

Graphic Design

Graphic Design
Design Philosophies
Graphic Design Principles
Economy of Visual Elements
Coding Techniques
Typography
Fonts
Color
Icon Design

Graphic Design

The “look & feel” portion of an interface

What someone initially encounters

- Conveys an impression, mood

Design Philosophies

My personal preferences:

- Economy of visual elements
- Less is more
- Clean, well organized

Graphic Design Principles

- Metaphor
- Clarity
- Consistency
- Alignment
- Proximity
- Contrast



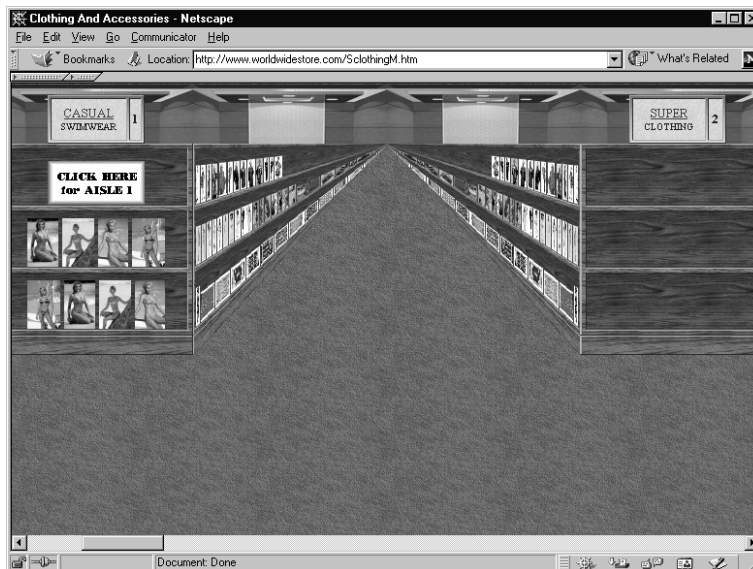
Metaphor

Tying presentation and visual elements to some familiar relevant items

- e.g., Desktop metaphor
- If you're building an interface for a grocery application, maybe mimic a person walking through a store with a cart

Example

Overdone?

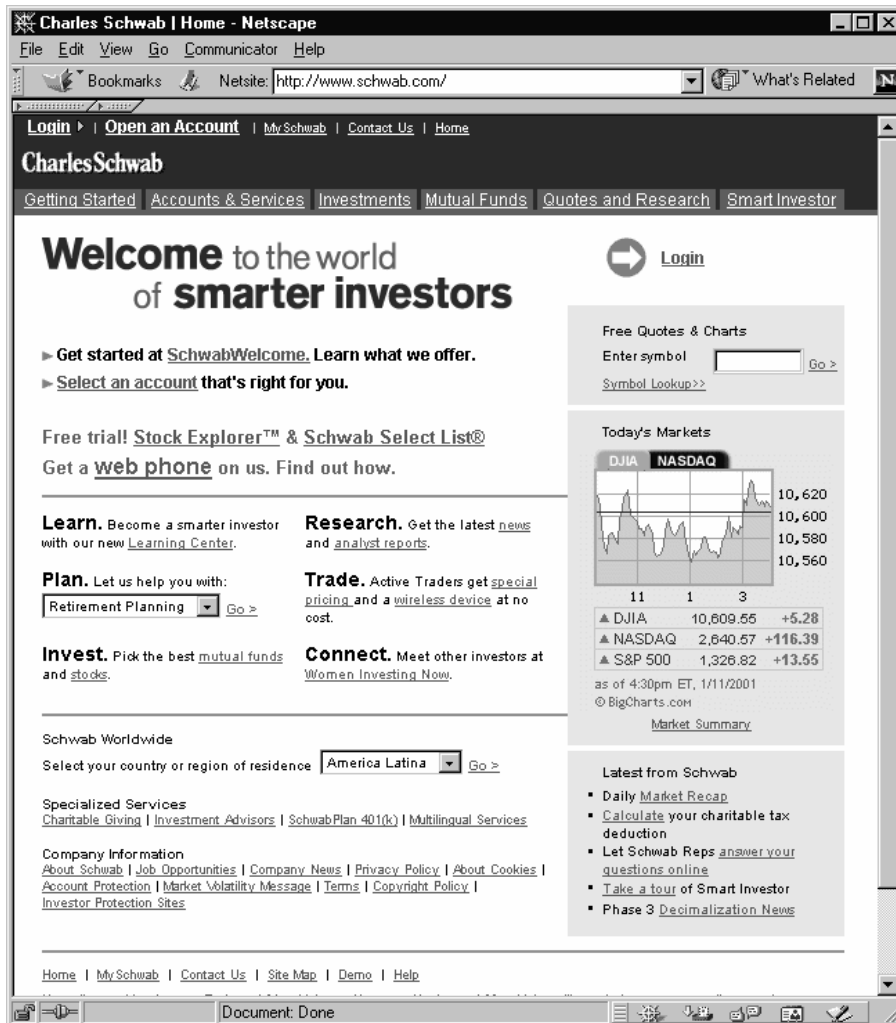


www.worldwidestore.com/Mainlv1.htm

Clarity

- **Every element in an interface should have a reason for being there**
 - **Make that reason clear too!**
- **Less is more**
- **White space**
 - **Leads the eye**
 - **Provides symmetry and balance through its use**
 - **Strengthens impact of message**
 - **Allows eye to rest between elements of activity**
 - **Used to promote simplicity, elegance, class, refinement**

Example



www.schwab.com

Clear, clean
appearance

Opinion?

Consistency

- In layout, color, images, icons, typography, text, ...
- Within screen, across screens
- Stay within metaphor everywhere
- Platform may have a style guide
 - Follow it!

Example

www.santafean.com



Home page



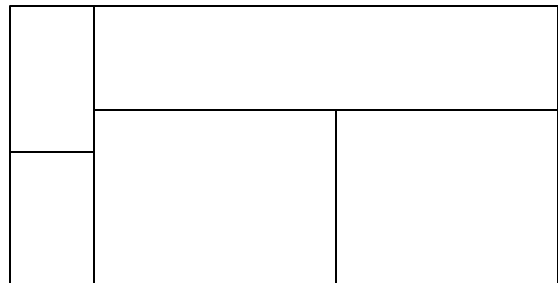
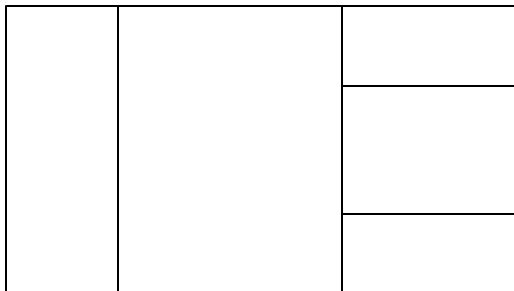
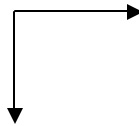
Content page 1



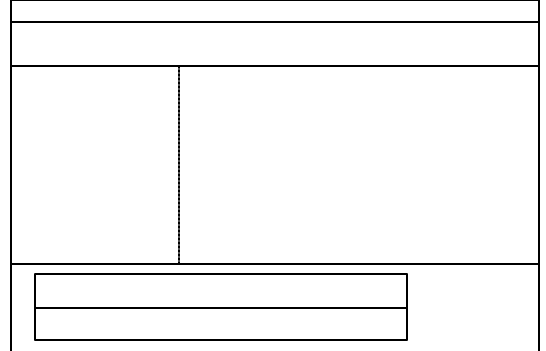
Content page 2

Alignment

- **Western world**
 - **Start from top left**
- **Allows eye to parse display more easily**
- **Grids**
 - **(Hidden) horizontal and vertical lines to help locate window components**
 - **Align related things**
 - **Group items logically**
 - **Minimize number of controls, reduce clutter**
- **Grids - use them**



Grid Example



Alignment

- Left, center, or right

Here is
some
new text

Here is
some
new text

Here is
some
new text

- Choose one, use it everywhere
- Novices often center things
 - No definition, calm, very formal

Proximity

- **Items close together appear to have a relationship**
- **Distance implies no relationship**

Time

Time:

Name

Addr1

Addr2

City

State

Phone

Fax

Name

Addr1

Addr2

City

State

Phone

Fax

Name

Addr1

Addr2

City

State

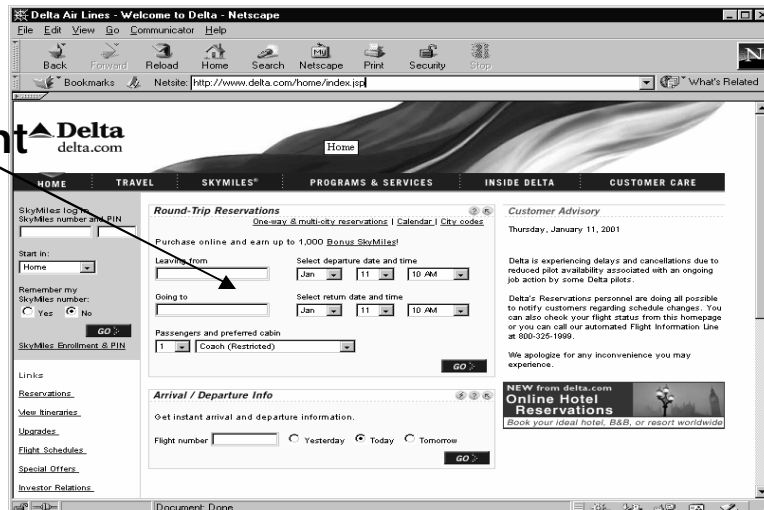
Phone

Fax

Contrast

- Pulls you in
- Guides your eyes around the interface
- Supports skimming
- Take advantage of contrast to add focus or to energize an interface
- Can be used to distinguish active control
- Can be used to set off most important item
 - Allow it to dominate
- Ask yourself what is the most important item in the interface, highlight it
- Use geometry to help sequencing

Important
element



www.delta.com

Economy of Visual Elements

- **Less is more**
- **Minimize borders and heavy outlining, section boundaries (use whitespace)**
- **Reduce clutter**
- **Minimize the number of controls**

Coding Techniques

- **Blinking**
 - **Good for grabbing attention, but use very sparingly**
- **Reverse video, bold**
 - **Good for making something stand out**
 - **Again, use sparingly**



Typography

- **Characters and symbols should be easily noticeable and distinguishable**
 - **Avoid heavy use of all upper case**
 - **Studies have found that mixed case promotes faster reading**

HOW MUCH FUN IS IT
TO READ ALL THIS TEXT
WHEN IT'S ALL IN
CAPITALS AND YOU
NEVER GET A REST

How much fun is it
to read all this text
when it's all in
capitals and you
never get a rest

- **Readability**
 - **How easy is it to read a lot of text**
- **Legibility**
 - **How easy is it to recognize a short burst of text**
 - **Typeface = font**
(not really, but close enough)

Typography

Whenever your local SMS Administrator sends you an actual software Package, the SMS Package Command Manager will appear (usually at network login time) displaying the available Package(s). The following screenshots display scenes similar to what you will see when you receive an actual SMS Package.

To start the demonstration, click the "OK" button. Below of the screen.

- Serif font - readability
- Sans serif font - legibility
(both are variable spaced)
- Monospace font

Fonts

- Serif
 - Times, Bookman
- Sans serif
 - Tahoma, Arial
- Decorative
 - Comic Sans
- Script
 - *Script*
- Monospaced
 - Courier, **Luci da**

Guidelines

- **Use serif for long, extended text; sans serif for “headlines”**
 - **Use 1-2 fonts/typefaces (3 max)**
 - **Use of normal, italics, bold is OK**
 - **Never use bold, italics, capitals for large sections of text**
 - **Use 1-3 point sizes max**
 - **Be careful of text to background color issues**

Font Control

Which do you prefer?

CRAFTS AND GAMES
ARTS FESTIVAL
OF ATLANTA AND DECATUR

SEPTEMBER 19-24



COME AND ENJOY

Crafts and Games
Arts Festival
Of Atlanta and Decatur




September 19-
24

Come and Enjoy!

Applies lots of these principles

Color

- We see the world via a *reflective* color model
 - Light strikes a surface and is reflected to our eyes--Properties of surface dictate color
 - Printers
- Colors on display follow the *emitted* model
- On monitors, typically RGB scheme
 - 0-255 value each red, green, blue
 - R: 170 G:43 B: 211
- Use it for a purpose, not to just add some color in

Color Attributes

- Hue
 - native color, pigment
- Saturation
 - relative purity, brightness, or intensity of a color
- Value
 - lightness or darkness of a color

Color

Color Guidelines

- **Display color images on black background**
- **Choose bright foreground color (white, bold green,...)**
- **Avoid brown and green as background colors**
- **Be sure fg colors contrast in both brightness and hue with bg colors**
- **Use color sparingly--Design in b/w then add color where appropriate**
- **Use color to draw attention, communicate organization, to indicate status, to establish relationships**
- **Avoid using color in non-task related ways**

Color

Color Guidelines

Color is good for supporting search

- **Do not use color without some other redundant cue**
 - **Color-blindness**
 - **Monochrome monitors**
 - **Redundant coding enhances performance**
- **Be consistent with color associations from jobs and cultures**
- **Limit coding to 8 distinct colors (4 better)**
- **Avoid using saturated blues for text or small, thin lines**
- **Use color on b/w or gray, or b/w on color**
- **To express difference, use high contrast colors (and vice versa)**

Color

Color Suites

- Designers often pick a palette of 4 or 5 colors



Professional



Monochromatic



Southwestern

Color Associations

- **Red**
 - hot, warning, aggression, love
- **Pink**
 - female, cute, cotton candy
- **Orange**
 - autumn, warm, Halloween
- **Yellow**
 - happy, caution, joy
- **Brown**
 - warm, fall, dirt, earth
- **Green**
 - lush, pastoral, envy
- **Purple**
 - royal, sophisticated, Barney

Icon Design

- Design task
- Represent object or action in a familiar and recognizable manner
- Limit number of different icons
- Make icon stand out from background
- Ensure that singly selected icon is clearly visible when surrounded by unselected ones
- Make each icon distinctive
- Make icons harmonious members of icon family
- Avoid excessive detail



What do each of these signify?

Almost always want to accompany your icons by a text label