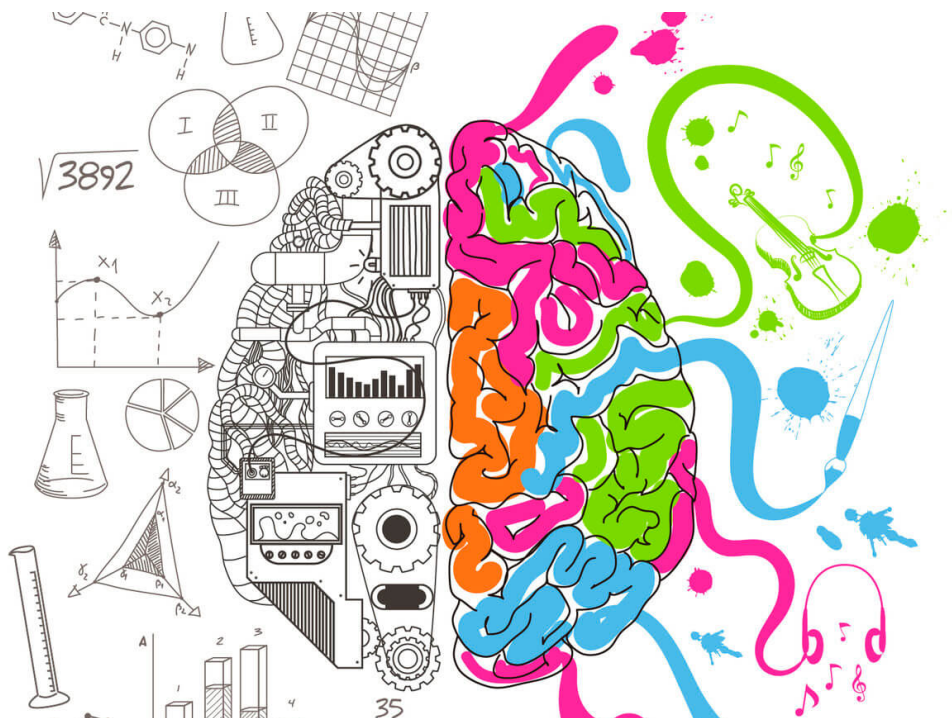


Exploring the Psychology of Design



THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGY IN DESIGN

“A designer who doesn't understand human psychology is going to be no more successful than an architect who doesn't understand physics.” — Joe Leech

...And rightly so. So how does one understand design psychology? Simply put, design psychology is a culmination of neuroscience, cognitive psychology, social psychology and human computer interaction that approaches user experience design through the lens of human behaviour.

The best thing about Design is that it communicates and calls for a reaction from users. User Experience is defined around various design experiences. The design platform is a vast vessel considering creating experiences that can run beyond the scope of application. To make design

a standard, relatable and definite experience, certain psychology principles are derived that designers should abide by.

In the light of these design psychology principles, designs can be decoded to create experiences that can be applied and interpreted as norms. Creating in the framework of design psychology helps to connect to clients as well as consumers equally and they understand the relevance of design output. There are various design principles, but the most universally acceptable and followed are listed here.

Jakob's Law of Internet User Experience

Jakob's Law refers to the **Principle of usability** as described by Jakob Nielsen, Co-founder, NN Group. This law recommends use of familiar



WHY REINVENT THE WHEEL WHEN YOU CAN REUSE IT?

patterns in design, in order to facilitate user experience, because users prefer it when a site works in the same way as all the other sites they already know. The mental model plays a pivotal role in design.

Hick's Law

"The more the merrier" does not apply under Hick's law. Hick's law is about taking a conservative and decluttered approach to make design simple and hence actionable. According to the law, the more the options you present to your consumers, the more time they take to decide making a choice.

Sites with minimalist designs appear promising, but how about their usability? What about sites that are heavy on content, how are those aligned and captured under Hick's law? It is the designer's skill to chunk and navigates the options under a smart infrastructure architecture, yet make the design appear simple and purposeful.

Psychology of Persuasion

The Psychology of persuasion very strongly and aptly captures the consumer responses bringing them to a call for action. The triggers introduced by persuasion are intriguingly response-oriented and therefore adapted by many designers.

Reciprocity: Reciprocity is creating indebtedness such that the consumer is obliged and comes back to shop. E.g. Offers and free vouchers.

Authority: Authority is making use of authoritative figures or celebrity endorsements to capture consumer interest.

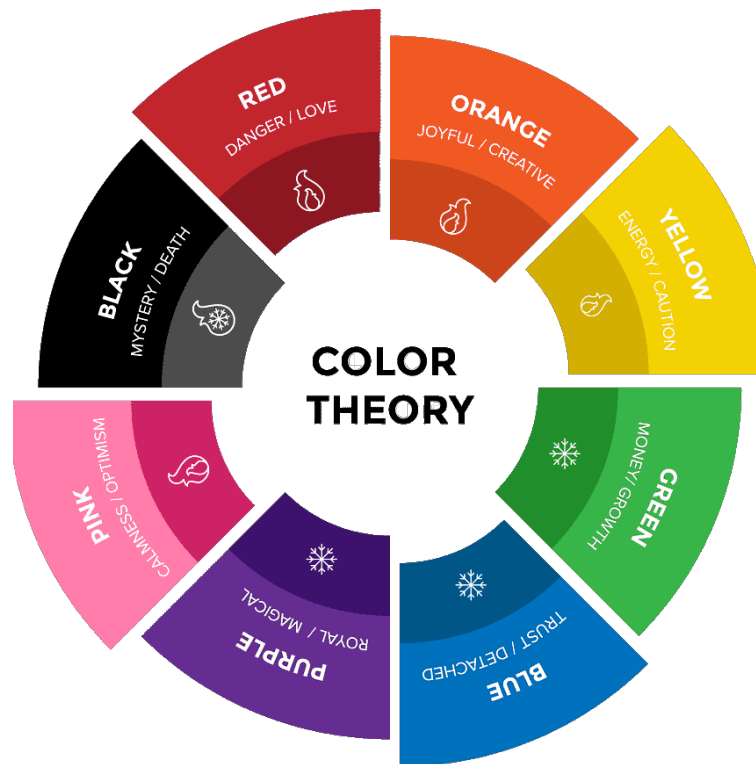


Designers make use of colour and shape to create visually compelling designs that engage and impact.

Scarcity: Creating a deprived environment, which in turn triggers consumers to act fast. Timed sales, limited offers, stock clearances all work around the scarcity law.

Psychology of Colours: Ask *Why* - Why blue? Why monochrome? Why avoid red over blue? Why purple and red are a big no-no! What is your intent? What is your purpose behind the design? Who is your target audience and what are their buying behavioural patterns? As a brand what do you wish to communicate to your audience?

Colours come to influence the design and inspire a call to action. The deep and interesting psychology of colours can be adapted to convey brand value or to trigger sales. For example, Corporates' rely on blue colour symbolising professionalism and trust. Luxury and high-end products make the use of purple, while bold brands make their statement with Black.



COLOR PSYCHOLOGY - DECODED

Colours are strategically placed to create a call for action. Different colours have different impacts on the individual's mind and help trigger or curtail actions. It is important to remember that:

Red. Associates with passionate, strong, or aggressive feelings. It is symbol for both good and bad feelings including love, confidence, passion and anger.

Orange. An energetic and warm colour brings the feelings of excitement.

Yellow. This is the colour of happiness. It symbolises the sunlight, joy and warmth.

Green. The colour of nature. It brings calming and renewing feelings. Also, may signify inexperience.

Blue. It often represents some corporate images. It usually shows calm feelings but as a cool colour it also associates with distance and sadness.

Purple. Long associated with royalty and wealth since many kings wore purple clothes. It's also a colour of a mystery and magic.

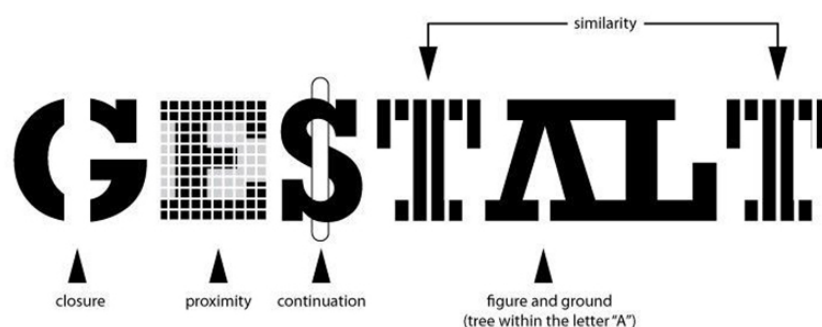
Black. The colour has a great number of the meanings. It associates with a tragedy and death. It signifies a mystery. It can be traditional and modern. Everything depends on how you employ it and which colours go with it.

White. It means purity and innocence, as well as wholeness and clarity.

Psychology of Shapes: Like Colours, our subconscious mind also reacts to different shapes by relating different qualities to different shapes. These are usually memory-based visual interpretations that we associate with certain qualities and have deep-set in our mind.

Gestalt Principles of Visual Perception

The Gestalt principle of perception states that elements placed together are perceived as one. The Gestalt Principle is narrowly classified under different principles:



GESTALT Principles Of Design

Law of Symmetry: This design aspect uses symmetry in design to capture user experience.

Law of Proximity: Elements, when placed in closed proximity, gives the appearance of a design that is bold and captivating.

Law of Similarity: Similar objects when placed in closed proximity offer a united feel and this enhances the design in a certain dimension.

Law of Continuity: This law establishes a connection from one object in a design to another under a smooth and unaltered flow. Often represented by curved lines.

Law of Closure: Law of the closure means an incomplete object that is designed to perceive as complete.

Figure & Ground: This is a captivating representation of design where one image can be perceived in different forms.



THIS HIGHLY CREATIVE LOGO IS MADE AS PER THE FIGURE & GROUND LAW, WHERE THE 'ARROW' IS SYMBOLIC OF WHAT THE COMPANY DOES.

Negative Space

Simply put, this refers to leaving white space around our design where the blanks in image will create a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.



Negative space in Red riding hood

In the simplest terms, gestalt theory is based on the idea that the human brain will attempt to simplify and organize complex images or designs that consist of many elements, by subconsciously arranging the parts into an organized system that creates a whole, rather than just a series of disparate elements. Our brains are built to see structure and patterns in order for us to better understand the environment that we're living in.

Visceral Reactions

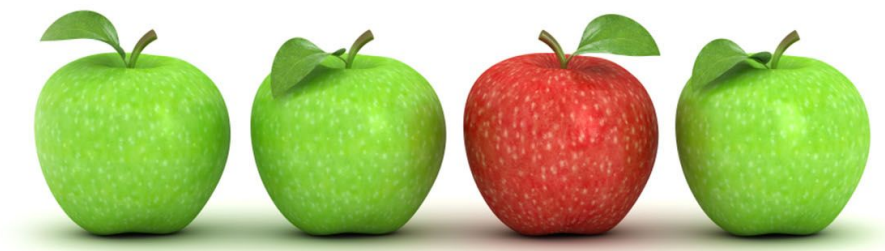
Have you wondered, why you keep visiting a website or an App that often? Think, Instagram, Amazon, Netflix and so on. What is it that these successful Apps/products have in them that have managed to captivate the audience and have them hooked. Is it the product range, the aesthetics, the ease and usability, the minimalistic approach, the highly satisfactory user experience or simply put a memorable association? All

the above experiences contribute to comforting results and hence you would want to get back to these sites often as compared to others. This can be termed as the visceral reaction of the website over you.

Visceral reactions are a stimulus to designs, and keep consumers coming back to your designs. Visceral reactions are highly creative and impactful designs that are explicitly built across user experiences. The elaborate elements like imagery, fonts, colours and graphic are used to enhance the design.

Von Restorff Effect

The Von Restorff Effect was coined by German psychiatrist Hedwig Von Restorff. Von did an experiment and found that when participants were presented with a list of items along with one more distinctive list than the rest, the memory for the item was improved.

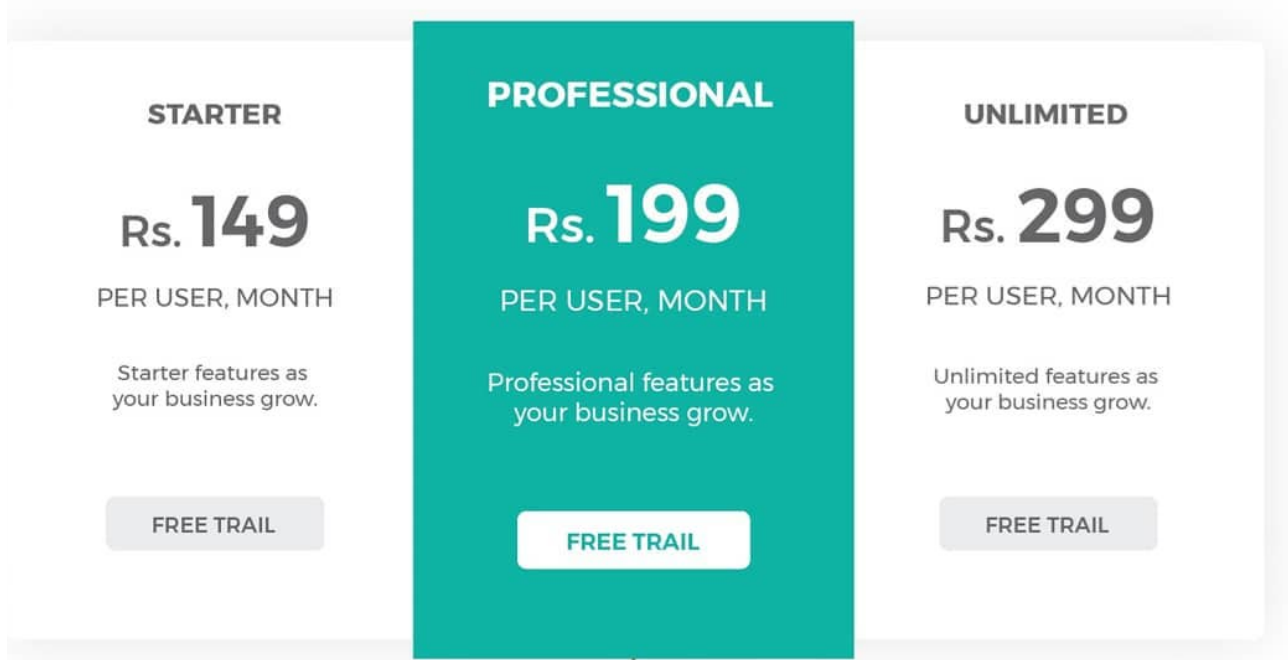


THE ISOLATION EFFECT - DISTINCTIVE ELEMENT AT PLAY

Also known as *The Isolation Effect*, predicts that when multiple similar objects are present, the one that differs from the rest is most likely to be remembered. The design stands by making a visual distinction of an object such that it stands stark in contrast to the others making a

memorable experience. This effect is created by working artistically around highlighting, altering colours, size, font or effect of the object that has to be distinguished to a call-to-action.

Von Restorff effect is usually seen in the call to action buttons that sit stark contrasting to the other elements in the design.



THE VISUAL CONTRAST ENSURES USERS ARE MORE LIKELY TO REMEMBER THE OPTION THAT STANDS OUT THE MOST!

In the above image subtly, people are definitely more likely to look and remember the Professional plan, and may also choose it eventually.

There are many other innumerable principles of design psychology including:

Dual Coding Theory, Pareto Principle, Fitt's Law, Mental Models, Memory Models, Memory Limitations, Selective Disregards and Change Blindness, Cognitive Load, Serial Position Effect etc.

It is a choice of the designer to adapt to a principle that is befitting the consumer and stakeholder demands as well as can trigger a suitable call-for-action. While psychology principles of design help maintain a standard across the industry, it is also easy to make understand the stakeholders of the design element and expected results. These design principles are based around consumer decisions and design expectations and therefore drive towards effectively meeting the goals.