On Flat Design Popular in Graphic Design

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Abstract

Flat design is active in all fields of graphic design with its simple, bold, clean and bright design language, which has been widely concerned and known by more and more people, becoming a popular trend in the field of graphic design. This paper summarized the concept and origin of flat design style, and analyzed the performance of flat design in various fields of graphic design combined with the visual elements of flat design style. At the same time, it discussed the inevitability and limitation of the development of flat design style, and provided reference for the application of this style in the future.

Keywords

Flat design; Graphic design; Information transmission.

1. Introduction

In the society today, people receive and process a large amount of information on various electronic devices every day, and design slowly infiltrates into people's daily life on these tools under the background of strong self-media era. With the fast pace of life, people have produced visual fatigue on a large number of complicated text information and image information. The timely appearance of flat design meets the requirements of information transmission accuracy nowadays. It visualizes a large amount of information with its design style of "avenue is most simple", abstract and symbolic design elements, economic and practical design ideas and the form of "reducing complexity", to meets the aesthetic needs of the general public, which is gradually accepted by more and more people who pursue a simple way of life. Although flat design style once only appeared in all kinds of digital terminals, it has been appeared in the whole design field, which can be seen in the illustration design, packaging design, advertising design, brand design and other areas. Flat design has raised people's cognition of design aesthetics to a new height and become a popular design form. Its appearance is not only a change of design style, which is also a new attempt and change made by designers to design thinking mode and design expression language. [1]

2. Concept of Flat Design

Flat design is a word in English, as a form of expression of two-dimensional space. The definition of flat design in the English version of Wikipedia is: an interface design style that removes all styles and attributes with three-dimensional spatial effects during the design process, and removes all design elements with shadows, highlights, reflections, gradients, shaded surface textures, and all three-dimensional illusions. As a new design style, it first appeared in interface design, and then developed rapidly and gradually spread to various graphic design fields.[2] Flat design style follows design principles which are contracted but not simple, and less is more. During designing, decorative expression techniques such as highlights, shadows, textures and materials that interfere with the reading content should be reduced. Information should be refined and designed to present information concisely and cleanly, so that it can be more quickly and directly presented in front of people's eyes. In contrast to the skeuomorphic design style, the abstract, symbolic and simple design language

displayed by flat style breaks through the visual limitation of traditional design and is favored by more and more designers.

3. Origin of Flat Design

Flat design is relative to the pseudo-physical design style. With the rapid development of society, skeuomorphism, a realistic and realistic design style, has been subject to many restrictions in design performance and innovative application. It has been unable to meet people's demand for concise and efficient information transmission, so it has been gradually replaced by flat design.

Flat design is not a sudden design style, it is the product of the development of history and the needs of the times. The modernist design style that appeared in the 1920s advocated emphasizing functional design in the form of visual simplicity and abandoning the tedious decorative design. At first, this way of thinking only appeared in the field of architectural design, and then more and more people affirmed, gradually affected the various design fields, until the establishment of Bauhaus Design College, modernist design style was pushed to the climax. In the same period, the design concept of "less is more" put forward by modernist architect Mies van derro also has a profound influence on the design thinking in the future. The Swiss minimalist design style, which rose in the 1960s, is the continuous development of less is more. Its typical feature is to abandon the redundant decorative design elements, with concise geometry, bright colors and clean lines, to complete the design of the picture, which coincides with today's flat design style in the design thinking. Therefore, the appearance of flat design style cannot be separated from the influence of Bauhaus's modernist design style and Swiss minimalist design style.[3]

Flat design style today is best known primarily for mobile applications. Microsoft launched a music player called Zune in late 2006, to compete with Apple's IPOD. Metro is the visual interface style of the player, starting the application of flat design. Because the response is good, Microsoft also applies this design style to the Windows 8.[4] Apple is not willing to show weakness, in the IOS7 operating system released in 2013 put a pseudo-physical interface, deleted the complex details, into the flat design style, visual effects have undergone earth-shaking changes, causes the society to this brand-new design style intense discussion. With the rapid spread of this design trend, some mainstream domestic Internet companies have also made changes in their own product interface design, all began to adopt flat design style. Flat design has become a popular trend of interface design.

4. Visual Language in Flat Design

Flat design follows the design thinking of "less is more". It uses the combination of graphics by refining the essence of things, colors and fonts, to make the audience quickly and accurately obtain important graphic and text information and meet the aesthetic needs of modern people.

5. Simplified Graphics

One of the characteristics of flat design style is the simplification of graphics. The combination of figure and line geometry eliminates complicated redundant information, and this clean and pure form enhances the readability and connotation of the work. Although complex decorative elements of the geometry in flat design has been removing, it does not mean simplicity and monotony. Geometry is not only a simple summary of things, but also depends on the designer's ability to understand the combination of things, and extracts the most representative and able to reflect the essential form of things in the complex organization.[5] In flat design, the

combination of geometric figures conveys different information and gives people different visual enjoyment.

6. Fresh Colors

Color is also an integral and important role in flat design. It has a strong visual impact, and different colors will bring people different psychological feelings. The color in flat design can convey emotion to the audience most directly. In order to attract people's attention, designers often combine the use of fresh and gorgeous colors, reduce the use of lines, by adjusting the brightness, purity and hue of the color, to enhance the visual impact effect, and show the vitality and interest of the work, to let people aftertaste.

7. Concise Fonts

As a visual language, font is an indispensable part of information transmission. In the pursuit of simple flat design field, vertical thickness unified serif font stand out, which is strong and easy to identify. It accords with the overall tonality of flat design, and complements other elements in flat design to achieve unexpected visual effects. As colors, different font modeling will also bring different psychological feelings. In the flat design, the concise and brisk sans serif font gives a simple, steady and advanced feeling, which makes people read comfortably and fluently.

According to the clever combination of graphics, color and text, flat design is harmonious and interesting, in line with the audience's demand for information intake, which is the perfect embodiment of modern design with both functionality and aesthetics.

8. Flat Style Activating in Graphic Design

8.1. Packaging Design

Although the space of information transmission is limited, the flat style packaging design creates strong picture effect and impact force through simplified graphics, gorgeous colors and striking atmosphere text, which enables people to obtain packaging and product information quickly and accurately, improves the information transmission effect of product packaging effectively, it not only stimulates the charm of products, but also strengthens the brand image of products, and even increases the purchasing power and market competitiveness of products. The packaging design with both formal sense and artistic connotation will be loved and accepted by the fast-paced contemporary people.

8.2. Illustration Design

Although there are many kinds of flat illustrations, the illustrators will follow the simplified painting principle, weaken the light and shadow effect and detail of the object in the painting process, and emphasize the color block sense and impact contrast. For example, some illustrators choose clip art, directly using color blocks for collage cutting and stacking. Or the texture of the color block to make the color block more rich and interesting, so that the viewer in the visual understanding of the work.

8.3. Logo Design

The flat style logo reduces the complex and redundant decorative elements such as shadow, perspective, gradual change, texture and so on, improves the design efficiency, saves the design cost, and conforms to the development trend of the fast-paced society. With less graphics, text and color to convey the core meaning to express, to meet the aesthetic needs of contemporary people. The visual effect of simplicity and sharpness not only improves the recognition and

recognition of signs, but also improves the efficiency of information transmission. Although flat logo looks simple, but behind this simplicity is the crystallization of designer wisdom, simple but not simple, thought-provoking.

8.4. Limitations of Flat Design

Everything has two sides. Flat design has many advantages, but it also has some limitations. In the interface design, flat design often uses monochromatic color blocks to decorative design form in order to meet the needs of users to simplify the operation. Although it can transmit information quickly and accurately, simple geometry, bright color and uniform expression style are sometimes too rational to be accepted by some audiences. High cold, lack of temperature and humanity, give people a feeling of lack of ground. Although [6] flat design style can make the work look tall and unique, not all designs can be integrated into flat style. For example, some high-end brand packaging design, as well as supermarket promotional posters, leaflets, and e-commerce platform terminal interface design, blindly pursue this style, often ignore the functionality of the work and the aesthetic preferences of the audience. Therefore, in the face of design needs, we should not adhere to the flat design framework, should seek more design thinking.[7][8].

9. Conclusion

Flat design in graphic design, with its simple geometry, bright and clean color and bold font, purposefully and accurately transmit information to users, more in line with people's aesthetic needs. Although the picture lacks rich decorative elements, it will not appear monotonous and empty in vision, but people will read more potential information from the picture and resonate with the work. It can be said that flat design is the perfect inheritance and development of Mies Van Der Rohe's design concept of "less is more".

Flat design style only appeared in the interface design at first, people from its praise and criticism, to now flat design popular, appeared in all fields of graphic design, more and more people accept. It brings great innovation to contemporary design. Thus, flat design and the development of today's society are complementary. Perhaps the future flat design will be replaced by the new design style, but good design has never blindly followed the trend, flat design will never quit the design stage.

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