

Importance of Visual Hierarchy in UX Design

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In brief

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You might have come across a website and felt confused. The text and images are cluttered, and you can't find your bearing. If you find it difficult to focus, it is a sign that the design lacks a strong visual hierarchy. Usually, design elements vary in composition and those with more importance than the rest. This is what visual hierarchy entails; it is an essential aspect of product design since it impacts how the users view the content.

According to this article by Eleken, it is the role of a UX designer to ensure the project has a good visual hierarchy. The designer needs to organize the elements to capture the user through an intuitive and logical flow.

Since humans have a short attention span, you need to hire a skilled designer to incorporate visual hierarchy in each project. The primary aim is to provide users with a seamless user experience. This article discusses why visual hierarchy is a significant aspect of user experience.

What Is Visual Hierarchy?

Before we delve into the importance, it is imperative to understand the meaning of visual hierarchy. During the design phase, the UX experts usually prioritize the order of elements. This allows the experts to use the right element in the correct design layout.

Significance of Visual Hierarchy

Here are some of the key aspects of visual hierarchy that play an essential role:

User Experience

Each business owner desires to launch a functional web product to the market. Using visual hierarchy in your design has a direct effect on user experience. Apart from visual appeal, it also allows the users to enjoy using the product.

Content Planning

When developing a website, the content writers are not left out. But it is the work of the UX designer to plan the content placement on the payout. You can't place information without following a visual hierarchy. For instance, the title and headers must be larger than the text blocks. It draws the customers' attention to the main information.

Reduced Friction

At times, customers might encounter too much friction on a website and decide to leave the mission. For example, they can abandon a cart on an e-commerce platform and search for another one. Visual hierarchy solves friction issues since the objective is to give users a smooth experience. Ultimately, enhancing usability is the primary objective.

Principals of Visual Hierarchy

Many principles govern visual hierarchy; we shall highlight the major ones you must incorporate in product design.

Size and Scale

This type of approach allows the viewers to focus on the content better. In addition, it uses different sizes and scales to draw attention to the design. For example, if your layout has large-scale texts, the viewers will see it first compared to small typefaces.

If you view any content, your brain will notice the big fonts at first sight. Besides, placing the large text on the right side has more impact and user engagement.

However, you don't have to use this principle on the entire page. Instead, choose the essential elements and reduce the sizes for the other information. An example of this principle is common in newspapers where important headlines have large typefaces to attract attention.

Color and Contrast

Color is a significant aspect in bringing out the design impression. This is because the bright colors are more visible than the dull hues. That is why most graphic and UX designers tend to use bright shades to draw the users' attention.

Moreover, you can apply contrast to make the design more significant and appealing. Many websites have the contrast principle on the CTA buttons and essential prompts like the login and registration. It attracts the eye, and the viewer will first notice the elements. However, do not clutter your page with many hues; moderation is paramount with this principle.

You can also play with the hues and saturation until you achieve the desired effect.

Structure and Composition

This type of element uses the organization to grab the users. One aspect is the use of leading lines to enhance the design flow. This principle is quite intuitive and directs the users to follow your flow. It entails designing products with line elements, resulting in an organized layout.

Another aspect is the application of the rule of thirds. Here, you need to split the page layout using three lines - vertically and horizontally in similar portions. Again, the intersections are the focal points where you need to place the essential design elements.

Direction and Layout

UX design is all about creativity, and you can apply this in the direction of elements in your page layout. For example, while the common horizontal and vertical designs are reasonable, you can break away and direct your text in curves or a diagonal pattern. This will make your layout stand out and engage more users.

However, you need to ensure your elements align properly to prevent confusion. Factor in content organization and prioritize the elements for a better focus.

Typography

Typography is another vital principle that can make or break a UX design. It is one of the important principles in the visual hierarchy since a web product must have engaging content. Typography entails combining two to three typefaces that are similar but different in specific attributes like size or font family.

Mainly, typography focuses on the title, subtitles, and body text. Therefore, the user must be able to differentiate the three by simply looking at the visual hierarchy. This will help them to draw importance through the different typeface elements.

Conclusion

Visual hierarchy is an integral approach during product development. It assists in prioritizing the essential elements to increase visibility. Thus, the UX designers must apply this technique to organize elements according to their importance in the design phase.

You don't have to struggle to focus on the main message if it has a proper hierarchy. One glance, and you will find what you are looking for in a website or application. So, project managers should not overlook the significance of hierarchy and must apply it for positive user engagements.

References

1. eleken.co - blog-posts / how-to-find-interview-and-hire-ux-designers-essential-guide-for-product-owners - <https://www.eleken.co/blog-posts/how-to-find-interview-and-hire-ux-designers-essential-guide-for-product-owners>