

"The very next day, Maria sent me a **layout that achieved the goals** I wanted, way below budget!"

Roger C. Parker

www.designtosellonline.com

AT A GLANCE

Why be consistent?

Consistency gives uniformity to your design. It is a deliberate use of type, color and certain graphic elements to control your reader and keep his attention focused on your content.

CONTACT INFO

Maria G. Nozza

5785 Brunetiere
Montreal, QC
H1S 1B5 CA

Telephone:

514 256-0134

Email:

mgnozza@mac.com

Profiting from consistency

Consistency creates a foundation for your design giving you an air of professionalism and authority.

Consistency is boring, isn't it? This is a popular misconception. We equate consistency with negativity: boredom, repetitiveness, and being static.

I equate it with many positive things. It creates a sense of belonging for all the various and otherwise separate components of your piece.

Consistent use of fonts, colors, graphic and layout elements, create a "brand" for your company. When properly used, it will create a unique "look" for you. It will make people remember you.

Consistency is the glue that unifies your piece. It ties together all the elements and controls the progression of the reader through your piece and helps keep his attention.

Let's examine how we can use "boring" and "old" consistency to dramatically increase our bottom-line and give an air of dependability and professionalism to our clients.



Top 10 ways to consistency efficiency

1. Use same margins throughout

Decide what margins will be applied to your document and then make sure that you use those for the whole document. You should also make sure to use the same paragraph styles throughout.

2. Use a grid

The grid provides an invisible foundation to guide where you place all the various components of your piece. Even though it's not printed, it's use is evident in the widths of columns, uniformity of white space and consistent placement of graphic elements. Grids are very flexible and don't create boring static designs.

3. Consistent white space

Often referred to as "negative space" this is the space between graphic elements. Making good use of white space is what creates an aesthetically pleasing design and gives a professional image to your publication. Too little white space or uneven distribution of white space is what leads to visual chaos and clutter.

Good Design is all about the details — and the **consistent use of them.**

TIPS

- Use the same font treatments for body type, headlines, subheads, etc...
- Use the same graphic rule at the top of all pages in your document.
- Repeating elements like page numbers should always be in the same place on all the pages.

Symmetrical (and even asymmetrical) designs rely on a grid. Invisible when printed, it helps ensure the correct placement of all the graphic elements and ensures **continuity, balance and consistency.**

4. Use color schemes

Ever notice that corporate companies usually use very few colors? Pick a few complimentary colors and then use these consistently in your documents.

5. Use type styles

Use the same type size, styles and line spacing throughout your document. Using variations will only confuse your audience and look out of place. Your readers like and expect consistency.

6. Establish type hierarchy

Decide at the onset how the headlines, subheads and body text are going to look and then maintain the same look throughout.

Achieving type hierarchy is easy: it's done through type weight, which reflects and leads your reader through the different levels in your copy. Its purpose is to create contrast.

7. Same punctuation rules

Another important choice is deciding which typographic and spelling rules you will follow. Will you be following the American standard or the British? Will you add a little space after the em dash? Once the decision has been made, use it always and consistently.

8. Repeating elements

There are graphic elements (example: a line at the top of a page) that are used throughout the document, make sure that they are always used in the same position, type and size.

9. Use either clip arts or photos

When deciding what graphics to use in your document, the question should also be whether you will want clip arts, illustration or photos. It rarely looks good to mix different styles.

10. Create a theme

The way to create a theme is by first determining what “look” you are going for. Then, by making consistent use of bold fonts, colors, rules, bullets, and images you create a theme. This theme is in reality your brand. You want to make a conscious effort to unify all the different components into a concept. The goal of any design is cohesion.

To learn more

Good design is all about the details: no matter how small. To find out more on how I can provide you with a fresh perspective on your design challenges and get more done in less time, visit my website www.mygraphicsnotebook.com or call me at 514 256-0134.



Powerful publications make use of grids. The larger the number of units of grid there are, the more design freedom you have.