INTE 6710 ~ Creative Designs for Instructional Materials
Project 3: Pecha Kucha Presentation Design Document

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Overview

I focused my pecha kucha on how to prepare and participate in a hike to the bottom of the Grand Canyon and stay overnight at Phantom Ranch. Specifically, I detailed how to prepare physically for the hike, what to pack for the hike, and what to expect during the hike.

In September 2012, I was a last minute substitute to a group making a trip to the bottom of the Grand Canyon. Prior to the excursion, I received a variety of information on how to prepare and what to expect. Now I am leading my own group to the Grand Canyon in October 2014. While the information I originally received was helpful, I can do a better job in giving a succinct overview of the trip during this presentation.

My audience for this presentation comprises three groups. The first group consists of individuals who are planning to accompany me on the trip next year. Because I am still filling slots on the trip, the second audience consists of people who are interested in the trip, but would like more information about it. Since my presentation is available online, the final group consists of anyone making the same trip or one similar to it who may seek out this information.

My audience has a stake in the subject matter because either they are planning to make a decent into the Grand Canyon or they are considering such a trip.

Having spoken to numerous people, many expressed interest in learning from my previous experience about what to expect from a trip of this nature. Many believe this to be a once in a lifetime experience and they want to get the most out of it. I also wanted to get them excited about the trip, particularly those who have not yet decided whether they wish to join the group.

I included the following learning objectives in my presentation: After viewing this presentation, the audience will understand how to prepare their body for the hike, know what to take with them during the hike, and understand what to expect during the hike itself.

I used PowerPoint to select the images, determined their order in the presentation, and wrote the script in the notes area. I used Photoshop to lay out the images and add text where needed. I recorded the voice tracks in Sound Forge Audio Studio. I combined the images, vocals, and background music in Sony Vegas Movie Studio. Finally, I upload the completed presentation to YouTube.

I based my design decisions on readings from Duarte, Heath & Heath and Garr Reynolds. The key decisions included telling a visual story, balancing full-bleed images with effective use of white space, reframing existing photos for maximum effect, focusing on one main point per slide, and ensuring a balance across all elements on the screen.

Design Decisions

Design Decision #1

I told a visual story with a clear beginning, middle, and end and established an identifiable structure (Duarte, 2012, pg 30). I used the slides as visual augmentation of the narrative by selecting slides that illustrated each point and evoked emotions (Reynolds, 2009, Chapter 4, Section 1, Paragraph 3).

With this structure, I made it clear to the audience the presentation explained three elements of the taking a trip to Phantom Ranch. I presented steps leading up to the trip (physical preparation), packing for the trip, and then the trip itself. I ensured the core of the story was always about reaching the bottom of the Grand Canyon and then back out again. (Heath and Heath, 2007, Chapter 1, Section 1, Paragraph 15).

Understanding vision is our most powerful sense, I used the visuals as a guide to keep the audience's attention and better remember the content of the presentation (Reynolds, 2009, Chapter 4, Section 1, Paragraph 15).

To avoid audiences reading the content instead of focusing on the story, I intentionally used as few lines of text as possible. In 15 of the 20 slides there are six words or less used. Thus, I filled in the rest of the story orally (Reynolds, 2009 Chapter 4, Section 9, Paragraph 1).

It was not necessary for me to summarize, but rather to draw the audience in and have them want to learn more (Heath and Heath, 2007, Chapter 2, Section 12, Paragraph 6).

Design Decision #2

Because the content was heavily visual, I utilized full-bleed images on half of the slides (1-3, 6, 8, 11, 13-14, 17, 20) and multiple bleeding images on an additional seven slides (4-5, 12-13, 16, 18, 19) (Reynolds, 2009, Chapter 4, Section 5, Paragraph 2).

When displaying pictures of the Grand Canyon itself, I always utilized some kind of bleed. This was important to give the illusion that the screen, and by extension the subject of image, was bigger than it is (Reynolds, 2009 Chapter 4, Section 5, Paragraph 3).

Design Decision #3

On the slides that did not include full-bleed images, I utilized white or empty space.

By leaving specific areas of these slides empty, I allowed the content to stand out and ensure the messages were clear. For example, slides 12 and 18 contain the most text so I

left the backgrounds white and placed nothing behind the text to distract the audience. Another example occurs on slides 7 and 9. These slides used extensive white space to focus the audience on critical items to bring along for the trip. The two slides contained only three words of text on each one (Reynolds, 2009, Chapter 6, Section 1, Paragraph 2).

In the two instances when I used text over a full-bleed image, I placed a box with transparent color behind the words so they would be more legible to the audience (Reynolds, 2009, Chapter 2, Section 14, Paragraph 1).

Design Decision #4

Because I took nearly all of the images on my trip, they did not always layout in the best possible way. As a result, I utilized cropping or reframing of numerous images to better suit the needs of my presentation (Reynolds, 2009, Chapter 4, Section 7, Paragraph 1).

For example, on slide 20 the original photo placed the subjects in the center. I enlarged the photo and moved it to the left of the frame. This resulted in the subjects now showing about one-third of the way from the left edge rather than the center. This allows the viewer to focus more easily and then the oral instruction guides them eventually to the text on the right side of the screen (Reynolds, 2009, Chapter 4, Section 33, Paragraph 4).

Slides 1, 2, 3, 6, and 8 feature full-bleed landscape images. In order to maximize the foreground images, I reframed the image to place the horizon line near the top of the image. There were no clouds in the sky so I moved the sky off screen (Reynolds, 2009, Chapter 4, Section 33, Paragraph 10).

Design Decision #5

Since a pecha kucha has a strict time limit, I utilized one main point per slide. This allows the audience to focus in on the image and narration (Reynolds, 2009, Chapter 4, Section 11, Paragraph 1).

While there are images that include multiple points of focus, there is clarity and simplicity so the learner can easily understand each point. In the case of slide 10, for example, the six images are all articles of clothing (Reynolds, 2009, Chapter 4, Section 19, Paragraph 2).

Design Decision #6

In slides with multiple elements, I designed with a balance to help to activate negative space ensuring the subjects stand out (Reynolds, 2009 Chapter 6, Section 6, Paragraph 2).

For example, slide 9 contains five elements, four images and one text box. None of these items appears in the horizontal or vertical center of the screen. Instead, I arranged them using the rule of thirds. I centered the top two images one third of the way down from the top and the bottom images one third of the way from the bottom. In addition, the two middle images appear one third of the way from the left and right edges respectively (Reynolds, 2009, Chapter 8, Section 8, Paragraph 2).

On slides 13 and 19, I used three images and one text box of different sizes and placed at different angles. This asymmetrical arrangement allowed the contrasting elements to create balance when viewed as a whole (Reynolds, 2009, Chapter 6, Section 9, Paragraph 1).

Design Decision #7

To maximize the impact of certain slides, I needed to use multiple images to communicate the main point effectively. I utilized the Gestalt principle of "continuation" techniques to help my audience flow smoothly from image to image (Reynolds, 2009 Chapter 6, Section 14, Paragraph 1).

For example, on slide 5, rather than use one image of a person running, I took five images of a runner moving farther away from the viewer. I lined up the pathway in each of the five photos to draw the viewer's eyes logically from one to the next up the hill.

On slide 8, I wanted to emphasize the point that the terrain is rugged and using hiking poles correctly is a necessity. I combined a background image of the terrain with one of proper hiking pole technique in the foreground. It gives the slide a dynamic feel and the narration explains each item (Reynolds, 2009 Chapter 6, Section 13, Paragraph 2).

Design Decision #8

I choose not to limit myself to photos from my previous trip to avoid repetition. In order to maintain the audience's attention I wanted to break patterns as quickly as they were formed (Heath and Heath, 2008, Chapter 2, Section 1, Paragraph 9).

For example, after slides 1 through 3 contained full-bleed images from the Grand Canyon, I changed to smaller images in my basement. This happens again on slide 12 when I added a map and mile markers, which are elements not previously seen in the presentation.

I also opened areas of knowledge gaps by teasing information. For example, slide 3 contains a red arrow pointing at a far off point. I explain through narration while it appears to be a long way off, it is actually only half way to our destination (Heath and Heath, 2008 Chapter 2, Section 14, Paragraph 18).

Formative Evaluation Response

I conducted a peer review process for this handout over a three-day period. I submitted a draft of the presentation that included 75% of the images and a remedial narration track to two classmates working on the same project. They each had three days to review the content and answer the formalized evaluation questions.

The information below contains the questions, the responses from the two reviewers, and my response based on their feedback. All the reviewer responses are included verbatim including any typos or spelling mistakes.

1. Currently I placed boxes in some areas and included the mini-hiking poles around them. I considered using various objects (boots, water bottles etc) as another option. In what ways do you think I can enhance the look of the text so it does not look repetitive?

   Why I asked the question: I was not sure if the images were distracting or made the images look less professional.

   First Response: I think the text looks fine and does not appear repetitive in a negative way. Repetition can be a good thing and can be an indicator of consistency. If you add additional objects to frame the text, such as the water bottles or boots, it could add an extra appeal to the text.

   Second Response: I like the added nuance of some images to accent the text from a design perspective, though I am not sure that the justification is to make the text seem less repetitive. I think using a short bit of text to reinforce the main point of the audio is fine, so long as it does not take the viewer's eye away from studying an informative image.

   My Response: Based on the feedback I decided to keep the hiking poles near almost all text areas throughout the presentation.

2. On some slides (such as 4 and 5), I used placeholders for images. Do you think I should leave the gray boxes as borders and insert the photos or remove the boxes entirely? I included a sample of each option on slide 4.

Why I asked the question: I was unsure which option allowed the images to stand out the best.

First Response: I like the option of removing the boxes/borders. With the border, I feel like it may be too much. By only including the photos, it makes the slide appear more clean and uncluttered.

Second Response: The borders add some polish so I that seems justifiable.

My Response: With differing opinions, I decided to take a little from each. I removed the boxes, but added a drop shadow instead to achieve a similar effect in a more subtle manner.

3. On slide 8, the audio will discuss the tough walking conditions and focus on proper techniques for holding the hiking poles. Would you leave the images arranged as they are or would you suggest making the image of the hiking pole larger or more prominent?

   Why I asked the question: I was not sure if the images told the correct story.

   First Response: You might consider making the image of the hiking pole larger, since that is the focus of the slide. The placement is great, as is the background.

   Second Response: If the main subject is the hiking pole it would be great to see a full size image of the hiking pole.

   My Response: I decided to follow the advice of the first responder and enlarged the image about 50% from what I had originally used. To the second responders point, I believe the narration justifies the decision.

4. In an effort to help envision the trip, I included the topographical maps of the trails on 12 and 15. How do you think those images blend with the rest of the presentation?

   Why I asked the question: Because they represented a significant difference from all of the other images, I wanted to ensure they were not too jarring or felt out of place.

   First Response: The images of the topical map add more concrete information to the presentation and help to express the magnitude of the potential hike and terrain of the Grand Canyon.

   Second Response: I was a anthro/geography undergrad and geek out over topo maps so I might be the wrong person to ask. However, from an educational

viewpoint it shows how you will be hiking into deep little ravine type areas so that is neat.

My Response: Based on the two responses, I kept the topographical maps.

5. I am considering using some sort of organizer on each image that follows the progress of the presentation. For example, it would start with "Preparation", then "What to Bring", then "The Hike" and so on. In what ways do you think that would affect the overall feel of the project? Where would you put the information (across bottom, sidebar, on top of image, as a separate section next to image, etc).

   Why I asked the question: In previous projects, I have made effective use of this device so I was wondering how effective it would be to include here.

   First Response: I think that presentation is great as is without the organizing placards. However, if you decide to add them I think placement at the top would be a good placement.

   Second Response: It really depends on who you imagine your audience to be. For a really young crowd perhaps, but for an older crowd I wonder what would be most useful to them. If it is not relevant and the images can stand on their own as a representation of the audio then I say scratch the text. I am a less is more type. Once your audio is solid I would ask myself, 'what I am asking the audience to 'take in' in 20 seconds?" (In a relaxed manner for your presentation). The less you give them the more you invite them into a deeper 'listening' of what you are giving them, ie, time to really search through the photos and see all the beauty of the canyon.

   My Response: I took the advice of both responders and determined the twenty-second time limit on each slide prevented me from adding anything extra fearing it would detract from the main point of each slide.

Bibliography

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