

opennemas

The best CMS for digital newspapers

POWERED BY



INTRODUCTION

Our main goal, at Openhost, is not only to **improve our Opennemas CMS user experience**, but also to help our customers to create, enhance and maintain your digital newspapers -which we consider like ours- so that readers obtain an **unbeatable experience** when being displayed content.

Therefore we created this little guide of design tips that we hope will be a **point of reference** when you begin, update or optimise your newspaper.

We want to present few practical advices about graphic and typography that will make possible that news are organized in a **clean, friendly and professional visual style**, which will make the reader feel comfortable, gain confidence and go back for more.

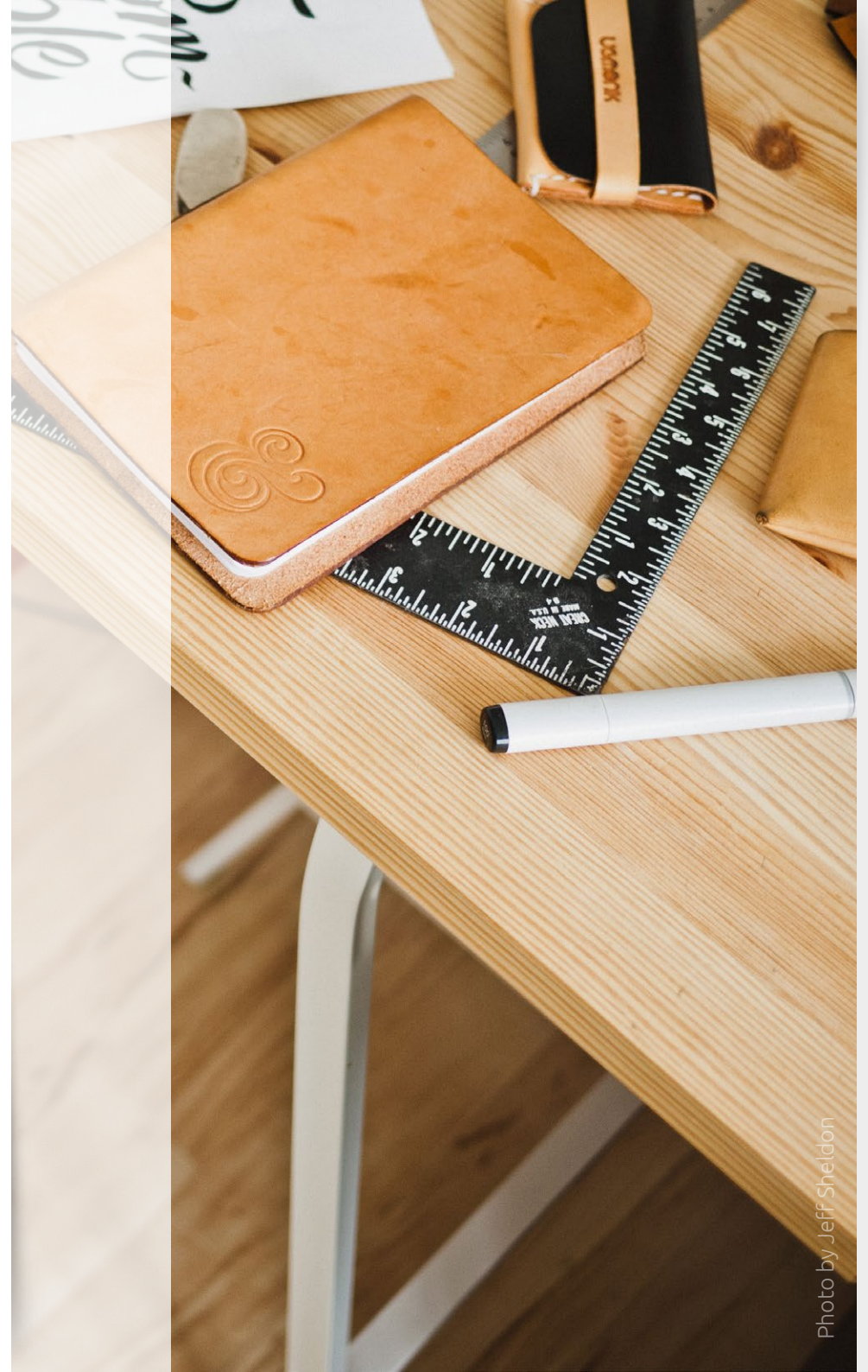


Photo by Jeff Sheldon

BASICS

STYLE

The design of a new magazine should be **carefully thought to give the right look**, either sober, fresh, modern, classic, techy, minimalist... that's what we want to convey and design is one of the most important way to achieve it.

CONTENT

We need to tell stories with a natural language, make them understandable, but above all we want to be **credible, relevant and interesting**.

MAIN CHARACTER

We do not have to forget that **the protagonist is precisely the content**, and we need to create a design to showcase it, where all elements are in harmony and the focus is fixed on the story the reader is interested in.

DIFFERENTIATION

There are many digital journals, and we need to make sure our is unique (each in its own way). We will use graphic, style and typography as tools for our newspaper to be **highly recognisable**.

MOBILITY

60% of news are read on mobile devices and if we include tablets in the consideration we reach **75-80%***. We must develop and show a version of our newspaper that adapts to different display types harmoniously and effectively. In Opennemas since late last year we implemented new processes of production "**Mobile First**" and now we feel the need of helping our newspapers to do the same.

**Data source Open Host, SL*



Photo by Jeff Sheldon

MyLogo



MyLogo



Home

Latest News

Economy

DO

HOME

LATEST NEWS

ECONOMY

DON'T

STYLE

To achieve a functional, attractive and fluid design we must take into account more than many parameters, therefore we will go through what we consider fundamental and what needs special attention to assure that our readers engage with us and stay.

HEADER

It is our presentation space, where the user has his/her first look to locate, know where he/she is and decide if he/she likes us or not. **Our logo** in the header should look with a perfect appearance. We must respect the proportions and sizes, not falling into temptation of 'bigger is better' because it does not work in this case.

The other master space in our header is the **main menu**. It also has a high percentage of influence on the memorisation/recognition of our image. The important aspects of it is a **well scheduled spacing** between elements, a proper **choice of typography** (both in terms of readability and size) and a density, which should never exceed more than one line, logically.

STYLE

GRID

The **grid or layout grid** is what gives the overall feeling of order and structure to our news website. Respecting all its aspects and each of the blocks is mandatory. If we take into consideration the layout grid when designing different elements, we can count on the fact that they will be displayed adequately in any situation.

To set the width of our grid we will need to consider the **different screen sizes** in which our content will be displayed. As the sizes and resolutions are too many to have a grid layout for each of them we advise to prepare our grid for 3 or 4 widths max: Mobile (<480px) Tablet (<768px) , Portable (<1024px) and Desktop (<1024px) .

We must choose a **column sizes and “gutters”** (inside margins) that can easily adapt to the various sizes and ratios of the elements we will position inside them (img, ads, widgets). A good choice here will allow a wide range of subdivision when they are necessary.

It is also convenient to have a **horizontal grid of “x”** pixels, and use that as a basis for spaces interlined, margins, padding, etc. It is very useful to get a good rhythm on the heights of the elements using **multiples of “x”**.



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STYLE

TYPOGRAPHY

Perhaps the most complicated component to choose for a newspaper. With the word typography we refer to the “form of writing” and it includes not only font and size but also line space, formatting and style of letter font, etc... Its function is critical, because **it will give to our journal our desired character.**

The typography (font and size) provides the tone of voice, level of news and paper physiognomy. The set of words and lines actually can have the same power of a video or a picture, especially in negative imprinting. If there is too much “bold “ or “capital letters” it will seem that our newspaper is shouting and it could be perceived as aggressive, in the opposite direction if the “font” is too small or “italic” the all magazine could appear weak and difficult to read. As rule of thumb the typography must be **easily legible, and scalable.**

Ideally we suggest to stick to **two fonts**: one for **headlines**, subhead, menu , etc. and another for **paragraph** and elements of more extensive character. We may have different variants of both (bold, italic, light...). We also want to keep in mind that they must have a **certain magnetism between them.**

Introducing more fonts (especially using them in main elements) breaks with the character of our newspaper, **affecting its identity.** The only exception we consider acceptable is to choose another font to quote or reproduce texts from others.

A **common mistake** that often is made is to choose the font we like **thinking personally**, instead of choosing the one that fits the ideology, style, sector or our newspaper goal.

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STYLE

TYPOGRAPHY

We should always use the **main typography to clearly define the hierarchy** of our content. This will be very useful to help the user (which tends to read our cover quickly jumping from article to article) to find quickly information of interest.

All items must be well defined with **proper spacing** and not just by body size. Depending on the density of our content we should assign an appropriate value, considering that should not be greater than 1.5 times the body size.

It is also advisable to use a kerning (depending on the size of the text, in -2 px for large and -1 px for small), especially for font without serif as when displayed they tend to be shown as separated. By doing this we will gain a lot in readability.

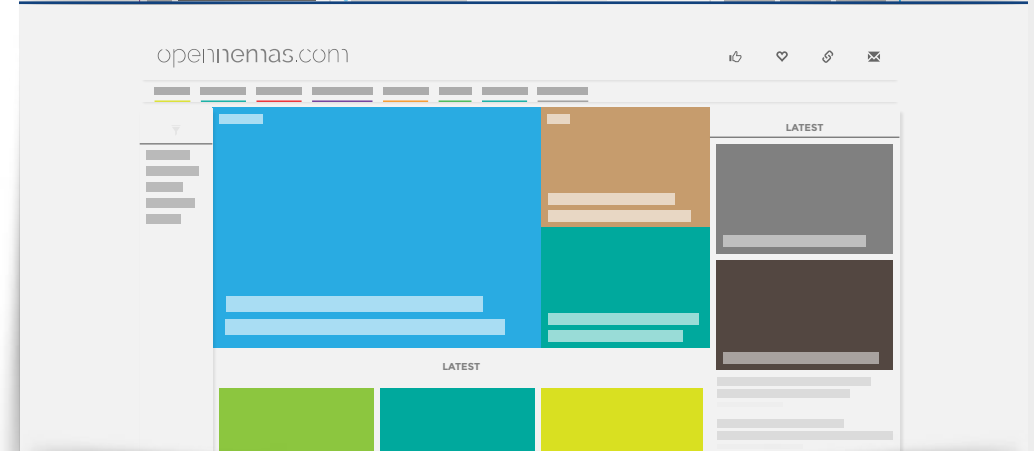
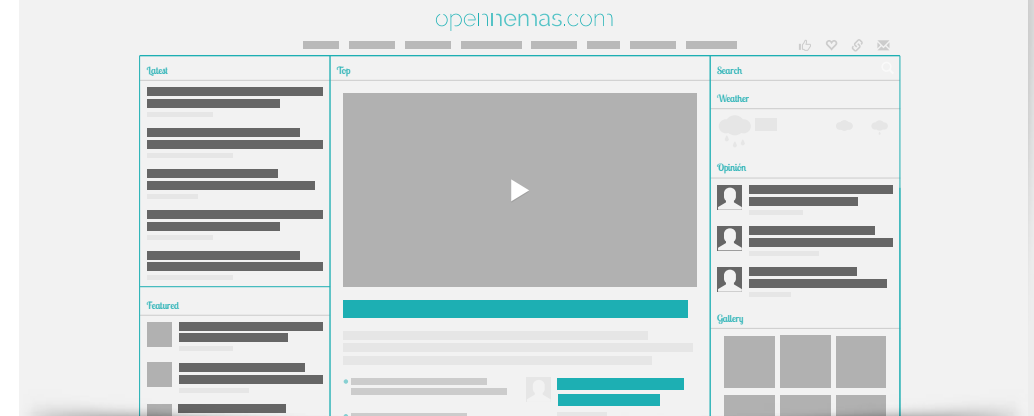
STYLE

COLOUR

When it comes to choosing the colour of a newspaper our first consideration is that there is no fixed rule, however there are few details that mark the difference.

We could choose to use any of these variants:

- A **neutral overall colour theme**, where the colour of the brand is highlighted. We may use small coloured elements to identify categories without breaking neutrality.
- A theme based on **colours in sections**, if we have many main categories of news. This helps readers to quickly identify articles of their interest.
- If our newspaper uses **images as the main base**, it makes sense to let these 'color in' our page. If so, we can use a reduced colour palette for our text elements.



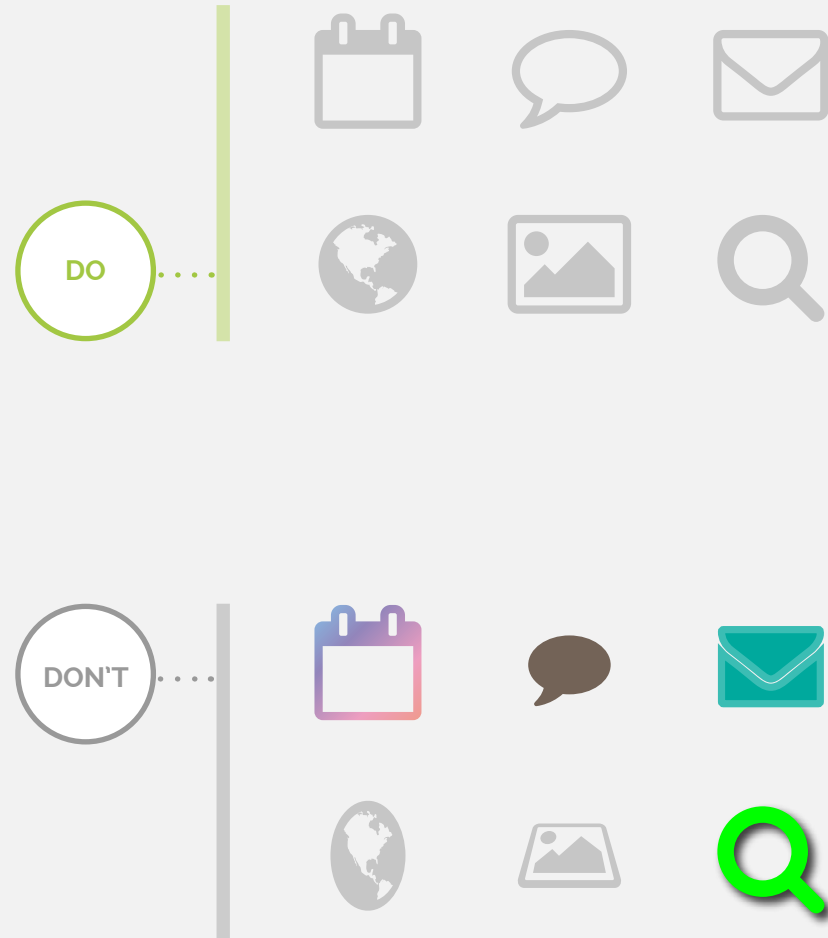
STYLE

ICONOGRAPHY

We think that “**an image is worth 1000 words**”. It is very important to support visually the categorisation and understanding of the elements of the page by adding some sort of graphics. One of the best options is to use a set of icons well designed, supplied with text, which has **consistency with the icons**, is scalable and ‘stylizable’.

We should work exclusively with this set of icons and define properly the usage of each of them, because this way the user has a clear clue of what happens when you click on that area.

It is important to use **universal symbols** as icons so that users do not have to think when they see them.



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