UNIT 11 INTRODUCTION TO LAYOUT TYPES

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11.0 AIMS

In this unit, we shall introduce you to the concept of layout, its role and importance in the creation of an attractive look and the necessity of the editor’s or copy editor’s involvement in the layout process.

On completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the difference between layout and design
- discuss the different terminology used in making layouts
- describe the various people involved in making a layout and the design solving process
- list the types of layout in terms of tools and techniques available
- describe the concept of layout in relation to the client, the printer and the designer, and
- apply the basic principles of design.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

We are exposed to printed literature from morning to night. Some of it comes to us through the established media, such as newspapers, books, magazines, posters and packaging and some comes directly in one form or the other by mail, is distributed individually, or collected personally according to our convenience. Not all these forms serve their purpose due to unimaginative content and, in many cases, for their unaesthetic looks. The unprofessional work that goes to the people finds its place in the wastepaper basket without creating the desired impression. Each printed piece performs its function to the fullest if a bit of thought is given to the design process, no matter whether the piece is elaborate with an imaginative copy, illustration and colour, or whether the few words of typography have been arranged on plain paper. Even the simple piece needs the same treatment as the elaborate one.

In this unit, a step-by-step approach in designing a printed piece has been taken. It is not, however, intended to make you a professional graphic artist, as there are many well-trained and qualified artists available to do the jobs. As editor or copy editor, you get involved in designing (not for designing things yourself since you may get the work done by a professional) since ultimately, you are responsible for the look of the finished product. However, certain types of designing you can do yourself with the help of various materials available around you or by using computer technology. This lesson will basically help you to interact with professionals and to look at the design solving process.
### 11.2 FUNDAMENTALS OF LAYOUT

A layout is a plan or blueprint for design structure. To construct a building you need a plan. Many people like masons, carpenters, plumbers, painters etc. work on this plan to construct a building or structure.

#### 11.2.1 What is Layout?

In our context, layout is the arrangement of design elements on paper. These elements are pictures, types, graphic shapes and colours. The pictures including drawings, photographs, charts, graphs, maps etc., headlines and text matter are formed by the types whereas patterns, lines and areas filled with colour and tone make graphic shapes. The main purpose of this exercise is to lay them out in a pleasing functional order.

Similarly to prepare a graphic design for a book, you may need a photographer/illustrator to provide the visuals, a compositor to provide the typesetting for the design's copy block and headline, a finishing artist or DTP operator to put all these together and a printer to produce the design. A layout person is the architect of a graphic design plan. Both imagination and skill are needed to develop a layout. Therefore, a book's layout too is meant for guiding the persons who are working on it and also giving an idea of the final look of the design to those who are responsible for approving it.

#### 11.2.2 Layout Terminology

Different terms are used for layouts in different visual communication media:

- If the plan is for an advertisement, we call it an advertising layout.
- If it is for a newspaper, it is called a press layout.
- A plan for the magazine pages is called a page layout and a complete compilation of all pages is referred to as a dummy. This term is also used in package layout. A dummy is really a three-dimensional finished layout that gives the feeling of a printed product.
- The term make-up is used to describe the process of putting together the elements of a newspaper page.
- The prototype of an exhibition stall is called a mock-up or model.
- Layouts are not necessarily only for printed design. In any field where ideas must be presented or simulated visually, such as film, TV or web page, visual presentations begin in the form of layouts called storyboard. A storyboard is a series of related pictures depicting what the action might be in the actual film when it is finally produced or the website is finally launched.

Satyajit Ray used to sketch extensively for each situation at the time of writing the screenplay for the production of his full-length feature films. That's why his pictures are epitomes of art. In the case of a website, storyboarding serves to help plan and visualize both the page layouts of each page, as well as give an idea of three-dimensional navigation and relations throughout the site.

#### 11.2.3 Who Can Make a Layout?

Many successful layout people do come from an artist background. They are in an advantageous position because of their skill of drawing and painting. An artist can express the idea of a design in the most literal form. However, layout people may come from public relations and journalism backgrounds because of their knowledge of information collection, general rules of layout design, typography and production. There are also people with a marketing and management background who know the psychology of sales and marketing. These days basic layout people are printers and DTP operators.
Often we depend on them for layouts. Some unorganized institutions pass their publication materials on to a printer without thinking of layout and design. Here the printer works as a layout person.

11.2.4 What is Design?

Design is a structure or form of any man-made environment. An artistically and skillfully structured environment is convenient to use and people view it with pleasure. Graphic design is the application of type, colour and images on a surface to create a clear and effective whole. Graphic designs are made in order to break communication barriers. The types are arranged to make the composition legible without too much strain. Colours are chosen not for themselves but to enhance the message and create the right atmosphere. Visuals are combined with types and manipulated and sized to capture and hold attention so that one can get a point across. Design also includes putting all these elements in order — arranging them into a logical sequence. To achieve this you need proper planning. The plan of a graphic design is layout. Broadly, two types of layout used in graphic design — Rough Layout and Artwork.

11.3 TYPES OF LAYOUT

There are basically four kinds of layout.

11.3.1 Rough Layout

(a) Working Rough

(b) Finished Rough

(c) Art Work
Rough layout is mainly used for presentation to the client or to the senior authorities of the institution, who evaluate and discuss the proposed idea in the form of a visual. The rough layout may be of different degrees of finish depending on the client's demand, availability of time and information with the layout person, and his/her skill in translating an idea into a visual form.

Rough layout is also used as printer's guide. Here layouts are of two types: working rough and finished rough. The working rough serves simply as a aid to the back shop. The designer's back shops are the DTP operator, the photographer and the printer, etc. Here the designer works as his own client. The layout artist prepares a working rough and he himself approves it, and then prepares a finished rough. He may need a photograph or a laser typesetting from the back shop to make a presentable rough layout. The designer may directly send the working rough to the printing press.

A finished rough is a close approximation of its final form. It presents all the elements of type, colour, picture clearly and accurately in regard to size, style, spacing placement etc.

11.3.2 Artwork

Rough layout is finally converted into 'mechanical' for the printer, commonly known as artwork. Conventionally it is a black and white image or black image on a white page of a camera-ready copy used by the printer to make a film positive or negative for the purpose of printing. This stage of layout should be handled by a trained artist with considerable knowledge of printing and pre-press work.

All the elements of the page — like area for illustration, graphic shape and colour—must eventually be made into your outlines and typed out as line art which will be printed without any gradation of tones.

11.3.3 Conventional Layout

Both rough layout and artwork are done conventionally and digitally. Despite the widespread use of computers, conventional methods of making layout are still in use. Here display type (heading and sub-heading) is lettered in, and visuals are sketched in the same size and tone as in the final product. There is enough detail for the visual to be a close approximation of its final form. Text copy, or reading matter is indicated by a copy-block, but this is made precisely as it will look in the finished product with lines drawn to indicate the 'x' height of the type and the space between lines. Sometimes, a simulated type is used for the copy-block in rough. Display lines or headlines can be indicated in several ways. Some graphic artists have the ability to draw the letters by hand. But many people who are otherwise skilled at layout are not very good at hand drawing or lettering. They can depend on adhesive coated pastedown type or low-resolution computer printouts.

11.3.4 Digital Layout: Doing It Yourself

Nowadays most of the layout tasks can be accomplished on the computer. A computer presents a creative graphic environment that allows you to use your software in much the same way that you work at your desk or drawing board. Applications allow the display of text and graphics very close to the way they look when printed. Typefaces will show in their actual sizes and styles and scanned images can be combined with art of other graphic applications in a variety of ways for a wide range of creative results.

In digital layout, the illustrative matter is scanned and finished by software like Photoshop, CorelDraw and Illustrator. Before you scan, determine the quality requirement for your layout and choose the correct resolution of your scanned image. High resolution scanning of graphics is time-consuming and occupies a lot of computer memory/space. Line art, text and flat colours occupy less memory of the computer, thus reducing the time in image manipulation.
After you have got the image in Photoshop by scanning, various filters and brushes of this programme enable you to turn your work into a good imitation of an oil painting, a water colour painting or a drawing. The ‘sharpen’ filters can restore the apparent focus in the out-of-focus photographs. Blur filters come in handy for smoothening the hard edges. The artistic filters can, however, when carefully and thoughtfully applied, elevate an ordinary picture to something quite extraordinary. The eyedropper tool enables you to select a colour and apply it to any of your painting images. The rubber-stamp colours a select piece of the picture and places it wherever you want it. Learn these techniques and other features of this software. The manipulated pictures should be stored in a computer hard disk in EPS or TIFF format for further use in other applications.

Choose a typeface for your digital layout that displays and prints correctly. The Post Script and True Type fonts are the two industry standards for imaging that can be scaled to any size, and still remain sharp and smooth in any object-oriented programme like PageMaker and Illustrator. They, however, lose the sharpness in a paint-oriented programme like Photoshop because they are pixilated in it.

In a multipage publication, a comprehensive dummy can be prepared by importing graphics and text on a page layout programme. The programme allows one to set up master pages with elements that repeat on every page. Simple lines, boxes, and shapes can be added, besides imported graphics. You can position your imported image on the page at will by sizing, masking and rotating. Formatting of the text is so flexible that it can be wrapped around any shape of illustration or can follow the pattern you develop.

The use of colour in your digital layout is unlimited. In digitized form as many as sixteen million colours can be used in your layout. Any range of colours can be created on the screen with different proportions of primary colours. But a word of caution: getting a colour in a comprehensive or on a printed page may not match exactly the colour you see on the screen. Today there are an increasing number of colour printers available which offer a wide range of resolution and colour quality. The quality of colour depends on quality of paper on which printing is obtained.

A digital rough layout can be presented to the client in the form of a low-resolution printout from an inkjet printer or the information of the layout can be stored in a floppy which can be opened in the client’s computer for his approval. Here also the image resolution should be very low or compressed so that it can be taken in a removable drive (CD, pendrive etc.)

Rough layout is not only meant for the client’s approval but also as a guide to the professionals who are going to do the artwork and pre-press task for reproduction. It also serves as an instructional copy for the printer. Instructions should be given on the layout itself or on the margin of the layout. In order to avoid getting the layout dirty, instructions may be given on a protective flap. The layout in a removable drive may carry the instructions on a separate sheet or on its label.

Looking Back

Types of layout can be categorized into rough layout and artwork which can be developed both by conventional and digital methods.

Rough layout also can be identified into sub-categories — finished rough and working rough. Finished rough is the close approximation to its final form used for presentation to the client and also serves as a printer’s guide. The working rough serves as a rapid guide to the DTP operator, photographer and the printers etc.

In the conventional method of making roughs, layout headings and sub-headings are lettered in, visuals are sketched in the same size and tones in the final product and the reading matter is indicated by a copy-block with lines drawn.
In a digital layout the illustrative matter is scanned and manipulated, typographic matter is typed and stored in the word processing software and then a comprehensive layout is prepared combining text and illustrations on a page layout programme. A low-resolution digital layout can serve the purpose of rough layout which can be altered easily. A high resolution one can be used as comprehensive layout for high-budget presentation and artwork for outputting on film.

11.4 RULES FOR MAKING LAYOUT

Here are some hints which will be useful to you in making layouts.

11.4.1 Identify the Elements

A design starts with identifying the elements to be arranged. The elements may be copy-block, headline, picture, colour, white space, etc. These are identified by size, shape, tone, texture and edges. A copy-block has a textured shape, a rectangular photograph has a smooth edge shape, whereas a cut-out photo has an irregular shape and so on. The basic shapes are: square, circle and triangle. Innumerable shapes can be obtained in variations and combinations of these shapes. Bigger and ragged-edged shapes carry more weight than smaller and smooth-edged shapes. Dark coloured or toned shapes look heavier compared to light coloured or empty shapes.

What is Tone? Tone is basically lightness or darkness of the surface quality. Everything we see with our naked eyes is in colour. The degrees of lightness and darkness of colours are called values of colour hue. The colour value retains its personality even when it converted into single hue and is termed tone. The shape may be very distinct or vague and distinct shapes are easily separable but vague ones are merged with each other or there are no distinct edges.

11.4.2 Arrange the Elements in Logical Sequence

Now, the job of the layout person is to divide the area of layout into rectangular grids in which these elements will be arranged. The grids will allow you to allocate the
elements in unity with endless possibilities. Some of the elements may be placed within the rectangular grid, one or two in other shapes. This brings dynamism and looks lively.

Select a predominant display element which may be placed along with other subordinate elements. This should be done logically, maintaining the proper visual sequence. Selection of an element may be done skilfully by sizing, shaping, toning in subtle proportion — dark/light, big/small, and regular/irregular. On the basis of the proportion, the reader decides which one to read first and so on.

To attract attention is the first and primary objective of the design. In some form or the other, curiosity should be created in design. It may be by emphasizing the design element, by the art or by word content. Emphasis can be achieved by making one of the items bigger in size, unusual in shape, darker in tone, rough in texture. The initial fixation is not enough. The designer should make an attempt to bring the reader’s interest to the rest of the design by harmonizing the design elements. Harmony means one element should go with another element which is by nature the same. Tone harmony is achieved equally by surface quality and design elements. Bold illustrations and bold types harmonize. Typographical harmony means that the type characters including figures, signs and punctuations are of the same style. Orderly repetition of some elements, long horizontal or vertical elements can give motion or direction to a composition.

Place the elements on the page in such a way as to make them look comfortable in a particular space, which is achieved by balance. There are two kinds of balance in design — formal or symmetrical and informal or asymmetrical. In formal design, space is divided equally from left to right, and elements of equal weight are placed equidistant from the central line. If a single element is to be balanced, that element should be placed at the centre of the space so that the imaginary central line can divide the element down the middle.

In informal balance, elements of similar look but precisely the same weight are placed in relationship to one another so that there is weight at the bottom of the layout as well as at the top, to the left and to the right, so as to balance the whole. Here, the optical centre acts as the pivot of a weighing machine or as the centre of gravity. The optical
centre is the spot that hits the eye first when it encounters a blank page. This is an imaginary point slightly above the geometrical centre.

Symmetrical Balance

Asymmetrical Balance

11.4.3 Develop a Style

Printed pieces have more impact when they have a distinctive style. Style also helps in placing the elements logically. The most commonly used style is grouping the elements in unity. A border around the elements makes a frame and becomes a style. A rhythmic style can be obtained some elements, which have homogeneous characteristics in terms of shape, tone, and colour.

A simple style design may be developed by using white space generously and a few type styles with regular shapes. An ornamental and luxurious style may be useful for hotels, restaurants, jewellery, and handicraft shops. A layout may be mainly of big size types and can be termed poster style.

A photograph or a graphic shape running across a page is also a style. This style of design has got extra attention-getting value and often gives the feeling of continuance of the visual without being bound by any kind of border and is called bleed style. The gimmick style with manipulated types, reverse blocks and sunbursts is capable of arresting the viewer’s attention instantly. This way a style may be contemporary, traditional, masculine, feminine, scholarly, rural, urban and so on.
Looking Back

Making of a layout follows some rules which help you in appreciating and criticizing a design logically. Identification of elements is the first step of design. These are copy-block, headline, picture etc. of different sizes or shapes filled, in colour, tone or texture. Each element has an optical weight which can be felt emotionally. Attract attention by emphasizing one of the elements. Develop an interest by creating harmony. Guide the reader by subtle proportion. Give motion or direction by orderly repetition or by placing them horizontally or vertically. Unite them by grouping, bordering, and overlapping.

11.5 SUMMING UP

In this unit, we explained to you the difference between layout and design. We also told you about the different terminologies used in making layouts and about the various people involved in making layouts and in the design solving process. Basically we wanted you to understand the types of layout in terms of tools and techniques available and know the layout in relation to the client, the printer and the designer.

Having an exposure to the basic principle of design will help you to interact with the professionals and to guide them as per your requirements when you are finalizing the layout of any publication as per the desire of the author and the requirements of the subject matter.