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VISUAL TRENDS 2020

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH CREATIVE AGENCIES

MORE OPINIONS

MORE INSIGHTS

MORE TRENDS

We spoke to professionals working in the creative industry and notable brand representatives to put together the visual trends of 2020. See all the latest insights and even more thoughts on the future of visual communication.

AIMBULANCE

ID 239293880, artjazz

We're Aimbulance, a strategic marketing agency. We help our clients' businesses and brands grow by developing simple and beautiful solutions that create meaningful connections and enrich people's lives.

Roman Havrysh

Managing Partner at Aimbulance

Jovan Rocanov

Creative Consultant at Aimbulance

PROJECTS BY AIMBULANCE

ID 311014134, 2Designbcn

ON VISUAL TRENDS BEING A ROAD MAP

Visual trends should be perceived as a kind of visual map enabling us to see the bigger picture. As creative people, we tend to be self-absorbed in our own little worlds and often forget that there is an outside world. Trends are great indicators of that world. They are there to remind us that it is not about us; it is about our consumers.

THE CHANGING AND CONTINUING TRENDS FOR 2020

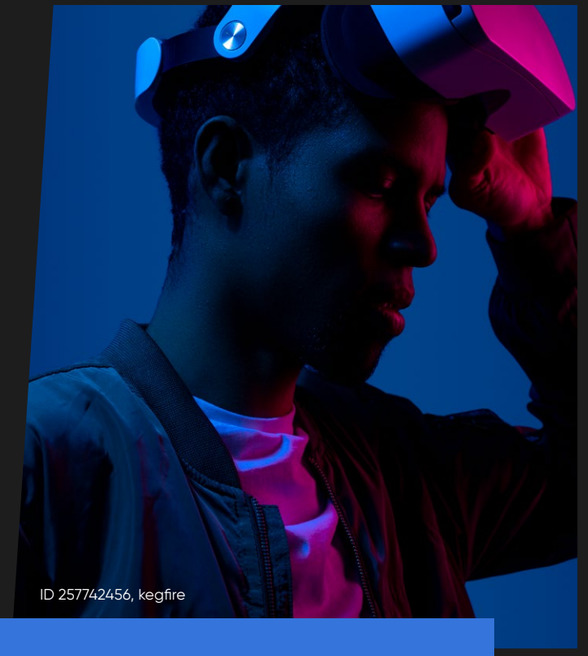
Strategic perspective

For the digital design industry, the unification of the interfaces will be the dominant trend. Like inventing the wheel, people found the best ways of digital interactions, and this will become the norm around the world net. This is also true about applications and other display-based interfaces.

The second most significant trend in visual communications would be the scientific approach to design. We'll learn a lot from neurobiology and behavioral studies to deliver better design solutions. The collaboration will take place more and more between designers/photographers and strategists/scientists/engineers etc. to produce successful solutions. Some examples of good studies for marketing communications and branding are here.

AIMBULANCE

ID 68636711, digitalmiket



ID 257742456, kegfire

Roman Havrysh

Managing Partner at Aimbulance

Jovan Rocanov

Creative Consultant at Aimbulance

THE CREATIVE PERSPECTIVE

1. Cross-discipline eclecticism

Fashion photography as a guest star in brand identity design. UI design color-coding inspired by interior design rules. These are just some of the examples of mixing disciplines, methods, and styles in order to achieve innovative and distinctive visual appearances. To get noticed in an overcrowded media space it is not enough anymore to stay in your lane; we need to borrow methods and practices from other visual disciplines.

For example, Jessica Walsh's new brand identity strikingly uses fashion photography to announce the opening of her agency.

2. Brand-centric concepts

Consumer experience matters now more than ever. This will lead to more brand-centric concepts aiming to connect with the consumer on an emotional level. Aligning brand purpose with consumer needs will provide the necessary context on a case-by-case basis. This context will require unique visual concepts which will be hard to copy and apply outside of a particular brand landscape.

The Casper brand is all about sleep and the importance of healthy sleeping. Their ad campaigns are carefully crafted to fit their brand essence and meet consumer expectations.

3. Social media-driven visuals

"Black mirrors" are still the supreme owners of our time and attention. Social media are an indisputable judge of visual design choices. Nothing is going to escape their scrutiny. Imagery will have to obey their laws in order to survive. Whether or not our visuals are "Instagrammable" will determine their success.

Instagram is setting up aesthetic rules for photography. For example, Kusama's infinity mirrors are seen as highly Instagrammable spaces. They drew much more attention than her paintings.

4. Inclusivity and accessibility

In the age of emerging alt-right and populist political agendas, inclusivity and accessibility will strike back. Inevitable migrations of workers will create a rising demand for inclusive and accessible designs. Emerging multicultural and multiracial megapolises will crave and request inclusive brands. Visual designs with the ability to deliver on this will lead the pack. Old school visuals focused on social, racial, and cultural stereotypes will face public backlash and extinction.

Tommy Hilfiger's "Tommy Adaptive" is an inclusive line of clothes featuring models with physical disabilities.

B-REEL

ID 250979060, FlexDreams

We were born online, and we've lived online since 1999, trying to explore the interesting things that can happen when storytelling meets technology. Pinning down an aesthetic for twenty years of Internet culture evolution moving at hyperspeed – right now faster than ever – is of course impossible. We just try our best to make interesting things.

PROJECTS BY B-REEL

THE PROJECTS WE'RE PROUD OF

Having been around for 20 years makes answering really difficult. Wilderness Downtown for Google Chrome is probably our most notorious project and one that we still remember, 10 years later. More recently, the Hublot Digital Boutique and the launch of Humanz by Gorillaz have made us very proud.

ID 174289294, mochak

Oscar Erlandsson — Strategy Director at B-Reel

Alexander Gårdenberg — Design Director at B-Reel

ON TECHNOLOGY AFFECTING DESIGN

We have no idea, but we have one big hope that we're seeing signs of and new technologies that are bound to affect design. The hope is that the move away from designing for paper first (and then adapting to digital) accelerates.

Digital-first opens up so many interesting challenges to solve creatively, from including motion as a cornerstone to exploring new ways to do UX (which by the way has gotten riddled with convention incredibly quickly). We're hoping to see more design that enables webAR, and more use of variable-type both for function and experience.

THINK DIGITAL EXPERIENCES AND DON'T FORGET TO HAVE FUN

Over the twenty years we've been around, there's been a pendulum movement between new technologies arriving, and people becoming very structured and functional first, before moving to having more fun.

Over the last few years, mobile-first and the death of Flash, have led to incredible amounts of very structured and functional design – and now almost all apps and websites look kind of the same. What's starting to happen now (again, but in a new way) is that the floodgates to having fun, creating surprise and delight, is coming back in a big way. So we're hoping for many more interesting digital experiences that move beyond the trends coming out in the next few years.

REFERENCES TO TRENDS

See the following projects: Gorillaz, Moschino, Uninterrupted.

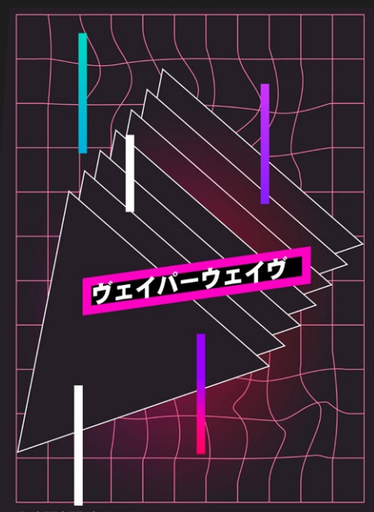
ID 288196494, bashta

BBDO WARSAW

BBDO Warsaw is a Polish branch of the most awarded advertising network of the last decade. For eleven years in a row, BBDO has been ranked the most creative agency network in the world in The Gunn Report. In addition, in 2017, BBDO was named Network of the Year at Cannes and the most effective agency network in the world in the Global Effie Effectiveness Index.

BBDO Warsaw is a modern communication group that offers a full range of advertising services across all media platforms. The agency and its divisions specialize not only in advertising campaigns but also produce digital content and tools, along with customer experience design and product design.

PROJECTS BY BBDO WARSAW



ID 253057106, artemvorotnik

Evgeny Vetrov

Art Director

at BBDO Warsaw

ON BRUTALIST DESIGN

Brutalist design continues as a trend from last year. It will be just as relevant in 2020. It's a constantly evolving trend that today looks different compared to a year ago. It's more 'mature'.

Modern brutalist design today is the answer to classical, overpolished designs. It challenges perfect compositions, where each element of the grid is aligned ideally and each block of text is legible from any distance.

We see too many cases of 'good design' that is borderline boring. Enter brutalism. Despite the seemingly simple execution and freedom from rules, it's far from being an easy stylistic. Not every skewed layout with odd typography and distorted proportions becomes 'stylish'. The key is to be unconventional, attract attention, but avoid looking tacky to stay within the aesthetics. And it is this point exactly (after seeing the many unsuccessful attempts), that makes it a difficult stylistic to pursue.

REFERENCES TO TRENDS

See the project PUSH by Sophie Gogishvili, SIN MAGAZINE 1 by Kieran Burr, and What We Feel Like by Rita Matos.

BBDO UKRAINE

ID 170726700, focusandblur

BBDO is the world's most award-winning international network of creative agencies and BBDO Ukraine lives up to this image. We create outstanding products of the highest level that actually work.

A creative product is the key force of all that we do. Through it, we build a whole world of creativity. It is our creative work that determines our reputation.

Our mantra is - "The Work. The Work. The Work."

PROJECTS BY BBDO UKRAINE

TRENDS CAN BE DANGEROUS TOO

Why do people follow trends and what's fashionable? Every year we discuss which Pantone color is on-trend and which tailoring of jeans is 'in'.

A brand is like a living organism that speaks to the world. For a brand (as for any person out there), it's important to be recognized, acknowledged, and relevant. Following trends, a brand shows that it's on top and fashionable (so to speak). The stylist of this brand is the designer.

But there's a kind of danger. In a chase for trends and attempts to show a brand as "trendy", a designer can forget the most important thing - about insights and ideas (which is what makes the work outstanding).

Maria Teterin

Head of Branding

at BBDO Ukraine

WHAT WE VALUE

For us at BBDO Ukraine, the most important thing is to find a visual metaphor that reflects a brand's insight. First, you have to understand "what does the brand want to say", and only afterward do we move on to "here is what the brand will wear".

ON SOCIAL TRENDS

I think that what's more important right now is not just visual trends but social ones:

- Women's rights and women in society
- Ecology
- Healthy lifestyle

I wish to encourage designers to channel their energy and efforts to some of these important topics. You really can become a trendsetter by boosting these topics with different visual styles.

WORDS OF WISDOM FOR THE ROAD

Design has to carry a message, a joke, or be a kind of game. It has to get the audience to experience some emotion or simply leave them to ponder.

REFERENCES TO TRENDS

See the project Biasless World, branding for &Walsh, AFAR Travel Magazine.

ID 259163008, DanieleGay

PIXIT

PIXIT is an owner-operated and award-winning design agency based in Austria. We see our focus on delivering exclusive, customized digital solutions for clients around the world. Our creative strength lies in the areas of design, branding, content production, web design, and app development as well as online marketing. Our design style or aesthetics is exclusive and minimalistic as well as dynamic or motion-driven.

PROJECTS BY PIXIT

ID 283714870, ScienceRF

Martin Holoubek

CEO

at PIXIT

ON THE NEXT BIG THING IN VISUAL COMMUNICATION

The next big thing in visual communication could be named “Intelligent, personalized experiences”. In times of data-driven marketing and constantly self-learning autonomous systems, we could automatically create personalized experiences. They could contain individual design and layout, new types of interaction such as voice control and relevant content for the user. When I only think of websites, then it would lead to completely new and dynamic experiences delivering exactly the personalized information that the user needs. Automatically.

SHOULD DESIGNERS FOLLOW TRENDS?

I think design trends are an inspiration and a kind of possible outlook into the future of visual communication. Although I think every designer should stay true to his or her identity and create their own style. They should only follow the trends that fit their style and the style of the brand. It doesn’t make sense to blindly follow the latest trends just to feel trendy.

REFERENCES TO TRENDS

See websites by K24, Cobo, Design Canada, and the Nike Air Max project.

PERQ STUDIO

Perq Studio is an integrated creative agency.

A client once said we're the best of both worlds - a creative powerhouse with boutique service.

That's because we stay small and deliver big. Our directors are hands-on. Always thinking. Always creating. And always putting their experience into practice on every project.

We don't have a fixed aesthetic. We believe that variety breeds creativity, so we're sector agnostic, designing for all types of clients across all industries.

PROJECTS BY PERQ STUDIO

THE PROJECTS WE'RE MOST PROUD OF

Making the iconic publisher Condé Nast Instagram-ready for digital-first audiences. Inspired by the brand's iconic accent, we designed bold geometric patterns to create a monochrome visual signature for the brand. This allowed us to bring distinct content together under three streams:

1. #iamcondenast to spotlight employees and position the brand as an aspirational employer

2. #insidecondenast to bring new eyes to the page through behind-the-scenes content

3. #followfriday to showcase the global reach of the brand's signature publications

Nikki Burton

Creative Director

at Perq Studio

THREE KEY TRENDS WE ARE SEEING ON SOCIAL MEDIA ARE:

1. Activism – we expect to see the current activist political and environmental mood spill over into creativity with a bold aesthetic, including clashing colors, diverse materials, handwritten typefaces and creative that breaks conventional rules.

2. Body Positivity – we expect the movement to keep growing and to influence all aspects of visual communications. From heartfelt slogans to diverse models, this is a visual trend that embraces everyone.

3. JOMO – hot off the heels of the minimal movement, JOMO is all about celebrating the joy of missing out. Think minimalism with a bright gen-z color palette and a clean approach to typography and photography.

A BIT MORE ON JOMO AND MINIMALISM

While minimal was stripped back, this is more about nothing unnecessary but still embracing joy through bright colors and bold typefaces. As we will see people retreat to their homes as havens and embrace the joy of mindfulness and being present in the here and now, we expect retailers to respond. This can be done by creating environments for discovery-led browsing, and sensorial havens designed to give us peace and make us slow down and spend time in-store.

ID 309299862, Svetlana_Cherruty

super

SUPER AN DER SPREE

Super an der Spree is a creative agency that makes campaigns for political, social, and cultural institutions and organizations. Our aesthetics are based on smart ideas, strong visuals, and accessible communication for everyone. Every project is unique and our main idea is not to make a campaign look good or attractive, but help to create a humanistic message that resonates with people.

PROJECTS BY SUPER AN DER SPREE

ID 314666434, Wirestock

Anfi Sa

Interdisciplinary Artist and Art Director at Super an der Spree

TWO PROJECTS WE'RE MOST PROUD OF

DGB-Zukunftsdialog (The German Trade Union Confederation). It's also a long-term project that will last for four years and we are honored to be responsible for visual communication this whole time. I also find this campaign very important, because the main goal of the Zukunftsdialog program is to create a dialogue between people and politicians and decide together what future we want and what we need to avoid.

Berlin baut auf dich - a platform that helps people who live in Berlin make an impact on city planning.

ON THE INTERDISCIPLINARY NATURE OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION

The next big thing in visual communication can be interdisciplinarity in nature and involve collaborative work. We will see more and more projects that have an influence on many different disciplines.

Visual communication is going in this direction. We already see a big variety of skills combination with designers that they can use in their practice - from coding and engineering to performing etc.

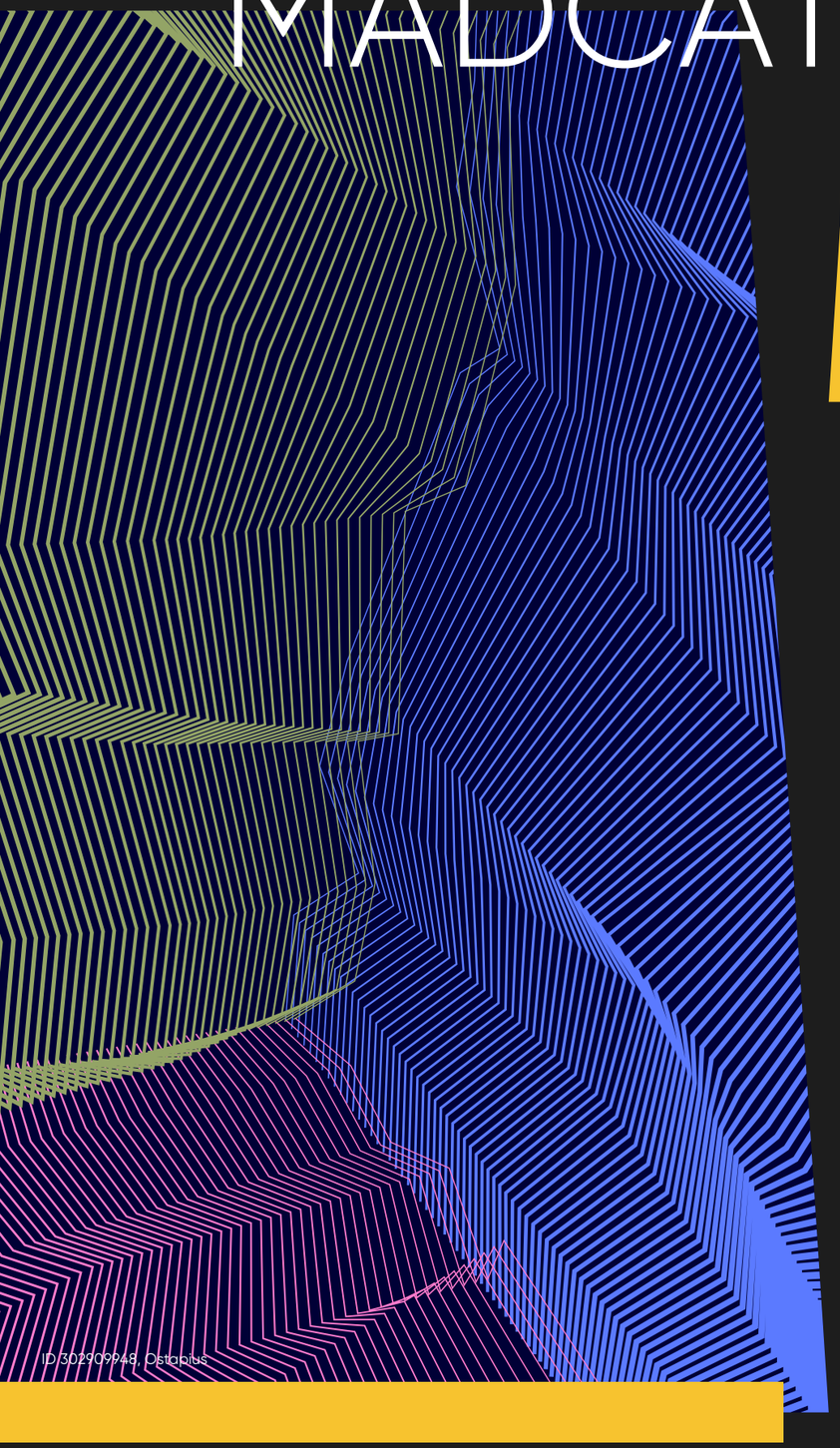
Many technologies are getting more accessible and easy to use, so designers implement them in their practice with great creativity which I find very exciting. Of course, it will have an impact on aesthetics because such a wide range of tools can make visual language very rich. And every new tool that helps designers find a unique aesthetic will be a kind of new trend.

REFERENCES TO TRENDS

See POST design festival and the speakers The Rodina, Anja Kaiser, Dinamo, Amy Suo Wu, Paula Mingelgaite, and Fraser Muggeridge studio.

MADCATS

MADCATS is a creative agency from Kyiv. We are the team of strategists, designers, marketers, and visionaries who come together to improve the future of the business of our associates.



Vik Vatamaniuk

Art Director

Gleb Petrov

co-founder

MADCATS

PROJECTS BY MADCATS

THE LIMITATION WITH DESIGN

If we look at design as a kind of visual game, the point lies in evoking interest from people through innovation or some kind of "intellectual elegance". On the road to this goal, there are two limitations. The first one is flatness, where the design exists in the first place, as it's always 2D. The second thing is the search for a closer tie with image and text, or form, in other words.

BREAKING APART FROM THE FLAT NATURE OF DESIGN

In light of these limitations, the attempts to transfer dimensional characteristics to flat design manage to capture attention, entertain the eye, and break apart from the 2D nature of things on the one hand. On the other hand, what justifies this kind of work are the examples that overcome the limitations of flat design and also work to strengthen the relationship with context. This ties together better form and essence.

For example, the logo of the glass museum in New York reflects the qualities of glass. Another example is the Printworks space in London that features a roll from a printing machine.

REFERENCES TO TRENDS

See branding for Printworks, and the New York Museum of Glass.

ID 279162906, bashta

SPIILKA DESIGN BÜRO

Spiilka provides globally recognized design solutions using an engineering-aesthetic approach. We're a design buro without a specific style. As Massimo Vignelli once said, "It's not important to develop your own style but your own approach." With an engineering-aesthetic approach, it's important for us to find this hyphen between engineering and aesthetic, to find the golden middle for each project. It is this approach that determines the aesthetics for our projects. We need the branding, website, and app to look stylish enough but also be a great tool.

The ones we're proud of

Right now we're working on an app called "Diya" for the citizens of Ukraine. The project also involves a design-system for government websites. We also have an award-winning project - the packaging for "MO" ice cream, which won a RedDot Awards (Best of the Best). Another project is Keep, the branding for a Ukrainian company that makes backpacks.

PROJECTS BY SPIILKA

Vladimir Smirnov

Design Director

at Spiilka Design Büro

ON SHIFTS IN DESIGN

It seems that the main trend will be not so much styles and techniques but more general shifts in design. Thanks to the amount of available courses, lectures, competitions, and design platforms, the general level of awareness in terms of aesthetics continues to grow. This means that next year, we'll see this movement from "engineering" design to "engineering-aesthetical". With this approach, how a design is perceived will be more important and interesting than how it should be used. At Spiilka, we put all our efforts into making this 'shift' happen faster.

CAMP AESTHETIC? WHY NOT?

If we're talking about specific techniques, it's likely that we'll see the long awaited movement towards camp aesthetics from the fashion industry to communication and product design. Boldness, grotesque, humor, sharpness, honesty - these are the things we'd like to see in the new year.

REFERENCES TO TRENDS

See this, and this, as well as Costapalor, Stand Proud project, Wade and Leta, and Bi-Scriptual.

MEDIA MONKS

ID 229745064, natika

MediaMonks is like a high-class, Michelin-starred kitchen and pantry: stocked to the brim with the finest ingredients, as well as the tools to turn those into basically anything you'd want. Visually, UX-wise, creatively speaking – everything we create is top shelf and the options are endless.

Sebastiaan Scheer

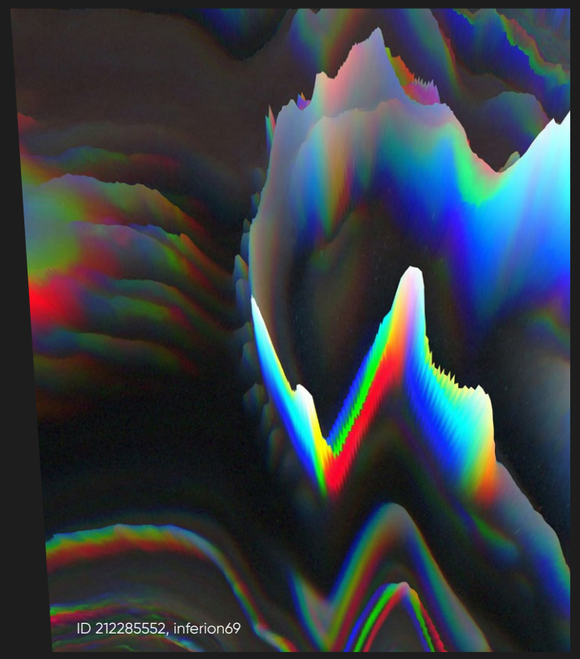
Design director

at MediaMonks Amsterdam

PROJECTS BY MEDIA MONKS

THAT PROJECT IN THE SPOTLIGHT

For me and my team, working on the Motorsports Experience project for PUMA was one of the most satisfying experiences we've had. For the project – a branding assignment for PUMA – we built two racing simulators for PUMA's flagship NYC store, where people can race a custom-designed course. The project really started to come alive for us, when during the design phase, we went to the Ferrari offices in Italy with the team. Overall it was an incredible experience, and I feel like we managed to put all of our excitement of working on this project into the end result.



ID 212285552, inferion69

TRENDS VS PROJECT NEEDS

The key is to always think from the perspective of what it is that you're building, and to apply trendy design when it's applicable, but certainly not when it isn't. It has to aid in solving whichever design problem you're trying to solve, and you're always working with applicable design. The design doesn't lead – the needs of the projects do.

DEPTH AND DYNAMISM WILL BE KEY

Design language is ever-evolving; if we look at UI design, for example, we went from skeuomorphic into more of a flat design, like you see with Android's Material design language. What I see happening is that there's going to be more of an emphasis placed on depth, on the dynamic between flat shading and creating a sense of three-dimensionality. It's something you see happening in the newest Windows, for example, as well as in MacOS. Basically, it's all about depth and dynamism, while maintaining context. And further refinement of everything you see happening today.

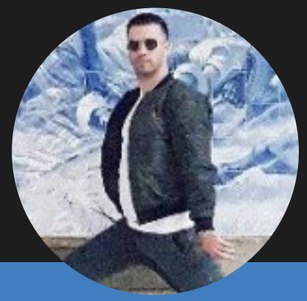
ID 99102474, zzzdim

BEETROOT

We are a design team stubbornly based in Thessaloniki, Greece, whose primary focus is communication design. What we want to do is change the world. Our mission is to blend colours, shapes, sounds, and ideas to build brands, have fun, and inspire people. As a team, we focus on our well being and quality of life as much as on design. We have developed strong, family-like bonds between our members. Teamwork and creativity flow out of our everyday life.

PROJECTS BY BEETROOT

ID 182269656, BugFish



Giannis Gougoulias

Designer

at Beetroot

FYI, THE GREEK MONSTERS PROJECT WAS HUGE

In an attempt to humorously reverse the poor political and economic image of Greece abroad, we decided to create "The Greek Monsters", while presenting universal philosophical foundations and practices of modern design. Since then, we have travelled all over the world, met and collaborated with numerous people full of creative passion. Our exhibition has a strong educational orientation since one of its central pillars is to highlight and teach the creative identity of Greece that is both international and timeless.

INSPIRE BUT DON'T CONFINE

We believe that ephemeral visual trends are crucial to the visual communication study continuity. That said, we should not be confined by them. We should always be restless, try to bend the rules, and eventually evolve our work to something entirely new.

THREE BIG TRENDS IN VISUAL COMMUNICATION

1. Experimental variable fonts in web
2. The return in classical typography
3. Concept vs aesthetics (back to meaning)

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