<http://combadi.com>, <http://www.theverge.com>

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How do they effectively use space, size, or balance?

<http://combadi.com>

Space:

Lots of negative space, cool colors, feels relaxing, like flying over mountains in the air. Not cluttered, main focus is “come back different” with bird that will take you wherever that is that you’re going. Room to fly around. Lots of air, I can breathe.

Size:

Main thing you see is large bold letters and bird, not much distraction from that, makes you think “hmmm, how will I be different? Maybe I should check it out!” although mountains are bigger they’re much lighter, don’t take away from bold letters.

Balance:

If the mountains were any darker they would be too heavy and throw off the balance. The bold letters and bird are not quite in the center, keeping it interesting, Nothing really takes away from the main letters and bird.

The M, B, S pop up when you roll over them, not evenly to the middle, keeping it interesting. Perhaps they could be a bit more clear on what the M,B,S is but I was happy to see their vacations organized by mind, body, soul, like at top right. Interesting. Made me curious.

How can they benefit from a reexamination of size, space, or balance?

For the three menus that pop up, mind, body, soul, I can’t really see the words, mind, body, soul unless I scroll down just a bit. I like the way they have the light, small print “challenge your”, then Mind in bold, etc. But I had to work to find that, probably not so good. Move it up just a bit? Perhaps put Mind, Body, Soul on those small colored tabs that pop up? It’s also odd how you click on the name of the co. in the top left corner (which seems to be the place where they all put that, the place it’s expected to be) it takes you back to the same page. Guess I was expecting something different.

<http://www.theverge.com>

How do they effectively use space, size, or balance?

Space:

They use it all, every bit of it. It’s exciting and colorful, makes me think I better read it. The page is very symmetrical although it doesn’t look like it. Topics across the top turn red, if you click you get more pictures in squares. If it’s too much work to figure out the stories from the colors you can click top right square (square again!) and get top stories in words, no bold texts, it’s like they know you might want to just read and not be attacked by all the colors and white headlines on darker backgrounds.

Size:

Big, in your face. “we will assault you with color and headlines, or you can read calmer text, or scroll down you (under the fold!) for video!”

Balance:

Nicely balanced but you don’t realize it at first. The different size squares are the same on both sides but doesn’t seem like it.   
  
I like the way the big logo on top left is just hanging out a bit to the left, not lined up with all the other things. Kind of stands out, and it’s bright red. Makes me want to push it to the right, but wouldn’t be as interesting. I do notice it.

How can they benefit from a reexamination of size, space, or balance?

I might say it’s a bit cluttered but wherever you are on page gets highlighted, red for words, different colors, kind of becomes tonal, with two colors! So it really does keep you organized as you go through it even thought it’s pack full.

After you get past the first page, scroll down past the video page, it becomes a mess. I expect it to keep being buzzy, colorful, but down there it is not. I would never make it past the first page stories. I become annoyed by too much video. My expectations are high from this first page! If they don’t keep it up I’m a bit disappointed.

What makes the two sites different?

First site is very cool, calming, not a lot of contrast except for the focus (bird and center text ) Lots of negative space, very light mountains, feels spacious, airy.  
  
Second site is a riot of color and contrast. The colors are warm, even the cool colors have warm undertones. The white text stands out on the darker background. It’s cluttered but organized. Very clear what to do, doesn’t make me think about how to get what I want.

What is similar in both that appeals to me?

They both create a mood using color, contrast, and balance. The bird and text are balanced over the mountains, flying over them.

The colorful site is exciting, buzzy, but not intimidating.