

# PROXIMITY

February 15, 2023



# AGENDA

Announcements

Reviewing Technical Definitions

What We're Doing Friday

Proximity

Homework Reminder

# REVIEWING TECHNICAL DEFINITIONS

# WHAT ARE THE 3 TYPES?



## PARENTHETICAL

- Used to add quick information in an aside
- Uses either parenthesis or commas to set it apart



## SENTENCE

- Used to add necessary detail for clarity
- Written as a complete sentence
- Includes term, category, and distinguishing characteristics



## EXTENDED

- Varies from one paragraph to several pages
- Explains a term and/or a process in detail
- Etymology, analogy, partition, principles of operation, comparison, examples, negation, graphics

# WHY THEREFORE TECHNICAL DEFINITIONS?

- They are essential in tech comm because, most of the time, your audience are non-experts in your subject.
- Any new term or concept needs to be clearly defined before it can be used in tech documents.
- Every field has a vocabulary of specialized terms & the ability to define these terms clearly is an important skill
- Important: Your infographic will need to have a technical definition!



# ON FRIDAY...

We'll start by discussing how to plan and research technical definitions, and what's expected in your infographic. We'll consider an approach for figuring out what to include, and we'll spend time working on them.

# PROXIMITY

Spatial Relationships

**“ THE PRINCIPLE OF PROXIMITY  
STATES THAT YOU GROUP  
RELATED ITEMS TOGETHER ”**

Robin Williams,  
The Non-Designers' Design Book

# COMMON DESIGN TERMS

- Baseline: the invisible line upon which type sits
- Body/text: the main block of text – does not include headlines, subheadings, titles, etc.
- Elements: the separate objects on the page. Possible elements include text, graphics, and/or groups of visually-related items.
- Eye flow: the way your eye moves across the design
- White (blank) space: areas of the design not filled with graphics or text
- Trapped white space: when the positioning of elements means that empty areas are used ineffectively and “eye flow” is prevented from travelling smoothly

Good design is always an intentional act!

# FOUR BASIC PRINCIPLES

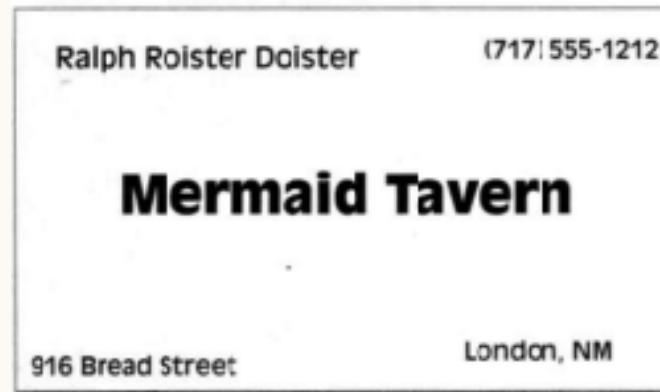
- Contrast: making the various elements very different to attract a reader's attention
- Repetition: repeating visual elements to create organization and unity
- Alignment: ensuring visual connections between elements
- Proximity: Grouping related items together to form a single visual element.

**Good design  
is as easy as ...**

- 1 Learn the principles.**  
*They're simpler than you might think.*
- 2 Recognize when you're not using them.**  
*Put it into words—name the problem.*
- 3 Apply the principles.**  
*You'll be amazed.*

# THE PROXIMITY PROBLEM

What do you notice about these business cards? What information matters? How do you bring it to the reader's attention?



These arrangements do little to help the reader find what they need to know -- the lack of proximity means that none of the information seems related to each other. But what if it's fixed?



Suddenly, it all makes sense! It's also visually more attractive and appealing. Simple, and not yet great design, it is still an improvement.

# CLOSER TOGETHER

- Proximity implies relationships between elements.
- Proximity leads to organization, which leads to reader engagement and understanding.
- Effective communication relies on information which makes sense, both intellectually and visually.

# PLANNING AHEAD

- As you create your infographic, you'll already know how to organize your information logically and which information needs to be emphasized.
- Use this knowledge to plan how to use proximity to your advantage.
- Use font weight and size to help further develop your organization.

# VISUAL CONNECTIONS

- Use white space between elements that do not have a logical relationship
- The closer two elements are, the more closely they should be related. Likewise, unrelated elements should be visually separated.
- You are your reader's guide – help them find what they need!
- Well-organized information is visually appealing.

# THINGS TO AVOID

- Too many separate elements
- The Mermaid Tavern design of corners & middle
- All elements evenly spaced out – group related items closer together
- Confusing the reader about how elements are spatially related
- Grouping together unrelated elements



# HOMEWORK

For tonight: read Design Part 1 under M5.2 and take the quiz. It's due Thursday night.

On Friday, we'll start work on the M5 Discussion Board; the first post is due Saturday night.