



Q&A WITH
CRIS LACUNA
CEO OF
CL COMMUNICATIONS



WHAT'S TRENDING
IN VIDEO 2022

Website Design
Secrets

The World of
Digital Assets

Your focus as a SMC graduate is to drive sales for your employer or into your business and to generate high overall profits.

The marketing communications strategy is fundamental in that goal, because marketing communications gets consumer attention and entices consumers to reach out to your company. The ways an organization communicates to its internal and external stakeholders has grown, in part, due to the pervasive use of social media which both enhances and challenges communicators globally. All sectors of business and not-for-profit organizations must now manage both offline and online images and messages for consistency across the traditional silos of marketing, sales, advertising, and public relations. This strategic approach is achieved through the planning phase and reinforced with professional collateral and digital content using industry-standard technology and emerging social platforms. Consistent sales rarely happen without a strong marketing communications strategy. The process to develop this strategy starts with targeting the right consumers based on consumer need and how you fill that need.

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CONTENTS

2024 Fall Issue # 1

- 2 What is SMC
- 3 Table of Contents
- 4 Principles of Designing A Website
- 5 Accessibrand
- 6 Rules to Designing A Website
- 7 From Pixel To Package
- 8 Q and A: Cris Lacuna, CL Communications
- 9 Video Trends for 2022
- 10 SMC Job Fair Ad

On The Cover
Cris Lacuna, CEO,
CL Communications
on Integrating Marketing & PR

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THE PRINCIPLES

Having an attractive and usable website is the goal of every website owner, and for people who run a small business, the look and feel of their website is of vital importance. It's where visitors create their first impressions—those brief seconds in which we accept or reject what we see on our screens. A site's design is also responsible for retaining each visitor's attention and guiding them through your content.

In this article, we'll go over seven design principles that, if followed, will help you create a website that engages your visitors and makes them want to come back.

Design is tricky business though. For the less experienced, it's easy to get carried away and lose focus on what really matters—the experience that visitors have on your site. If you catch yourself geeking out on cool fonts and eye-popping color schemes, you can have some fun. But be sure you also focus on usability and the core purpose of your site.

No matter how interesting your design looks, your site must be simple to read and easy to navigate. Visitors should have no difficulty using your website and employing a straight-forward design can play a major role in ensuring a high degree of usability.

It's time to get into our seven design principles. We will discuss layouts that are scientifically proven to match how people consume content, plus talk about spacing, fonts, the effective use of color, and other design factors.

WHITE SPACE IS GOOD

Empty space on your web pages opens everything up, allowing visitors to comfortably take in the content you're presenting. In web design terminology, empty space is called white space, and it's important to make sure you have enough of it to make your site user-friendly. White space improves readers' comprehension. It's really about what's near the white space. Any content that's surrounded by empty space is going to catch the user's eye, and the content will be easier to absorb because there's nothing around it to distract the reader. It may seem obvious, but we should note that your white space doesn't have to be white—it can be whatever color you choose for your background.

BALANCE

Just like tangible objects, elements of a web design also have a weight that needs to be balanced. The concept refers to the distribution of visual weight around a vertical axis, which helps in achieving harmony in a design. Balance can be divided into two types Symmetrical and Asymmetrical.

UNITY

The principle of unity in a website design refers to togetherness amongst similar elements. Elements that are closely related to each other are placed in proximity while those distant in relation are placed at a distance and this creates cohesiveness in a webpage.

In the image, you can see how elements with similar shapes have been placed in proximity and the whole page exudes harmony and cohesion.

SPACE

In every website design, there must be some empty space (also called as negative space) which allows the eyes as well as the mind to breathe. By applying this principle, you can also lay emphasis on crucial elements. The picture above with a bold picture, short text and a lot of negative space allows the user to focus only on the important element ' which, in this case are the headphones.

RHYTHM

This refers to the creation of a path in a design, which directs the eye to move from one element to another. The pattern created is very predictable and hence the viewer's eyes feel at ease in scrolling across a screen. Here, the pattern has been created by linking circles through wiring and automatically, the eyes would move from left to right.

RULE OF THIRDS

A principle associated primarily with photography; Rule of Thirds is also valid for website designs. This concept requires you to break down a webpage, using a 3x3 grid, i.e., into 9 equal blocks. The important design elements should be placed along the lines or touch the intersection points. Theoretically, the points of intersection are key areas where our eyes get automatically drawn to. Notice how the object has occupied only one-third of the area but grabs all the attention.

COLOUR SCHEME

The color scheme of your web design can make or break its appeal. With the use of contrasting colors for background, text and images, the impact will be much greater. Prefer to use a blend of light and dark hues as in the image above. Or go for monochromes, but make sure that some elements are there to balance it out.

TYPOGRAPHY

Serif fonts are generally preferred for headlines because they are difficult to read at small sizes, whereas, for the body text one should go for Sans-Serif fonts like Verdana and Arial. They have a contemporary appeal and less decorative. Also, make sure that there are not more than 3 font types and 3 font sizes in one website; otherwise, it will become too inconsistent. All these design principles are essential to bear in mind while creating a website for maximum impact. So, use your common sense and creativity and have a remarkable online presence for your company.

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Principles of Design are universal across all digital channels and the application of them is also very similar. The rules can be worded differently but it all refers to the good design and using the tools of the Principles of Design.

1. Keep your design balanced (Rule of Thirds & Proportions).

Your website should have a sense of balance to make your pages seem inviting and professionally laid out as opposed to elements thrown on a page.



2. Compartmentalize your design by using grids (Proximity).

The use of a wireframe is important in planning to make sure your website is organized into packets of similar information for ease of navigation for your audience.

3. Pick two or three base colors at most for your design (KIS & Repetition).

Keep your colours in line with your brand and always remember the KIS rule with Colour. It is best to use your colour tactfully as opposed to generously.

4. Try to make the graphics go well together (Consistency).

Websites and traditional or digital publications consistency is critical as it creates unity and comfort and an easy to navigate to your audience.

5. Improve your website's typography (All of the design principles apply to your typography).

Typography is always an integral part of any design. Picking the right fonts and minimizing the number of fonts is very important. All the design principles apply to your use of fonts.

6. Use white space in your design (Negative or White Space to create Contrast).

White space or negative space is so important in all design. It is used to make our design easy to read and navigate and it also works with Proximity and the KIS rule to create a pleasing design.

7. Have all elements connected (Proximity).

Having related items close to each other or connect is imperative in a website. When designing a website, you have the added dimension of links to work with.

WHAT IS A DIGITAL ASSET?

**Videos
Photos
Design Files
Audio Files
Presentations
Graphics
PDFs
Spreadsheets
Documents
3D files
and more.**

A digital asset is any valuable piece of content in a digital format. This includes assets that were created digitally, as well as those created offline and later stored on a platform. The definition is broad because it encompasses pretty much everything from emails and account information to videos and photos. The value of these assets can be indispensable for marketing or in your personal life. Some assets have a sentimental value or can't be replaced, such as old family photos. Others are valuable because of their financial

worth. Your logo, for example, is a valuable digital asset because it enables you to differentiate your online presence from other companies. By definition, a digital asset is "any digital material owned by an enterprise or individual including text, graphics, audio, video and animations." Historically, many people have considered digital assets to only include photos and videos, but over the years it has evolved to including other digital files in our definition, such as documents, presentations, and spreadsheets. While the definition of a digital asset is constantly expanding as new digital formats are emerging in business & marketing, it's important to remember that the file format is only part of the definition. The other portion of the digital asset definition is derived from the value that they bring to the company.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF DIGITAL ASSETS?

Your organization uses a variety of touch points to reach out to customers, employees, and other stakeholders. Throughout these communications, your brand identity needs to be consistent, and digital assets make this possible to do. For one thing, you'd have to spend more time looking for logos and other branding elements. By having an archive of digital assets you maintain the overall quality of the content of these assets. Plus, time isn't the only thing you'd lose without digital assets. You'd also lose money trying to replicate an asset that already exists, and you'd waste space storing multiple versions of the same information. Despite all of the benefits of digital assets, they can present drawbacks if not managed properly. Organization is a major challenge with digital assets, particularly as your number of assets grows. When managing files for your own personal use, you may be able to identify files based on a hierarchy and naming system that makes sense to you. An organization with thousands of people must make the assets

easy for everyone to categorize, store and retrieve. Security and safe keeping of your digital assets is also critical. On one hand, assets have to be easy to retrieve for the people responsible for producing and distributing content. On the other hand, protections need to be in place so unauthorized users can't use them improperly. Protocols are necessary to make sure that the only people who have access are the ones who absolutely need to.

WHAT IS A DIELINE FOR PRINTING & PACKAGING?

A dieline serves as a package template that ensures proper layout for a printed product. It is a diagram that shows all the cut lines and folds of a package in flattened form. They are also used for envelopes, pocket folders and more. There are a few steps toward creating proper, accurate dielines for items such as boxes.



Sometimes a client will send a printing company an example of how they would like their packaging to look. In this case, you will want to take the package they send apart to see where tucks or graphics are, also being sure to take measurements. If you simply have the product with no package reference, you will need to make measurements of the product itself, using wrapped paper to estimate the needed size.

From here, dielines are then created in Adobe Illustrator with certain design standards. You can then use a hard copy of the dieline you create to test with the product you are packaging. Once you have it right, hard copy prototypes are made with heavyweight paper or other materials. Following careful checking of prototypes for sturdiness and other factors, the finished packaging product will be ready to hit the shelves.



CRIS LACUNA, CEO OF CL COMMUNICATIONS
ANSWERS YOUR BURNING QUESTIONS ON
PR & MARKETING

Should I merge my marketing and PR strategies?

YES! Here are just a few reasons:

1. Amplify promotional efforts: your messaging will reach your audience louder and clearer.
2. Improve brand consistency: a unified brand identity across all platforms reinforces your brand's identity in the minds of your audience.
3. More effective communication with stakeholders: whether it's clients, investors, or the public, a cohesive approach enhances trust and understanding.

In 2020 63% of mobile traffic is video, and this is set to grow to 76% by 2025

(Source: Smart Insights)

As we project our way through 2021, it's no secret that video marketing is a standout way to reach your audience. As the medium has developed over the past few years, one thing has become extremely apparent: the sky is your limit. As a business, you have the potential to explore a number of different creative avenues to test the waters of what works and what doesn't for your target audience. It's about engaging with your audience and entertaining them in a memorable way, to create a lasting impression of your business. You have the opportunity to combine storytelling with marketing, taking your viewers on a journey that both draws them in and entices them to stay.

There are a number of trends that have emerged showing the direction video marketing is taking, which as a business you can capitalise on. If you are looking for a starting place for your video marketing, these key video trends will give you the motivation you need to get started on engaging video content for your business.

TREND #1 TRAINING VIDEOS

Did you know, 65% of people use YouTube to help them solve a problem.

TREND #2 MOBILE VIDEO IS GROWING STRONGER!

Mobile video consumption rises by 100 % each year. In fact, people are 1.5 times more likely to watch a video on their mobile phone.

TREND #3 IT'S GETTING PERSONAL

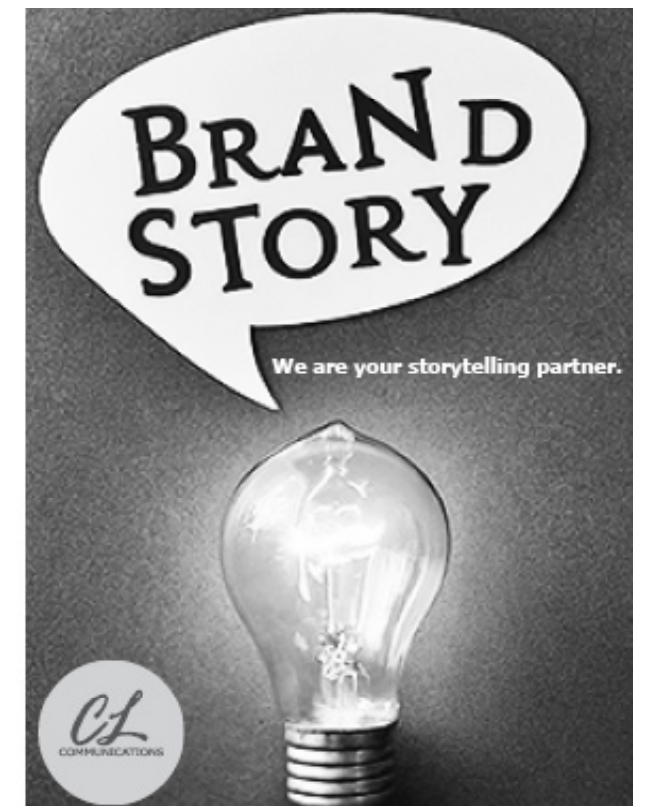
Customers no longer want to just see a brand; they want to go behind the brand and meet the people and processes that bring it all together. Vlogs are the third most popular video form (coming in after how-to videos and educational videos) and are a popular way to connect a brand with its customers.

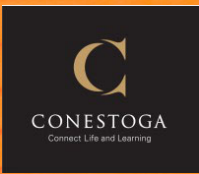
TREND #4 LIVE VIDEOS

By 2021, live streaming is set to become a seventy billion dollar industry. As far as engagement goes, being available to your audience and able to answer their questions in real-time both forms a vital connection and engages them.

TREND #5 EASE OF VIDEO CREATION

The final trend that is taking us over into 2021 is the ease in which videos can now be created. If you go back just a few years, video product required specialised equipment, the commitment of a dedicated team and the investment of a large chunk of marketing dollars.





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