



# Why Web Design is Dead



High quality templates, mature design patterns, automation, AI, and mobile technology are signaling the end of web design as we know it.

Article No :1448 | June 8, 2015 | by Sergio Nouvel

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Web design is (finally!) dying of irrelevance. Web pages themselves are no longer the center of the Internet experience, which is why designers need to move on to the next challenges—products and ecosystems—if they want to stay relevant.

Web design has no future—a risky statement I know, but this article explains why it has no future and what we, as designers, can do about it. As a discipline, web design has already exhausted its

possibilities, an emerging combination of tech and cultural trends highlight the need for a broader approach.

Let's start with the symptoms of this imminent death.

## Symptom 1: Commoditization by Templates

Most of the content that you see on the web today is run by some framework or service—WordPress, Blogger, Drupal, you name it. Frameworks provide you a foundation and shortcuts so you spend less time struggling with the creation of a web site, and more time creating content.

As a consequence of the ubiquity of these frameworks, a whole world of free and paid templates lets you get started with a professional-looking design in minutes. Why hire a web designer if you can achieve a fairly acceptable design for a fraction of the cost using a template? Actually, many web designers (especially the ones on the cheaper side) just pick a pre-made template and make some minor branding customizations.

Either way, if your web page is a standard, informational one, there's probably a template out there that can do the job for you.

## Symptom 2: Web Design Patterns are Mature

What is the latest web design innovation you can point a finger on? Responsive design? That's digital ages old. Parallax? Useless eye-candy. The web has had all the [user interface components](/topics/interface-and-navigation-design) and patterns you might need for a while now (and no, parallax is not something we really ever needed). And that's why you don't see much innovation in web patterns as of late.

This maturity is good for users: they will find consistency in their daily use of the web. Checkout forms, shopping carts, and login pages should all behave in a similar way. Trying to get creative at this point will probably be pointless or even harmful.

## Symptom 3: Automation and Artificial Intelligence are Already Doing the Job

There's a new trend of automated web design services, arguably started by [The Grid \(https://thegrid.io/\)](https://thegrid.io/). It's a service to build basic websites which makes design decisions—semantic ones—based on artificial intelligence. It analyzes your content to detect the best layouts, colors, fonts, and extra imagery for your site. Using cleverly chosen design basics (made by humans) as the foundation, it's hard to go wrong with it, and the result will probably be better than what an average web designer can do.

**When something can be successfully automated, it means that its practices and standards are established enough as not to need much human input.** And this is obviously the beginning. There will be a fierce competition about which service can deliver better designs, faster, and with less human intervention.

## Symptom 4: Facebook Pages as the New Small-Business Homepage

In the late 1990's, future-minded businesses would buy their .com's, purchase expensive hosting plans, and hire a "web master" in order to have The Web Page, the one that would make them visible to the rest of the Internet. By 2005, creating a site in Blogger or WordPress.com was more than enough for your new wedding photo business (it was also quick and free).

Today, this function has been completely overridden by [Facebook \(/topics/facebook\)](/topics/facebook) pages. They are free, made to be viral out of the box, offer powerful tools only available to big businesses a decade ago (like subscription for updates or media posting), and are as easy to set up as your own profile page. They are so efficient in making a business visible that they are rendering basic web pages useless.

## Symptom 5: Mobile is Killing the Web

How often do you visit a web site from your [mobile device \(/topics/mobile-technology\)](/topics/mobile-technology) by directly typing the address? Only when you don't have the app, right? People don't seem to think much in terms of web pages these days: they think of digital brands, which mostly translate to apps or subscriptions (likes, follows, etc). That's why most big websites, blogs, and portals are pushing their mobile apps to you—out of home screen, out of mind.

Mobile web has always been slow and cumbersome. Typing addresses is weird. Navigating between tabs is weird. Our underpowered mobile devices and saturated data networks don't help create a smooth web experience like the one we have in our desktop machines.

As vital as responsive web design is (not adopting it is committing digital suicide), it only guarantees that your user can view your page in a mobile device, if she ever finds it in first place. And the limited space in

her mind is already mostly occupied by apps.

# The Rise of Web Services and the Content that Finds You

The truth is, we need fewer web pages, not more of them. There are already too many competing for our attention and assuming selfishly that we have all the time in the world to close pop-up ads, explore navigational hierarchies, and be dazzled by transitions, intros, and effects.

**But what really matters is not how you arrange things on a page: it's the content, in terms of a specific user need.** That's why Google is starting to display actual content in some search results, without you having to visit another page. Just an example: if you Google a nearby restaurant from your mobile device, the search results include a button to directly call the place. You don't even need to visit the page. The page designer's ego and the visits-counter may suffer a bit, but ultimately the user experience is improved.

Things are moving in the direction of digital assistants like Siri, and especially Google Now with the new changes announced for Android M: they aim to provide you the exact bit of information you need, when you need it. **This implies a shift from web pages to web services: self-sufficient bits of information that can be combined to other services to deliver value.** So if you are looking for a restaurant, you get the reviews from Foursquare or Yelp, the directions from Google Maps and the traffic conditions from Waze.

Even more: we are transitioning to a push-based model of content consumption, where the right information arrives without you even requesting it. Google Now, for instance, warns you of how early you should depart in order to arrive on time to your meeting. All of this is already happening thanks to APIs—interfaces that let other services interact with your data. **In this world, web pages are not required at all.**

This is not to say that web pages will die—they will be around for a long time, because they are —and will continue to be— useful for certain purposes. **But there's nothing interesting there for designers anymore. They are a commodity and a medium, no longer the default state for digital products and businesses.**

Web pages are static content that need to be found and visited (pull-based). But in the emerging push-

As a discipline, web design has already exhausted its possibilities

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based paradigm, the content finds you. Through data obtained from your context, your activity, and even your biometrics, content and tools will smartly present themselves to you when you are most likely to need them.

That's the big thing about the new breed of smartwatches: they obtain data from your body and show you proactively tiny bits of information for your brain to chew on. **Computer technology is already making big steps in order to disappear from your sight.**

Where does this leave us?

## Web Design is Dead, Long Live UX Design

Here's the good news: designers are really far from being obsolete. Quite to the contrary, you can see that the demand for UX designers is still on the rise, and everyone seems to be redesigning their digital products these days.

**This switch from web design to experience design is directly caused by the shift from web pages to digital products, tools, and ecosystems.** Web pages are just part of something much bigger: mobile apps, API's, social media presence, search engine optimization, customer service channels, and physical locations all inform the experience a user has with a brand, product, or service. Pretending that you can run a business or deliver value just by taking care of the web channel is naïve at best and harmful at worst.

**And all these touchpoints need to be designed, planned, and managed.** This is a job that will continue to exist, regardless of the channel. We will still need cohesive experiences and valuable content across smart climatizers, virtual reality devices, electronic contact lenses, and whatever we invent in the decades to come.

In fact, as technology fades into the background, all we can see is the value transmitted by it. **The designers who want to stay in business need to be experts in managing content and value across channels.**

It's time for us to grow up, because we have been part of the problem: **we have helped to give birth to self-righteous web pages that assume they deserve to be watched and awarded just for the time we invested in crafting them.** Now more than ever, in a world flooded with cognitive noise, the world needs simple, intelligent, integrated ecosystems of information. The sooner designers embrace this need, the better prepared we'll be for the future.

Image of [dewy cobweb](http://www.shutterstock.com/pic-259505696.html) (http://www.shutterstock.com/pic-259505696.html) courtesy Shutterstock.



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Check out our interview with Sergio Nouvel, where we discuss this popular and controversial article in greater detail. ([MP3 \(http://uxmag.com/sites/default/files/uploads/UXCAST-sergio-nouvel.mp3\)](http://uxmag.com/sites/default/files/uploads/UXCAST-sergio-nouvel.mp3))

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Article No. 1 449 | June 9, 2015

## [Stop Sprinkling Emotion. Start Creating Magic and Meaning](#)

[\(/articles/stop-sprinkling-emotion-start-creating-magic-and-meaning\)](#)

by (</contributors/amanda-o-grady>)**Amanda O'Grady**  
(</contributors/amanda-o-grady>)

Products and services that build deeper connections with customers are the result of a design process infused with emotion.

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Article No. 1 244 | May 27, 2014

## [What Does it Take to be a Mobile Designer Today?](#) ([/articles/what-does-](/articles/what-does-it-take-to-be-a-mobile-designer-today)

[it-take-to-be-a-mobile-designer-today](#))

by (</contributors/sergio-nouvel>)**Sergio Nouvel**  
(</contributors/sergio-nouvel>)

Being a successful mobile designer requires an evolved understanding of how people use their devices, a robust toolkit, and the flexibility to adapt to new technology.

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Article No. 1 286 | August 6, 2014

## [Wear Are We?](#) (</articles/wear-are-we>)

by (</contributors/ux-magazine-staff>)**UX Magazine Staff**  
(</contributors/ux-magazine-staff>)

In the wake of a new implementation of brain-

computer interface headgear, we asked three UX Magazine contributors about the trajectory of wearable technology.

## About the Author(s)



[Sergio Nouvel](#)

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[\(/contributors/sergio-nouvel\)](/contributors/sergio-nouvel)

Sergio Nouvel ([@shesho](https://twitter.com/shesho) (<https://twitter.com/shesho>)) is a Chilean-born designer, Director at [Continuum](http://continuumhq.co/) (<http://continuumhq.co/>) Peru and entrepreneur. He has worked with big companies and small startups in Latin America, helping them building better digital products and innovative business models. He is also co-founder of [Get on Board](https://getonbrd.com) (<https://getonbrd.com>), a job board focused on tech professionals.

## Key topics in this article

[Android \(/topics/android\)](/topics/android)

[Apple iOS \(/topics/apple-ios\)](/topics/apple-ios)

[Artificial Intelligence \(/topics/artificial-intelligence\)](/topics/artificial-intelligence)

[Browsers \(/topics/browsers\)](/topics/browsers)

[Content and Copy \(/topics/content-and-copy\)](/topics/content-and-copy)

[Design \(/topics/design\)](/topics/design)

[Design Tools and Software \(/topics/design-tools-and-software\)](/topics/design-tools-and-software)

[Facebook \(/topics/facebook\)](/topics/facebook)

[Information Design and Architecture \(/topics/information-design-and-architecture\)](/topics/information-design-and-architecture)

[Interface and Navigation Design \(/topics/interface-and-navigation-design\)](/topics/interface-and-navigation-design)

[iPad \(/topics/ipad\)](/topics/ipad)

[iPhone \(/topics/iphone\)](/topics/iphone)

[Mobile Applications \(/topics/mobile-applications\)](/topics/mobile-applications)

[Mobile Technology \(/topics/mobile-technology\)](/topics/mobile-technology)

[New and Emerging Technologies \(/topics/new-and-emerging-technologies\)](/topics/new-and-emerging-technologies)

[Product design \(/topics/product-design\)](/topics/product-design)

[Social Media Marketing \(/topics/social-media-marketing\)](/topics/social-media-marketing)

[Ubiquitous Computing \(/topics/ubiquitous-computing\)](/topics/ubiquitous-computing)

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## UX Job opportunities

[UI/UX Designer - Toronto, Canada \(/uxjobs/archon-systems/ui-ux-designer\)](/uxjobs/archon-systems/ui-ux-designer)

Archon Systems - March 2, 2016

[Sr UX Designer \(Mobile App UX/IxD\) - Santa Monica, United States \(/uxjobs/dogtown-media/sr-ux-designer-mobile-app-ux-ixd\)](/uxjobs/dogtown-media/sr-ux-designer-mobile-app-ux-ixd)

Dogtown Media - March 2, 2016

[Senior CX Consultant - London, United Kingdom \(/uxjobs/the-bio-agency/senior-cx-consultant\)](/uxjobs/the-bio-agency/senior-cx-consultant)

The BIO Agency - February 29, 2016

[UI/UX Designer - MELBOURNE, Australia \(/uxjobs/trunk-platform/ui-ux-designer\)](/uxjobs/trunk-platform/ui-ux-designer)

Trunk Platform - February 29, 2016

[Lead UX Architect – Up to £75k DOE - London, United Kingdom \(/uxjobs/mavis/lead-ux-architect-%E2%80%93-up-to-%C2%A375k-doe\)](/uxjobs/mavis/lead-ux-architect-%E2%80%93-up-to-%C2%A375k-doe)

mavis - February 28, 2016

[UX/UI Designer - Knoxville, United States \(/uxjobs/foto/ux-ui-designer\)](/uxjobs/foto/ux-ui-designer)

FOTO - February 26, 2016

[Senior UX Designer - Toronto, Canada \(/uxjobs/kira-systems/senior-ux-designer\)](/uxjobs/kira-systems/senior-ux-designer)

Kira Systems - February 25, 2016

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## Getting started in UX

Our contributors and staff recommend these articles on for developing an understanding of experience design and jumpstarting your career.

[Hiring the Right Designer \(/articles/hiring-the-right-designer\)](/articles/hiring-the-right-designer)

[How Much UX have You Put into Your UX Portfolio? \(/articles/how-much-ux-have-you-put-into-your-ux-portfolio\)](/articles/how-much-ux-have-you-put-into-your-ux-portfolio)

[How Mature is Your Organization when it Comes to UX? \(/articles/how-mature-is-your-organization-when-it-comes-to-ux\)](/articles/how-mature-is-your-organization-when-it-comes-to-ux)

[The UX Team Starting Lineup \(/articles/the-ux-team-starting-lineup\)](/articles/the-ux-team-starting-lineup)

[Seven Things Your Boss Needs to Know About UX \(/articles/seven-things-your-boss-needs-to-know-about-ux\)](/articles/seven-things-your-boss-needs-to-know-about-ux)

[Why UX Designers Need to Think like Architects \(/articles/why-ux-designers-need-to-think-like-architects\)](/articles/why-ux-designers-need-to-think-like-architects)

[Five Customer Experience Lessons Coffee Taught Me \(/articles/five-customer-experience-lessons-coffee-taught-me\)](/articles/five-customer-experience-lessons-coffee-taught-me)

[Four Things I Learned about UX at Universal Studios \(/articles/four-things-i-learned-about-ux-at-universal-studios\)](/articles/four-things-i-learned-about-ux-at-universal-studios)

[The \(Sometimes\) Giddy Experience of Learning Design \(/articles/the-sometimes-giddy-experience-of-learning-design\)](/articles/the-sometimes-giddy-experience-of-learning-design)

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## Comments

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designfacet sean  
February 27, 2016

From cheap tempaltes to every grandmother and their dog putting together websites online add to that cheap websites from overseas individuals, this trade profession is close to bitting the dust. Graphic print designers who learned how to design websites can go back to working on their identity design jobs but web coders/programmers have not much to fall back on. God help us all. LOL



PG CArr  
February 24, 2016

Web design is not dead at all. Who wants "clients" who don't want to pay anything for their web presence (or very little). companies like Wix produce cookie cutter sites for people who do not want to invest in their companies.



barbara o.  
February 19, 2016

I absolutely and unequivocally agree. I have felt this way for awhile, the role of the web designer has devolved into obsolescence esp within the last few years. Why I no longer do "web design" per se and instead have shifted to overall branding campaigns where web graphics (whatever those might be - unique to each client) are just one component of an overall visual system. Your reporting is spot on IMO.

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ehsan aslani  
February 7, 2016

hey men,if web design is dead, why you use it? seriously??

طراحی سایت و طراحی وب سایت پارسایا

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WE CAST ALL SPELL HERE  
February 1, 2016

COMPLIMENT OF THE SEASON TO ALL AND MAY THIS SEASON BRING JOY AND HAPPINESS UPON YOUR FAMILY AND ALSO BRINGS ABOUT FAMILY REUNION AND RESTORATION IN THIS NEW YEAR 2016.....

My Name is Alan Pratte, From USA. I wish to share my testimonies with the general public about what this man called Dr OTIS DARKO has just done for me , this man has just brought back my lost Ex WIFE to me with his great spell, I was married to this woman called Sharon we were together for a long time and we loved our self's but when I was unable to make her pregnant for me and also give her al she needs she left me and told me she can't continue anymore then I was now looking for ways to get her back until a friend of mine told me about this man and gave his contact email: otisdarko60@yahoo.com then you won't believe this when I contacted this man on my problems he prepared this spell cast and bring my lost WIFE back, and after a month she became pregnant for me because he gave me some herbs to take also and when she went for a test and the result stated that she was pregnant am happy today am a FATHER of a baby girl, thank you once again the great DR OTIS DARKO for what you have done for me, if you are out there passing through any of this problems listed below:

- (1) If you want your ex back.
- (2) if you always have bad dreams.
- (3) You want to be promoted in your office.
- (4) You want women/men to run after you.
- (5) If you want a child/PREGNANCY SPELL.
- (6) You want to be rich.

(7) You want to tie your husband/wife to be

yours forever.

(8) If you need financial assistance.

(9) How you been scammed and you want to recover you lost money.

(10) Stop Divorce

(11) CURE TO ALL KIND OF SICKNESS/DISEASES HERE

(12) Winning of lottery

(13) Cure To Hiv/Aids

(14) LOTTERY/LOTTO SPELL WINNING

(15) CURE TO HERPES AND ANY OTHER SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES AT ALL...

(16) HAVE YOU BEEN SCAMMED BEFORE AND NEEDS TO RECOVER ALL THE DOLLARS/MONEY YOU LOST TO THESE FRAUDSTER ???.. CONTACT OTIS DARKO AS HE HELPED MY FRIEND CALLED LEONARD CAPTAIN FROM USA TO RECOVER BACK THE SUM OF \$300,000.00 DOLLARS HE LOST TO SCAMMERS ONLINE

Email... otisdarko60@yahoo.com..... YOU CAN ALSO ADD HIM UP ON WHATSAPP USING THIS MOBILE NUMBER:+2348077526136



John

January 31, 2016

Writer is correct: Web design - or graphic designers in general- is coming to an end. The primary reason why is more and more people are promoting on social network, and are learning to use template-building websites like wix. A friend started his own healthy food preparation business, and he promoted it on facebook by adding everyone on his friend's lists... and his friend's friend's list. Free advertising right there. Now, major corporations will still employ web and graphic specialists, but how many? The majority of you will go "independent." Yet one can not simply rely on freelancing for a living.



Dave Fennley

January 8, 2016

Just the number of comments alone in this article are a good indication as to the level of uncertainty among web designers.

Basically what it boils down to is this :-

If you work for a company that is making money, you'll likely think the article is a joke. You'll shrug it off. If you work for a company that is losing money, you'll probably feel a sting as you realize that web design isn't one of the impervious-to-recession trades - quite the opposite. If you work for a company that is going bust, you'll already want to be climbing for the hills and this article will simply reinforce that. Money runs all. **The world doesn't need more web designers. It needs more salesmen.**

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j. valentino  
December 18, 2015

This is all good writing and stuff, but a little presumptuous. This line for example: That's the big thing about the new breed of smartwatches: they obtain data from your body and show you proactively tiny bits of information for your brain to chew on.

Well, most of these "smartwatches" that obtain data from your body are designed to help you stay in shape. Yet, obesity levels are at an all time high, and continue to get higher. The presumption, was that this kind of gadgetry would help you get into shape. The opposite has occurred.

Anytime someone makes an assumption about the web, it's usually wrong. The problem with the template designs are that all websites are starting to look the same. The whole bootstrap/Wordpress/etc thing is already tiresome to look at.

Website designers, don't worry about your job.

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Jonah  
November 20, 2015

For any business wanting to stand out from its competitors and actually rank well on Google, web design is more alive than ever. It is easy to say web design is dead as many have for years but the reality is that successful businesses don't rely on Wix sitebuilders or Facebook for their online presence and if they do it is a big risk. When Apple.com and UX Magazine migrate to a Google Plus page from their SiteBuilder made websites then I suppose they'll be practising what they preach. Any plans for that yet UX?

For those who actually want to stand a fighting chance of being found instead of totally relying on 3rd parties' social tools and whether Siri will know where their business is located why not have the freedom and non-tie in or tie down of your own professionally built site?

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oracle training in chennai  
October 28, 2015

Thanks a lot. We share for the wonderful. We have to learning about lot of new information.

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Joe

October 27, 2015

I Fail to see how downloading an app for everything is a good way to go with the web. Cell phones are under powered yes but the more apps you install the worse they perform. Why would anyone want the App over the web page? Web pages allow all places to use one app Your web browser. Wow, your phone is not bogged down by poorly Made apps. How crazy are we to want that? Yes the web has problems When you use a browser, but so does life and we don't quit life Do we? I'll take my chances with browser issues and have a phone that works thanks. Good luck to you and your crippled phone from Web apps.



BG

October 23, 2015

UX, UI, Web Design, etc = "We are family". Nothing new here. Web designers ( if we must say it), the good ones, have been acting like "UX designers" since day one. Quality design tells a great story and leaves a lasting impression.

Why does the high tech industry always feel the need to "mystify" it's practice and deconstruct the hell out of everything to the point of "who cares"!!!!?? FYI, for everyone, the term UX design is borrowed. It has nothing to do with that iTunes icon on my iPhone. It's about making tangible "things" like cars, bikes, spoons, headphones, chairs, etc, etc. Stop using it out of context. I can't wait until the day when we all go back to calling ourselves who we really are, "GRAPHIC DESIGNERS"!



SW

October 21, 2015

I've found more than one UX Designer article today with a super charged rant about their skill set. What's up buttercup??? Honestly, more power to you!! UX designer get paid well right now! Live it up! Cash out while you can brother!! God knows as a web designer I made serious cash back in the day. What goes around comes around.



Mandla

October 14, 2015

Wow!What a jerk.Sergio do you think I'm commenting from a web app?I'm not even sure if you really understand what web design is.So you think real companies can rely on a facebook page?Learning web design is not for everyone...you have been a dreamer who couldn't cut it.Go on embarrass yourself dude.



marcus

August 17, 2015

I cant belive you get paid to write this nonsense. Get find another career.



Design and Promote

August 12, 2015

Here at [www.designandpromote.com](http://www.designandpromote.com) we are a web design company and we see some troubles in the design level. Local sites, design is not dead as nicer looking sites are expected otherwise they get passed on by the consumer.



nic

August 10, 2015

best you tell the guys at google that it's all over. Oh and you may need to use your browser to search for their website contact info unless you have their head office app on your android. Sure It's changing everything does and cheap tight mean people like you exist ithats a reality yes and mostly they all use Wix and other substandard platforms to rank on page 10 and don't even know that they have competitor ads appear in their apparently free sites that they pay hosting on. This post is scaremongering dribble.

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Trinity

August 5, 2015

You are so right. Love this piece, especially Symptom 2, and I think I know the reason on why you think it's mature. It's because web design, much like the music industry (and writing and art), has been reduced to it's lowest common denominator. In music, nothing 'successful' is by chance any more. Music has become a carefully researched market-based craft. The 'art' is gone because the results are too unpredictable to be consistently profitable. I believe the same is true of design. With design we've reduced it to it's lowest common denominator. Marketing managers wouldn't want to confuse a user with something unexpected, because the prospect of losing a sale or a click. Of course there is still plenty of room for artistic expression, but I doubt you'll find it used on a commercial site.



David

August 4, 2015

I don't agree. Web design is central to a great user experience and is more than just a template. There is however, a difference between an amateurish design and a getting something done by a professional designer. I learnt this when Illicit Web Design (<https://www.illicitwebdesign.co.uk>), re-designed my businesses website, at a good price too! It was a major improvement from something I tried to create with a template, and has left a lasting impression on people the way that Facebook or Twitter pages dont. My business has actually grown significantly from online customers coming to use the site. So if you want a beautiful and practical user experience the web design is always the way to go.



Red Burtley Private Investigator

July 29, 2015

@rom1000

You nailed it. Thank you! Thank you! I couldn't have said it better. The whole point of design is to be different. That will never change. A free service like Facebook is like putting a business card on the University kiosk. And so and so forth.



latinlover

July 20, 2015

It's pretty obvious that Sergio Nouvel doesn't know what design is....



[rom1000 \(/readers/romain\)](#)

July 17, 2015

- 1- Why do you assume that anyone can use/set up templates? That's just plain wrong
- 2- Web Design Patterns are Mature?? What..? It's like saying "tshirts design is now mature" That sounds bad doesn't it?
- 3- AI. Well right.. potentially AI can replace every human being in every circumstances, that's the whole point of AI. Still, that doesn't exist just yet (The Grid really??), but web design won't matter much by then I suppose.
- 4- Facebook pages. Yeah, that works well for babysitters and maybe plumbers but can we talk about actual businesses delivering a lot of structured contents through their websites??
- 5- Mobile is Killing the Web? More like somehow re-inventing maybe? Do you really think people will install an app for every website they want to surf on?! Mobile browsers (an app that browses the web, now that's genius) have a long life ahead of them.

The essential point you're missing is that brands want to STAND OUT. It's called competition and every business wants to be more visible than the next one. You need to ADVERTISE your services/products/contents in a creative/pleasant way if you want people to remember you and come back to you. I've never heard of standard/templated/data-oriented advertising strategy. But yeah sure, why would anyone hire a webdesigner when even Word97 can export HTML?!



Matt

August 17, 2015

Well said. I agree with you 100%.



BlackJack Johnson

July 17, 2015

HEY DUMBASS! Web designers practice UX and UI design as a function of our daily jobs... you know, as DESIGNERS. All this demand for WYSIWYG web template creates bad code and make everything homogenous... but guess who creates most of those templates??? (answer) Web Designers (call them UX/UI Designers or Informatin Architects if you prefer). The internet (or WEB) is actually teh service that brings all that amazing UI to your device. It's not something new or different Just more screen sizes. Truly good design still rests on time tested principles that last even when the trends change.

This article is just you whining about the fact that we don't live like the Jetsons or Star Trek. Not to mention, your incredibly stupid assessment that the Bloomberg interface is "boring". It is actually beautiful and reflects truly great architecture for the context in which it is used... Sorry there weren't enough floating holograms and swooshing, swirly things for you to get it. It's not a video game on your Xbox.





Kian

July 16, 2015

I disagree, unfortunately. I own a business and using templates will simply not be enough when it comes to my website design. I don't have the right skills so I hired a company ([www.headchannel.co.uk](http://www.headchannel.co.uk)) and they did it for me. The final result was a fully professional website that attracted more clients than ever. So I don't think that a serious company should go the easy way and use templates that can be used by anybody.

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[Tibor Sekeli \(/readers/tibor-sekeli\)](/readers/tibor-sekeli)

July 13, 2015

just for a good measure, nowadays journalism is dead and bloggers are taking over. here is my post to mashable FB page who rehashed this article... Rarely seen a more BS click bait article than this. Just to emphasize usability you cant claim that something else is going to disappear (die). Shows again how little understanding mashable bloggers - wanna be journalists have about the topic.If you would have asked someone who is actually in the industry you would know that- templates are worth nothing without the proper tool driving it. often those CMS are to complicated to setup for users them self, even installing a template and configuring it right can be a nightmare.- 'web design patterns are mature' thats what i call bullshit bingo catch phrases with out meaning. there is innovation in web patterns every day. just people dont notice it anymore because its well done.- artificial intelligence: just because one site posts some automated design it doesnt mean its going to catch on. its design is limited and its not what majority of small business will ever want.- facebook is not replacing business websites and shops. it is adding to it,yes, but not replacing by far. a lot of illegal trade is going on on social media, legal much less.- mobile websites slow? majority has 3-4g or higher, the speed of connection and CPU is high enough to download and display websites fast. never had a problem googling one even incomplete word to find website and click on link.. why typing all? and ever heard of history and automatic suggestions while typing urls?- what has siri to do with webdesign? it doesnt replace it. it just compliments a website.just because you wish something in your wildest wet dreams it doesnt mean its becoming true. imminent death... bitch please! get a real job

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[Tibor Sekeli \(/readers/tibor-sekeli\)](/readers/tibor-sekeli)

July 13, 2015

my comment might look harsh, but in reality people are fed up with catchy titles and blogger articles which say something but mean something else.. on mashable FB repost of this everybody is in uproar over the article and the statements claimed here.if you would have said "golden era of usability design" in the title, it would have been all fine :)

You seem like an intelligent guy.. perhaps there is a wrong definition of what 'web design' actually isWhat you wrote sounds like 'web design' is something a nephew of the company owner does in his spare time. In reality usability is less than 10% of a web site or web app design process. there is information design, graphic design (web design?!), architecture design (technical).yes usability is important and most web designers do not have an idea about it.Web design is not dying anytime soon... :)



[jack \(/readers/jack-3\)](/readers/jack-3)

July 12, 2015

Patently ridiculous supposition. Fails on all counts.

Does he know he just said that millions of people who don't use "smart" phones are irrelevant?

Everyday in my professional capacity I speak with people trying to use my employer's product/service to build their website. The majority of these people are those for whom the personal computer as a business tool and the commercial internet as a communications medium are just something that happened to other people. Most of them have no idea where the pc ends and the internet begins. They have the gravest difficulty with how to copy and paste something with their mouse. They have no idea what a web browser is. That kind of ubiquity might actually be a positive development if the technology was anywhere's near up to it. After twenty years it still is not.

If a tree falls in the forest and nobody is there. Does it make a sound? I gurantee you the thousands of my employer's customers I have spoken with over the past five years have no idea they have become irrelevant.

What you are talking about might actually come to pass in another twenty or thirty years. But I doubt it. To believe otherwise is to deny the essential state of human nature.



Miguel P

July 10, 2015

The tabloid like headline is what irritates some folks. You have some pretty valid points though.



[Tibor Sekelj \(/readers/tibor-sekelj\)](/readers/tibor-sekelj)

July 13, 2015

can you point out one point which is valid here?



Isabella

July 9, 2015

As latest technologies are coming in the market so a lot of website owners need to redesign their sites according to the latest web design trends so web design will never going to end.



Peter Naydenov  
July 7, 2015

Web design could not be dead until we have web pages. Yes, it's a bit different but its happen all the time. It's an evolution process.

Do you remember the times when Microsoft FrontPage was the best HTML editor and everything was build on top of tables? I'm talking about times before Macromedia Dreamweaver 1.0. How different is this industry right now?

In other hand you can get back in history and can you can find a lot software that produce websites. The only difference is that now is online service instead of a program.

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[Tibor Sekelj \(/readers/tibor-sekelj\)](/readers/tibor-sekelj)  
July 13, 2015

its just a click bait article :(

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TK  
July 2, 2015

This is an interesting topic but it's not just happening to web design, it's happening to many professions and industries.

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Binayakumar Jha  
June 30, 2015

It is heat throbbing but very true. Mobile technologies is killing web design industry. Though web designers are getting used in mobile app designing but still a fear is looming. UX designers are better placed in the industry. These are the reasons, we at <http://www.indianic.com>, are inclined to hire UX designers more instead of web designers only. Let's see how things traverse in future.

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[Jon Schear \(/readers/ion-schear\)](/readers/ion-schear)  
June 22, 2015

I think one of the reasons not outlined in this article that has caused this descent into production-level web design is

pricing. I used to work for a small web design firm in Denver, CO who was building a website for a rather large charity. The thing that shocked me a bit was that the design process for this website lasted months on end. Consistent changes were requested and made, and I ended up leaving the business before it was completed.

The thing is, the charity had money to burn on something like this. They had money to throw at the designer to develop wireframes, detailed comps and more. Most businesses do not have or are unwilling to spend that amount of money on a website. This in turn creates less demand for the more expensive designers while others reduce their prices. Price reductions mean the designer can't spend the same amount of time on a project, hence the development of tools like Wordpress to accommodate.

Anyway, just my thoughts.



caroline

June 22, 2015

While the premise of this article is quite incendiary, and there are more than one legitimate points being made, I feel like this is more for the shock value than for anything else. We are obviously dealing with the proliferation of DIY website builders and the commodification of websites in the market of web design but what the author didn't account for was the rise of websites for different demographics: while developers have Wordpress ([www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)) and amateurs have Wix ([www.wix.com](http://www.wix.com)), Weebly ([www.weebly.com](http://www.weebly.com)) and Squarespace ([www.squarespace.com](http://www.squarespace.com)), designers have Webydo ([www.webydo.com](http://www.webydo.com)). Webydo is essentially interrupting the market with designers' ability to host a site for very minimal expense while delivering solid products to clients cutting out developers completely. Any person who regularly uses the internet can pick up on the difference between a well-designed, visually impressive, commercially-optimized website. The fact that there is now this new paradigm of relatively inexpensive access to professional designers to build a site for you, might even be the new upset in the market.



Richard Hill

June 21, 2015

The last part of this is the good bit! For a long time now a webpage has only been the holding container for good content of all types. But sometimes we want to read, sometimes we want to buy and sometimes we just want to look at cats. Variety still is the spice of life and content can still be delivered in many ways. Good design is simply the skill of imagining this without being cliché. nice article though.



[Seba \(/readers/sebastian-victorica\)](/readers/sebastian-victorica)

June 17, 2015

Muy buen artículo Sergio! Independientemente de que le guste o no a algunos diseñadores y tu profesión creo es

bastante objetivo.

Great article, besides any conflict of interest within the author profession. I think is pretty objective and to sum up despite having other points of view I think clear shows the trend in the sector.

At the end what it clear matter for everyone is the content and strategy independently of the design.



[Tibor Sekelj \(/readers/tibor-sekelj\)](/readers/tibor-sekelj)

July 13, 2015

the article fails on so many points. :) and is simply wrong



Carst van der Molen

June 17, 2015

Web design might be less relevant, it is far from dead.

A rose by any other name would smell as sweet. Call it Web design, or Graphic design for the web.

UX Design indeed is decidedly different, but not a replacement. Why is that?

Because UX designers tend to juggle too many crafts at once.

“Why hire a web designer if you can achieve a fairly acceptable design for a fraction of the cost using a template?”

Because a designer can make it look good while keeping in mind basic rules of thumb.

Case in point? On the desktop, the paragraphs of this article ignore the virtues of good typographic measure.

Meaning: there are too many characters in a line, which makes for a bad reading experience.

Surely many readers might not even consciously notice this—you can be sure though they would appreciate shorter lines.

“But what really matters is not how you arrange things on a page: it’s the content, in terms of a specific user need.”

Arranging content is one of the premium tasks of a designer, both spatially and in time.

Good content deserves a good designer, or: good content needs attention and love.

Concentrating on user needs alone does not solve the equation: it’s both about sending and receiving; about giving and taking.

“But there’s nothing interesting there for designers anymore. They [web pages] are a commodity and a medium, no longer the default state for digital products and businesses.”

(Paper) book design is still very interesting, even though as a discipline it is rather static.

The tradition is very rich, and it tells us a lot about good design patterns.

I suggest multichannel designers look at examples like these, and not only focus on new technologies.



Aaron Dowd

June 18, 2015

**"On the desktop, the paragraphs of this article ignore the virtues of good typographic measure.** Meaning: there are too many characters in a line, which makes for a bad reading experience. Surely many readers might not even consciously notice this—you can be sure though they would appreciate shorter lines."

This was my first thought when I saw this article. Some good points, but web design is far from dead. There are just too many people who don't understand the value of good (and responsive) design, and it's the designer's job to educate them.



Joe Marker  
June 30, 2015

Agreed. You'd think a UX site would know the basics of good typographic measure.



[Mohamed Al-Shahawy \(/readers/mohamed-al-shahawy\)](/readers/mohamed-al-shahawy)

June 16, 2015

Very interesting topic and great article, though I don't agree with all of it. I believe that web design is facing a serious trouble and if it's not dead already it's gonna be very soon. Customer behaviour has changed and this is why UX is more important and deperately needed than any. Now you need the one who can get it right for you no matter what is the device or platform you're designing for cause you will never know what is scoming tomorrow!



[Jesse Janowiak \(/readers/jesse-janowiak\)](/readers/jesse-janowiak)

June 15, 2015

The overall premise of this article is something that I have agreed with for several years, but I have a few quibbles with your supporting arguments. I particular, your characterization of Facebook vs. home pages and of mobile use both assume one pattern of user behavior: frequent, repeated visits. While this may be a desirable outcome for a lot of businesses, it doesn't apply to all of them, and it ignores the importance of **discoverability**.

Let's use a hypothetical small business and see how they fit into your model: "Quality Painters," a small company that does interior and exterior painting for homes and businesses.

Symptom #1, commoditization of templates, stands. A small business like this is probably going to go with a quick, off-the-shelf solution for their website. Symptom #2, mature standards, stands as well, insofar as it contributes to symptom #1. Symptom #3, AI, is moot until a mature, commercially available version of that kind of AI. Even then, it will probably be incorporated into the kinds of templating systems mentioned in symptom #1. So symptoms #1 - #3 could really be lumped into one symptom: automating the work of the web designer.

Symptom #4 might present a temptation for Quality Painters. After all, a Facebook page is free and easy to maintain, plus it has the advantage of social media being built right in! But consider the needs of a painting

company. A lot of their business is going to be first-time customers, or customers who have not needed their services for a long time. Homeowners and business owners are not typically going to need a painter more than once a year, and probably less. So when they go looking for a painter, are they going to search Facebook? Probably not. They're going to search Google. While Google CAN find Facebook pages, I've found that it's not very good at it. To be discoverable, a web page is better. As for the social media component, how many people are going to be excited by frequent updates from the painter they hired to paint their spare bedroom one time?

Symptom #5 is the weakest of all for a business like Quality Painters. You write "People don't seem to think much in terms of web pages these days: they think of digital brands, which mostly translate to apps or subscriptions (likes, follows, etc)." But Quality Painters isn't a digital brand. Quality Painters is a painting company, and nobody is going to want to download their app. When you need a painter, you don't open the app store and start searching for painting company apps.

Your other point regarding mobile is so flawed that I can't believe you're not intentionally ignoring it: "How often do you visit a web site from your mobile device by directly typing the address?" you ask. The answer is "almost never." I **search** for it, and so do you and everyone else. If a company doesn't put the information I'm searching for on a website, I'm never going to find it.

It's important that in the excitement surrounding customer engagement and interactive branding strategies we don't forget about the majority of users and customers who just drop by once and a while to get some information or purchase a product or service.



Gerry  
June 13, 2015

Interesting idea, but what about the fact that web technologies continue to evolve such that web design is not only about making marketing/informational websites but has been, for some years now, delving into the world of interactive applications, e.g., HTML5 web apps? Considering that web app technologies are continuing to be developed and supported by browsers, how is web design dead when there is a need for designers of these new types of applications, i.e., web-native apps?



[Tibor Sekelj \(/readers/tibor-sekelj\)](/readers/tibor-sekelj)  
July 13, 2015

majority of businesses do not need a interactive web app.. they do not need special usability but just a simple website to present their business. thats not going to die anytime soon. the article wants to emphasize usability design which is fine, but the claim that web design is dead is ridiculous.. usability design is one of the smallest parts of a website design.



Penina  
June 12, 2015

Thanks for this. While I'm not on board with all your points, I would just add that as long as we maintain our identities as designers, rather than (for instance) web designers, none of these changes will really hurt us. The best design has always been a design of experiences and not any one physical (or digital) thing. Aesthetics, communication, function. Everything else is an ever-more-transient means to that end.

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[Sergio Nouvel \(/contributors/sergio-nouvel\)](/contributors/sergio-nouvel)

June 13, 2015

We agree on what's really important here, Penina. I'm happy to see different points of view of such a complex and changing matter and yet finding common ground.

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Mars

June 12, 2015

This article as provocative as it is, couldn't spark different reactions than the ones you see in the comments. While I don't agree with some points, I think it's a very good summary of a growing trend. It's picturing a future that will sound bitter to professionals who today dedicate their lives to crafting web design. But the future indeed lies in web assets that behave like applications and deliver content to the "intended person in context". The Grid is certainly not a good example of such approach, but a variety of solutions will appear very soon. My team and I are building Smart Canvas, which is a platform that delivers web and mobile user experiences via the intersection of people and machine learning curation.

On the "design patterns" topic, I suggest people take a look at Material Design, which I think will evolve to allow this type of future state that Sergio is describing here.

Love the article, thank you for writing it!

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