

## **Basic Design Principles for non-designers**

Alignment makes the difference between a professional and amateurish design. Within the reading, the section on alignment made the biggest impact on me. I don't consider myself an artistic person so even when I recognize that something doesn't look right I struggle to pinpoint what exactly needs to be changed. Lining up the elements of the page is a really simple design pattern that seems obvious once you consider it but it really is the key to making something look professional and ordered. Especially as the page grows in complexity and number of elements increases, alignment is critical for guiding the eyes from one location to another. Simplicity is very pleasing. Alignment allows a web page to have strong cognitive and visual simplicity even if there is lots of information that needs to be conveyed.

One design stood out in the reading above everything. The graphic for Santa Fe Festival of Musica Romantica was my favorite example of using very basic design principles to make a huge difference in appearance and feel. It is night and day between the two versions of the graphic, despite the fact they use the same image, background and color scheme. Aligning everything to the left creates a nice strong line and adding the additional space from the left edge really helps with readability and makes the design look purposeful. The differences in font size give the different headings levels of importance and emphasis. It also uses white space effectively to visually separate the different elements.