Page Layout

The division of the page into areas in harmony with one another is the heart of all layout design.

Harmony of elements, both positive and negative:
- type sizes (clear visual order)
- printed and unprinted areas (positive & negative spaces)
- text and image various values of gray (across the spectrum of colors you use)

Size can be used to your advantage in well known but effective ways:
- change of expectation—the cat becomes larger than the horse (plays on our expectation of how big things *should* be)
- larger than life—a housefly magnified 100 times; (really small things blown up exceptionally large (visual jolt)

Visual Rhythm is based on the repetition of shapes, values, colors, textures, or any repeated element. The cyclical nature of reality captured in design. minutes, days, hours, seasons, lifetimes—everything has rhythm. A key tool in effective layout. (One art is often used to describe another, its vocabulary usurped.)
- waves lapping against the shore
- the action of wind, sound, heartbeats
- alternating rhythm (every other, like stripes)
- progressive rhythm (ascends and/or descends)

Grid Layout—invisible structure that underlies the page and functions as a guide for the placement of page elements. *(SHOW PHOTOMONTAGE)*
- favorite of Swiss and International typography styles; clean
- thematic harmony
- everything is subservient to the grid!
- sense of real order and readability
- infinite variety
- Illustrator & InDesign have grids (view>show grid); guides; match leading

Path Layout—assumes no underlying structure; a more spontaneous approach. The designer provides an obvious path for the reader's eyes to follow, through a series of steps, so the path the eyes takes, the order of information received (or given) is *strictly* controlled.
- obvious entry point is established (focal point)
- focal point is the first area that attracts attention and encourages the viewer to look further. if we look at something intending to communicate and we do not know where to begin, we are lost and tend to disregard and move on, being bombarded as we are in this 'information age.'
- columnar path
- meandering path
- common element path

Unified Theme—when visual design theme and editorial (intellectual) design themes come together.
- editorial—anything that tells a story related to common topic. The intellectual unity is driven by words & people who write them and wish to communicate

(denote) in a factual, specific, unambiguous way using a common language convention (alphabet).
- visual—something that ties document together visually. For visual communication (connote) the world relies on graphic designers and artists. It's a different part of the brain that notices subtle imagery and nonverbal ques to reinforce, if not directly relay, meaning. (a picture is worth a thousand words)

Figure/Ground Relationships
- stable—unchanging object against background
- reversible—because we cannot simultaneously perceive both images (figure & ground) as figure, we keep switching between them
- ambiguous—a figure made up of another figure(s); our perception shifts between the smaller and larger figure(s).

Balance—asymmetry and symmetry

Gestalt—a successful visual whole. Anything more would be extra; anything taken away would leave a sense that something is missing. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

Some basic tenets of good design in page layout, intended to provide clear understanding of message and congruency of text and images—

Remember, graphic designers do more than just decorate a surface. They work with the fundamental principles of visual perception.

Identify First: Who is your audience? Curtail your design to reach those people. The narrower the audience, the easier it is to identify modalities with which they might identify (i.e. a design for kid's daycare should appeal to young families).

Research what the competition is doing, and consider there market placement and image and see if it's working. Does your client wish to fit in with a status quo or be totally different? Does he want to tap into an existing conservative market or create a sensation?

CONTRAST—a comparison of opposites (without this you can't see anything—white on white) (it needs to be significant)
REPETITION—the use of the same device more than once (echo devices, text, color)
ALIGNMENT—the justification of page elements by positioning along an established line (it should almost always be very legible and easy to decipher quickly, alignment being the primary tool) Non-bleed elements usually maintain a distinctive margin.
POSITIONING (PLACEMENT)—the thoughtful and purposeful positioning of page elements to achieve a high aesthetic but still deliver the message. The balance of beauty and content; harmony of image quality and message legibility—the artist's hand. (*where* everything goes should be meaningful and explainable) To look at the document coming away with the feeling that nothing else needs to be added and nothing removed to make the design complete!

Establish Visual Hierarchy (first read, second read, etc.) The designer lays down a path for the eye to follow. Very little to nothing is left to random chance. (that doesn't mean you shouldn't always be on the lookout for and aesthetically pleasing accident, and have the sense to stop and keep it)

Divide in thirds or fifths (golden mean)
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_ratio
—twice around the neck . . .
—golden rectangles (Mona Lisa)

Nautilus Shell, growth pattern in plants: many cultures have revered the mathematical perfection of nature and try to model it in their work. The Mona Lisa is painted on a rectangle in the proportions of the Golden Mean.

Fibinacci Sequence: http://www.vashti.net/mceinc/golden.htm

Images:
http://images.google.com/images?q=golden+mean&hl=en&client=safari&rls=en-us&um=1&sa=X&oi=images&ct=title

It's really okay to leave up to 2/3 white-space, or more. It's your message. Keep it out of the mud. Make it clear. (Negative space is the same thing as white space.)

Rules should be kept relatively thin (depending on output) and largely uniform. Different stroke weights where they should all be the same

Sample colors and/or use limited palette
—sample colors from photos
—use analogous or complimentary color schemes

Figure/Ground Relationships

No more than 3 font styles per document (this does not include within the family)

No novelty fonts in body copy

No mixing of novelty fonts

No widows and orphans

Top & Bottom see GC100 text Ch4
—and other concepts

Render as little text in Photoshop as possible. Despite the claims in the literature, you should let Photoshop do what it does best—edit photographs. Text prints better to any output device better as vector information from Illustrator or InDesign. I know, there are just some effects you want to use from Photoshop—fine, but use it sparingly.

No non-proportional size changes of text. Skewing is ugly. Find the right font to fit your needs instead of butchering some font out of proportion until it doesn't match its fellows and throws the fung sui of your document all out of whack! Many fonts are now available with large families that let you choose from expanded and condensed, bold and thin, and everything in between. Pro fonts also have special characters (glyphs) and kerning pairs that really look good.

Link to kearning leading & tracking.

Every object on the page has a relationship to every other and must be considered in its context to the whole. That's why changes can be so maddening. Six hours balancing all the elements and making it as superfine as you can (with provided text and images) then they send you three more paragraphs and six more pictures! People try to say too much in one document! Simplify your message and its meaning becomes far more clear than if it's cluttered up with other stuff. The whole is indeed greater than the sum of the parts, but only in the right combination, at the right size, in the right color . . .

When working with clients, it's best to not begin a design project until ALL the materials for a project have been gathered to avoid having to redesign as every time they send you something. If the situation calls for images and text that are forthcoming, create placeholders and predetermine (if you can) image sizes and number of words at a given font size and communicate that to your client. In periodical and newspapers, the framework is designed first and everything must be made to fit it, instead of the other way around. Commercial graphic design is about designing:

- to please someone other than yourself
- to fit the end output device

Yes, these are limits imposed by SOMEONE ELSE on YOUR work! At first a little weird, but when you consider that the more they know about what they want, the faster you can make it all come true—the sooner you get paid and move on to the next project. Everyone has to keep the wolf from the door.

Information Architecture—Designing a document is one thing, writing it is completely another—and an altogether separate fee! Some clients think you're an add agency (like Darren and Larry Tate on *Bewitched*) that will polish up their verbage along with their image with your fancy document design (print or web). Sure, we usually want to tweak it a little (usually to delete something) to fit our imagery or our particular style or slant (theme) for that project, but by and large, the writing should be worked out by the client

to very nearly its final stage, or you should charge a separate fee for making it all fit and making it all make sense! This particular skill crosses over to technical writing

Non-proportional size changes of people should be avoided, with the possible exception of vast changes that won't be mistaken for an accident or neglect. A mirror-reflection of a person (to get them to face a different direction) should also be avoided. It just looks unnatural with right side on the left and vice-versa.

http://www.eff.co.uk/
 >alphabetical list of fonts (at bottom of page) >click on a font and note it's:
- Available font family (small caps, italic, condensed, bold, black, roman)
- Available font formats (PostScript (Type 1), TrueType, Open Type, etc.)—see handout

Don't stroke your text! (except when you know how) (link to 'stroke effect')

Document uniformity both within a single document (like a book or catalog) and with documents published and released in succession. People recognize the look within even having to read the title.

Reference Robin Williams/Paul Rand

Repurposing