

PR 488: INTRO TO VISUAL COMMUNICATION

MORE WEB DESIGN BASICS

PRINT VS. WEB DESIGN

There are a few major differences to remember between print and web design:

- ▶ Different color spaces (CMYK vs. RGB)
- ▶ Different measurement specs (pixels often rule)
- ▶ While space is often fluid, there are a few conventional widths people use (though this changes all the time, it's good to keep up with trends)

COLORS ARE EVERYWHERE, BUT THEY'RE DIFFERENT ON SCREEN

Print design often works in the CMYK color space (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Black). The CMYK color range is often much smaller than the RGB color space used for screen (Red, Green, Blue).

There are some great tools for working with RGB color spaces:

- ▶ Color Picker: colorpicker.com
- ▶ ColorZilla (an extension for eyedropping color): colorzilla.com

THE MIGHTY MIGHTY PIXEL

For most of the time that web design has been around, the pixel has always been the de facto unit of measurement. Don't give a web developer measurements in inches, or font sizes in points – their heads will explode.

You may hear other terms used these days, namely em or rem, which are both relative measurements favored by most web designers these days. But the pixel is best if you're starting out.

- ▶ Pixel to EM converter: pxtoem.com

CONTAIN YOUR AWESOMENESS

Web design uses a few common grids: 12-column or 16-column. 960 pixels used to be the most common width for a website, but these days, with the advent of giant, high-resolution screens, many people start with 1100 or 1200 or even 1440 pixels as a base.

- ▶ 960 Grid (the old-school): <https://960.gs>
- ▶ 1200 Grid: <https://1200px.com>
- ▶ 1440 Grid: <https://1440px.com>

PROTOTYPING

You generally need a map before you go anywhere, right? This is even more important in web design.

A prototype is generally what user experience (UX) folks and web designers use to figure out what goes on a page or template. Prototypes can be as simple as pen and paper or as fancy as digital versions of rectangles (sometimes called high-fidelity prototypes).

Sitemaps are also another tool that help with planning, so you know how the flow of a site goes and what pages are needed.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

When it comes to actually designing, a lot of folks still use Photoshop to build their mockups. If you go this route, definitely use one of the available PSD templates out there for a grid system.

If you produce a design for someone, always make sure to provide a PSD and a few of the assets (like a website logo) to pass on to a coder. Your developers will thank you!