Good design matters

 By Ryan Boyington

Graphic and Web Designer

Strategic Initiatives Department

Town of Caledon

Every business ? whether small or large ? has a public image.

From your business card to your website, design matters.

Graphic design is the presentation of ideas and information in a clear, visually-engaging manner. People gravitate to well-designed presentations and communications. Poor graphic design can have disastrous consequences for your message, product or brand. Good design, however, adds credibility, inspires trustworthiness and makes communicating your message much more powerful.

Some insider tips

Good design is more than just pretty pictures. It's strategy!

Good graphic design can help simplify and humanize complex communications. Design strategy communicates an organization's objectives in a meaningful way that moves design beyond just aesthetics. Good graphic design is simple, compelling and inspires action. Tip: Sometimes less really is more. Strive for simple language and clean layouts.

Colour matters

Colour is an important element of graphic design. Colour can be applied to any element, changing it dramatically. It can be used to make an image stand out, to show linked text on a website, and to evoke emotion. Experienced graphic designers know how to combine expertise with colour theory. Tip: Colour can work against you sometimes. For example, red letters on a black background are difficult to read. Try to choose colours that complement each other.

The psychology of typography

Font selection should never be an arbitrary process. There is an inherent psychology associated with fonts. Every font communicates to us on both a conscious and subconscious level. Designers don't think of typography as simply headlines and body copy. They use it as strategic design element. Tip: Don't overload your design with too many different typefaces.

Good web design equals

design + usability + accessibility

Responsive web design is critical because mobile traffic now accounts for more than half of total internet traffic. Did you know that if your website is not considered mobile friendly it could appear lower in Google results when searched for from a mobile device? The web is a rapidly changing landscape and designers in this space must keep pace with these changes. Tip: Go surfing. Find sites that look great on your phone and on your desktop. Let your favourites become the foundation for your site.

Layout - a skilled balancing act

The primary objective of any page you design, whether it's for a printed brochure or the latest web app, is to communicate information clearly and effectively to the audience. Skilled designers will know how to apply layout grids, focal points, rule of thirds, white space, hierarchy, scale, contrast and harmony for design success. Tip: White space is your friend. Don't feel compelled to fill every inch of space with words or pictures. There is power in letting your content breathe in whitespace on the page.

The value of visual communications

More people remember what they ?see and read? and ?see and hear? far more than what they just read or hear. Effective graphic design can be applied through all visual avenues to enhance and improve your marketing and communications.

Engage. Inform. Persuade with good graphic design