

REPORTING AND DESIGN

IT'S ALL IN THE DETAIL

SEPTEMBER 2023

“Design is thinking made visual.”

- Saul Bass, American Graphic Designer and Filmmaker

DEAR READER

Lines, texture, shape, imagery, colour and typography are the fundamentals of any design concept. How these fundamentals are integrated and strategically applied will ultimately determine how captivating your report can be.

Compiling a report goes beyond placing words on a page – **the report must be compelling**. Keeping an audience engaged in the digital age, in which humans consume large amounts of information daily, requires creative thinking. Netflix says if viewers do not find something to watch in the first 60-90 seconds, they typically lose interest and leave the platform.

Design enables us to think about how we can deliver quality content that will instantly **captivate the reader**, inspire them, make them want to read the copy and then, **make it easy to understand**.

DESIGN BASICS

“

Understand your client, understand their corporate personality, understand their appetite for change, understand how they see themselves; and then believe in the same things that they do.

Understand your client.”

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTENT

Content and design must speak to each other. Therefore, the designer must understand the report's contents before conceptualising how this will be presented. The designer needs to **think logically and creatively** about how text-heavy content can be displayed impactfully, or how **design can make complicated information easier to understand**. Understanding the content will guide the designer in selecting the most suitable layout, graphics and imagery.

CONSIDERING COMPOSITION AND LAYOUT

The composition and layout of a report can easily captivate or distract the reader. **Layout must be seamless, it must flow**, it must make sense and sometimes less is more – over-designing a page can detract from your message. Consider a simple yet effective design concept. Embrace the white spaces, as this gives the reader's eyes a break and keeps them engaged.

For example, **infographics are practical for displaying information**. They are visually appealing and easily grab the reader, enabling them to digest information at a glance. Infographics can be used to display processes such as business models (organograms, timelines, and distribution footprint). It can also be used to create interest around statistics and performance measurements.

USING IMAGERY TO TELL YOUR STORY

Selecting the right imagery for a report helps the reader relate to the message and can **create a visual relationship** with them. One high-quality image can be more impactful than a collage of images that do not correlate or tell a story. The key to finding the best images for a report is to **select images that align with the content and the company's brand**.

WHAT'S TRENDING?

MINIMAL DESIGN

“Less is more” applies to design concepts.

The minimal design is characterised by a clean layout, simple design, visual hierarchy, and a limited colour palette.

The minimalist design aims to be impactful using fewer elements.

Minimal design does not mean cheap design. Minimalist can still equate to elegance.

BOLD COLOURS

In recent years, neutral and muted palettes were used in many design concepts in reporting, advertising and digital content marketing.

Design concepts are gradually moving away from muted or natural tones, and companies are more open to using **simple and bold colours with a minimal design layout**.

SHOW, DON'T TELL

Data visualisation has transformed the way companies compile their reports.

Visualising key information allows the report to **tell a story, helping the reader to connect the dots**. This can vary from basic pie charts, infographics and graphs to heat maps, tree maps, area charts, dot distribution maps and wedge stack graphs.

THE FUTURE OF DESIGN

Artificial intelligence (AI) is taking every industry by storm, and the design world is no different.

Designers can access AI platforms that allow them to customise logos, generate AI imagery or manipulate existing imagery to meet their design needs by simply inserting descriptive prompts. The rise of such platforms has enabled designers to **unlock creativity and improve efficiency**.

THE RIGHT PARTNER FOR YOUR REPORTING NEEDS

WHY YOU SHOULD REPORT

Reporting on company performance is important for mitigating reputational risk and being a responsible corporate citizen. It is also a regulatory requirement for many companies. However, **reporting on performance is not just about ticking off the right boxes**. Every company, listed or unlisted, has a broad impact on society beyond its investors. Authentic reporting allows companies to build a culture of transparency and accountability for internal and external stakeholders.

Once you have identified your reporting needs, it is time to find a partner that will help you meet those needs.

A GOOD MATCH

When looking for the right partner to execute your reporting needs, you want a partnership that equates to 1+1=2, i.e., brings **synergy**. You need a company that will be more than just a supplier. You want to **collaborate with a company that understands your goals** and is committed to helping you achieve them.

This is a partner that values **excellence and respect**, no matter the size of the project or the client. A collaborator that treasures building **long-lasting relationships** with all its clients. You need a partner with extensive experience in local and international stakeholder communication and a reputable clientele.

You want to partner with a company that embraces **creativity and innovation**. A partner that dares to take on the challenge of creating a reporting experience that exceeds expectations. A partner that can help you realise anything that you can imagine. A partner like GreymatterFinch.

THE ONE-STOP SHOP

At GreymatterFinch, we want your reporting journey to be seamless. This includes catering for all aspects of end-to-end reporting. We will work with you from planning the project right through to the completion of your report. **GreymatterFinch is by your side**, from determining what and how to report to ensuring that the report, in its printed and digital forms, reaches stakeholders.

GreymatterFinch will help your company **build a solid reporting suite**, including financial, integrated and sustainability reporting, and supplementary products and services that **maximise your investment** in interim and annual reporting.

NEWS IN FOCUS

[How companies will have to report on ESG globally explained – Bloomberg](#)

Countries and regions are creating their own reporting rules on environmental, social and corporate governance reporting. The European Union recently announced its new reporting standards that companies will adhere to from 2024. This article provides insight into the different regulatory paths that are emerging.

[Corporate social responsibility is more than just charity – here's why it's good for business – Entrepreneur](#)

Executives who do not consider integrating CSR into their decision-making fabric risk alienating stakeholders, damaging their brands, and eroding their competitive positions. This article explores the CSR elements that executives need to factor in.

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