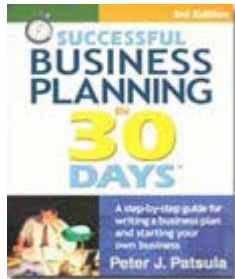


# The **ENTREPRENEUR'S** Guidebook Series™

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# PERSONAL PLANNING

## Guidebook #60:

### *Mastering Ad Design & Layout*

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*“Which FONT would you prefer dear . . . Algerian Bold, Ivy League Outline, Garamand Classic . . . or perhaps just plain old Helvetica?”*

Smallbusinessstow.com

## **MASTERING AD DESIGN & LAYOUT TECHNIQUES**

**THERE** is no magical formula for combining illustrations, photos, colors, typefaces, and other graphic elements to create ads with incredible pulling power. In practice, design has a minor effect on sales compared with: the needs of consumers; the nature of the product, its benefits, features, function, and appearance; the price of the product; the persuasiveness of the ad's message; the seller's reputation; and the availability of the product. In other words, words not pictures, are the great communicators.

However, a well thought-out ad design and layout can make your ideas zoom out of the page, have a major effect on how easily and effectively your message is communicated, and subtly encourage your reader to take action and buy.

In other words, although ad content more often influences the outcome of a consumer's decision, it is more often ad design which invites them to consider it in the first place.



# INTRODUCTION TO DESIGN & LAYOUT

---

EFFECTIVE AD design & layout starts with a clear understanding of a project's goals and written content. This means that before you determine how your ad is going to look, you must be pretty confident about what you are going to say.

Headlines, body copy, and assorted visuals must already be figured out before you begin to consider the final appearance of your printed page, its organization, and the combined effect of its print, photos, and design. Once these steps have been completed, you are then ready to roll up your sleeves, arm your creative soul, and

get ready to apply the following 86 design and layout strategies:



*Every child is an artist. the problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.*

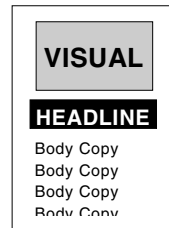
**PABLO  
PICASSO**

# BASIC DESIGN STRATEGIES

BASIC DESIGN and layout strategies center on the concepts of:

- Simplicity
- Unity
- Balance
- Contrast
- Proportion
- Consistency
- Proximity

These are the *primary* tools of the ad designer.



*Don't make your ad too complicated or the reader will get confused and go on to someone else's ad. Simplicity sells.*



1

**Keep your layouts simple.** The best layout is a simple layout e.g., large picture at the top, headline underneath, body copy in two or three columns under the headline, logo and address in the bottom right-hand corner (see figure). People are use to it. And although it's not especially creative, it's sensible, easier to conceive and cheaper to produce.

It is true that additional elements can enhance an ad's readability, but too many make it cluttered and unappealing to the eye. Ads with too many small pictures, photos, graphs, tables, charts, sub-heads, breakers, secondary photos, and

sidebars, as well as too much unplanned white space or conflicting typestyles, have a complex look that discourages people from reading further.

Generally, the mind can focus on about three or four different things at the same time before every additional piece of information or object creates clutter rather than clarity. In fact, it takes a highly skilled graphic designer to produce a multi-element ad that doesn't look jumbled and ponderous.

**NOTE** Every ad or photograph should be distilled to its simplest form. Whenever you begin work on a photograph or ad layout, which contains a number of components, you may find it difficult to resist the temptation of putting everything

*Themes maintain unity and can help solve numerous other design problems.*

into the design. However, discipline yourself to, continuously remove items until the design is distilled to its simplest form.

## 2

**Create unity.** Unity can be created by having one central focus or focal point where the eye has a tendency to concentrate on. This is usually a visual, but can also be a headline. You can also create unity by making sure graphics support body copy, headlines support body copy, subheads support body copy, and captions support graphics. Keep in mind that all elements in an ad are part of the visual language, all contribute to the whole – all have equal value.

**NOTE** Themes maintain unity and can help



solve numerous other design problems. A good theme also proliferates ideas, creates visual entertainment and simplifies. Themes should be pursued in any series of photographs or visuals. All photographs in a catalog, for example, should have a common purpose, background or layout.

### 3

**Create asymmetrical balance.** Formal or symmetrical balance occurs when elements on the left side of your ad are in the same position and of the same size or density as elements on the right side. However, though easy to design, this kind of balance is visually uninteresting. The key to designing a good ad is to place illustrations, copy



*Looking at an ad that is visually unbalanced is like driving a car with a missing wheel.*

blocks, headlines and other elements so they appear balanced without formality (e.g., try using an odd rather than even number of illustrations to help achieve informal balance).

In other words, a well-designed ad avoids perfect symmetrically balanced colors, textures, densities, central points of focus and blocks of text from left to right. Instead, visual balance is obtained by balancing various elements of an ad on one side of its centerline with corresponding elements of varying sizes, densities and colors at

greater or lesser distances on the other side of its centerline. It's kind of like playing on a seesaw. In fact, if you drew an imaginary line down the center of a well

designed ad, and if each pixel of ink had weight to it, the entire ad would seem to balance perfectly somewhere in the middle of the centerline as if on a fulcrum. This type of balance called asymmetrical balance is used to create a sense of stability so that when you look at it your eyes don't want to fall off the page. It is the technique ad designers use the most.

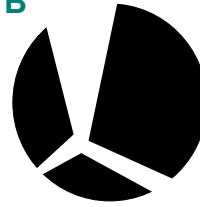
However, when the message or content of your ad can be assisted by directing a reader's attention away from the middle of the page, towards information you want to emphasize, you may decide to consider disrupting both symmetrical and asymmetrical balance.

## Symmetrical & Asymmetrical Balance

A



B



This disruption is best down with top to bottom elements rather than left to right elements and so that it follows the natural gaze-motion path of the eye (see figure on [page 18](#)). Although your ad will have a lopsided feeling that pushes your head down and to the right side, as long as it is directed towards something you really want the reader to see, like a special deal and an order form, it can still work.

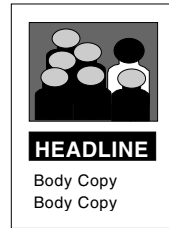
**NOTE** In the diagram above, shape A is symmetrically balanced. On the other hand, shape B asymmetrically balanced. Which one draws more attention and lets the imagination go wild? Which

type of shape would you use to sell a Volvo? Which type of shape would you use to sell a Ferrari?

#### 4

**Create contrast.** Using contrasting sizes, shapes, lines, typestyles and figures can help create tension in your ad as well as draw attention to key items in your ad you want to emphasize. For example, a bunch of short people standing around one tall man brings attention to the tall man (see figure above).

**NOTE** Contrasting sizes can also be used to help create depth.



*Contrasting colors and shapes can be used to attract attention.*

#### 5

### **Create emphasis through proportion.**

The size of all graphic elements should be determined by their relative importance and environment. Important ideas or fig-

ures should be emphasized by making them larger, bolder, brighter, or essentially different from the main components of the rest of the ad. As well, making things smaller, or quite different than what readers normally expect, also creates emphasis and indicates importance.

**NOTE** Setting the headline in big, bold type helps draw attention to it. If you want people to respond to your ad by phoning, set the phone number in large type at the end of the body copy.



## 6

### Create page to page consistency.

Page to page consistency makes it easier for the reader to understand the content of your ad by giving them consistent visual cues that show how your material is organized, what is important, and what is not important.

To create page-to-page consistency, use identical typefaces, type-size, and line spacing for body copy, headlines, subheads and captions. As well, repeat similar graphic elements on each page, such as vertical lines, columns, and borders of the same width.

Also, use uniform paragraph indents, margins and spaces between columns and around photographs paying particular attention to how they create white space.

*White space on a page often acts as a visual frame.*

White space on a page often acts as a visual frame for the entire ad or promotional material. In fact, if the amount and position of white space on each page changes dramatically from one page to the next, the reader gets confused and frustrated having to constantly reprocess how and where information is being presented.

**NOTE** When working on a multipage publication, such as newsletter or brochure, work on two page spreads instead of individual pages to create consistency and an integrated style.



## 7

### Use proximity to engender your product with favorable associations.

Reality is created by making associations. Associations can be created through prox-

imity. In other words, when two or more visual elements are put close together, invariably they are grouped and seen as being related and/or in a pattern – this is why fake dinosaurs can look like they are eating people, telephone poles can appear to be growing out peoples' heads, and babies can be taller than adults.

As an ad designer, this means that through the constant bombardment of two ideas in close association with each other, an inescapable reality can be created. Proximity can thus be used to burn into people's brains over time an unforgettable image, such as that of the mythical Marlboro Man – a combination of cigarette, horse, cowboy and rustic image of the Old West.

*The association made between a product, and the results and benefits of its use, plays a very large role in advertising.*

In a lipstick ad, proximity can be used to create an association between a particular brand of lipstick, a beautiful sophisticated women, and a handsome man who broodingly stands in the background – invariably with lustful eyes. Many readers will subliminally put the two together and come to the conclusion that if you wear this lipstick you will feel beautiful and desired.

**NOTE** The association made between a product, and the results and benefits of its use, plays a very large role in advertising. Ad designers frequently put photographs of products close to photographs of the product's benefits.



## ADVANCED DESIGN STRATEGIES

ADVANCED DESIGN and layout strategies center around:

- anchoring the corners and bottoms of ads
- making an easy path for the eye to follow
- using white space effectively
- using frame within a frame techniques to draw attention to key details
- using strong lines to create unity between graphics and body copy
- using light to dark relationships to create interest

*Visually arresting elements can be placed in the top corners of your ad so the ad doesn't look like it wants to fly away.*

- adding variety to avoid creating boredom,
- carefully selecting backgrounds to accentuate figures.

These are the *secondary* tools of the ad designer.



8

**Anchor the corners and bottoms of your ad.** Don't have the corners or bottoms of your page fizzle out into nothingness. The bottoms of your ad should be heavier visually than the tops of your ads.

This brings the focus down to the bottom of your ads where usually the ordering information is.

**NOTE** Visually arresting elements can be

placed in the top corners of your ad so the ad doesn't look like it wants to fly away.



**Make an easy path for the eye to follow.** The design or map of an ad should follow the readers' natural tendency to read an advertisement or publication from upper left to lower right (see figure on **page 18**). It should also pull the reader through the ad and along the way highlight and emphasize the major points. Don't make the eye go back and forth too much.

More specifically, an ad design and layout should pull the reader's eye from headline and visual through the body copy in logical sequence to the signature and logo. Subheads and bullets can help accomplish

*Changes in direction breed visual confusion.*

this. Other techniques that can help accomplish this are having lines point towards your product, and using photos that have eyes looking at the product.

**NOTE** *Changes in direction breed visual confusion.* In a series of photographs, objects or sidebars, maintain the same form perspective. In photos, it is also important to maintain the same lighting. It should also be noted that, fine print will more likely be read if it follows the focal path of the ad.



**Make effective use of white space in your ad.** Don't crowd your ad design. Leave white space, or rather breathing room for the reader. This increases readability. In fact, research shows that people

will look at an ad longer if it has more white space. As a rule of thumb, leave enough white space to equal about one tenth of the size of the ad – minimum.

**NOTE** Some art directors believe that ads must always have a large amount of white space or else they will look cluttered and people won't read them. But, if your typography is clean and readable, you can set a solid page of text and people will read every word of it.



*Frames within frames can be used to attract attention to key details.*

## 11

**Use “frame within a frame” techniques to draw attention to key de-**

**tails.** The “frame within a frame” technique is based on the continuous use of similar shapes to frame a figure and invoke the illusion of depth (see figure below). This technique can enhance the importance, and consequently the perception of the contents or figure within the final frame.

## 12

**Use strong lines to hold together graphics and body copy.** There is a natural tendency for eyes to follow the directions of lines. Lines that go nowhere are confusing. Lines that lead somewhere make an ad make more sense. Lines that recede into infinity, like railroad tracks, draw the viewer to the vanishing point. Thus, when designing your ad, try and reduce all graphics, shapes, dark areas and copy to a series of lines.



Then organize these lines until they present the strongest image and support your content (the strength of lines alone can often create a visually appealing ad).

When visualizing your ad as a collection of lines, look for relationships between:

- circular lines
- contrasting lines
- falling and intersecting diagonals
- heavy horizontal lines
- irregular lines
- line groupings
- oblique lines
- rising diagonal lines
- 3-D lines (creating a three-dimensional axis)

*Use light and dark relationships to create layout interest.*

- varying thickness lines
- vertical lines

## 13

**Use light and dark relationships to create layout interest.** A shape is normally formed by an area having a boundary that is created by an edge or line e.g., without a line or edge to define it, it is impossible to see a circle, square, or rectangle on a blank piece of paper. However,

shapes can exist without edges or boundary lines, instead consisting of light and dark areas or spots that are automatically connected by the eye. These connections become more apparent when ads are seen from a great distance or when vision is blurred close-up. The resulting shapes

have a direct effect on how interesting or uninteresting an ad is.

To get a better idea of the impact of this design & layout technique, take a photograph or ad and turn it into a diagram that shows all the key black, gray and white elements. The resulting light and dark relationships will give you a good idea of what you are really looking at, and what can be added or removed to draw more attention to the eye.

When visualizing your ad as a collection of shapes and areas, look for relationships between:

- circular shapes
- contrasting numbers
- contrasting shapes & areas

*When visualizing your ad as a collection of shapes and areas, look for relationships between circular shapes and rectangular shapes.*

- details within space
- disturbing spots –spots that seem out of place
- dominating spots
  - double spots – spots that reminds us of our own eyes
  - high horizons
  - horizontal shapes
  - intersecting lines and shapes
  - irregular shapes
  - low horizons
  - one against many patterns
- rectangular shapes
- related spots and lines
- spatial distribution

- spots, lines & shapes
- square shapes
- triangular shapes
- vertical shapes

## 14

**Use variety to spice up your advertising.** One of your biggest challenges as an ad designer is to reconcile the continuing conflict between consistency and variety. Your goal is to create advertising and promotional literature that is consistent within itself without being boring. Visual boredom occurs when predictability and mirror-like symmetry dominate a document.

*Visual boredom occurs when predictability and mirror-like symmetry dominate a document.*

## 15

**Carefully select backgrounds to accentuate figures.** The function of an ad's background is to provide a way to define the subject by giving it a context in which to exist i.e., bring out a central figure. However, being that the central figure usually occupies a smaller amount of space in the frame than the background, this can be challenging. To accomplish this, the figure must be seen as having form, contour, or shape while the background should be seen as not having any of these characteristics.

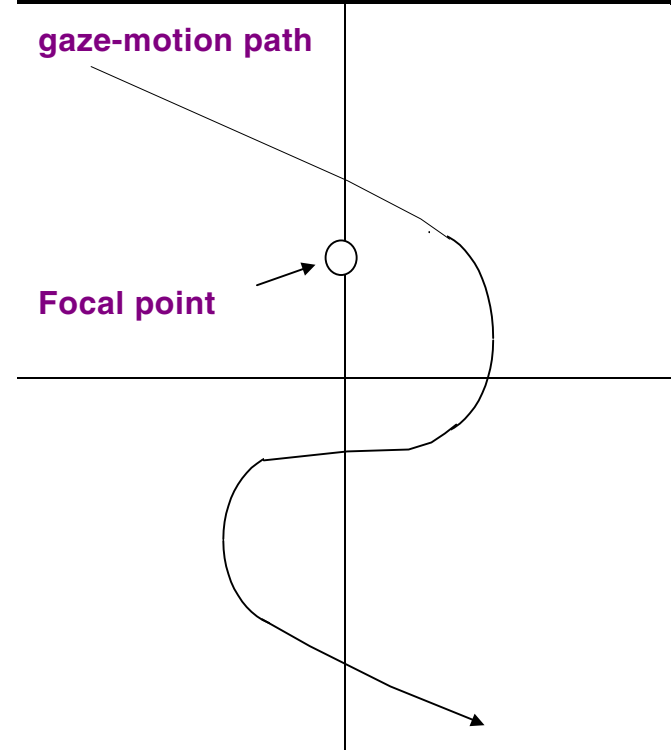
## 16

**Use the Golden Rectangle.** Behavioral scientists have determined that

of all the rectangular shapes, the vertical rectangle of approximately three units wide by five units deep is the one people are exposed to the most and, thus, the one they find the most comfortable. Advertisers refer to this shape as the “golden rectangle of layout” and believe that an advertising message receives higher readership if presented in this size (see figure).

The figure on the left shows a drawing of the “Golden Rectangle” a shape that measure three units wide by five units deep. The dot on the vertical centerline, one-third down the top of the ad, is called the focal point. This is where the eye want to focus on and first enters an ad. The wavy line extending from the upper left-hand corner to the lower right-hand corner, in a reverse “s” pattern, is the path that the

## The Gaze Pattern in the “Golden Rectangle”



eye normally follows after entering an ad. This is called the gaze-motion path.

As an ad designer, your objective is to reinforce the ease with which the eye can follow this path.

**NOTE** If you place artwork or other elements in your ad near the bottom curve in the gaze-motion pattern, you will invite the reader to leave the ad at this point and turn the page.



*If you place artwork or other elements in your ad near the bottom curve in the gaze-motion pattern, you will invite the reader to leave the ad at this point and turn the page.*

## GROUPING DESIGN STRATEGIES

SYMMETRICAL ELEMENTS and areas that are perceived as more symmetrical than other elements in an ad will be grouped as figures or focuses within an ad. Grouping design and layout strategies center around the idea that:

- the mind processes information more efficiently within related groupings

**NOTE** The need to create patterns in what we see is so strong, that without them, the brain starts to create imaginary ones. To a degree, this is why people hallucinate in the desert. Everything begins to look the same; there is nothing to

see that is defined, and nothing to organize. Gradually, the mind begins to create its own figures to play with.



### 17

**Group by using similar shapes, sizes, textures and colors.** *Similar shapes* can be grouped to form a pattern that creates motion as the reader moves from one similar

shape to the next. *Similar sizes* can be grouped to aid in the speed at which information is processed.

Cars, shoes, pool cues, buildings, TVs and even people can be organized according to size. It is this ability to group and see a pattern of sizes that allows people to shop more quickly. Imagine for example how long it would take to shop at a store if you had to stop and check the

*The need to create patterns in what we see is so strong, that without them, the brain starts to create imaginary ones.*

size of each item before you could try it on. *Similar textures* should be used to indicate an overall feeling of smoothness or roughness. *Similar colors* can be used to create a sense of balance, unity and harmony. It is natural for the eye to seek harmony. In fact, every time you look at a color photograph and see a primary color your eye automatically searches for its complementary color. If it's not there, your brain notes an imbalance. This tendency is so powerful that sometimes even when a primary color is not seen, your eye automatically produces it.

## 18

**Break up long lists.** People group in two, threes, sevens, tens, sometimes twelve and rarely like to think in terms of

*Long lists when appropriate should be broken down to aid retention.*

### **SUPERTIP**

twenties or greater. In all likelihood, a list of 31 facts about your product will never get read from beginning to end unless you help the reader organize the facts into smaller more digestible quantities, or unless each fact is utterly fascinating and distinct from every other fact on the list and there's no other obvious way of ordering them. Even if the person did manage to read the entire list, it is likely they will forget most of the middle ones.

Therefore, if a list is longer than about fifteen items (or any number a little more than a dozen), break it up with subheadings, especially in space ads. A short list of your top sellers or newest products is better than a long list of everything under the sun. In fact, try and keep all lists to 10 items or less.

**NOTE** Imagine how tedious and difficult a 10,000 page encyclopedia would be to read, if it offered all its information with no sections, chapter headings, subheadings or even paragraphs – just one idea after the other, dripping into your skull like Chinese water torture.

## 19

**Group ideas into one, twos or threes.** This is the most important rule you will ever learn. This one rule is worth the price of five textbooks on the topic of design & layout. Graphic artists won't tell you this secret because they subconsciously fear for their jobs.

Any collections of ideas, graphics, words, etc. can be grouped into ones, twos

or three by searching for and finding relationships between them and making those relationships obvious. You can also purposefully create unity between unrelated objects by making them the same height, width, shape, color, tone, mood, typestyle, or even similar weight.

*The mind is geared to make connections, and remembers more completely if those connections are already made.*

### **POWERPOINT**

In general, group in ones to create unity, and because the human brain can only consciously focus on one thing at a time. Group in twos to compare ideas. Group in threes to draw conclusions. Group in two and threes to process greater amounts of information.

Keep in mind though that grouping in ones, twos and threes is a rule that occasionally can be broken if circumstances permit. At peak efficiency, the mind can



handle about seven new items before it has to refresh itself.

Although, this taxes a human brain's processing power, and people reading advertising don't like to be taxed, at times it can be used to your advantage. For example, an advertisement with six or seven apparently unrelated photographs might generate curiosity if ultimately they are grouped together by one idea e.g., your product. For a better understanding of the reasoning behind this design strategy, read the following three explanations:

*Group into twos because the world is full of opposites:*

### Examples:

- above, below

*Episodes of a consistent nature bring across an identity, more effectively than random impressions.*

### POWERPOINT

- before, after
- beginning, end
- cause, effect
  - child, adult
  - east, west
  - friends, strangers
  - good, bad
  - graphics, words
  - light, dark
  - man, woman
  - mine, yours
  - north, south
- open, close
- plus, minus

- positive, negative
- right, left
- this, that
- visuals, body copy
- water, land
- white, black
- yin, yang

*Group into threes and not twos, because a complete thought consists of at least two contrasting thoughts, combined together to form a new original thought or decision.* Every concept has two extremes, as well as, a middle ground that reflects the relationship between them. In a sense, thinking is a process of moving

*There is only one way in which a person acquires a new idea: buy the combination or association of two or more ideas he already has into a new juxtaposition in such a manner as to discover a relationship among them of which he was not previously aware.*

**FRANCIS CARTIER**

back and forth between one extreme and another and then drawing conclusions.

It can even be argued that if you subtract one focal point, the mind will instantly create a third in order to feel balanced and whole again (you will notice that even though grouping into twos is a safe design practice, the mind wants to invent a third factor; it has no problem coming up with a third relationship even if that relationship is imaginary).

**Examples:**

- above, below → straight ahead
- before, after → during
- beginning, end → middle

- cause, effect → solution
- child, adult → teenager
- friends, strangers → acquaintances
- good, bad → indifferent
- graphics, words → numbers
- light, dark → dusky
- man, woman → children
- mine, yours → ours
- open, close → develop
- right, left → center
- this, that → those
- visuals, bodycopy → headlines
- water, land → sky
- white, black → gray

*If you try and group into fours the mind will attempt to make two groups of two or combine two factors into one, to make three again.*

- 4 + 5 → 9

*If you try and group into fours the mind will attempt to make two groups of two or combine two factors into one, to make three*

*again.* If it can't, it will become frustrated and irritated. Having more than three points of foci can create clutter, lack of continuity, and result in lack of interest.

Notice the abrupt changes in flow of meaning between: Jimmy Henderson was *short, fat and oval* compared with; Jimmy Henderson was *stupid, fat, short, and oval*; and Jimmy Henderson was *short, oval, fat and stupid*. In the first example, all the terms seem related and the image they create is quickly imparted. The second example, creates an interesting seesaw af-

fect between, stupid-fat, and short-oval. However, in the third example the last term “stupid” seems to come out of nowhere making it seem emphasized or merely out of place.

**NOTE** If you group in fours, usually one item will not be remembered, will be disregarded, or will create a sense of uneasiness (see figure).



*Four lined headlines  
should be avoided  
Visually they create an  
uneasy feeling.*

## COLOR DESIGN STRATEGIES

COLOR DESIGN and layout strategies usually center on the idea that:

- black and white is boring
- color is exciting

However, although for the most part this is true, excellent ad designers know that too much color can kill a good design.

**NOTE** The *primary* colors are red blue and yellow; *secondary* colors are orange, green and violet; *intermediate* colors are produced by using unequal parts of two primary colors or one primary and one secondary color such as orange-yellow.

*Beautiful award winning brochures aren't necessarily the ones that pull the highest response.*

### **SUPERTIP**

**Full color gets more attention, creates more interest and gives a better impression than black and white.** At first look, it is generally color that creates

our first impression whether pleasant, shocking or curious. Color also has the psychological advantage of fixing visual impressions in memory and stimulating interest, as well as adding prestige to a package or advertisement. All three of these general reactions to color – attention, interest, and prestige – constitute part of its sales appeal.

**NOTE** Although research shows that you have only a few seconds to catch a reader's eye, before paying for color, make sure it *pulls* more than it *costs*.

 21

**Excessive color detracts from copy.** If your ad contains too many brilliant colors or pictures, people won't read your copy. They'll just look at your pictures and get distracted by colors that don't seem to have any purpose. Remember that the only purpose of using color is to get people to actually read your ad not just look at it.

**NOTE** Before choosing a color scheme to attract attention, keep in mind that unlike black and white, color processing is subjective – meaning that what looks good to you may not look good to someone else. Also, don't forget that many people, especially the elderly, have a lessened sensitiv-

*Color works because of its contrast with non-color areas; use it in one or two strong clustered areas rather than scattering it through out your ad.*

**SBA**

ity to color, and often miss out altogether the attraction of a brilliant color scheme. Furthermore, remember that a certain percentage of the population is colorblind.

 22

**Tasteful two-color promotions can look extra-special.** In the hands of a skilled graphic artist, a second color can add to a brochure or ad's effectiveness. In the hands of an amateur, it can look chintzy and cheap. Use a second color for selected parts of a publication e.g., borders, rules, subheads, masthead, or logo. However, avoid over-use. Remember: less is more.

**NOTE** Also consider the use of duotones and tint combinations to give the feel of a

multi-color promotion. Black and white photographs can also be tinted with a second color for emphasis.

## 23

**Experiment with different colored papers and inks.** When printing your ad, consider the effect of different inks on different paper. According to color psychologists, reds stand out while blues recedes. Thus, blue makes a better background and red makes a better attention-grabber. Black text on a yellow background is also very effective and is considered the most dramatic color combination available.

The list below shows the legibility of print from clear and striking to mellow and difficult to read:

*Less is more.*  
**ROBERT**  
**BROWNING**

- a. black on yellow
- b. black on white
- c. yellow on black
- d. white on black
- e. blue on white
- f. white on blue
- g. green on white
- h. white on Green
- i. red on white
- j. white on red

## 24

**Use colors to help create desired emotions and symbolic associations.**

In most people, reactions to color are pleasurable; it seems that a love of color is

an inborn human trait. However, different colors seem to draw out certain kinds of emotions or remind us of past experiences.

For a more detailed description of which colors draw out which emotions and images see chart on this page and the next.

**NOTE** The basic suggestion or warmth or coolness is widely used in ad design. An illustration of an ice bucket looks cooler rendered in white or greenish blues rather than oranges or red. Likewise, an electric heater would be better rendered in reds, oranges, or yellow rather than icy blue.

## 25

**Shade or tint a color for a desired effect.** Tints are colors that have been lightened by the addition of white. Shades are colors that have been darkened by the ad-

### Effects of Colors

COLOR	SUGGESTS
<i>Black</i>	Unknown; Evil; Strength; Heaviness
<i>Blues &amp; Greenish Blues</i>	Winter; Coolness (of ice, snow and water)
<i>Dark Blues</i>	Royalty; Haughtiness; Formality
<i>Dark Greens</i>	Cheapness; Coldness
<i>Deep Reds, Purples &amp; Gold</i>	Riches; Quality; Stateliness; Royalty
<i>Green</i>	Growth; Life; Envy; Spring; Youth; Coolness
<i>Hot Pinks, Reds &amp; Yellow</i>	Joy; Gaiety (and the festive character of parties, celebrations and parades)
<i>Light Browns (and other earthy tones)</i>	Fall; Simplicity; Wholesomeness; Aging



dition of black. Tints tend to purify colors and make them cooler. Shades make colors more mysterious and perhaps evil.

## 26

### Select the right color intensity.

Chroma can be defined as the purity of a color, that is, the extent to which it is free from neutral grays. It is the quality by which we distinguish strong colors from weak ones. To weaken a pure color it is necessary to mix it with its complementary color not white or black. By varying the intensity of colors ad designers can increase or decrease the conventional emotional impact of the color.

## Effects of Colors

COLOR	SUGGESTS
<i>Light Green</i>	Freshness; Crispness
<i>Maroon</i>	Luxury; Solidity; Quietness
<i>Orange</i>	Warmth; Action; Power; Fall
<i>Red</i>	Heat; Excitement; Passion; Love; War; Danger; Strength; Power Summer; and other ideas connected with action, energy, the sun and blood (red is a good color to use in a sale ad)
<i>Sky Blue</i>	Serenity; Peace; Calmness; Youthfulness; daintiness
<i>Soft Dusky Hues</i>	Mystery
<i>White, Light Blue &amp; Light Green</i>	Coolness; Purity; Fidelity; Goodness; Innocence; Youth; Cleanliness; Chastity
<i>Yellow (yellow is the most luminous color in the spectrum)</i>	Brightness; Airiness; Refreshment (yellow gets lost on white paper, so surround yellow areas with a border of a darker tone)

 27

**Harmonize colors.** To create color harmony, ad designers use colors of various tones of the same hue, in the same segment of the color wheel. They also use complementary colors and hues that are related but not identical.

**NOTE** To create color harmony, add a little bit of the primary color, blue red, or yellow to every other color.

 28

**Balance colors.** The basic principle of color balance is that the brighter and stronger a color is, the smaller its area should be. If you want to reduce the impact of a color that is too emphatic

for its level of importance, shade it, tint it, reduce its intensity, or use less of it.

 29

**Contrast colors.** There are at least six kinds of color contrast that that can be used to create more visual excitement in an ad:

- contrast of hue
- light-dark contrast
- cold-warm contrast
- complementary contrast
- simultaneous contrast
- contrast of saturation



*Adding color to a black and white advertisement not only increases readership, but can substantially increase the sales response. Retailers, however, frequently use too much color in their ads.*

**SBA**

## PHOTO DESIGN STRATEGIES

THE IMPORTANCE of photography can not be underestimated and overemphasized. A great visual cannot make a mediocre idea work. On the other hand, a less than perfect photograph can severely reduce a great concept.

**NOTE** The following photo design and layout strategies are applicable to both fields of ad design and photo design.

*Photo design and layout strategies, as do all graphic design and layout strategies, center around the following two ideas: make the mind group things to increase communicability; and bring items in and out of focus to suggest importance and emphasis importance.*

### **SUPERTIP**

## 30

**Understand how people really see photographs.** A photograph is a highly selective representation of reality that

freezes a scene in an exact moment in time; it is three-dimensional reality compressed on to two-dimensional space.

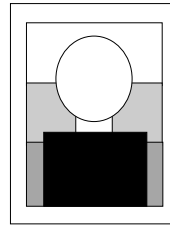
However, when you look at a photograph, in addition to this carefully organized but limited reality of shapes, colors and lines, you also see the sum of all your knowledge, experience, and memories. A good commercial photographer is therefore

careful to include only those elements that will trigger the desired memories and emotions, in addition to those that contribute to the desired image.

**NOTE** Each part of a photograph is actually seen separately. The minds' ability to group them all together, allows the photograph to be seen as one image. A good photographer relies more on the effective organization of all the elements of a photograph to create clear communication rather than mere inspiration.

### 31

**Cling to one idea.** Just like ads must concentrate on one idea, individual photographs must also cling to one idea. This is more effective than developing a number of different ideas, none of which are executed well. In fact, once you have chosen an idea stick with it through thick and thin. Develop it. Explore it. Don't second-guess



*Use the rule of thirds when taking photographs.*

yourself. Don't go off chasing rainbows or hunting for greener pastures on the other side of the fence. Understand that any idea can become a great idea if you experiment with it. Learn the fundamental skill of all good photography, which is to add something special to what is otherwise quite normal.

### 32

**Use the rule of thirds when taking a photograph.** The

human eye doesn't find a photo very pleasing when the subject is stuck smack in the middle of a

photo. The eyes wants to find things in thirds (see figure). To use this strategy draw an imaginary line across a scene, cutting it into three equal sections. Then try to place your main items – such as the ho-

rizon – on those thirds. For portraits, place eyes in top, neck in middle, and chest in bottom.

### 33

#### **Use shadows and light to create the illusion of depth.**

If you approach all photographic images by applying the same principles of light and shade as mastered by the great painters, your photographic image will begin to acquire the appearance of a third dimension. Remember, nothing exists until it is created by light.

*Nothing exists until it is created by light.*

the chemicals in the film, and light sensitive transistors in digital cameras. Therefore, to create the desired effect in a photo, you must become a master experimenter, a person who is bold and unafraid to seek out the finer peculiarities of light. With color film, pursue low contrast lighting to ensure maximum color saturation. If filming outside, favor hazy, overcast days and late afternoon light or locations in the shade.

**NOTE** To achieve depth, it is important to see details in the shadows of on an object. However, if you want to make the object appear detached from the background and thus more distinct, you must brighten or illuminate the background. To achieve this, you can use a white card as a reflector, to bounce light to the dark side of the object. This lightens the shadows and

### 34

#### **Experiment with various kinds of lighting.**

All graphics are reflected light. It is light that activates the retinas in the eye,

makes the object appear to emerge from the background. For professional commercial photographers, this is by far the most commonly used lighting technique to make products stand out.



35

**Avoid harsh shadows.** With outdoor lighting, avoid harsh shadows. They are mercilessly destructive. In fact, never shoot in direct sunlight without relieving the high contrasts creating by direct light and shadows the shadows. This is especially important for color fashion photography. Harsh shadows destroy detail.

**NOTE** Tolerate the inconvenience of carrying large white reflector cards, but refrain from using fill-in flash, for it never looks

*Ads with cluttered layouts and poorly reproduced visuals look amateurish and turn the reader off.*

**SUPERTIP**

natural.



36

### Choose the right kind of background

**color.** When shooting any picture, background colors are just as important as the colors in the main figure. They can easily add to or destroy the impact of the main figure. Gray is the best all around background for color photography. It is always harmonious. To provide contrast when photographing products, few backgrounds are more powerful than black. Black lets colors speak loudly. White is the purest background, but tends to come out bluish-gray if not processed properly during the making of a color separation.

**NOTE** In general, backgrounds should be absent of strong colors.

### 37

**Avoid gimmicky backgrounds.** Gimmicky ripples, crumpled folds and busy patterns do not contribute to good product photography. They are a distraction and visually jarring, changing the visual emphasis from the product to the background. Gimmicky backgrounds are the trademark of an amateur.

*Gimmicky ripples, crumpled folds and busy patterns do not contribute to good product photography.*

### 38

**Use visual stepping stones to draw attention to the inner details of a photograph.** Figures and backgrounds cannot be seen simultaneously, but they

can be seen sequentially. Thus, visual stepping stones can be used to create a kind of back and forth motion between a main figure and details in the background.

Visual stepping stones can be created through the use of strong contrast, lighter tonalities, more details, intellectual or emotional associations, or stronger shapes placed in the background rather than in the main figure. In nature photography, this effect is usually achieved by having a branch, usually out of focus, or a part of the shoreline, to help lead the eyes to the mountains in the background.

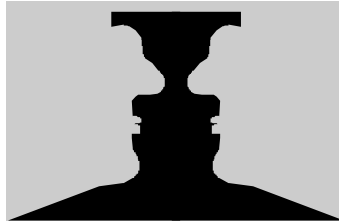
**NOTE** In the figure on the next page, notice how a back and forth motion is created between the background and figure.

## 📷 39

**Frame your photos with objects.** Using a tree, person, door, window or a building as a frame tells the reader more about the vantage point the photograph was taken. This gives them a stronger sense of location and action.

Frames can also be used to show a sense of confinement. For example, to show the discomfort of riding in economy class, compared with first class, the chairs on both sides of the passenger should be included to give the appearance that the economy class passenger is slowly being crushed.

## Is it a Candle Stick or Two People About to Kiss?



## 📷 40

**Shoot on location to create a greater sense of reality.** A location shot is more natural and tends to show your product in a more honest light. Studio shots can fail because they often appear contrived.

## 📷 41

**Carefully plan fashion shots.** Good photographs rarely just happen. Sometimes models have to hold agonizing poses. Sometimes photographers have to wait weeks for the right weather.

## 📷 42

**Use the principle of “closure” when**



**cropping photos.** When you see a portrait of someone from the waist up with the elbows cropped out, do you assume that they have no elbows and no bottom half of their body? No, you don't. Your mind completes the image of the body from memory and there is no reason to expect that the rest of the person does not exist.

In fact, imagine how complicated life would be if you had to see whole shapes in order to recognize them?

A good photographer realizes that you don't have to show everything to create an effective photo. As long as shapes and lines are familiar enough, the reader will complete the rest of the picture, thus paying more attention to the important parts that need to be emphasized.

*If people in your photos aren't looking directly at your camera, you should give them looking space.*

## 43

**Include people in photos of your products.** Objects in themselves mean nothing without people added to give them life. Good photo composition thus demands that whenever practical,

people should be added to help a photo tell some kind of story. The easiest way to do this is to take pictures of your product in action, not just being modeled. People can also be used to show scale e.g., show a miniature camera in the palm of someone's hand.

## 44

**Give people in your photos looking space.** If people in your photos aren't looking directly at your camera, you should

give them looking space. Otherwise, they will seem out of place. This means giving them space between their eyes and the edge of the photo in the direction they are looking.



45

**Choose the right kind of lens to help create the desired perspective.** Lens choice is often a compromise as there is no single camera lens that can duplicate both the angle of view and the perspective of the human eye.

In general, a short wide-angle lens will increase the angle of view and scale but also cause distortion by making shapes rounder, while a long lens will increase and

*Your words are  
your salesman,  
your graphics  
your display.*  
**POWERPOINT**

compress the size of the image making it flatter.

More specifically:

- a **16mm** fish eye lens can be used to duplicate the normal view
  - a **43mm** lens can give you normal perspective but cuts the viewing angle to a third
  - a **100mm** lens gives you good compression and the ability to move in close
  - a **200mm** lens can be used to fill up the lens viewing area with anybody's head at 100 feet



46

**Photograph products as if you are in**

**love with them.** Show your love for a product by making its image sensuous in appeal. For the car photographer, every snap of the shutter is an expression of his love of machines – the sweep of a spoiler, the flow of a sculptured body. For the food photographer, it may be glistening black caviar, sparkling iced champagne, or a plump strawberry dipped in sugar.

## 47

### **Look for special qualities in people when photographing them.**

When photographing people, it is important for you to first imagine how you really want the person to look like, rather than how he or she really is, and then try and coax that image out of them. The challenge lies in being able to extract what

maybe unknown even to them and to reveal what you want to be seen; to catch a glimpse of something in their eyes that helps define your product.

While taking pictures, constantly coax different moods, expressions and poses from your models. Make it easy for them to feel free and lose their inhibitions. Pay close attention to how they look when smiling or laughing. Some people reveal an inordinate amount of gum when they laugh. This is not flattering.

**NOTE** If you need to book a model, avoid booking models who do not work through an agency. Agencies set down disciplined rules for conduct, as well as attend to all the financial and legal matters. Their professionalism will more than make

*If you need to book a model, avoid booking models who do not work through an agency.*

up for their higher expense.

## 48

**Regard each photo as you would a sheet of paper or canvas.** Just

like in art, photo composition is concerned with the arrangement of picture elements so that they have a unified effect. Before taking a shot decide on:

- the best shape and proportion to suit your subject
- how main figures should interact with the frame edges
- how much detail you want in the frame
- your central point of interest
- how you want to link images together

- what your point of view will be  
A quick sketch on a piece of paper can help you sort out your ideas.

## 49

**Use selective focus.** Focus defines importance by isolating the subject from the background. Although the background as well as its relationship to the figure will be seen, the eye will quickly return to the focused area. The eye does not like to remain in an area that is out of focus.

**NOTE** In general, keep your product in sharp focus and its background a little fuzzy.

*Always make readability a key aspect of your ad design – increasing the space between paragraphs increases readability.*

**SUPERTIP**

 50**Test everything before you shoot.**

Leave nothing to chance. Test the lighting. Test the film. Test the equipment. Test the model.

 51**Test shoot using a Polaroid.**

Before shooting three rolls of film, test the lighting conditions and layout using a Polaroid. After studying the shot, decide what variations you will need to do.

*Before shooting three rolls of film, test the lighting conditions and layout using a Polaroid.*

## HEADLINES & BODY COPY DESIGN STRATEGIES

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HEADLINES and body copy design and layout strategies center on the idea that:

- readability comes first
- style or visual appeal second

In other words, if your headline font is so fancy and your layout so cluttered that you page is hard to read, then you've failed your primary goal. Remember that design and layout is all about communication and persuasion, not beautification or ornamentation.

*Headlines and body copy design and layout strategies center on the idea that readability comes first and style or visual appeal second.*

## 52

### Choose the right kind of typeface.

The choice of typeface is one of many elements that contributes to the image conveyed by the ad. A typeface, also referred to as a font, can create a feminine or masculine impression, as well as make copy more readable, or striking.

Typefaces come in either serif or sans serif styles. *Serif* typefaces contain crossbars on the bottoms of their letters to help guide the eye. They convey a less modern character. Depending on the overall appearance of an ad, less modern can be perceived as classy, conservative, timeless, traditional or downright old-fashioned. *Sans-serif* typefaces don't have any cross-

bars. They convey a more modern and progressive image and look best when surrounded by lots of white space.

*Headlines* – For headlines and titles, your choice of typefaces is virtually unlimited. However, as a rule, for headlines use a black, bold or extra-bold sans serif typeface such as Arial, Helvetica, Helvetica Black or Swiss Universal. Sans-serif headlines seem to stand out better. Use serif headlines if you want an old-fashioned effect.

*Body Copy* – For body text, use a serif typeface like Dutch, Palatino, Times and so on. Serif typefaces are easier to read. Avoid using sans-serif body copy.

*Prices and Phone Numbers* – For prices and phone numbers, use a sans serif font. However, avoid using an extra bold sans

serif font for small lettering.

*Exotic Typefaces* – If a warped, stretched, shadowed, or italicized typeface isn't essential to the message you're trying to convey, resist the urge. In general, limit your use of exotic typefaces. And never use an exotic typeface as body text.

*For body text use a serif typeface like Dutch, Palatino or Times.*

*Types of Fonts* – Below is a collection of popular serif & sans serif fonts:

#### Sans Serif Fonts:

Pleasure City (Arial)

Pleasure City (Century Gothic)

**Pleasure City (Britannic Bold)**

#### Serif Fonts:

Pleasure City (Times New Roman)

Pleasure City (Courier)

Pleasure City (Bookman Old)  
**Pleasure City (Playbill)**

## 53

### **Embellish your typeface with the right kind of typestyle.**

Typefaces or fonts usually come in different styles. Styles are embellishments of the basic font. Below are 8 of the more common types of typestyles:

*Italics or Slanted Letters* – Can project a *feeling of action*, speed or progressiveness. The visual effect of forward-leaning letters, especially when combined with a sans-serif typeface, makes them seem to be literally moving across the printed page. The more radical the slant, the faster they move – through

*UPPER CASE LETTERS (capital letters) are conservative, larger-than-life and give a feeling of formality.*

extremely italicized letters are harder to read and may appear to be falling over.

*Back-slanted Letter Styles* – It's a rare situation where back-slanted letters (also called reverse italics) are appropriate. For one thing, the eye isn't accustomed to reading them; for another, they probably symbolize backwardness as surely as regular italics convey a forward-looking attitude.

*Upper & Lowercase Letters* – UPPER CASE LETTERS (capital letters) are conservative, larger-than-life and give a feeling of formality. Lower-case letters are friendly and down-to-earth. Capitals are also imposing and corporate-looking while lower-case letters are approachable and seem to imply a smaller business. Never use ALL



CAPITALS in body text. Its' okay for short headlines but quickly becomes tiring to read. And never, ever use **ALL CAPS** in a cursive script font.

**NOTE** Using lower-case letters exclusively suggests a more informal, causal image.

*Outlined Letters* – **Outlined** or open letters project a certain pizzazz which solid typefaces lack. They can also be used to make an ad appear less formal than filled in letters and give you an excuse to fill them in with a second color.

*Drop Shadowed Letters* – With the aid of a drop-shadow, you can give any typeface a three-dimensional look. Outlined letters can practically jump off the page.

*Thicker letters, also called heavy-face or boldface letters, convey a hands-on business operation such as manufacturing or shop trades.*

**NOTE** Reversing the typeface – placing light-toned letters against a darker background – can sometimes be used to achieve much the same effect.

*Script* – Script is a typeset version of cursive handwriting. Script shows more feminine characteristics, whereas printed letters are masculine. At the same time, script can provide a wide range of other impressions, though readability will always suffer as a result. Depending on how fine or embellished it appears, script can convey lots of personality – like your own signature would – or seem ultra-classy and exclusive.

*Bold Letters* – **Thicker letters**, also called heavy-face or boldface letters, convey a

hands-on business operation such as manufacturing or shop trades. Thick letters are also seen as more masculine.

*Thin or Lighter Letters* – THIN LETTERS are seen as more feminine. They can also be used to show a kind of professional class or technical expertise. Especially for a service trade, thin letters imply professionalism and even indicate an advanced degree.

*Most ads should use no more than three or four different sizes of typefaces.*

ing and be large enough to allow the reader to process new information in a relaxed manner (this is especially important if targeting advertising to mature readers).

Small sized type should be reserved for details and facts. Small type always increases the level of concentration needed by the reader.

In general, type sizes for publications usually range from 8 to 12 points, while most ads are set in 12 to 14 point body copy. Anything below 8 points is difficult to read.

8 point

10 point

12 point

14 point

**NOTE** For longer promotional materials

## 54

**Use the typesize appropriate to the content of the copy.** Most ads should use no more than three or four different sizes of typefaces. Large type should be used for headlines. Medium sized type should be used for regular narrative read-

such as brochures and newsletters make, sure your choice of type sizes is consistent. Consistency of typeface, style, and size trains the reader's brain to process different sections differently thus increasing their comprehension and retention.

## 55

**Avoid too many typefaces.** If three fonts on a page look good, then thirty-three will be better? Right? Wrong! Try to stick to a maximum of three or four different typefaces per page or ad. As well, limit the number of typesizes on the page to three or four.

## 56

**Use clear readable typefaces for your**

**body copy.** By far the most important criteria for selecting type, especially body copy, is its readability. Type should be as clear, easy on the eye, friendly, and as inviting as possible. Style is important, but readability always comes first. When legibility, comprehension and retention go up, so do your sales. For this reason use serif type almost exclusively – the type with the little feet or cross bars – **like the type you are reading right now**. Studies have shown over and over again that serif type is easier to read.

*All emphasis is  
no emphasis.*  
**SUPERTIP**

For greater readability body copy should also be printed black on a clear white background – not black on light gray or color. Copy printed in reverse (white lettering on a solid colored background) or on a tint is difficult to read and should also be

avoided. If you must use these techniques, do so only for emphasis and for very short sentences or phrases.

**NOTE** If you are using sidebars, to increase readability, don't crowd text in a box that's too small.



57

### Set body copy underneath headlines and visual.

This strategy seems like common sense, but you would be surprised how many ad designs end up with visuals on one side, body copy on another, and headlines floating around somewhere. Readers expect to see body copy directly underneath a headline, and headlines directly underneath visuals. They are use to this type of structure and know how to

*In advertising copy longer than two or three pages, never end a sentence or a paragraph on the bottom of the page.*

process the information contained within it quite quickly. Right away they connect the picture with the content below it and use it to help extract greater meaning. If you change this basic format the outcome must be exceptional not just novel in order to be justified.

**NOTE** It is quite common to move visuals around to improve the overall effectiveness of an ad layout. However, if you do so, make sure each visual has a caption underneath or can be easily connected with the content it is helping describe. People read captions.



58

**Never end a sentence at the bottom of a page.** In advertising copy longer than

two or three pages, never end a sentence or a paragraph on the bottom of the page. Always leave a window to encourage your reader to turn to the next page.

**NOTE** End your pages half-way through a sentence so people have to keep on reading. In fact, make your sentence break so compelling that your reader won't be able to sleep unless they finish the entire paragraph, column or DM sales letter.

## 59

**Select the right column width for body copy.** Don't use overly wide or narrow columns. Columns that are too wide are difficult to read because it is hard for the eye to go by and continue where it left off. Columns that are too narrow contribute

to too much back and forth eye movement.

## 60

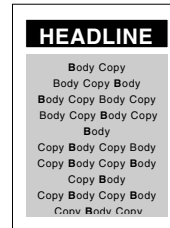
**Break long body copy into shorter sections.** An ad or brochure page filled with a solid column of tiny type says, "Hey you. Don't read me. I'm going to be as tough as hell to read. So why don't you just get lost and go read someone else's ad!" To avoid this, use numbers, bullets, breakers, letters, Roman numerals, drop caps, stick-up caps, initial caps, indents and subheads to break down long winded text into shorter sections. Also, use graphics to simplify and break up large blocks of copy.

*An ad or brochure page filled with a solid column of tiny type says, "Hey you. Don't read me."*

 61

**Use graphic accents to emphasize key phrases.** Graphic accents can be used to add visual excitement to an ad (especially DM letters). However, always use restraint when using them. Otherwise you will not only end up creating visual confusion, but you will also call too much attention to the fact that your ad is an ad.

Graphic accents include: UNDERLINED CAPITAL LETTERS, indented paragraphs, **boldface type**, *italic type*, **colored type**, fake handwriting, arrows→, notes in the margins, **yellow highlighting**, **reverse type** (white type on black background), callouts, **boxed copy** and postscripts



*Avoid irregularly shaped blocks of body copy.*

(P.S.). Underlining in particular should be used cautiously.

**NOTE** Remember all emphasis is no emphasis. Simple powerful designs are better than busy fussy ones.

 62

**Avoid excessive hyphenation.** Excessive hyphenation makes your ad look technical. The hyphen lines also tend to ruin the flow of the ad making your eyes want to leave the page.

 63

**Avoid irregularly shaped blocks of body copy.** Don't format your copy to look like an elephant, vase of flowers, tree

(see figure), or a building. It may be cute, but it doesn't sell. Save this trick for tables, charts, graphs or greeting cards.

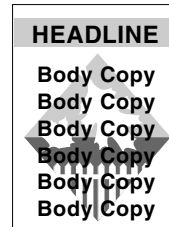
## 64

### **Avoid having isolated words or syllables at the tops or bottoms of pages.**

A window is one word or syllable isolated at the bottom of a column or page. It looks lonely and out of place all by itself. Orphans are words isolated at the top of a column or page (see the word "cards" above). Orphans are much more visually jarring than windows.

## 65

### **Avoid setting blocks of copy or**



*Avoid putting body copy over graphics. It's very confusing.*

**headlines in italics.** Italicizing an entire paragraph makes no sense graphically – it looks out of place – as well, makes its contents tedious to read. Likewise, being that headlines are suppose to jump out of a

page, italicizing them and making them appear to be falling over makes no sense. If you must, italicize a few words in a headline for emphasis only.

**NOTE** Avoid using type printed at an angle across an ad, except for short banners.

## 66

**Avoid unequal spacing between body copy and visual elements.** Pay particular attention to spacing between headlines, visuals, paragraphs, and the top and side

borders of anything. If you must leave some open space, it is better to do so on the bottom of the page.

## 67

**Avoid putting body copy over visuals or photographs.** Never, never, never print a photo over the top of a paragraph, and for that matter, any part of the paragraph. This makes the copy (your sales message) difficult and sometimes impossible to read (see figure on previous page). Can you imagine trying to read black print over a dark red and brown photo of a checkered table cloth? The sad truth is it's been done before with abysmal results.

*Never, never, never print a photo over the top of a paragraph, and for that matter, any part of the paragraph*





## SKETCHING DESIGN STRATEGIES

---

THE DESIGN process starts in the mind and stays there, unless you learn to sketch. The skill of sketching is the necessary link to transfer images in the mind to a more permanent form so they can be more easily shared with others and scrutinized by yourself. It is a skill that allows you to shape your ideas before committing to more time consuming and costly procedures. In fact, many designers feel that only when you can sketch out an idea are you ready to lay it out.

*Artists have no respect for anyone who copies their style. But, if they themselves take someone else's style, improve upon it, and mold it into their own, they feel no shame in being hailed as a genius.*

**POWERPOINT**

The following strategies are to help you improve and refine your skills of sketching out a layout.



### 68

**Learn to sketch what you see in your mind.** To be able to sketch any idea that comes to mind, you must first learn the basic structure of objects, landscapes, animals and humanoid figures (anatomy). Then you must also develop a perception that recognizes shapes and masses, not just lines, and must learn the art of simplifying, that is, of distinguishing between what is important and what is incidental and irrelevant.

**NOTE** Knowledge is the foundation of



69

**Master the five do's and don'ts of sketching.** To help refine your skills follow these five guidelines:

drawing. Designers and artists draw what they know, not (as commonly suggested) what they see.

To increase your knowledge of artistic techniques:

- take a thorough and extensive drawing course
- learn to work in various media including pencils, oil, acrylics, pastels, watercolors and above all else, markers
- buy a good 35 mm camera and slide projector
- study art history to learn more about great art of the past and present

*The skill of sketching is the necessary link to transfer images in the mind to a more permanent form so they can be more easily shared with others and scrutinized by yourself.*

1. **Don't work with short, fumbling lines.** *DO* learn to work with spontaneous, continuous lines. Use soft pencils or markers, not pen and ink.
2. **Don't draw more than is really necessary.** Avoid excessive detail. *DO* simple backgrounds. Show close-ups of heads and shoulders rather than full figures. Draw only to illustrate your idea not to perfect it.
3. **Don't try to indicate perspective, except in a simple form.** *DO* try as

best as possible to indicate use of space.

#### 4. **Don't get attached to the drawing.**

*DO* feel free to throw it away if it isn't working.

5. **Don't trace, for there is no surer way to shut off individual creativity and learning.** *DO* however, use or adapt pictorial reference material. In fact, it's a good idea to build your own picture reference files.

### 70

**Master the use of markers.** Invest in a good quality set of markers so you can do your own rough illustrations. Markers are formulated with dyes, not pigments. They come under different brand

*Most layout sketches are frightfully inaccurate. The sketchings of subjects and objects are usually compressed or extended.*

names, some in as many as 200 transparent colors; water thinner, or acrylic-based. Their tips range from extremely fine to very wide chisel points. They are extremely versatile. In fact, this simple tool has created a veritable revolution in the graphic arts field.

### 71

**Be flexible when following your sketch.** Most layout sketches are frightfully inaccurate. The sketchings of subjects and objects are usually compressed or extended and not perfectly represented as real life objects and space. Therefore, it makes little sense to follow them to the letter. In practice, your final layout doesn't have to look exactly like your original sketch at all. In fact, whenever you design

an ad exactly the way it was first laid out, you will likely end up with something that looks rather uninspired.

**NOTE** Premature judgment will destroy inspiration. Therefore, prevent interference. Conceal ideas when they are in their embryonic stage. Protect yourself from having to explain or to rationalize them.

Such tampering is harmful in bringing ideas to fruition.

*Premature  
judgment will  
destroy inspira-  
tion.*



## MISCELLANEOUS DESIGN STRATEGIES

USE THE following collection of design and layout strategies to supplement your already bursting box of design and layout goodies.

### 72

**Borrow from the best.** The easiest way of improve your ad design and layout, is to copycat and improve upon the successful elements of other people's ads, particularly those bearing some relationship to your product.

It works like this: when you see an ad that catches your eye, in a magazine, newspaper or flyer, make an ad that looks

*To go beyond is  
as wrong as to  
fall short.*

### **CONFUCIUS**

very similar, using your own words and images.

This technique works like a charm. If nothing else, the process will help you learn what makes a great ad design and layout. And pretty soon, your own style will start to take form, and all that copying, borrowing, stealing, emulating, or whatever else you want to call it will start to seem like what it really is: a class with the masters.

### 73

**Compromise only if you want to destroy your creative excellence.** Good ideas are preciously rare. When you are fortunate enough to conceive one, defend it to the hilt. Prepare to battle for it. Have the courage of your convictions.

 74

**Don't be timid.** Every ad layout should demonstrate visual courage. Start with simple and safe approaches. Then become daring.

 75

**Don't be afraid to make images big.** Don't fall prey to "clip-art Syndrome." This is where amateur designers litter their pages with several small images. In design work, the secret is to be bold. Make your graphics stand out and take command of the readers' attention. Let them bleed of the edge of the page if you have to.

 76

**Don't cry wolf every three lines.** Re-

strain your creative urges for when it's really important. Good ad design means you don't have to knock people dead every paragraph or page to create variety and interest. In fact, if you do this too often you will achieve the opposite of what you wished. Instead of creating interest and emphasis, you will create clutter and indifference.

*Don't fall prey to "clip-art Syndrome."*

 77

**Don't make your ad look too much like everybody else's ad.** If your ad looks like everyone else's ad, it won't grab attention.

**NOTE** If possible, try to make your ad not even look like an ad.

 78

**Get and take advice from people of reputation.** In the visual realm, everyone perceives themselves as an expert. Even your grandmother. Because everyone seems to know what they like and dislike visually. However, if you know a good art director personally, listen to their advice ten times more carefully. Good art directors are easy to recognize: they know how to crop photographs, how to create visual impact, and are prepared to change layouts, without their ego interfering, if someone else comes up with a better idea.

*Never leave a blank page, people will think it is a manufacturer's defect.*  
**SUPERTIP**

 79

**Place your logo in the upper left hand or bottom right hand corner.** Those are the two best spots for it. The worst place for your logo is the lower left-hand corner; the eye prefers to leave the ad at the lower right-hand corner, so your logo will have greater impact there.

 80

**Include the price in your ad.** Since price is the most important factor that allows a consumer to determine whether an item represents an adequate value, an ad without a price makes the buying decision difficult, if not impossible. Can you imagine how frustrating and uninteresting it would be if your

daily newspaper had no prices on the food store ads, consumer electronics ads or department store offerings? Prices belong on an ad whether you are advertising a home for \$250,000 or a ballpoint pen for 79 cents.

## 81

**Print your ads as sharp as possible.** Output is everything. To fully understand the various grades of quality of output from different sources, print out a computer created document on your laser, ink-jet or dot matrix printer and then have it printed out at your local service bureau on a 2450 dots per inch Image Setter. Now compare the two

and guess which one will attract and im-

## Designing an Ad Critique Checklist

- Does your ad contain any misleading statements?
- Does your headline promise the reader a benefit?
- Has your layout allowed the reader's eye to stray from the preferred gaze-motion path?
- Have you included the five basic elements of a layout: headline, illustrations, copy, price and logo?
- Have you included the price in the ad?
- Is your copy clear, crisp and concise?
- Is your ad balanced asymmetrically?
- Is your logo in the upper left corner or the lower right corner of the ad?



press more customers or clients?

**NOTE** Output that looks closer to the final product will increase your ability and other to accurately predict the final reproduction quality of the ad. This is especially important if your ad contains fine print or details.

## 82

**Use Image N' Transfer sheets (I.N.T.s) if you don't have a computer.** Ready-to-use images, including numerous typefaces, symbols, ornaments, and pictures are available under various brand names at your local stationary shop. Ready-to-use images are printed on transparent sheets and can be transferred to most smooth surfaces by burnishing (rubbing on to a piece of paper with a blunt object).

## 83

**Always keep in mind the purpose of you ad.** If your design does not complement your end use in any significant way, then you are missing the whole point of design. Design is a function of use and purpose.

*Creative thought is nurtured in silence and flourishes in solitude.*

## 84

**Work in solitude and silence.** If you are to achieve any creative excellence, the one essential ingredient you need is inspiration. This is one of the reasons that you must work alone and in silence as much as possible. In fact, preserve your solitude at all costs. Creative thought is nurtured in silence and flourishes in solitude.

 **85**

**Invest in a professional quality DTP program.** With a DTP program such as Pagemaker or QuarkXpress, you will be able to cut and paste your own advertising. A good laser printer can then give you 600 by 600 DPI professional looking output good enough for reproduction in most newspapers.

 **86**

**Invest in a graphics program like CoreIDRAW.** For complex advertising, a copy of a full-blown graphics program with an extensive library of clip art is a must. It greatly speeds up the ad building process, especially the design stages. In addition, you can create original color art and photos with dazzling effects.

**NOTE** CoreIDRAW is the market leader for IBM PCs. It offers its older 3.0, 4.0, 5.0, 6.0 and 7.0 versions at reduced prices. It's 3.0 and 4.0 versions can be purchased for under \$100.



*Good design is  
good business.*

**THOMAS  
WATSON JR.**  
*CEO, IBM*