Graphic Design Strategies for Sustainability

Rebecca Schaefer
Presentation outline

• Intro
• Graphic design at the OfS
• Sustainable design guidelines
• Graphic designer’s impact on sustainability
• Why design matters & how to access it
How do sustainability and graphic design relate?
Graphic design at the Office for Sustainability at WMU
My job

• Western Michigan University’s Office for Sustainability
• Student graphic designer
• Graphics to convey a message
Our design process

• Group learning & brainstorming
• Critiques
• Sharing information & ideas
• Reach a specific audience
Initial meeting
Sketching
Critique
Creation & critique repeat
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Final product
Recent OfS designs & publications
Come join us at the WMU Office for Sustainability Thursday, September 27th
12 – 3 p.m. Community Open House
4 – 6 p.m. Workshops

Come get to know the local sustainability community on campus and beyond! The celebration will feature live music, food, EcoJug distribution, a raffle, local vendors, WMU clubs/orgs and the reopening of our beloved Open Bike Shop. Visit our website homepage for a detailed schedule including workshop topics and how to sign up.

www.wmich.edu/sustainability/celebration
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Gibbs House Potluck Fliers: February 2018 (left), November 2017 (upper right) September 2017 (upper right), March 2018 (bottom right)
OfS advertising sticker project
*Made with corn polymer based plastic
In use
BE A SUSTAINABILITY LEADER
APPLICATIONS DUE ON NOVEMBER 2, 2018 AT 5 PM

The Wesustain Internship is a semester-long, paid, discovery-driven opportunity for students from all academic majors, personal backgrounds, and levels of experience to join in the movement to become sustainability ambassadors and improve quality of life for all. We believe that creating a culture of sustainability starts with our students, and the Wesustain Internship is a perfect opportunity to gain hands-on experience with on and off-campus sustainability projects. During the spring and fall semesters we hire a dynamic and diverse cohort of eight to ten interns eager to explore and cultivate the practical knowledge and leadership skills necessary to incorporate sustainability in their personal lives, careers, communities, and beyond.

Wesustain Internship: Poster (left), flier (upper right), website graphic (bottom right)
Failure & learning

- Mistakes lead to better efficiency in the future
- Brochure project
- Full bleeds create paper waste

Example of a full bleed
Sustainable Design Guidelines
Print with low-VOC inks

- Volatile organic compound
- Created indoors & outdoors
- Poor for health
- Soybean alternative
Use smart packaging

- Minimize dead space
- Compostable/recyclable shipping materials
- Reusable packaging

Stackable packaging with reduced dead space
Go digital when possible

- Print less
- Email
- Website
- Social media
Use sustainably harvested, FSC paper

- Forest Stewardship Council
- Sustainable paper option
- Look for this logo (left)
Guideline availability

- https://wmich.edu/sustainability/reports-publications/office-sustainability-publications
Graphic design can serve a higher purpose.
Design for social impact

• Value based company
• Art devoted to social change
Jorge Gamboa
National Geographic issue *Planet or Plastic: Iceberg Plástico* (2018)
Jean Jullien
*Peace for Paris* (2015)
IT DOESN'T MATTER IN WHAT ORDER THE LETTERS IN A WORD ARE. THE ONLY IMPORTANT THING IS THAT THE FIRST AND LAST LETTER BE IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

Sam Barclay
I Wonder What it’s Like to be Dyslexic (2013)
Design with sustainable principles

- Sustainable consumer-based designs
- Brian Dougherty
- Design backwards

Design backwards graphic found in *Green Graphic Design*
Netflix return envelopes
Aveda reusable lipstick holder
Lemnis Lighting bulbs reusable packaging
PDW’s Dave’s Mud Shovels; reduced packaging
Nooka’s Glue-less Custom Box; biodegradable material
Why should you care about graphic design?
Budget options

• Observe others
• Free student organizations or volunteers
• Vectr
• Photo POS Pro
• GIMP + Inkscape
• SketchUp
Sources


Questions

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