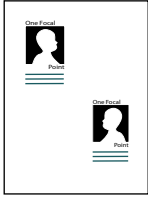


The Eight Basic Compositional Devices from the Griffin Design Code



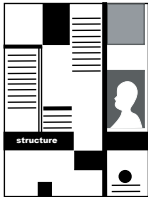
One dominant focal point

One area or object commands the initial attention of the viewer. In the case of the isolated study of this compositional device, is the one dominant focal point is all that is presented to the viewer. It can appear to float or rest in its position, free of all edges.



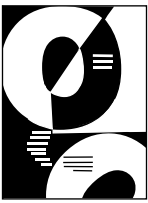
Two dominant focal points

This composition divides the viewer's attention in two eye-fixes. The design includes two areas of focus that are separate from each other.



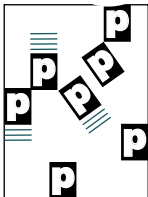
Structure

This compositional device relies on the use of a grid to organize the placement of visual elements within the picture. This grid can be evident by benefit of borders and space rules like those used by Piet Mondrian in his studies of spatial arrangements. Or the grid can be sensed by its invisible hold on the placement of visuals. The viewer can be presented with an orderly picture made up of divisions of space.



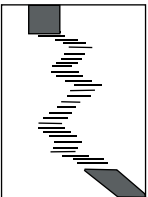
Negative / Positive

High contrast is characteristic of this composition. When the figure or subject matter in the picture relies strongly on the background for its shape edges there is an interdependence of dark and light. Negative / Positive sometimes provide the viewer with an optical illusion. The shape of the dark areas seem to recede and what was once the lighter background becomes a recognizable shape. This is known as figure and ground exchange and affects the viewer with subtlety.



Pattern

In a pattern composition the eye is bombarded with a repetition of visual units. This array can be informal or formal. A standard result of this compositional device is an equal distribution of the viewer's attention. A pattern composition relates to the format edge, touching a minimum of three sides.



Movement

The use of gradation, a change in a gradual progression, creates a sense of movement. This composition gives the sense that the visuals are flowing from one area to another in the picture. The motion can seem to be flowing as seen in the after-image of strobe photography. Usually the movement is created by the presence of a distinct curving eye-path.



Frame

This composition has multiple visuals, but they are arranged in a way that spotlights one area in the picture. The standard format provides a strong border that surrounds the area of interest. A variation on that technique is placing non-border elements, such as text or titles, in an ad format so as to bracket an area.



Perspective

The immediate impact of a perspective composition is a sense of depth. By employing the five depth cues, (foreshortening, overlap, cast and form shadow, diffusion of edge, and scale change) the designer achieves the illusion that the two-dimensional surface of the picture is merely the front plane of a window into the three-dimensional scene.