The Texas Panhandle... By Design

Principle of Alignment - Corn Fields

A look at the cities, landscapes, and societies in the Texas Panhandle through the lens of the Universal Principles of Design

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Table of Contents

About this document

Texas Panhandle Facts

Debuting in 1983, George Strait's "Amarillo By Morning" rose to Country Billboard's # 4 country song of the year.

About this document

This document covers 8 principles from the Universal Principles of Design and takes a in-depth look at these principles from design elements mostly in the Texas Panhandle. There are a few design elements that needed outside examples, however, a vast majority of these examples (both good and bad) come from the Texas Panhandle.

The document is broken down into 8 sections which covers one principle of design. There are 3 good examples and 2 poor examples provided for each principle. The two indicators showing what example is good and which example is poor is color in blue (good) and red (poor). If there is a business name associated with the poor example, you may see the name blurred out. This document has nothing against any business or person but rather it is just a honest look at the designs that can be found online.

Good Example

Poor Example

The overarching theme of this document is to show that design matters. Who you design for matters. A design, even if it's put together really well, may be judged on it's effectiveness. Just as with Instructional Design, not every student is going to be the same and every training opportunity will be met with challenges of the needs of the learners.

Texas Panhandle Facts

"We expect you all to come to Texas"

"IN THIS FAMILY-FRIENDLY SHOW, set against an authentic tapestry of history, the show's fictional characters bring to life the stories, struggles and triumphs of the settlers of the Texas Panhandle in the 1800's. Song and dance abound-and a generous helping of good ol' Texas humor too-with spellbinding lighting, special fire and water effects, including the Dancing Waters of TEXAS! And nightly fireworks highlight the Grand Finale."

Website: http://www.texas-show.com/#home

Principle of Design: Alignment

According to the Universal Principle of Design, Alignment is the placement of elements such that edges line up along common rows or columns, or their bodies along a common center. With the design principle of Alignment, objects and data can be organized in a manner that is easier for the user to understand. As anyone who is attempting to figure out a series of objects, we attempt to look for a standard of how they are placed and designed. Once the Alignment of the design is in place, a deeper understanding of the content of the material can begin to take place.

The point of using principles of design, such as Alignment, in any design, is so that we can use the design in a means that is necessary for achievement of our goals. If someone is spending a majority of their time attempting to figure out the order of your content rather than comprehending the material itself, this is a sign of a possibly poor design of the material or object.

Every element is connected visually via an invisible line that we create in our minds in order to organize that element. Alignment is about obtaining unity among elements that are grouped together. Whether the objects or elements are close together or far away, there should be some sort of alignment in order to achieve that sound principle of design.

When it comes to design itself, using the principle of Alignment can also add that professional looking finish that you may want. For example, in designing spreadsheets in programs such as Microsoft Excel, there is a need to align content based on what data it is. When you have multiple rows or columns that have a stack of data that needs to be organized, the data needs to be aligned based on the grid in Excel. Columns such as date and time, for example, can be aligned left, center, or right according to the grid. If you have multiple results in your data and each cell contains the date and time is misaligned with each other there can be confusion amongst the reader or user of the content. Aligning the date and time, for instance to the right, creates a nice orderly look in that column and it thus makes it easier to read.

Once the user is able to establish what alignment that particular data was designed by there can be a deeper level of engagement with the material which also increases cognitive though processes in the mind.

As the following examples will demonstrate, adhering to the principle of Alignment can drastically add the desired effect that you need on your design. The desired effect, even besides that merely for aesthetic purposes, can also add functionality. Depending on what your element is , there may be a demand for the use of alignment in order to create the desired functionality of the element itself.

In contrast, if the principle of Alignment is not used, properly or not at all, there is a risk that the user of the content or object may not achieve a high level of understanding with the content. Once user or student achievement has been sacrificed, the overall design is no longer a valid means to convey the message or functionality of the creation. This must be re-reviewed for further success and the alignment principle was be carefully considered.
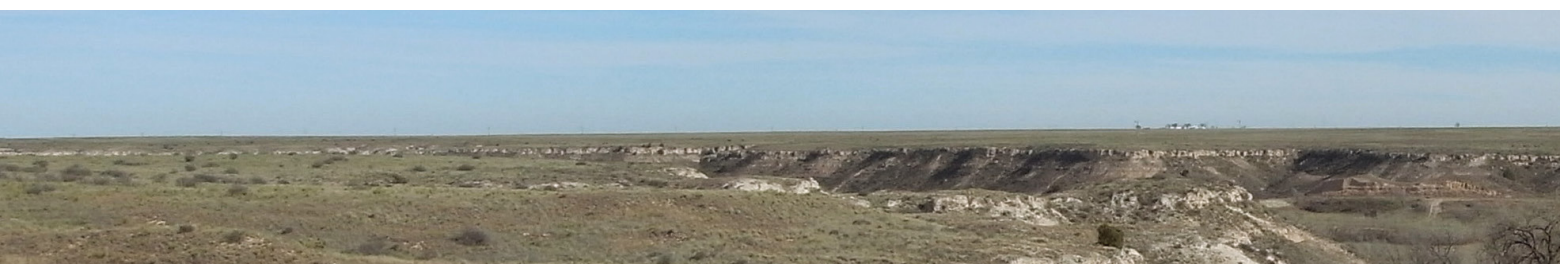
Once you have aligned 2 or 3 elements you have basically established a pattern. The user is now going to start looking for that patter again in your design because the principle has already been established with the user. If elements 1, 2, and 3 are aligned then by logic element 4 should be aligned to those as well. If element 4 is not aligned with the first 3 elements, the user will begin to look for another alignment patter that makes that element fit into the scheme of the design. If that same alignment scheme is not followed throughout the design, user may become confused with all of it.

The implications of Alignment not being followed properly can have dire consequences in regards to the success of your design (i.e. student achievement in a lesson taught or a product being sold on the market that the business needs to be successful with the consumer.

Principle of Alignment - Corn Fields

In the first example of the principle of Alignment, we look at a corn field in the Texas Panhandle. As is depicted in the photo above, there are rows of corn in the entire field. Instead of random piles of corn throughout the field, the farmer has decided to organize the crop into rows, thus using the principle of Alignment.

The principle of Alignment helps achieve at least two major parts in the corn field. First, it provides functionality to the farmer when it comes time to harvest. The corn is much easier to collect when planted in rows instead of a random set of organization. Second, the organized rows of corn based on the principle of Alignment helps the farmer keep track of what he has in the field.

This comes particularly important during harvest time because it can be known whether seeds planted in row 50 produced more corn than row 100. If row 50 did not, then this would help the farmer troubleshoot further knowing what row to look at.

Principle of Alignment - Wind Farms

In the Texas Panhandle, there is no shortage of wind. Due to that fact, several wind farms in the area have been established. As you notice from the above picture of one of the wind farms in the Texas Panhandle, the wind turbines are not randomly placed. They are purposely designed to be aligned with each other.

As wind turbines work, it is important that they run as efficiently as possible to obtain the most amount of wind to operate. Setting up the wind turbines in rows gives functionality of the need for alignment. Alignment, in this case, not only provides a aesthetic flavor but it also provides a means in order for the object to work as it was intended.

Principle of Alignment - Cadillac Ranch

Based in the Texas Panhandle, the Cadillac Ranch has attracted thousands of tourists to the area. When the project as designed, the principle of Alignment was followed. As can be seen in the above picture, the alignment of cars from the ranch can be seen easily. This gives it a aesthetic attribute in that looking at the cars as a group it can be easily discovered that they belong together and have a connection to each car.

Although there's really not a functionality that is needed, the alignment of the cars does allow the viewers to set in their mind how to order that information. If there was a random alignment to the attraction, would it still be as popular? Whenever someone is looking at your design, they will look for clues that the creator new what he was doing. The principle of Alignment gives that clue and makes the creator appear to be more professional.

In contrast, websites of some local businesses in the Texas Panhandle do not always follow the principle of alignment. For example, the website shown above has a center alignment on the entire page. the navigation bar on the left, text in the body, and text in the footer are all center aligned.

There are times to center align elements and text, however, it should not be the entire page. The use of left or right alignment as well come into a well designed website or document.
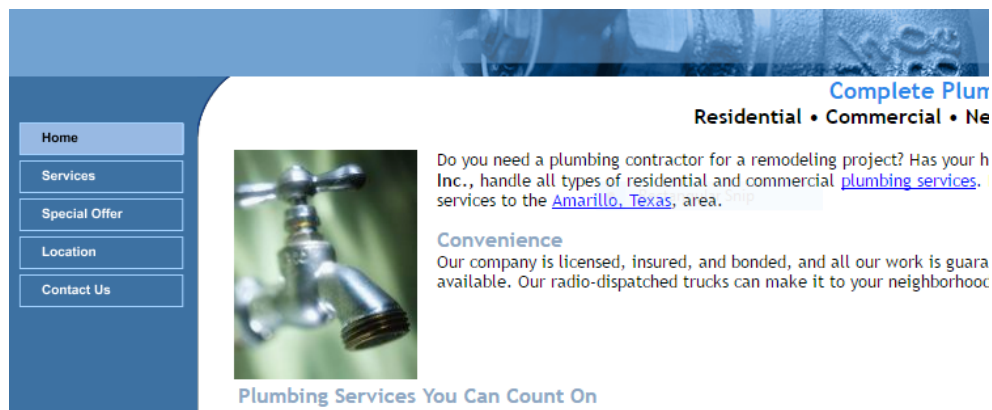
In another example of poor alignment, this local business' website could use some work. It is good that they have incorporated the use of graphics in order to establish the principle of picture superiority, however, the text next to it could be aligned better. The next paragraph that starts under the picture could be aligned on the right of the picture because of all the white space left.

In regards to addition, the navigation bar itself is not really aligned with other elements of the page. By moving up the navigation bar, it would be more aligned with the top of the page.

Principle of Design: Color

By definition, the universal principle of color is defined as a way to attract attention, group elements, indicate meaning, and enhance aesthetics. Elements that have been designed with color in a proper way can have a visually positive impact on the design itself and bring to light certain elements that the creator is trying to portray. On the other hand, if color is overused or brings a overabundant amount of complexity to a design, color can actually have a negative effect and take away from the design. Color can have different meanings to people depending on how their culture or background sees it. Where one culture may see the color Red as danger, another culture may see it the opposite.

Color can give so many different meanings to items that may not have the same powerful message if it was black and white. For example, the flag of the United States of America was designed with the colors Red, White, and Blue. If the color of the design of the flag was not purposely considered, why not choose Green or Yellow? The White in the flag signifies purity and innocence, Red depicts hardiness and valour, and Blue signifies vigilance, perseverance, and justice. Thus, when we see the flag of the United States of America we see those colors as symbolic to certain meanings.

I also find color can add functionality to objects that people interact with all day. In the case of cell phones, whenever we receive a call from someone we typically have 2 choices. The first choice is to accept the call which is depicted with green button, the second choice is to deny the call with a red button.

The same desired effect occurs at traffic lights. When there is a Green light, that's an indication to the driver that they are permitted to go. When the light is Red, it lets the driver know that they can't proceed. With the principle of color in these cases, it gives the user messages without actual text being used.

In order to convey the message of the choices in the design, colors can be used to help establish a standard. Once the standard is in place, guidelines for acceptable behavior and desired effects can be set forth for the usability of the design.

Just as color can have positive effects, color can also have negative effects if it is not designed properly. For example, text that has a yellow font color on top of a red background color makes it very hard for the human eye to read. Adding a bright pink color to an advertisement to bring attention to it may not be effective if the user is unable to read or understand the message you are trying to convey. If the use of color is overwhelming your design the design may need to include less color.

The saying of "less is more" can be applied in some cases where there is a need for color but not a gross amount. Using color to your design just for the sake of using color should be avoided simply because, for one of many reasons, it may send off a message that you do not want to portray and did not want to set.

In addition, color can also be added to designs in order to set a feeling or mood. Colors that are typically associated with sadness, for example, are the darker colors such as black or a dark, deep blue. In contrast, colors that portray happiness are colors such as light blue, yellow, and orange.

Depending on what message you are trying to convey, the use of either dark colors or light colors can set the mood of the design. Whether this is a positive effect or negative effect depends on the purposeful use of the color. If your design is meant to convey happiness and good feelings and you use a palette of dark colors the message may be construed and, of course, it is visa verse when it comes to conveying a message of sadness.

The use of color in your design should be purposeful in that you should pick the color that signifies something. Take this logo for the Amarillo Bulls hockey team, for example. The bull is shaded in red, which is meant to signify that it is angry. As it is commonly believed that when bulls see the color red, just as you see in rodeos, the bull becomes angry. If the designer of this logo decided to go with a blue or green, the log may not have been as powerful. With the purpose of this design and color, it was meant to send a message to other teams that the hockey team is a red, raging bull that will be a tough challenge.

Also notice the drop shadow highlight around not only the bull but the text. This brings out the logo in it's entirety and makes it stand out. The choice of yellow for it was a good contrast against the dark blue text. Anytime more than one color is used, you always want to make sure the colors do not clash but rather make it easy to see and recognize.

Colors are typically thought of to be in logos or advertisements, however, colors are also considered when it comes to design of architecture. This picture of the auditorium at the Globe News Center in Amarillo was purposefully chosen but the designers. Notice the entire inside of the room are varied shades of orange. This was not a random color that was believed to just look good but rather it served as a symbolic nature. The orange in the auditorium was chosen to represent colors from the Palo Duro Canyon and also the beautiful sunsets in the Texas Panhandle.

Aside from the meaning, the color also provides a soft ambiance and does not overwhelm the room. Once you choose your color, it is important to verify that your color does not overwhelm the design itself. If you have people who are in the room and are constantly bombarded with sight overload thanks to your chosen color of the room, it may need to be reevaluated.

Principle of Color - Amarillo Horse Statues

Referring back to how color can serve a purpose in the form of symbolism in architecture, colors can also be chosen when it comes to designs in statues. For example, the horse statues that are commonly seen around Amarillo, TX can symbolize even something as strong as patriotism.

The horse statue shown above was chosen to have a color scheme the same as the Texas flag - red, white, and blue. In order to keep with the design of the Texas flag, notice how the eye of the horse also has the star from the Texas flag on it.

The Big Texan, which is an icon in the Texas Panhandle and is known for it's massive steaks, also has a hotel that is right next to the restaurant. The color scheme chosen for it, however, was not designed with the big picture in mind. As you can notice from the picture above, each building has it's own color. One part of the hotel has a red paint, one has yellow, and one has a blue shade, which does not make for very good color design.

Colors can be used to enhance the over all attractiveness of your design, however, if not used properly it can have a negative effect on it. With so many colors on each building, it gives it the feeling like it is not cared for and may give a sense that it is cheap, not in a good way but a bad way.

Principle of Color - Website Design
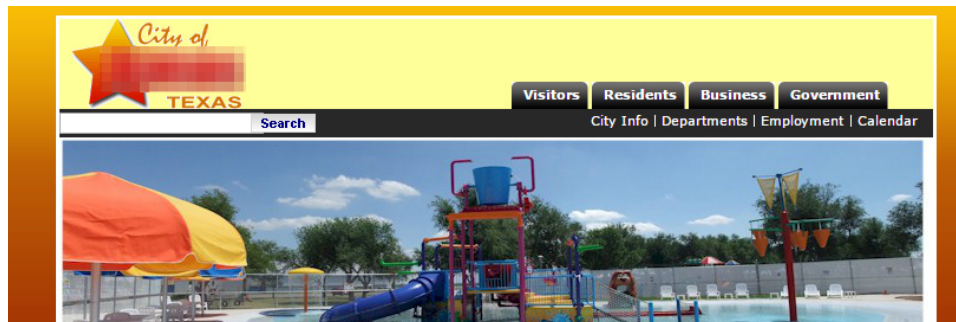
When it comes to website design, you want to have a warm, welcoming feeling that will bring in your vistiors. This goal can be achieved with a proper color scheme and proper use of colors in general. When used at random, however, it can have negative impact. Take for example the picture above from a website from a city here in the Texas Panhandle. The background has a gradient of orange turning into a darker orange with a header of bright yellow. The colors chosen actually clash together that violates the principle of color. The designer may have been attempting to use the same colors as the city logo or there may be another meaning behind it, however, that meaning may not be known to the visitor and this color scheme gives it a "random" feeling.

Principle of Design: Highlighting

According to the definition of the principle of highlighting, highlighting is a technique for bringing attention to an area of text or image. When text is part of your design, there are more ways than one to bring attention to certain words or key phrases. The use of such techniques as using bold, italics, and underlining help bring forth important parts of the text. As a general rule for the use of highlighting, no more than 10 percent of the visible design should be highlighted. Although the use of highlighting can be very useful when it comes to calling attention to certain details, if used too much it can start to have a negative effect. When only 10 percent of the text contains highlights, they are meaningful. When basically every other word is highlighted it begins to lose its effectiveness. Just as with any other principle of design, there is a fine line between using it too much and too little. Use it too much and it becomes overwhelming, use it too little and it becomes uninteresting.
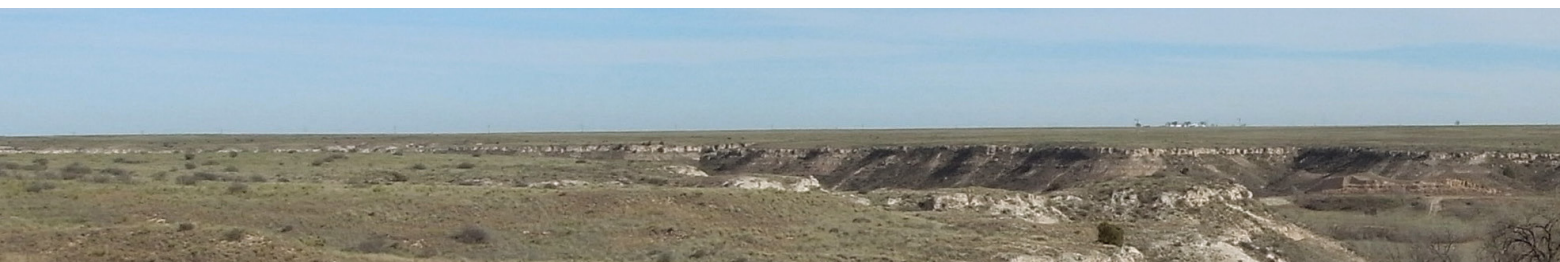
There are certain times when the use of highlighting is needed and other times when it is not. For example, if you are making warning signs for patients or doctors to read in a hospital setting there may be several cases where you want certain words or key points to stand out from others. If the document contains all information that they may need, you must consider what knowledge in that document is of the most worth.

Phrases such as "may result in death or injury" should have a heavier meaning than standard information on the document such as the hospital address or email address. If the document is meant to possible save lives, the designer must take into consideration what parts of the text or document should be highlighted and what should not.

If the document or design is meant to convey a message for advertisement, like in the cases of car dealerships, the information you are going to highlight is probably not going to be the legal text that you are required to show. For example, if you do notice advertisements at car dealerships or even the commercials they put on TV, the text you are going to see the most highlighted are things like "save $3,000 off MSRP" or "60 months Zero interest". Highlighting key phrases like this may potentially attract customers to your business because they bring interest to the advertisement.

Legal text such as consequences of not paying off your loan or defaulting on it is not going to be highlighted the same as everything else. This text is typically in very small print at the bottom of the screen or document, otherwise referred to as the "fine print". Although the "fine print" does carry a level of importance for legal purposes, it is not going to get the same attention as other text would in order to attract new customers.

The use of font itself is also a key element in the principle of highlighting. When writing a paper for a professional journal, font you may typically use for that case would be something like Times New Roman, 12 pt size. In that same case, you would not use other fonts such as "French Script" or "Freestyle script" because the document may contain a large amount of text and these fonts may not work best for the reader. If the design calls for a "French Script" in a short amount of text, then use it.

There are literally hundreds of choices when it comes to fonts in Microsoft Word and Adobe InDesign but using a different font does not make it creative or show that the designer has design skills. The design of the highlight in fonts must be purposefully and carefully considered when adding to your design. The consequences of using them improperly and not using them at all needs to be understood.

Just as with the principle of color, highlighting certain words in a picture or text can make all the difference in the world. When it comes to donations, designing something like a donation poster to influence people to give can be crucial in order to guarantee the best success. As depicted in the picture from the Coffee Memorial Blood Center, a major blood donation center in the Texas Panhandle, they are trying to influence you into giving blood for those who need it.

The picture depicts a person's arm and has several different forms of highlighting. For starters, the headline text "Blood Donations Do!" is in bold, red text and is noticeably larger that the other text. This is a form of attention grabbing and once someone sees this they may be influenced to read the rest of the poster. The designer of this poster purposefully design that to be the case because they are trying to get people to donate. If highlighting was not used in the poster, it has lesser chance of getting attention and with less attention may come less donations.

The principle of highlighting can also be see on the person's arm. Notice how the text "1 Unit" and "3 Lives" was put off to the side and set larger on purpose. This signifies to the reader that their donation is not meaningless but rather their donation can have a large impact in the form of 3 lives may be saved.

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.
LIVE UNITED.™   United Way

Highlighting can also be used as a means to motivate others into not only giving but also volunteering. This message banner from the United Way, which has multiple offices across the country but is heavily located in the Texas Panhandle, conveys a message of helping and volunteering.

This message of asking for volunteers is achieved with the use of the principle of highlighting. It is also noticeable that "less is more" is considered in the banner as well. For example, there are 3 main words on the banner "Give, Advocate, Volunteer". Each word was placed as a headline at the top of the banner and also given it's own color. This brings attention to what the United Way is looking for and easily gets the point. The design itself is less cluttered because of the use of highlighting.

Principle of Highlighting - Christmas Concert

As with the holidays, you begin to see text in the standard Christmas colors of red and green. As we will see later on in this principle of Highlighting, that can be overused to a overwhelming level. This example shown on the right, however, is a good example of Highlighting. The Christmas poster shown here from the Amarillo Wind Ensemble reflects some highlighting in the form of different colored text and specialized font with the "Teen Christmas".

The rest of the font at the bottom half of the page actually creates a good balance with the top half. If every text was highlighted in the manner that the "Teen Christmas" is, this would certainly be a poor example. However, because the bottom have keeps it toned down it actually gives off a feeling of harmony in the design.

The Amarillo Wind Ensemble
Christmas Concert
to benefit
Teen Christmas
December 12th, 2016
7:30pm

Amarillo College Concert Hall
Washington Street Campus

Enjoy the Music,
Support a Great Cause!

Free Admission
Donations Appreciated

Highlighting needs to bring obtain the reader's attention and then keep it. If the reader becomes too overwhelmed with it they will likely stop reading. This is the case in the above social media poster made by a local sports team charity event. All the text on the page is highlighted with either different Christmas colors of red or green and vary in size. There's also a lot of graphics on the page that are relevant to Christmas but overall takes away from the poster design.

When you highlight more than 10 % of the page, as per the principle, you are crossing into a sensory overload with the reader. If everything is highlighted, there's really not a special part of it that will stick with the reader.

Principle of Highlighting - Donations

Graphics are just fine to use on designs, especially when they are for donations. Too many graphics and highlights, however, begin to have a rate of diminishing returns in that the more that is added the less positive impact there is.

The poster shown here on the left, albeit has good intentions to get donations, may have added to many elements to highlight the occasion.

For example, the poster is attempting to highlight the event to get peoples attention. What ends up happening in this case, however, is that you are given a lot of different highlights in the form of varying text fonts, sizes, colors and graphics. This creates no focal point on the design and the attention is dived amongst the poster. In order to resolve this, it may have been worth while to just use one or two actual graphics and then uniform the text to where it is consistent.

Principle of Design: Legibility

The Universal Principle of Legibility states that it is the visual clarity of text, generally based on the size, typeface, contrast, text block, and spacing of the characters used. In order for a design of a document to be professional in its appearance, the overall legibility needs to be planned for and carefully considered. With word processing programs such as Microsoft Word and Adobe InDesign, designers now have full array of attributes to add to their text. The default standard font and size of text properties are just the beginning. How the text is displayed on the document is also completely under the control of the designer and should be designed in a way that is effective for the goal at hand. In order to achieve these goals, attributes such as size, font, and spacing are available to suit the design of the document.

Not only is the content of your text important but also how the text is displayed is equally important. As discussed with the principle of Highlighting, text can be changed in its font size and font type in order to convey a message of importance or urgency. According to the principle of Legibility, however, there still needs to be the ability to read and decipher the text. According to this principle, the designing of text can be so that there is a sense and overall structure of Legibility to the point where the text is easily recognizable to the reader.

For example, in a technical support environment the legibility is crucial the overall design of the document. In order to provide information in a concise manner that assists technicians in their troubleshooting, the content must be Legible in that there must be a proper use of text blocks and spacing, for example. In writing a document, there must be a clear and logical progression of thoughts and ideas throughout the document.

This is easily achieved with a well-structured paragraph or text block. This also allows the designer to group text content into areas that are easily read or obtained. One block of text can be aligned on the right, left, or center of the page in order of the design. This also helps the organization of the document because you can set aside text on different parts of the page such as on the sidebar.

The importance of the principle of legibility needs to be placed on the reader or the learner. In order to understand to what magnitude the level of Legibility that is required, there must be a survey of the readers. If there is going to be people who will be reading your document that need special attention, such as with disabilities with reading, you may consider paying careful attention to the spacing and leading of the sentences.

This importance can be observed when children are learning how to read and write. As children begin to learn to write, they use sentence lines in order to help them learn the importance of baselines and normal spacing. Sentence lines can also have word blocks for children to fill out to practice spacing throughout the sentence.
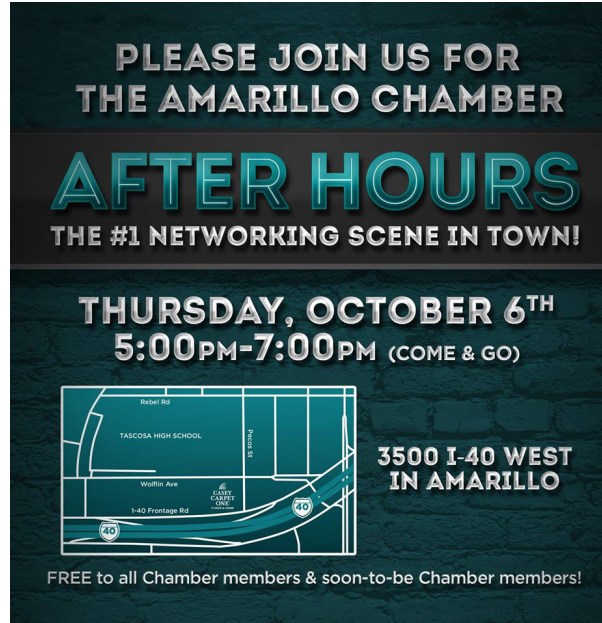
When it comes to the principle of Legibility, you want the design to include graphics and text that are both effective and grabbing the reader's attention and is very easy to read. The design shown above, from the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce, is a good example of that design use. First of all, the design color theme is easy on the eye and you don't have to strain to read it. There's also only a couple of colors for the text that are used for the entire design. The headline and subtext are all in a sliver color and the biggest heading, "After Hours" is in a light to dark green gradient.

Second, there's a consistency when it comes to font style and size. The font is consistent throughout and does not vary which that in itself makes it more legible. In regards to the size of the font, there's only a few variants but it is effective and used properly. The heading, which should be bigger, is a bigger font at the top of the page than the body of the text in the center. The only difference is the text arond the map of the location of the meeting. With the graphic included, the text can't be the same size such as the date and time in the middle of the page. This also the graphic to take up part of the page and allow the page to flow through it's design.

There is also a good contrast between the background and top typography of the text and graphic in that neither level of overwhelming the other. With the good contrast in colors of the text as well, it is easy to read and is inviting for the reader to continue reading it from top to bottom.

Continuing with contrast of the design and the overall feel, the above poster design shows good use of text with appropriate size and color. With the black background, it allows the text which was used with yellow and white to really stand out.

The design itself is clean and not too busy or cluttered. Good Legibility also refers to taking away some of the distractions that a design may have. If the design has too many elements it may become overwhelming to the reader.

Principle of Legibility - Autumn Leaves of Amarillo

In this poster design from Autumn Leaves of Amarillo, the principle of Legibility is used as a powerful effect. Such effects as drop shadows are not always needed in order to convey your message. There is a time and place for those effects but it must be done purposefully.

This design uses one picture aligned to the right and the text is aligned to the left. The biggest text on the page, "Grand Opening" has a easy to read text that has a small amount of leading to make the letters stand out. The heading of the document, which is the name of the business, is also done in a yellow font to bring it out.

The body of the text, which is a white color, has a easy on the eye contrast on the black background. Legibility is a major function of the design and it paid off well for the overall composition.

Gift Shop Summer hours -- 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. -- Winter hours -- 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Welcome To Cross Ministries

Click Here

Holy Bible   Awesome Views   Stations of the Cross   Gift Shop   Guest Book   Donations

Welcome to the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ Ministries

and the marvelous story of what God is doing through this 19 story cross located on Interstate 40

You want to have your text noticeable but also legible. Using the principle of highlighting, for example, can help bring attention to your design. However, if overused in the design it will have the opposite effect. Notice the text on this website from a local religious affiliation in the Texas Panhandle. The headline, for starters, uses a fancy font with tails with a red color.

This, in of itself, makes it somewhat illegible. In addition to the font and color they used a drop shadow. I am a fan of drop shadows, however, not every text field needs a drop shadow. With the additions of the drop shadow, font, and color it makes it less legible thus violating the principle.

Innovative • No nonsense
Effective Web Sites

QUALITY • PRICE • RELIABILITY

Advanced Technologies
Secure Server
Online Shopping
Custom Programing

Multiple Email Address Forwarding • Server Side Includes • Data Encryption

Audio and Video Productions

The point of legibility is to make it as easy as possible for your readers to read your content. As with the previous example, the picture shown here on the left probably had a good intentions but unfortunately did not pan out.

The company, a local to the Texas Panhandle (whose name has been blurred on purpose) used a center alignment and drop shadows on every line of text. Drop shadows are good but there's a fine line to using it, not every word needs that effect. The color choice is ok, however, everything is centered aligned which makes it even less legible as a whole.

There's also a variance when it comes to the size of the text and no consistency. The text at the top of the page appears to be smaller than the body of the page.
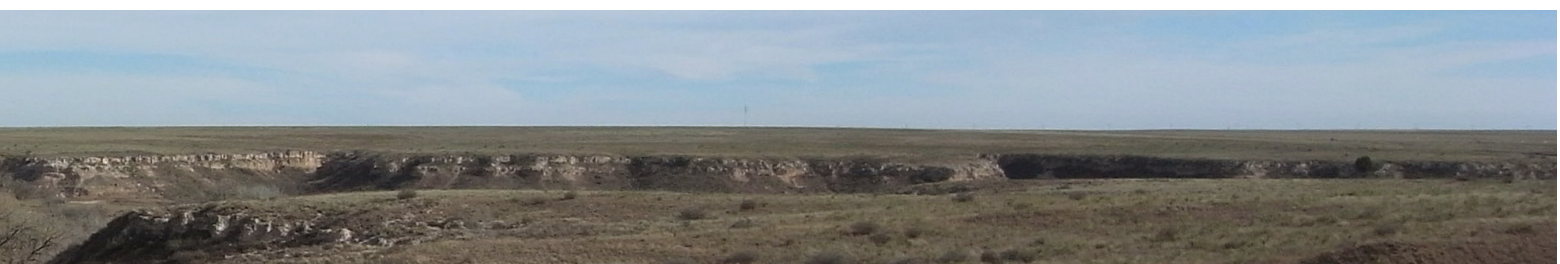
Principle of Design: Picture Superiority Effect

In order to attract customers to your particular brand or product, using the principle of Picture Superiority Effect can be a powerful tool to achieve that goal. According to the principle, pictures are remembered better than words. The old saying a "picture is worth a thousand words" comes into play with this principle. People may not constantly be searching for your business depending on what items or service you provide. For example, people do not generally search for a plumber to fix plumbing problems at their home on a daily basis. They will, instead, search for your services when it is needed at that moment.

In order to bring recall to your business and make it more likely that they will call you instead of your competitor, it is important to have a logo or business brand that is easily recalled and remembered. This can be achieved by adding pictures, in this case possible a picture of a technician or pipes, to let people recall your services when they did not previously need them.

This principle is particularly important when it comes to advertising because of the age we live in. Today's society has a large presence on the internet and most visuals reach out to customer though media such as social media and Google searches. Whenever you are looking for a particular item, you don't have to wonder hopelessly into the shopping mall in order to find what you are looking for. Now, all you have to do is go to the old trusty Google search engine, type in your query, and start looking for businesses that may have that near you.

With that said, a Google search query may provide hundreds or thousands of results for the one item you need. In order to "stand out from the crowd", as the saying goes, you must have a strong, recognizable logo for your brand.

According to the principle of Picture Superiority, people will remember advertisements that include pictures with the text of the logo. This is a crucial step in attracting new customers who may be coming to your store for the first time. Based on the principle, if a consumer is searching for something and they come across several businesses that sell the same desired product, they may be more willing to go to the store that has a logo with pictures rather than a logo with just words.

This principle really speaks to the importance of the aesthetic of a logo or design. As with any design that you may be making, it needs to be purposefully and carefully created. Years ago, if you were able to create a design in Adobe Illustrator or Photoshop, it was considered to be done by a professional. With these products available to the open market now, such as the general public, anyone can open up these programs, watch a few Youtube videos, and begin to design something in Adobe.

These type of skills are nice to put on a resume, however, simply saying that you can create a design in Illustrator or Photoshop no longer makes you above the rest. Rather, what will make you above the rest is a resume of previous designs that were created for a specific audience. What will now make your designs stand out from the crowd is how well it is done and how purposely it is created.

Using pictures to your advantage against other competitors is a crucial factor in attracting customers. According the principle of Picture Superiority, a picture along with text can bring a world of difference in brand recognition. Take for example this logo from The Knife Guys, a local store in Amarillo, TX that sells knives. The logo used this principle, in my opinion, in order to bring brand recognition to their store and help with memory recall with the customers.

When customers are searching for a particular item, in this case a knife, they may not be looking for a particular store, all they know is that they need to find a store that sells them. When you look up their store through a Google search or even a phone book, you are looking for something to catch your eye. Reading "The Knife Guys" may not have the same powerful effect with just text alone. The use of the picture of the knife in the word "knife" has a powerful yet subtle effect in catching the attention of the shopper.

Even using pictures by simply replacing text with a picture, in this case a knife instead of the letter "i" brings out the logo more. This is also easy yet powerful tactic in attracting customers over the competition.
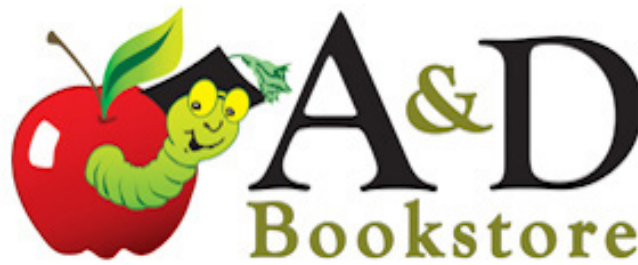
A & D bookstore in Amarillo, TX has setup a simple, yet effect picture superiority effect for their brand with the use of the "bookworm" picture. With the text itself, it does not give off a memorable impression and would not create recall when needed on the behalf of the customer. The picture itself is not over-whelming and it is something people can relate with.
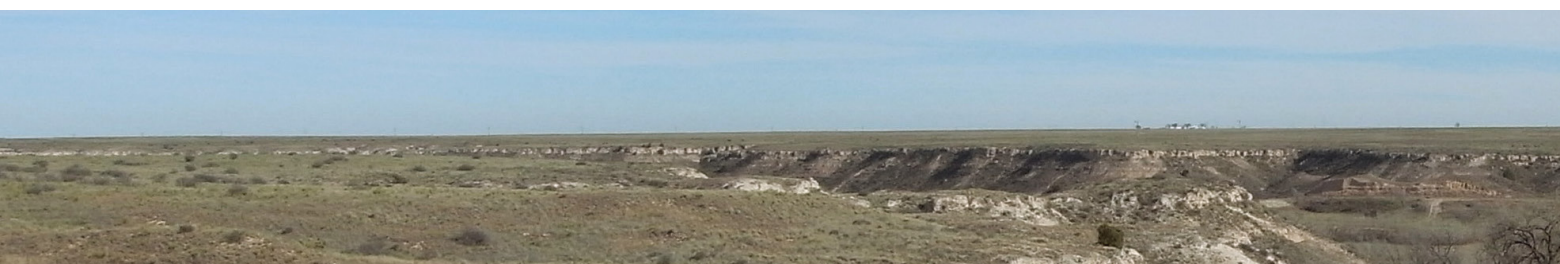
If you are able to include pictures or graphics that are easy for customers to remember and are easily relate-able to their personal interest, in this case the love of books, then you will have a better chance of having that customer remember your business when it is time for them to make a purchase. This makes them also stand out amongst other companies because when customers are searching for something they want something they can easily find. The "bookworm" that has now been established helps them find and remember.
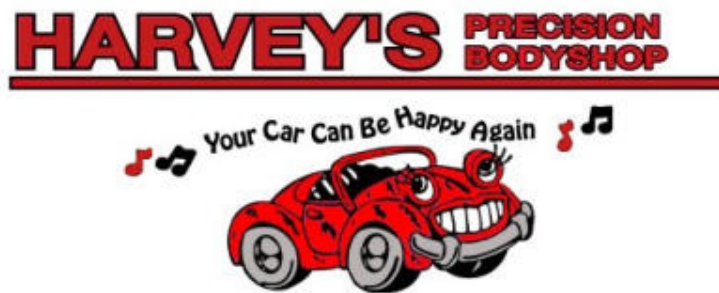
Harvey's Precision Bodyshop, a local automotive mechanic in the Amarillo, TX area, has established the principle of Picture Superiority in their brand's logo and banner. As with other designs, text itself may not be enough for customers to remember when it comes time for them to use other's services. With the design from Harvey's, people can easily remember who they may want to contact thanks to the picture of the smiling car on the logo.

What they have done as well is establish a catchy commercial that includes lyrics "Your car can be happy again". Although it may not be a top 10 song in the music industry, it is recognizable to consumers.

In a poor example shown above, this business attempted to use the principle of Picture Superiority but feels like they cane up short. This automotive place located n the Texas Panhandle uses the picture of a red truck on it's logo design. Since there are hundreds of automotive places in the panhandle, the picture of a truck or car may not be powerful enough for a customer to remember their business over another.

They also used the nickname "The Fordman" on the side of the truck. The nickname, in order to be successful, would need to help customer recall on the business name. Otherwise, they will just Google that phrase and see what results come up.

In another example that attempted the principle but could probably use more work is this business logo show above. The picture of the state of Texas with a star over the Texas Panhandle is effective in showing where they are located, however, I'm not sure it would generate the customer's cognition levels to where they remember the business name.

There are hundreds of businesses in the area that also go by the name "Lone Star". If they can't remember part of the name they will just Google it and may be provided with several examples and possibly even a competitor.

Principle of Design: Scarcity

Scarcity, also commonly used in Economics terms, occurs when items and opportunities become more desirable when they are perceived to be in short supply or occur infrequently. There are multiple items in the world that are non-renewable and only has a certain amount of resources. When items become depleted in their resources and there is only a limited number, they become scarce. When items are scarce that humans consume, human behavior can be altered due to their desire and need for that said item.

When someone sees an item is scare and they also see another person attempting to obtain it, their behavior can be changed to where they are consumed with getting that item for themselves. Used in marketing, business may attempt to use Scarcity as a means of trying to get people to buy items at a higher and faster rate.

When we think of Scarcity, we may think about natural resources such as water. Water can become scarce in times of droughts and times of high use. Scarcity, however, can also be applied to when businesses attempt to attract attention and customers when they display certain merchandise as "scarce" or "short-supply". This alters purchase patters in people when they believe they are getting merchandise that not everyone will have.

For example, there are many cars in the world that are no longer in production and their production was limited. At the time of its production, the car may have cost $100,000. Whenever all but 2 of them are left unsold, the remaining cars may have a drastically higher cost because it is now scarce. Now that the car is scarce, its price tag may increase 10 fold. Although it may have cost about $90,000 for the car company to produce it, they are now making well above what they invested into it because of its limited availability.

The exact opposite can happen when an item is not scarce but rather abundant. When a resource or item is abundant, its value goes down because it is widely available to the market. This is something that not only customers want to avoid but also businesses. When their product is scarce, they may end up loosing customers because people will realize that the product is no longer available or the changes of getting that item are slim.

From a design standpoint, the view of Scarcity helps get the consumers attention. Whether it be buying an item that is low supply or getting word out to the public that a resource, such as fuel, may be low or limited due to oil plants being shut down or natural disasters such as hurricanes.

When consumers hear that an item is scarce or may become scarce, there can be a rush to the cash register in order to get it before it's gone. For example, Black Friday is a perfect example of how having items on a limited time sale (therefore making it "scarce") has an influence over shoppers.

In normal circumstances, you wouldn't get out at 3 AM the day after Thanksgiving in order to buy a TV. However, when the TV is going to be a limited 1 hour sell for several hundred dollars off, you are now provided with the motivation needed to get up that early and shop. This helps marketers and businesses discover how the principle scarcity if their advertising is effective and to what items.

Every Drop Counts

City of Amarillo • www.amarillo.gov

Scarcity in regards to water in the Texas Panhandle is nothing new. Because droughts are quite common in the area, the people who live here are use to having to watch their water usage. This is especially true when the summers are drier than normal and the city starts putting restrictions in place when it comes to water usage such as watering lawns.

With the element of a drought possible every year, the city of Amarillo put out a campaign that stresses water conservation. The campaign logo shown above, "Ever Drop Counts", has a effective picture of just one drop of water. The goal is to get people to remember that even when water is currently not in scarcity levels, the threat of a drought is constantly upon the region. If the logo is effective in helping people remember this, their water conservation will not only be during the summer but also year round.

When it comes to the logo design in the principle of Scarcity, it provides a starting point into the conversation of water usage. Unlike some areas that see constant rainfall, the Texas Panhandle must be vigilant in the case of saving water in the case of a drought. If the message this logo is portraying, Scarcity, reaches at least a few people who see it, then it could be considered a success. The design is better with just that one picture of a water drop compared to a picture of several.

On designs such as this, you want the design to stick with the reader. This design by the city, I believe, achieves that goal.

Blood is in every human-being on the planet so why would it be scarce? There are several people who do not donate blood, whether it be for medical reasons or just personal reasons. The above example of just how scarce blood can be, example from Coffee Memorial Blood Center, shows that because blood is scarce, your donation of blood could potentially save someone's life.
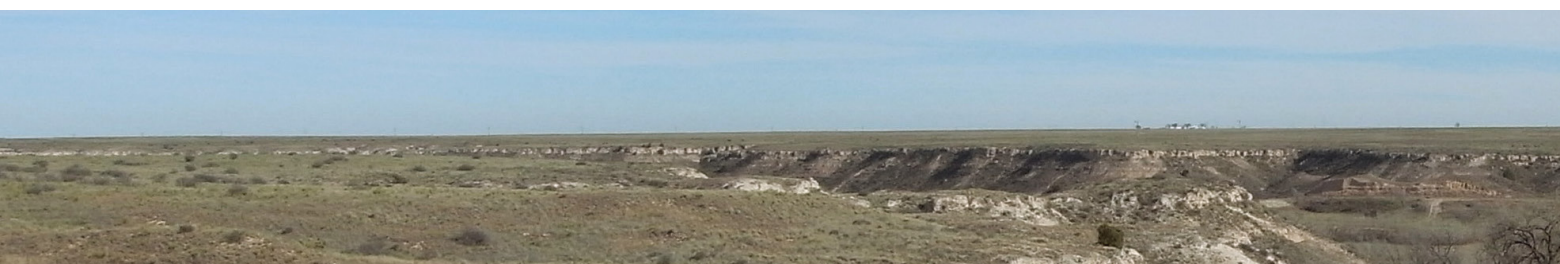
This poster is a call to motivate others to donate. It is simple in it's design by just using bold letters mixed in with one symbol of a heart and then highlighting others with red font.

Food can donations are always in need throughout the country. The High Plains Food Bank is one center that is trying to meet the need, however, there are times of shortages (scarcity) and help is needed from the community. The above poster from HPFB brings to light their campaign, "Together We Can", in order to get in donations.

The poster gets direct to the point with what your donations go. They also provide a heartfelt graphic of two people holding hands to show a sign of helpfulness. The principle of Scarcity is used here to motivate people to donate or volunteer.
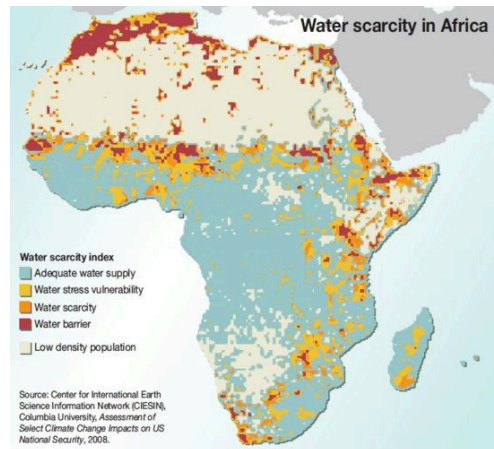
It is known that Africa has a vast population that is always in great need, thanks to commercials on TV and volunteer organizations around the world. The above graphic, although meant to be scientific, is just a overlay map of what areas of Africa have a scarcity when it comes to water. The map does depict what areas of the country are in dire need, however, if the goal was to show the effects of scarcity then it should have also provided statistics about the population and the effect it will have on them. I'm not sure if the graphic would actually motivate anyone to donate.

Food is scarce in certain countries around the world. With several groups around the globe that aim to end world hunger, the main goal is to get society involved in the fight. The poster shown above from an online group, Stop Hunger Now, has the map of the world on a red plate with a fork and spoon. The design, in my opinion, only tells me what they do as a organization, it does not motivate me to donate or volunteer. That is the whole purpose of using the principle of Scarcity in order to motive others to either take action or assist in some means. This poster, unfortunately, does not achieve that goal.

Principle of Design: Savanna Preference

The Universal principle of Savanna Preference states that people have a tendency to prefer savanna-like environments to other types of environments. When compared to other types of environments, such as a vast landscape with numerous trees and hills, savannas have been studied as being the preference with people. The Savanna Preference is noticeable in today's design of such places as parks, resorts, and golf courses. Parks attract people for many different things such as picnics, festivals, and parties. Based on research on this principle, people flock to these areas for these events and the like because parks provide that open space and depth.
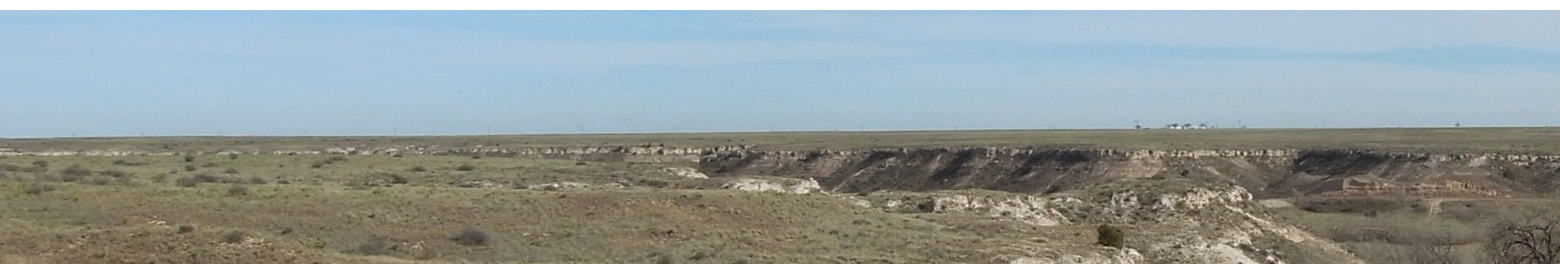
This principle comes from that humans in their early days of existence thrived in savanna-like areas as compared to humans who lived in a more rugged and ridged landscape. This preference has been studied to be the strongest in children, which is why you see these landscapes in some children television shows and books.

The use of the Savanna Preference principle in design can be critical to consider depending on how, or if, you want your design to succeed. If your goal is to attract people to your area you may want to consider the best way to provide an open space, or rather a savanna-like area. Parks, as previously mentioned, display a savanna-like openness. Parks consist of scattered trees, a landscape of green grass, and a less "busy" design where there is a huge amount of congestion.

The conversation can be held, then, in order to understand this human preference and behavior, on how the human mind works. To put this into perspective, consider cities that have high population densities and those that have lower population densities. Studies have shown that people who live in a highly congested area, i.e. high population density, have higher stress and tend to be less happy.

In contrast, people who live in suburb areas tend to have less stress and tend to be happier. If you look at this issue through the lens of the Savanna Preference, it is easy to understand why this may be.

Humans tend to desire open areas with plentiful green grass, a few scattered trees, and less congestion. If people are living in areas that are that exact opposite, the negative effect on their emotional state may lead to higher stress and an attitude that portrays a less that desired happiness. If humans live in areas where there is more "space to breathe", to coin a phrase, they may have a higher chance of being happy with their living situation.

For further research, consider shopping malls. Malls, in general, are all enclosed buildings that have multiple store fronts and restaurants. Although the mall may have some skylights and windows, the area is still enclosed and if there is any landscape in the building it is usually in a potted plant. The alternate design of a mall, therefore, is an open-air mall. Store fronts in this design are actually from the outside, there is no enclosure of another building surrounding that store. This allows the design of walkways between buildings and stores to be filled with natural landscape, such as green grassy areas, trees, and a feeling of openness.

In the Texas Panhandle, there are very few areas that show a grassy area with scarred trees that have grown by themselves in nature. However, there are a few noticeable areas that do depict this principle. The first place is shown above at the Texas Panhandle War Memorial. The memorial was landscaped to have a large grass area with a few trees scarred throughout. This type of landscaping gives it a feel that the Savanna Preference was sought after.

The Savanna Preference principle can also give a solemn attitude to an area or attraction. The landscaping of the Texas Panhandle War Memorial, for example, shows that the area is one of respect and reflection. If the human mind is at ease with this kind of landscaping then it may help ease the burden on those who visit this place who have had family members die in the line of duty.

Savanna Preference can help you set the mood of the area as well As noted as well by the use of the flags and monuments. With such a open area, it gives visitors an uncluttered feeling and a feeling of openness. This war memorial was purposefully designed in that the designers knew what was going to be placed in the area and who was going to be visiting it.

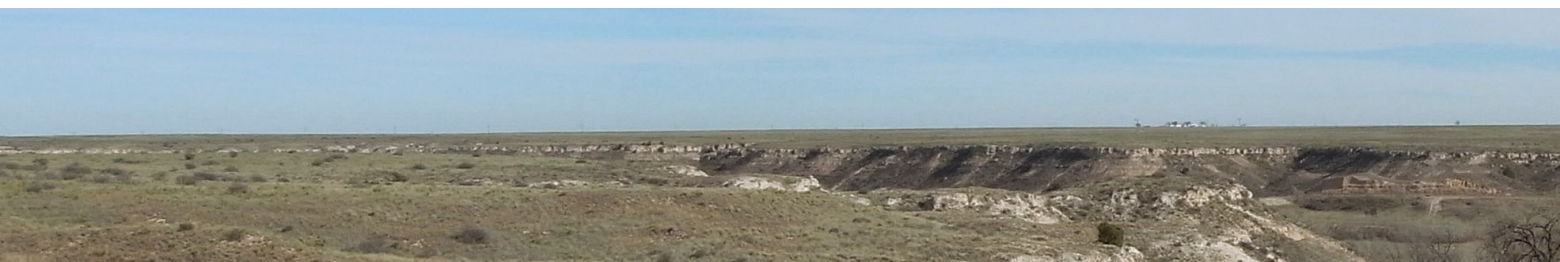## Principle of Savanna Preference - Thompson Park

Parks can be one example of the principle of Savanna Preference. For example, in the park shown above, Thompson Park in Amarillo, TX, there are several wide open areas with trees sprinkled through. This is a popular park because it gets several visitors for company picnics, birthday parties, and festivals. A reason for this may be explained by the Savanna Preference principle.

If the park is cluttered with several trees with no open areas to do outdoor activities, there's a chance people may not visit. From the city point of view, you want your population to get out and visit your parks because that means they are out enjoying the amenities of the city, which translate into population

Principle of Savanna Preference - Palo Duro Creek Golf Course

The Palo Duro Creek Golf Course in Canyon, TX is another example of the Savanna Preference. With the game of golf, there needs to be a wide open area. However, if there is just a wide open area with no physical features, there is a less chance that people will visit. The golf course in Canyon, as shown above, as large green areas and trees throughout the land. As you will notice from the picture, these attributes gives the area a welcoming message. Golf courses such as these understand that the way they design their courses is a major influencer in getting golfers to use your course instead of the competition's.

In regards to parks using the principle of Savanna Preference, sometimes there is an attempt to adhere to the principle but they fail short of really achieving the goal. The park above attempted to use the principle with it's limited space available. The park, which is located right next to a major road in the city, has the road in front of it and a area of trees to it's back.

Although the park does have green grassy areas throughout, there is a very limited number of trees. Thus, the area feels more like they attempted to use the Savanna Preference but rather came short due to the lack of available land.

Principle of Savanna Preference - College Campus

In another example of where the Savanna Preference was attempted but came just a bit sure was at a college campus outside of the Texas Panhandle. As shown above at a large area at this college campus, there is a area with green grass and trees, however, the area feels like there is a concentration of trees in a certain spot rather than throughout. The affect of attempting the Savanna Preference is still admirable, however, the principle should only be used if the means and resources are available to make that area effective.

Principle of Design: Wayfinding

Depending on how large your complex or business is, it is important to provide visitors with a way of finding out where they are in relation to the building and where certain places are. This Universal Principle of design is called Wayfinding, which is the process of using spatial and environmental information to navigate to a destination. Whenever you have visitors to your attraction, especially first time visitors, you don't want them to spend a majority of their time searching for something in particular. At a certain point if this happens, they may become frustrated and leave the business or attraction. The end result is that you lose business and when you lose business the company or attraction will not thrive.

All this could have been avoided if directions were given at the point of entry and throughout the area with the use of care and purposefully design. Not only do visitors need a map of finding certain areas but they also want to know the shortest route there. Use the principle of Wayfinding in order to achieve a warm, welcoming, and helpful guide while the visitors are there.

In order to thrive as a business, whether it be a zoo or shopping mall, the design of the entire complex needs to be carefully considered and your customers need to be cared for as well. To put this in perspective, take a look at your complex from the eyes of someone who has never been there before. As an employee or long-time volunteer, you may know exactly where things are right off the top of your head. You are there on a daily basis and the location of certain areas have become second nature to you.

For someone who has never been there or who is there rarely, their frustration and stress level may be increased because of the complexity of the area. When visitors, who potentially could be spending more money at your business than what it costs, if any, to get into the gate, get stressed or frustrated they will stop looking for what they are interested in which may affect their attitudes.

When people are learning, for example, they are looking for cues that they are progressing positively and are achieving goals. Whenever they learn something new and interact with it the first time, they need to be given direct communication that shows they achieved the skill taught or why they did not learn the skill the first time around.

Learners who may be going into a training course, for instance, may not have any clue what to expect if they've never taken the training before. Going into it, they may be a little stressed and concerned about how they are going to get what they need and how well they will be able to perform. The same thought process should be considered when it comes to designing areas of interest for people.
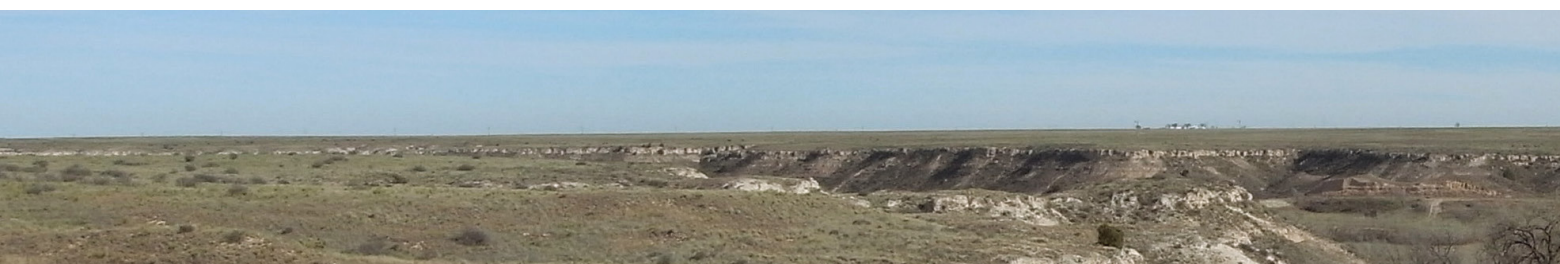
People need to know first where they are and where the start is, where they should progress from there, and when they have achieved in reaching a destination. While people are navigating to these desired areas, there could be potential for confusion. Just as with learning a skill, guidance needs to be provided not only at the beginning but from start to finish. Provide signs that confirm they are going into the right path and how long the destination is from where they stand. Guidance is not something that should be avoided. With the principle of Wayfinding, designers can purposefully design maps and guides for people to follow during the duration of their visit.

The World of Wonderland, an amusement park in Amarillo, TX, is a semi-large park that has several attractions. Although due to it's size you could simply walk around until you find what you are looking for, the park has created and provided a map of the park that helps guide visitors during their stay at the park.

The screen-shot of the map above is a fully illustrated map of the park. Instead of the map looking like a blueprint with just outlines and numbers, there are drawings of the buildings and rides all in full color. Designing the map like this brings several features that visitors can use in order to help them navigate throughout the park, one being color. If designed properly, the map should reflect the exact color of the ride or building that is displayed. So instead of looking for a sign, the visitor could also be looking for a color.

In addition on the map, there are legends and descriptions on the illustrations that help to clarify what place is located in relation in the park. The point of Wayfinding is to make it as easy as possible for the reader.
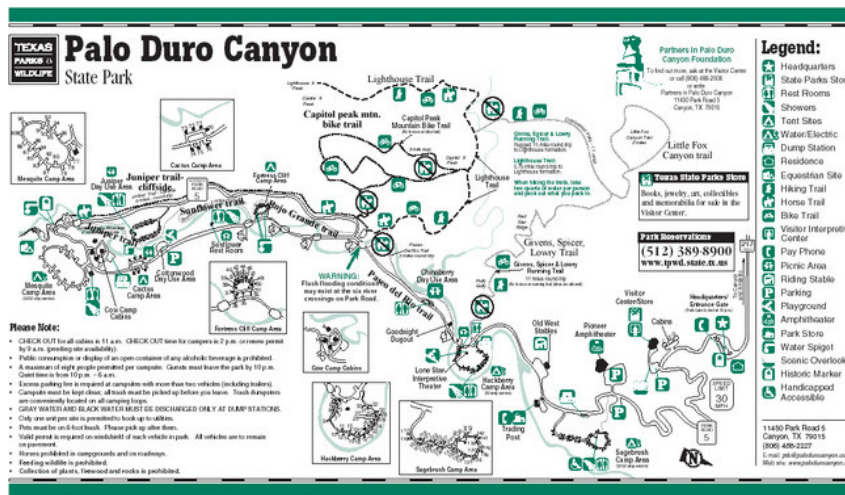
Wayfinding techniques do not always have to include fully illustrated, colored maps. Depending on the complexity of the complex or area you have to describe, it may only be possible to just have a graphical representation of certain places. For example, this map shown above from the Palo Duro Canyon shows where certain places are in relation in the park with a outline of the road that stretches through the canyon and a very detailed legend. If designed correctly throughout the park as well, these icons in the legend can also be symbols that visitors look for in order to search for clues they are on the right path.
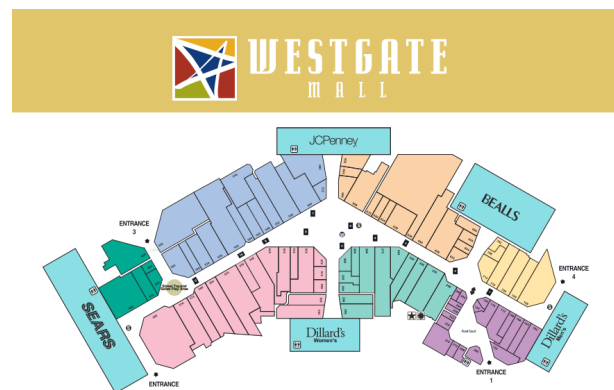
Although navigating through a shopping mall can seem like a chore, it is possible to use Wayfinding techniques to lessen the pain. Westgate Mall in Amarillo, TX, for example, has created a map of the entire mall to help their shoppers. The map shows several key areas that help the visitor know where they started or where they are, like entrances for example. There is also a significance placed on what is referred to as "anchor stores" (i.e Sears, JCPenny) since those are the main parts of the mall. Typically, once you know where one of the big stores are out, navigation can flow through from there.
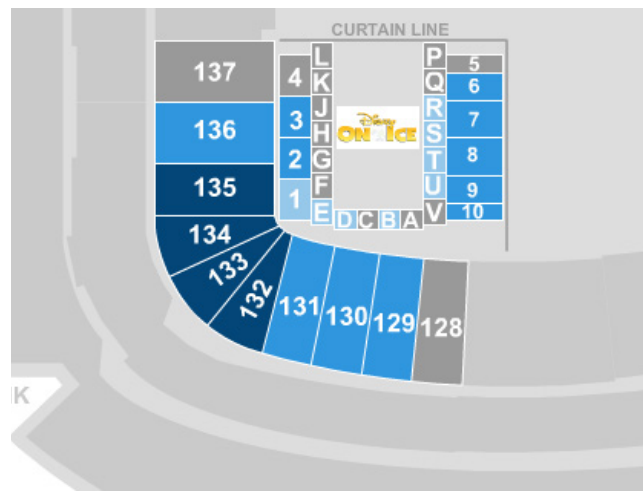
There is a fine line between providing too much information on a map and not providing enough. The map shown above for an event center outside of the Texas Panhandle, for example, takes more of the latter. The map is attempting to use simplicity in it's design, however, it leaves out certain details that may be needed to navigate through the area. There are no indications of exists, entrances, or any other markings to show you are on the right path. Visitors who look at this map are left wondering where they are or if they are headed in the right direction.
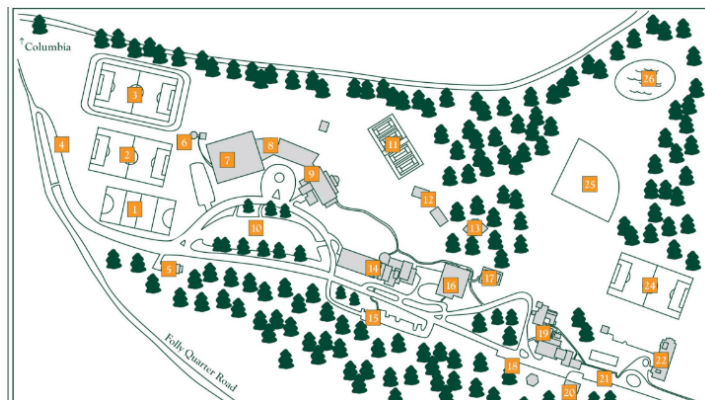
Another poor example of using the Wayfinding principle comes from the map above from a college campus outside of the Texas Panhandle. The map shown depicts the layout of the college campus, however, provides no other means of intellectually knowing where things are. There are not statue markers, bus stop markers, or parking lot indicators. In addition, the use of the landscape, in this case trees, needs to be consistent with the actual layout of the campus. If there are two distinct trees between two buildings, make sure that is designed into the map to help visitors know they are on the right track.