groups as well: Script, Cursive, Text and Calligraphic writing. All these groups have the appearance of hand writings. Since all letters are capitalized, they are difficult to read. Usually it should be preferred to have the first letter is capitalized and the rest as regular letters. They are used in special writings such as invitation cards that require a small amount of writing.

#### 4.6.Script

It looks as if it is leaning to the right. There are extensions between the letters. So the letters can be connected with each other. This is especially preferred in wedding and meeting invitations. It has a very elegant appearance. It is used to make scripts look fancier. Some examples:



Figure 7. Brush Script

#### 4.7. Cursive

It has the appearance of hand writing, but there are no connections between letters. This font looks straight up. A good example of this type of fonts is **Park Avenue**:

#### 4.8. Text

This type of writing can usually be called bold letters as well. This is the first font type found by Gutenberg. It represents traditionalism and is generally used in certificates and diplomas. Font samples: American Text and Black letter.



Figure 8. American Text and Black letter

#### 4.9. Calligraphic

All letters are designed very elegantly. We can call this the vertical state of Script. The contrast is emphasizing in its lines. They are used in the first letters of posters, invitations. It is a very popular font. It is widely used in advertising and resembles elegance confidence.



Figure 9. Calligraphic font

#### 4.10. Decorative Font

The scripts that fall into this category are designed to be used in graphical or decorative purposes. It is only limited by the imagination of the humankind. Letters can even be in the shape of flowers or human forms. This cannot be used in scripts. It is rather preferred in artistic works (Fredes, 2009:25-27 and Tiryakioğlu, 2012:41-46).

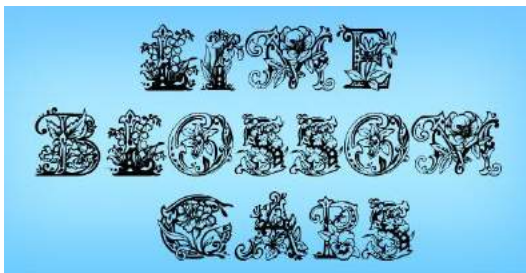


Figure 10. Decorative font

#### 4.11. Specifications of Writing

The letter is the foundation of writing, alphabet and typography. Arrangement and structure of each letter is different and the choice in design is very important. The fundamental elements of a letter are the type of line.

The first and most important responsibility of the designer is to choose the appropriate letter and typeface.

Some fonts have equal spacing between letters and some do not have equal spacing depending on the letter's specifications.

The designer has to choose the most suitable one among thousands of fonts to ensure that the publication is read in a manner suitable with its specifications and to ensure visual continuity.

#### 4.11. Spacing

The spacing between typographic elements makes the script easier or harder to read. Excessive spacing makes the message repulsive, too little spacing jam the words and lines and disrupt the appearance of the writing and makes reading problematic as well. These spacing can be listed as:

- Space between letters
- Line Space
- Space between words

#### 4.12. Color and specifications

Color gives meaning to content. It is not difficult to use color, but it is important to use the right color. Proper and balanced usage of color is an indispensable part of a good design. Designers should try to compare the specifications of colors with the content of the scripts. The desired effects can easily be obtained by colors that are suitable with the content or the parts to attract the attention (Kidd, 2011).

## 5. CONCLUSION

The purpose in choosing and using the most suitable among these many typefaces is to create an effective communication because every typeface carries a different meaning and message in it.

How we present emotions, thoughts and knowledge is as much important as what we say. In this regard, font choice is a visual expression method. Typography has a unique language and concepts. Font management is not only a tool in communication but also a guide for a good design. Another important function of typography is that it makes reading easier, showing the importance of font choosing once again. In short, we can say that typography is the fundamental component of design, and even an element on its own. Creating new characters, ensuring legibility suitable with the purpose or just designing aesthetic fonts are the duties of a typographer. Choosing and using a typeface not only assists legibility, but also support communication. Therefore, the chosen font should be

suitable with the message. If the message is shouting, the font should help that. A tough and protesting message should have a tough and protesting font. Elegant and stylish fonts will not be suitable for such a purpose. Likewise, a script with emotional messages should have fragile and aesthetic fonts. Shortly, typography exists to honor and to value the content.

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