

# Visual Design Essentials

CMPT 363

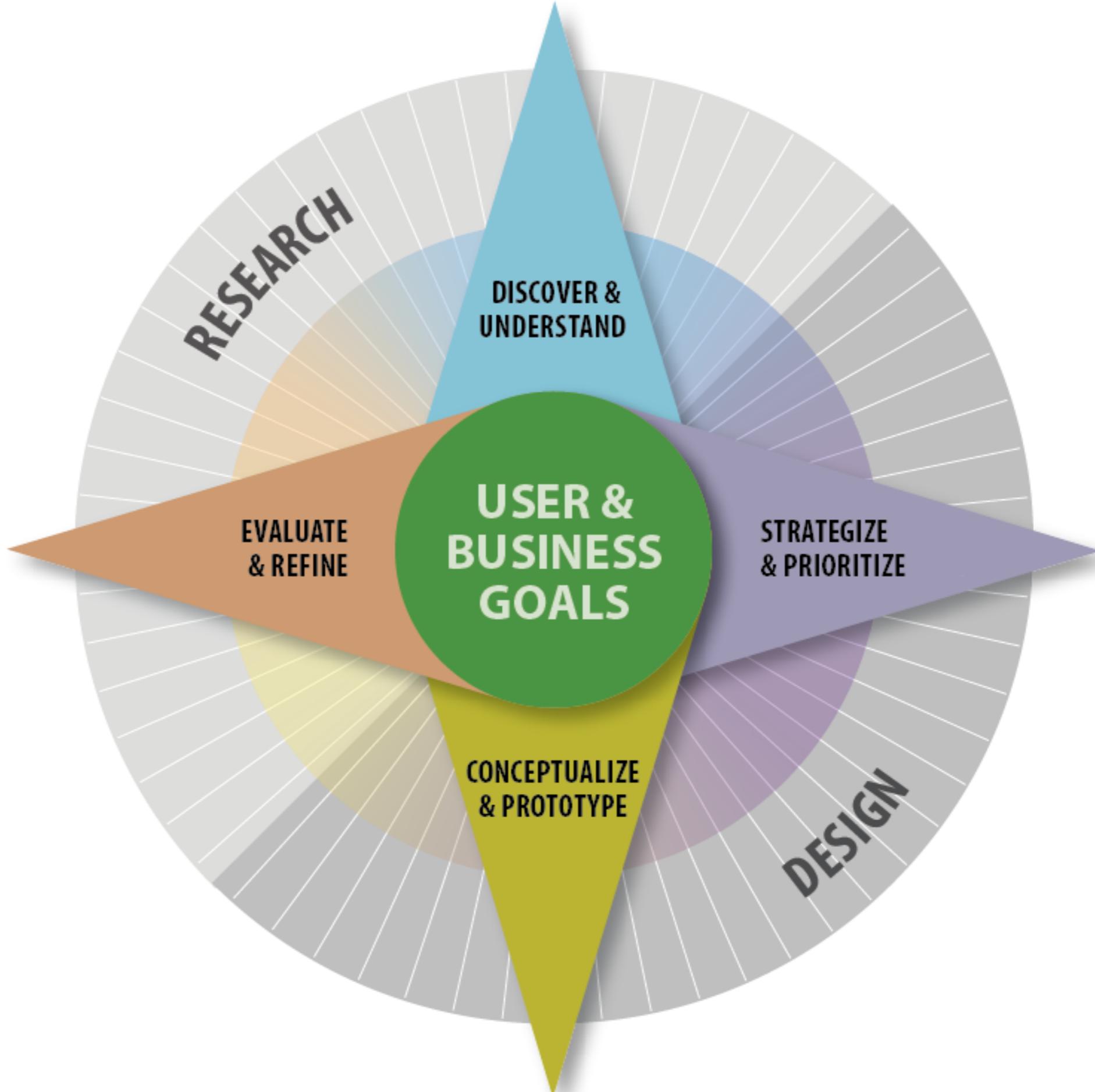
“To design is much more than simply to assemble, to order, or even to edit; it is to add value and meaning, to illuminate, to simplify, to clarify, to modify, to dignify, to dramatize, to persuade, and perhaps even to amuse.”

— Paul Rand

*What are the essentials of  
effective visual  
communication?*



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# Topics to Explore

1. Typography
2. Grouping, Grids, and Visual Hierarchy
3. Visual Design Principles



152635.11

04 : 16 : 57 - 16.2 KCB1 0145 8799-12E

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xb8idEf-lak>

# Visual Design Essentials

Typography

# Typography

Typography is the design, selection, and placement of typefaces for communication

# TYPOGRAPHY

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?  
time\\_continue=1&v=sByzHoiYFX0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=sByzHoiYFX0)

# Typeface Classes

Class	Dates to	Distinguishing Features	Sample
Blackletter	Early 1400s	Based on the script used in Europe before the Gutenberg press was invented	 Fette Frankfur Standard
Humanist also Venetian	Late 1400s	Sloping crossbar on the letter "e" Relatively small x-height	 Adobe Jenson Pro
Old Style also Garalde	Early 1500s	Increased contrast in width of thick and thin stroke lines	 Palantino Standard
Transitional also Neoclassical	Mid 1700s	Contrast in width of thick and thin strokes continue to increase	 New Baskerville Standard
Modern also Classicism	Late 1700s	Contrast continues to grow and the open areas in, for example, the small "e" get small	 Bodini Standard
Slab Serif also Egyptian	Mid 1800s	Size and shape of the serif changes becoming as thick as the main stroke	 Lucida Typewriter Standard
Sans Serif	Early 1900s (developed in the early 19th century but didn't reach prominence until 20th)	First fonts that included no serifs	 Helvetica Standard

# What About Fonts?

A font is a specific rendering (i.e. size, weight, style, etc.) of a typeface. This is the same relationship as a song to a mp3 file.

# Typeface Selection

Big Al's  
Harley-Davidson  
Riding Club

# Typeface Selection



Kansas City  
**CREEP FEST**

October 28–29, 2011

From horror films, to spooks, to treats for your inner ghost or goblin, KC CreepFest will provide you with a hauntingly good time! Gather your friends and summon up your courage, this event is not for the faint of heart.

Film Festival • Schedule • Tricks & Treats • Blood Drive • Volunteer

The 2011 KC CreepFest will take place October 28–29, with screenings at the Tivoli Cinema and Westport Coffeehouse Theatre and event after-parties at participating Westport venues. Horror celebrity Tiffany Shepis will host a Saturday night movie, sign autographs, and emcee the annual Westport Costume Contest at Firefly on Saturday, October 29.

KC CreepFest celebrates the creativity and innovative spirit of the "Best of the Midwest" independent horror filmmakers. The event includes locally produced feature-length and short horror films, classic B-movies, a seminar on micro-budget filmmaking, and a blood drive for the Community Blood Center of Greater Kansas City.

The Tivoli will showcase work by Midwestern horror filmmakers on Friday, October 28 and Saturday, October 29. The film directors and

Film festival

A cartoon illustration of a round, pale face with large, bulging eyes, a wide-open mouth showing sharp teeth, and a single tear falling from its eye. It has small brown ears and is holding a small, dark, circular object. To the right of the face is a stylized, dark, jagged shape resembling a mountain or a shadow.

# Typeface Selection

**BE *VERY VERY*  
CALM. NOW.**

# Typeface Selection



# Selecting Typefaces

- Context (i.e. environment)
- Legibility (i.e. for individual characters)
- Readability (i.e. for blocks of text)

# Tips about Selecting Typefaces

- Stick with classic combinations (check out [fontsinuse.com](http://fontsinuse.com))
- Limited palette (i.e. often only 2 different typefaces)
- Consider your planned visual hierarchy

# Typeface Anatomy



# Type Measurement

72 points = 1 inch

6 picas = 1 inch

12 points = 1 pica

# Kerning, Tracking, and Leading



# Leading: Before and After

## 11 pt / 13.2 pt leading

Itatius de re vernatem quam rem illecum as est, opta aut inciument dolorit, comnihilit audande stemporro tempel esto dolut adi volum aut eniandandi te volorernatem quia dolor sequis as di omnist, optae liciissed modist dolecte sam, sint.

## 11 pt / 15 pt leading

Itatius de re vernatem quam rem illecum as est, opta aut inciument dolorit, comnihilit audande stemporro tempel esto dolut adi volum aut eniandandi te volorernatem quia dolor sequis as di omnist, optae liciissed modist dolecte sam, sint.

## 11 pt / 10 pt leading

Itatius de re vernatem quam rem illecum as est, opta aut inciument dolorit, comnihilit audande stemporro tempel esto dolut adi volum aut eniandandi te volorernatem quia dolor sequis as di omnist, optae liciissed modist dolecte sam, sint.

figure 3

# Activity: Typography Analysis

Analyze the use of typography of (the responsively designed) [microsoft.com](https://microsoft.com).

Consider the factors of typeface selections with regards to **context** (i.e. environment), **legibility** (i.e. for individual characters), and **readability** (i.e. for blocks of text).

Also be on the lookout for **kerning** (space between pairs of characters), **tracking** (spacing of multiple characters), and **leading** (spacing between lines).

# Time for Questions & Discussion

- What we've covered so far
  - Typeface classifications
  - Typeface fonts
  - Typeface selection
  - Type anatomy
  - Type measurement
  - Kerning, tracking, and leading
- Coming up
  - Grouping, grids, and visual hierarchy

# Visual Design Essentials

Grouping, Grids, and Visual Hierarchy

# Grouping

Grouping similar or related elements on the screen can help viewers locate information most important to them.

# Principles of Grouping (Gestalt Laws)

The Gestalt laws of grouping are a set of principles in cognitive psychology, which attempt to account describe how people tend to organize visual elements into groups.



The Astounding

## Phi Effect

Illusory movement  
created only with the  
power of light!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LlzuJqZ797U>

# Grids

By segmenting a screen using invisible grid lines you can more easily both organize and present content. While sometimes subtle, the use of grids can also help content appear more refined in nature.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkqTilETlhE>

# Visual Hierarchy

Visual hierarchy is the organization and prioritization of content in order to improve the communication of that content

# Aspects of Visual Hierarchy

- Size
- Color
- Alignment
- Whitespace

# Typographic Hierarchy: Before

The Temptations & The Four Tops  
Wednesday, June 26, 2013  
8:00 pm  
When The Temptations took the stage over 40 years ago their stunning harmonies and tight choreography combined with excellent leads created a legend. The Temptations made musical history with their string of fabulous pop and funk hits in the sixties and seventies, and they managed to weather a steady stream of changes in personnel and consumer tastes to be able to continue the history.

Steve Martin and the Steep Canyon Rangers  
Sunday, July 28, 2013  
7:30 pm  
Steve Martin and the Steep Canyon Rangers, featuring Edie Brickell will perform songs from their album *Love Has Come for You* as well as songs from *Rare Bird Alert* and other new tunes. The new collaboration, *Love Has Come for You*, is set for release on April 23 on Rounder Records.

The Avett Brothers  
Friday, August 16, 2013,  
8:00 PM  
The Avett Brothers will perform their smash hit *I and Love and You* along with the rest of their latest album. In the wake of the album's release, the Avett Brothers made the rounds on late-night TV, including appearances on the Late Show with David Letterman, The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson, and Late Night with Jimmy Fallon.

# Typographic Hierarchy: After

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# Activity: Grouping, Grids and Visual Hierarchy

## PROJECT GROUP

Analyze the use of groups (Gestalt Laws), grids and visual hierarchy of SFU's myExperience Web app

### Gestalt Laws:

- Proximity
- Similarity
- Closure
- Continuity

# Time for More Questions & Discussion

- What we've covered so far
  - Grouping
  - Grids
  - Visual hierarchy
- Coming up
  - Visual design principles

# Visual Design Essentials

## Visual Design Principles

# Visual Design Principles

- Alignment
- Proximity
- Repetition
- Contrast

# Alignment

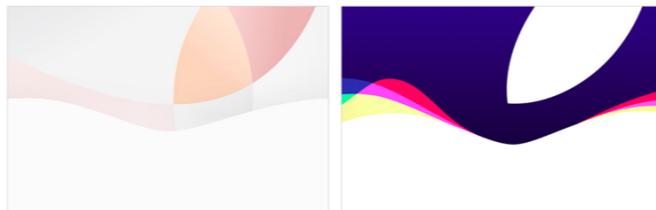
Alignment refers to items on a page being lined up with each other

# Effective Alignment

Primarily use only one type of alignment (e.g. left, right, centered) on a single page



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March 21, 2016

Check out our live event and watch the introduction of the stunning 9.7-inch iPad Pro, beautiful new bands for Apple Watch, and iPhone SE — the most powerful 4-inch phone ever.

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September 9, 2015

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Apple WWDC 2015 Keynote Address  
June 8, 2015

See the announcement of Apple Music, get a preview of OS X El Capitan and iOS 9, and learn what's next for Apple Watch and developers.

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Apple Special Event  
September 2014

From the launch of Apple Watch to the arrival of iPhone 6 to a live performance from U2, this is an event not to be missed.

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# Apple Special Event

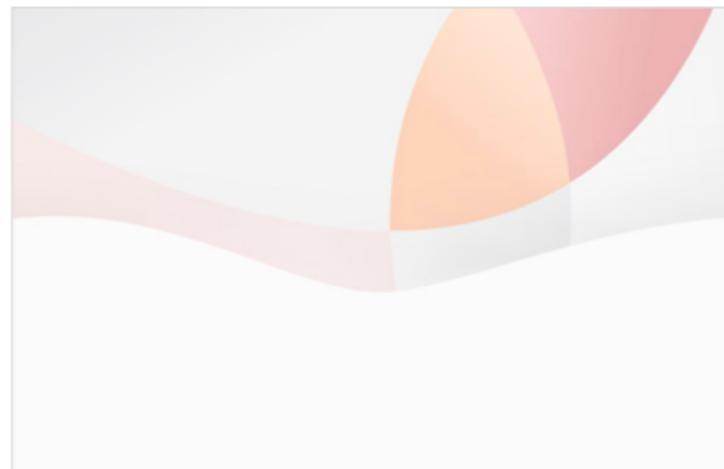
June 13, 2016

At WWDC we made lots of major announcements. iOS 10 is our biggest release yet, with incredible features in Messages and an all-new design for Maps, Photos, and Apple Music. With macOS Sierra, Siri makes its debut on your desktop and Apple Pay comes to the web. The latest watchOS offers easier navigation and a big boost in performance. And the updated tvOS brings expanded Siri searches.

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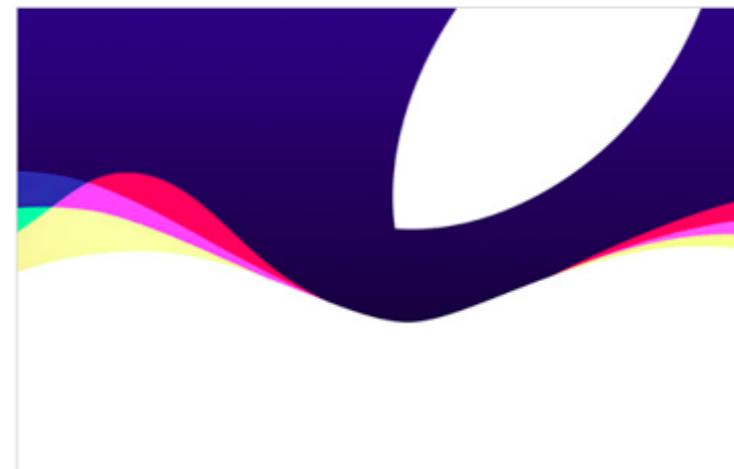
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# Effective Alignment

While centered alignment easily provides visual balance, it is also less visually strong and can make multiple lines of text harder to read than other forms of alignment

# iPad Pro

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Public betas now available.

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IDC Analyze the Future

"Microsoft continues to rewrite the company's playbook with its Azure platform, and unorthodox partners, supported technologies, and interoperability have become the mantra for Azure and, increasingly, for Microsoft overall."

- Azure Expands Application Support Options, IDC, Oct 5, 2015

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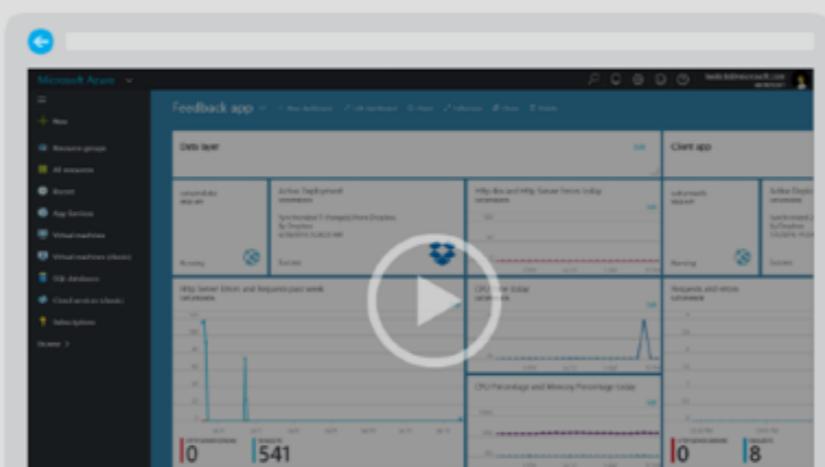
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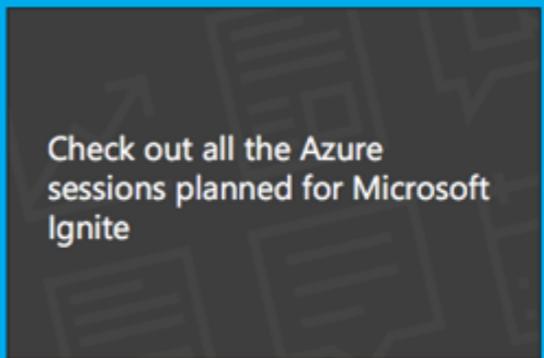
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# Effective Alignment

Align horizontal elements, avoiding up/down/up/down situations, along an invisible baseline

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<sup>1</sup> Feature, app, and content availability and experience may vary by region and device.

<sup>2</sup> Games, accessories, and media content sold separately. Limited number of games available in 2016 support cross-device play; additional games to follow. DirectX 12 only available with supported games and graphics chips. Check PC to determine graphics chip compatibility.

<sup>3</sup> Streaming functionality available in supported games; stream to one device at a time; streaming with multiplayer from Xbox One requires home network connection and Xbox Live Gold membership (sold separately). Xbox One Backward Compatibility feature works with select Xbox 360 games, see <http://www.xbox.com/backcompat>. Xbox Live and broadband internet required for initial download of game to console.

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# Proximity

Proximity refers to the relationships that can be communicated between items on a page, based on how close they are to each other

# Effective Proximity

Place objects that have strong relationships with each other close to each other

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iPhone



iPad



Mac



Apple ID



iTunes

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Apple TV



Apple Music



Apple Pay



iPod



iCloud



AirPort + Wi-Fi



Pro Apps



AppleCare

# Effective Proximity

Perform a ‘squint test’ to help gauge proximity effectiveness by closing one eye, and then squinting the other eye until the page is out of focus

Be careful of too many visual groups, or equal spacing everywhere with the result of no visual focal point

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Apple Watch



iPhone



iPad



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Apple ID



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Apple TV



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iPod



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Pro Apps



AppleCare

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# Time for More Questions & Discussion

- What we've covered so far
  - Alignment
  - Proximity
- Coming up
  - Repetition

# Repetition

Repetition refers to the repeated use of particular design elements on a page, and also between pages

# Effective Repetition

Reuse visual design elements (e.g. color, font, graphics, layout, etc.) to help communicate a sense of design unity

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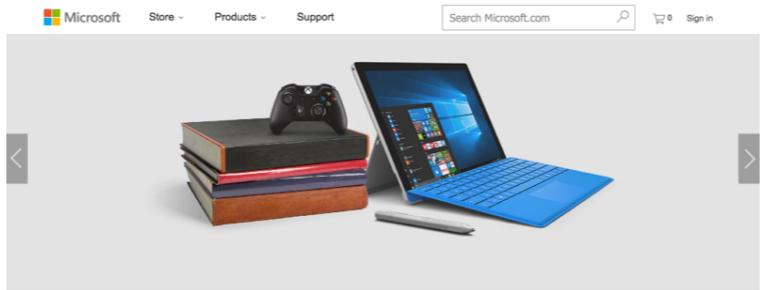


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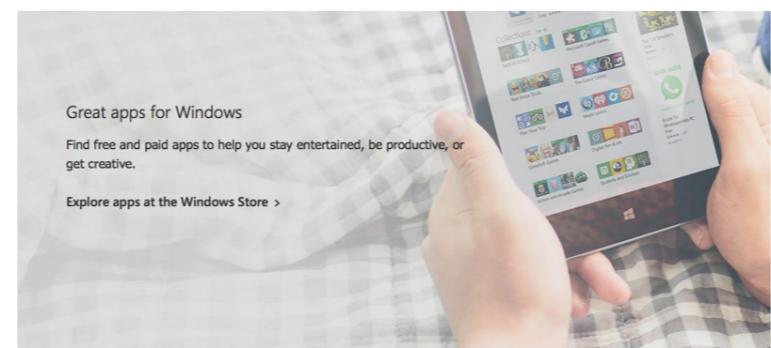
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# Contrast

Contrast refers to how much visual difference there is between various items on a page

# Effective Contrast

Use contrast to provide a visual hierarchy, and help guide the viewer's eye around a page

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MCC: Content Creator  
Writes Great Content



Nathan Roberts (SunkNath)  
MCC: Content Curator  
Knows Helpful Content



tincanguy  
First Answer  
Rising Star

# Effective Contrast

If two items (fonts, graphics, etc.) are different then make them clearly visually distinct, otherwise make them identical



Mac

iPad

iPhone

Watch

TV

Music

Support



MacBook

Design

Wireless

OS X

Built-in Apps

Tech Specs

Buy

# One of the best things about a Mac is everything you can do with it.

Every Mac comes with a collection of great apps for things you do every day, like Safari for surfing the web, Photos for managing your photos and videos, Pages for creating documents, Numbers for making spreadsheets, and Keynote for preparing presentations. There are apps for sending email and text messages, taking notes, and staying up to date with your contacts and calendar. It even comes with the Mac App Store for finding new apps. Your Mac is more than fully featured, it's fully loaded.



Photos



iMovie



GarageBand



Pages



Numbers



Keynote



# Effective Contrast

Use contrast to bring focus to the most important elements of a page. Again, a ‘squint test’ can help gauge contrast effectiveness



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Microsoft

# Visual Design Principles

- Check alignment
- Group similar items together
- Create repetitive elements
- Use contrast appropriately (esp. visual hierarchy)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=admflU5UkUs>

# Activity: Visual Design Principles

## PROJECT GROUP

Review SFU's myExperience Web app in relation to the following:

- Alignment
- Proximity
- Repetition
- Contrast

# Summary

- Typography
- Grouping, Grids, and Visual Hierarchy
- Visual Design Principles
  - Alignment
  - Proximity
  - Repetition
  - Contrast

# References and Suggested Books

- The Non-Designers Web Book by Robin Williams
- Visual Usability: Principles and Practices for Designing Digital Applications by Tania Schlatter

# Image Credits

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