



**KOMPANIGROUP**

GET AHEAD. STAY AHEAD.



# WHAT'S CLICKING NOW?

DIGITAL DESIGN TRENDS FOR 2016 AND BEYOND



ANALYSIS



PLANNING



IMPLEMENTATION

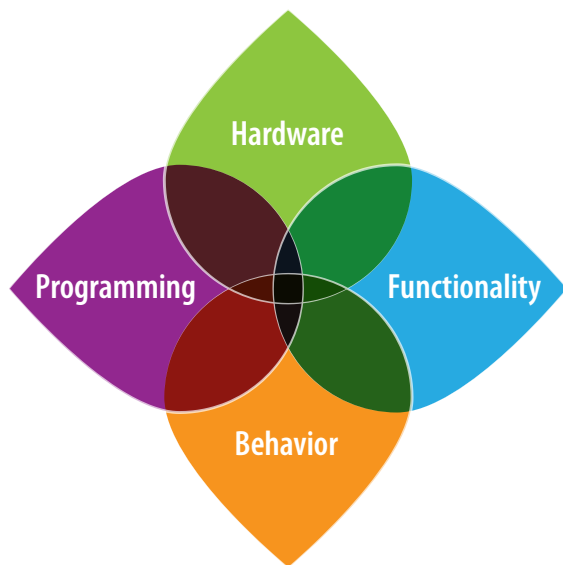


RESULTS

# CHANGE KEEPS CHANGING



Since its invention, no single communications technology has evolved as much as the web. When the telephone was created in 1876, the first big shift in how the technology was used came in the late 1960s with fax machines. That's nearly 100 years before a big leap forward.



Web has been moving at almost five times that rate. We've gone from emails and file sharing to e-commerce transactions made with virtual wallets on mobile devices through wireless connectivity... all in just a few short decades. But it's not only what we can do online that is changing so rapidly. It's also how we do it and the experience of our online actions that are evolving at the blink of an eye.

**Identifying Digital Design Trends is no longer strictly about aesthetics and principles of graphic design.** Today's savviest marketers and design firms are those that have expertise in human behavior, programming, functionality, hardware and the critical places where they overlap with one another.

You've likely heard a lot of talk about User Experience in recent years - and that's because of a fundamental digital design trend that's not going anywhere anytime soon. People have moved away from visiting websites and apps purely for functional reasons, and now select sites based on how much they enjoy (or are frustrated) by their time there.

# BEHAVIOR + DESIGN = EXPERIENCE

Just as in nature, competition drives evolution to remarkable places.



## WHY THE SHIFT?

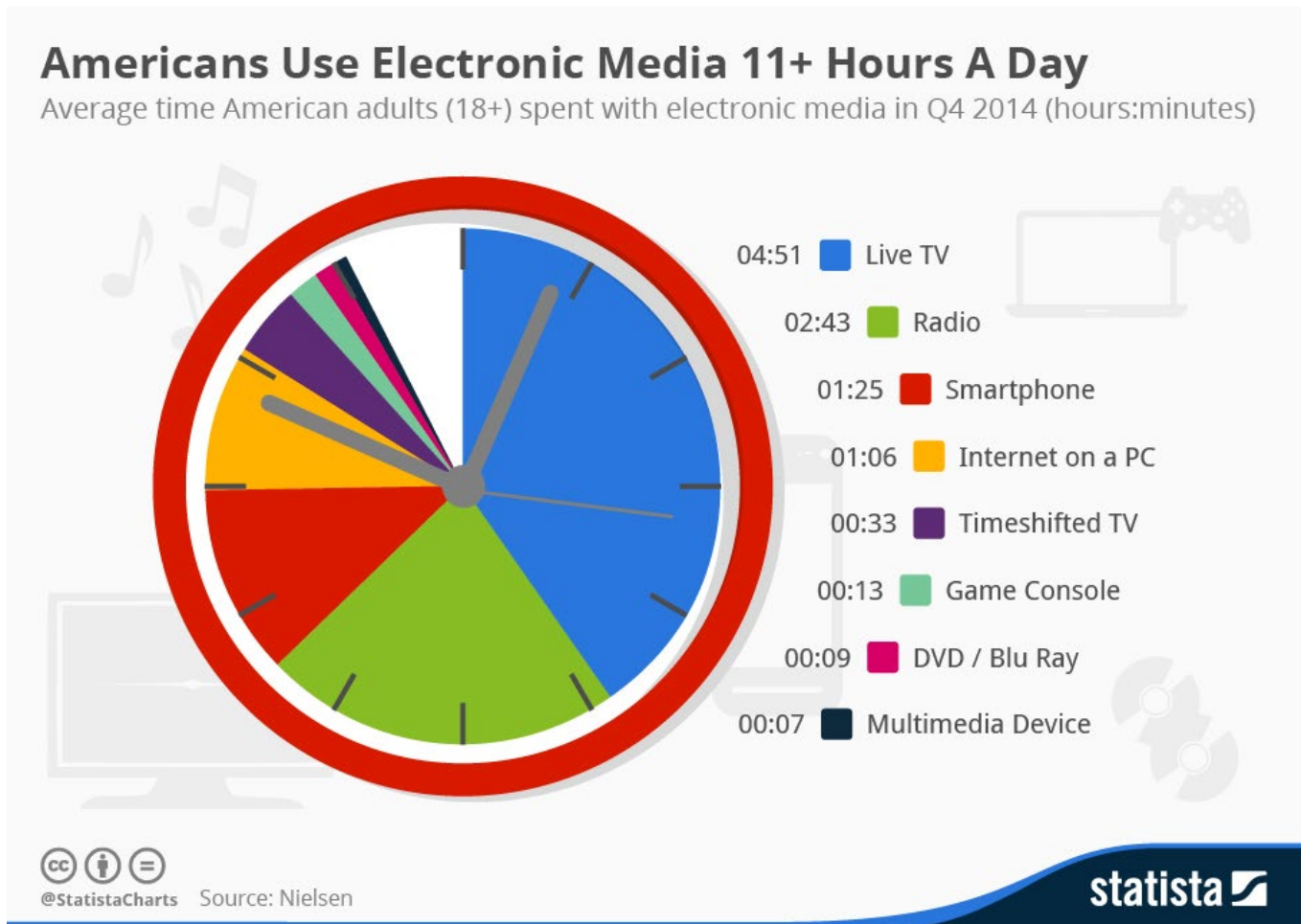
The simple answer would be that everyone likes to interact with design elements that are fun, pretty, and enjoyable. But the more informed answer is because of competition. In the early days of the internet, it didn't matter how a site looked as long as you could send your message, make your purchase, download music and videos, or whatever else you hoped to accomplish. Now, however, there are many companies out there eager to provide the same end result through a variety of different outcomes.

Think YouTube was the first to figure out people enjoyed sharing videos online? Of course not, they were just better at it than others because of the way they organized the site (and continue to re-organize the site) to make it easier to locate, share, and upload those videos. And what about Napster? Some still remember the pirate days of 'free' music and file sharing world prior to digital rights management. But it wasn't just illegal streaming that made torrent and p2p sites fail. The start of iTunes actually coincided with a surge in sharing sites eager to fill Napster's shoes... but despite the allure of "free," users were attracted to Apple's sleek, easy, one-click design.

This later paved the way for Spotify, Pandora, and others. Similarly, look at the way our phones function today. Much of this is driven by the front end design and engineering that revolutionized the phone as a comprehensive communications tool - combining elements of traditional voice cellular service, personal digital assistants (PDAs), pagers, MP3 players, and other separate pieces of tech into a single, elegant interface. What all these winners all have in common was understanding what users would consider a positive experience - and then driving their design to make that happen.

# FORM + FUNCTION = SALES

Clearly, we don't all interact with sites from a purely entertainment-driven standpoint. Function is at the heart of why digital communication continues to eclipse other forms of media.



That's more than half of the entire day devoted to being "connected" in some way - which matters greatly to anyone that sells a product or service. If you want to reach new or existing customers, the smart money is on trying to reach them online. But reaching them is only the first step.

While numbers like actual sales are also dependent on other external factors like pricing, supply costs, and simple customer preference, the role of multi-functional design in e-commerce is vital. The most successful e-commerce venues use their site as more than one kind of tool - and that influences everything from image size, to placement of navigation, to inset areas, to the style and look of links and other clickable items.



### SELLS CLOTHING ONLINE

Has a Website

.....  
Lists All Products

.....  
All Product Listings Same Size

.....  
Minimal Operational Costs

.....  
Annual Gross Sales: **\$250,000**

### SELLS CLOTHING ONLINE

Has a Website Optimized for SEO, User Experience, Past Purchase History, and Opt-In Email Marketing

.....  
Lists Products by Department

.....  
Site Contains Product Features & Highlights

.....  
Slightly Higher Operational Cost

.....  
Annual Gross Sales: **Over \$2 million**

Each brand develops their own lexicon for how the “finish” appears - but some elements are consistent trends across e-commerce sites.

## ACTIVE IMAGERY

This can include making sure all images on the site link to a product page, thumbnails that bring up “quick shop” functions upon hover, or even “zoom” features enabled to certain browsers such as Chrome, which allow users to see larger images (when available) without having to click through to the next page.

## MULTIPLE NAVIGATION OPTIONS

Understanding that some people prefer a traditional (self-driven) navigational experience and others prefer a guided one; you’re likely to notice e-commerce sites with top or side navigation as well as a series of linked images or content that pull users through the site either through clicks or swipes.

## BUY NOW/ACTIVE SHOPPING CARTS

Every moment people aren’t buying can be a missed opportunity. Abandoned shopping carts are big signs that the site or sale has failed to complete its objective. Smart retailers are using design to overcome many of the common pitfalls to an incomplete sale. The biggest is sticker shock. People love to browse, but don’t often keep a tally in their heads of what their purchase will end up costing. However, if cart functionality is tabbed or stepped, retailers can limit exposure to that scary number until customers have had time to become attached to their proposed purchase. It’s a small way design can close sales - and make a real impact on bottom line.





# YOU + KOMPANI GROUP = SMARTER BY DESIGN



**Anyone with knowledge about design software can create a basic, attractive digital marketing piece. But some of the best-looking websites out there are unfortunate underperformers.**

In today's fully wired society, it's simply not enough to just "be there" in the digital world. You have to always be making the sale or reaching the next market - and the only way to do that is with design that integrates that kind of functionality in a way that users still find appealing and memorable.

That understanding is a cornerstone of the Kompani Group digital design approach. We start with strategy and intel, then we use those truths to inform our design. We make choices about what visuals mean to various audiences, and when it's important to let function lead over form or vice versa. A recent client specializing in orthopaedic stem cell treatments just saw a big leap in SEO standings because of the way we re-organized their content to be more linkable, more readable, and more engagingly tied to the visuals. In just 3 months, their U.S. ranking jumped ahead nearly 5 million spots; their total number of sessions increased 90% overall and 122% on mobile devices.

Another good example is our own brand. You've likely noticed a similar nature-themed imagery running throughout our communications. That's because we believe in being a part of the world we serve - and being aware of our surroundings on a business level and beyond. It's our way of demonstrating we're grounded in reality, even though we make it a point to be ahead of the norm when it comes to technology and helping businesses achieve. **We make communications easy to follow, because we - ourselves - are easy to follow... all the way to success.**





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*Place yourself in good Kompani and success follows*

[contact@kompanigroup.com](mailto:contact@kompanigroup.com)

[www.KompaniGroup.com](http://www.KompaniGroup.com)