

Minimalism, Logo Design, Typography

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Graphic Design

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What 3 key words symbolise graphic design and why are they important for this industry?

For my dissertation and proposal I will be looking at 3 key words that relate to my area of study being a Graphic Designer. My 3 keywords are minimalism, logo design and typography, and I will be researching these topics and looking at examples from artists on how they use these factors for their work. I will be looking into what these words mean and will see from different types of graphic design work, if these words apply to them. I will also, through research, find out how other artists view similar thoughts that I have, and see how important they feel that the three keywords that I have chosen affect the design world.

Minimalism

For my first keyword I have chosen Minimalism. This is a *'style of art, music or design that uses very simple ideas or a very small number of simple elements'* (Oxford dictionary, 2021).

Minimalism to me, means less is more. "Replacing modernism implied a misunderstanding of the basic notion of modernism. Modernism *"is not a style but a dynamic attitude in flux, with solid foundations based on rational processes. Styles are just opposite, ephemeral manifestations of the speculative desires of producers."* Having too much information on an infographic or a website can become overwhelming and can lose the impact of what information or message you are trying to convey. It can make things complicated and harder to use which will put the customer off. Some may say that minimalism is lazy but it is the complete opposite as a lot of thought has to be put into it. Balance is a big part of minimalism as there is less of the website or infographics unbalanced structure will stand out more hence why grids will be used and minimalistic work will look structured. Contrast will become apparent as there would be less colour but there will be more contrasts giving it a unique look.



This (left) is a minimalist website product design and user experience designers website. The website has a very simple colour palette by having unsaturated colours. The website makes use of icons which makes good use of semiotics which is one of the most important parts of graphic design as it gives the symbols meaning to the viewer. These simple icons which are easy to identify can be used for any language too making them very effective in design. It also confirms the structure that was stated before as the text, images as well as the icons, look structured and are aligned making them look pleasing to the eye. Also having features which includes the icon for

the options makes the homepage look neater as it temporarily hides this until that icon is selected.



This (left) is an advert for one of Apple's phones. Apple has become a very well known and up market company and for a while now and has kept these marketing strategies very minimalistic. They let the product do the talking, having limited text and to have the focus on the product. In particular this is advertising the cameras

quality on the phone so has a close up of just that section on the phone. For the text they just went for a review as this further enhances and comforts the quality of Apple's products. With the minimalistic design the product is able to be advertised to anyone as there is nothing obvious that would single out a particular audience.



(left) depicts a movie poster for First Man. The main section and the part that your eye is first drawn to is the silhouette of the astronaut in front of the moon. What I love about this style is the simplicity of it and how with just two simple vector images which is a computer generated image made out of points, lines and curves. For the text it is limited as being based on such an important and well known event you don't need much.

Logo Design

For my second keyword I have chosen logo design which is “*a printed design or symbol that a company or an organization uses as its special sign*” (Oxford dictionary, 2021). Logos and logo design is very important as it is a symbol that will first be seen by a customer, depending on where it goes, so it’s important to get it right as “*a logo is a flag, a signature, an escutcheon, a street sign. a logo does not sell (directly), it identifies*”. A logo is rarely a description of a business.” Logos can also be linked to minimalism as stated there more can be less. A logo needs to be clear and scalable as if it’s on a billboard it can look fine but if it’s brought into a letterhead, if it’s not right, it can be hard to identify if the logo is cluttered and has too much going on with it. As well as this it is very important to get the typography correct to ensure that your logo is effective in its purpose. If you have a nursery with a rock band type of font and vice versa it can put people off on looking further into your product or business. Similarly colour is a key factor to get correct as colours can represent feeling as blue represents trustworthiness, security and stability. Lastly a logo has to be iconic. Following trends is a safe option but if you want your business to stand out then you have to be different. Trends often change therefore your brand will become outdated. By sketching out your ideas, ideas can spark and develop to create a good and effective logo.



(left) is the logo for the London Underground. It has become a very iconic logo and that’s no accident. What I love about this logo is how without the text you would still recognise it as the London Underground due to the red circle and the blue rectangle. This is actually very useful as tourists who visit and cannot speak English or not much can easily recognise this and will be able to move around the city with ease. Another thing I like about this logo is that due to the simplicity of this logo, it’s astonishing to think that this logo we see today was created in 1912 and does not look dated compared to some of the other logos around that time. This makes this logo symbolizes a city, transportation network and a place all at the same time.



For the next logo I shall talk about how I wanted to show the development and how minimalism is affecting recent logos. Above are three Nissan logos the one on the left is very recognisable and is the one everyone is familiar with then the one on the right is the new one which looks far more simplistic and some would say boring. And it's not just Nissan, other car manufacturers like BMW are also going for this more flat and simple design. Being a massive company it is easier for them to do this as they are already well known and an icon in the car manufacturing industry. Going into the new flat logo the logo should become more recognisable as looking at the two the Nissan type from the new one stands out far more than the left. The new logo looks very modern and you can still make out the bar from the old logo.

As well as this Nissan originally had an older logo (figure 6) that looks very similar to the London Underground logo. So this new logo keeps the familiarity of the older one as well as the flat look from the original. This trend, unlike other trends in logo design, is unlikely to look outdated anytime soon due to the simplicity and we are likely to see other car manufacturers following this trend too.



For the last logo I wanted to show what not to do and what it can look like when important factors of logo design like colour, type and scalability aren't listened to. First of all the scalability of it means that when it is shrunk you instantly lose the 'Sports Bar 'N' Grille' section then as it gets even smaller you lose other aspects of the logo like the icons for the balls then the frog mascot becomes unrecognisable. The colour scheme has the contrast but it's with the other parts, together it becomes hard to see. The frog mascot causes the logo to look cluttered and it being off to the side and behind the logo just makes it impossible to be able to see it at a smaller scale. Lastly the main text for 'CAZZ'S' has a light coloured stroke on the text which I feel makes the type hard to see too. Overall I don't feel like this logo is appropriate for what the business is trying to sell as there is nothing that hints or resembles the grill or bar section of this business.

Typography

For my last keyword, I have chosen 'typography'. Typography 'the art or work of preparing books, etc. for printing, especially of designing how text will appear when it is printed'. To me typography is one of the most, if not the most important aspect of graphic design as typography is the appearance of the text or the art of working with it as *"Type design moves at the pace of the most conservative reader. The good type-designer therefore realizes that, for a new font to be successful, it has to be so good that only very few recognize its novelty."* Fonts are very important and selecting the right font for what you are working on is something you need to get right. For example serif fonts should be used for more formal type and is the popular choice for newspapers and articles.

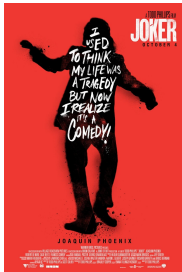
Meanwhile sans serif is a more modern look and works well in online work as it's easier to read. You also have a display font which can't be used for base text as it would be difficult to read so should be used for titles, logos or other graphic designs. There are so many different fonts and styles but when doing a project it's best to use around one or two different fonts to use for a project. If you want your type to look more interesting use different weights to add to a style. Contrast in typography works well too. Having sans serif with serif or decorative with simple can go a long way in improving the look of a project. Hierarchy is very important in graphic design as if you are designing a poster you want to use the text to guide the viewer through your poster and to avoid confusing the view with wrong sizes.



(left) is a 1880 square-metre typography masterpiece located in Blackpool right in front of Blackpool Tower. It is one of the largest pieces of public art ever created in the UK, created by Gordon Young. It is full of quotes and famous lines from 850 comedians and writers and uses a range of type, colour and sizes. The art piece is laid in the formation of a giant T that links the beach, road and the promenade. The letters range in size and go 30mm deep into the ground. The sizes of the letters can be over a metre long which makes it able to see them from the top of Blackpool Tower.



This is a typographic poster by Neville Brody which consists of a man made almost completely out of type. It uses a range of different typefaces as well as different sizes. Words that stand out due to this include 'Ashes to Ashes, Tumbling dice and Unravel'. These words to all intents and purposes repeat themselves throughout this piece as different sizes and fonts. This poster contains a good amount of white space which gives the feeling of calmness compared to the more chaotic look of the hair. The primary colour used is blue which signifies calmness and responsibility. Looking at the image I would say that he does look calm and even looks like he looks like he's concentrating. To the top of the head there is orange/ red colouring used. Orange can signify vitality which I can see in the image as he looks like he is in a state of being active and strong as he does look young which you would expect from a younger person. Though the text is quite clear I would say this image relates to quiet design as I felt that I really had to look into it to understand it. When first looking at it those three phrases were the most obvious and although I saw the other words and phrases I didn't see the repeated words. I would definitely say that this image relates to the plenitude as the guy who is made out of words is filled and tightly packed. This gives the illusion and the shape of the face.



Lastly, I have chosen a movie poster from Joker. What I like about this style of movie poster is that it is relatively simply going back to minimalism but it contains some typography which is from the movie. It also has the main character of Joker as a silhouette doing the famous dancing scene.

In conclusion, I've broken down and explained how my keyword factors contribute to graphic design. I have gone through how semiotics is so important in conveying your message whether that is through art, a poster or through your brand. Through quotes I have seen that other artists have similar views on how these aspects of graphic design affect the practise and improve the meaning. I have also shown how more is less which can be used for all three of my keywords and how simplicity can make the work more meaningful and have a bigger impact on the reader or viewer to answer the question: What 3 key words symbolise graphic design and why are they important for this industry?

References

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