Legal Design
The science behind visual design

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Legal Design

Visual communication from a cognitive perspective

The Deloitte Legal Design team specializes in creating effective visual communication from a cognitive perspective; in a business-to-business setting where both sender and receiver are specialists and operate in a content-driven context.

Legal Design is key in situations where stakes are high, the issues are complex and/or the stakeholder field is challenging. For instance, in communication with regulators, governmental bodies, inside/outside of court or top management of your organization.

How? All designs are made based on scientific knowledge. Leaning on the fields of communication sciences, behavioral economics and psychology; the Deloitte Legal Design team utilizes all benefits visual communication has to offer.

Why? Legal content is particularly suited for ‘visual translation’. Visual communication is cognitively less straining and allows for faster information processing. Imagery can communicate the most complex problems in swift, yet correct, and memorable manner. With the complexity of your message and often high stakes involved; communicating visually with stakeholders is ideally suited to get your message across effectively to achieve your business objectives.
What is especially interesting in the use of visual design in a professional setting is the fact that it allows you to set the stage. People intuitively respond to what they see. What we decide to translate into an visuals, determines the stage. What information goes in and what do we leave out? What is the information hierarchy and order? How do we place emphasis on certain information elements? Every design choice is a strategic choice that can help you obtain the goal you set out to achieve.

Within the domain of Legal Design, we distinguish between different kinds of designs. Do you need insight at a glance? Do you have to make sure the text of a legal contract can not be misinterpreted? Or do you need to quickly run your stakeholders through different scenarios? No legal issue is the same and some require a different approach than others, tapping into multiple benefits of visual communication.

Besides the fact that the result - the legal design itself – is of tremendous value, we have experienced that the process of creating the right legal design holds equal value, as does the art of visual thinking for legal professionals.

In the next pages we will elaborate on this with examples to illustrate (the diversity of) the different types of designs.
**Contract design**

Preventing misinterpretation

**Contract design** is one of the most advocated and adopted types of legal design. It’s also referred to as document design, since it can be applied to numerous types of documents, not just contracts.

Contract design focuses on making legal documents more accessible and preventing misinterpretation from happening by offering both a visual and a textual explanation. Research has shown that offering visual support in legal documents allows people to:

1. Move through the content quicker;
2. Gain a better understanding of that content;
3. Are left with more positive emotions after reading the document in comparison to solely textual information.

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2.8 Roadside assistance

Roadside assistance in the Netherlands and abroad (car, luggage and passengers) is provided by the leasing company. The employee must ensure that the lease car includes a ‘green card’ that is valid in the destination country.

2.9 Fuel card and claiming fuel expenses and toll charges

A European Shell fuel card is made available for refuelling. The employee must use this Shell fuel card when using such services in the Netherlands. See also Annex 9. If the employee opts for an electric car, annex 4 applies as regards the fuel card.

Toll charges, ferry costs or costs for car trains, etc., can only be recovered from the employer if these costs were incurred during business travel. Such costs may explicitly not be paid with the fuel card.

2.10 Kilometre records

The employee must record all business kilometres (travel to or on behalf of clients) and any commuting kilometres and study kilometres travelled with the lease car or rental car using the kilometre records in SAP Employee Self Service. Study kilometres must be recorded using the relevant course or training code.

The difference between the total number of kilometres travelled in (part of) a calendar year and the number of business kilometre recorded in (part of) a calendar year using the weekly Working Time statements is considered private kilometres.

2.11 Working abroad

If the employee is located abroad with the lease car for more than 60 consecutive days, the insurance conditions and roadside assistance programme are cancelled. If this term is expected to be exceeded, the employee must contact the Manager prior to his stay abroad.

If the employee is seconded abroad at the employer’s request for more than three months based on his Dutch benefits package, the lease car will be returned. The lease car will be added to the pool during this period and, if possible, returned to the employee when he returns. If the lease car is no longer available upon the employee’s return and the employee is still entitled to a lease car, a new lease car can be ordered in accordance with the lease car scheme then applicable, provided no other pool car is available. The employee will be granted the gross cash option during the secondment period, based on the function and lease matrix then applicable.

If the employee is seconded abroad at the request of the employer based on the benefits package of the foreign member firm, then participation in the lease car scheme is terminated.

Costs involved in early termination of the lease contract will be for the account of the employer.
Information design taps into the explanatory power of visual communication. This type of design is focused on providing insight and understanding at a glance.

In the world of today, people experience a constant information overload; the overall attention span is down to 7 seconds and for our clients, time is scarce. Explaining things visually will speed up understanding, enhance information processing and allows for an immediate content-driven debate instead of focusing on explaining the process first.

The design on the right is a visual representation of the four pages of text in which visual elements and text work together. It explains the Temporary Emergency Measure Bridging for the Preservation of Work following the COVID-19 outbreak, and direct insight in the three different user groups and the effects thereof.
Information design can also function to create shared understanding. One of the benefits of visualization is that you don’t have to spend time talking people through different scenarios as the scenarios are displayed for everyone to see.

In the example we see a metro map which provides insight in changing regulations; demonstrating where regulations will deviate from the previous situations, i.e., as you can see for the MDD class 1, a quality management system is not a requirement, as it is for Class II and under the MDR.

Another benefit is that we now have insight into multiple scenarios at once. If we were to hold all this information cognitively, the strain on our memory would be significant, if not impossible. Having a complete overview like this that allows the decision-making process to move much faster, overseeing all options.
Strategy design
Getting your vision across

One of the benefits of imagery is that we get to envision what does not (yet) exist in reality. Such as your vision or intangible business processes for instance. Strategy designs often consist of multiple visualizations all in support of the key message, balancing imagery with text.

Strategy designs are created for ‘shared understanding’, making sure we don’t only think we are all on the same page – with visualization we can confirm this.

These designs are often used to facilitate boardroom level conversation and decision making. They save time - you don’t have to waste time explaining first - you can directly dive into the content.
Strategy design
To align and activate

Strategy design is also a very effective tool to get teams aligned in the process of co-creation. By attempting to capture the core of your strategy in an unambiguous, straightforward strategic story, activation also arises.

Creating a visualization like you see on the right is the best way to visualize a strategic story. It helps you and your team turn your story in one that people recognize, can relate with and motivate to take the next step.

These kind of visuals are also often used in a physical space where the team meets. The illustration functions as a constant reminder of the “why”.

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Litigation design

Litigation design is all about relaying your story in the most effective way possible. Litigation design uses both design and psychological principles to get your point across. In a courtroom you want to convince. It is all about getting your point across swiftly yet effectively. It is about presenting your view on the issues in such a way it can not be denied.

Are you familiar with the Miffy – Kathy litigation? On the top left Miffy, a famous Dutch children’s character. On the bottom left Kathy, a character from the Hello Kitty family. Do you see the resemblance?

By creating a visual overview demonstrating the similarities one can convincingly, yet quickly, present and defend your point of view because it becomes cognitive easily to compare the two characters. If all similarities would have been described in text, storing all this information and making a mental comparison, would have been too much of a cognitive strain.
Boardroom design enables you to clearly display the core of your complex message in a visual way. It makes you stand out and communicate effectively in a way that sticks with your audience.

Boardroom graphics grant you the opportunity to share your thoughts, effectively communicate your key message, and to position yourself differently. In cases where time is limited, boardroom graphics ensure everyone understands the information at hand and allow for faster decision making.
Negotiation design

Complexity as a way to convince

Stakeholder design, negotiation design and litigation design all require ‘telling a story’ in order to set the playing field. Here more often we see real infographic come into play, where the visual elements outshine the textual elements.

The designs are focused on achieving the business objective, meaning the selected visual shape often tells a story in itself. This type of design is focused on evoking a certain emotion and response. The cognition component is leading in the design process. It is also this type of design that is focused on showing complexity rather than creating a simplified representation of reality.
How can we support you?
The heart of business is the art of problem solving

We truly believe the power of legal design is in the art of collaboration. After years of creating legal designs, we have come to realize that the processes of creation are just as important as the final design itself. Switching from text to visuals will make you think differently. It will make you analyze the issue on multiple levels, explore unexpected solutions and sharpen your argument with every step we take.

This is a multi-disciplinary approach. We bring in domain specific knowledge; design knowledge and knowledge about cognition and behavior. You bring in the unique perspective of your organization, your objective, and - of course - the legal content. By working together, we exploit the benefits of each other's expertise.

Designed for insight.

Legal Design services

Become an expert yourself

- Keynote Introduction into Legal Design
- The way of a visual
- Insight Design
- Becoming a visual expert
  (extensive training – one full day)

Legal design process

Interested?
Start with a 1h lunch & learn
The Legal Design team is the most innovative in the current Dutch legal arena. They are unique in their approach by bringing cognition into the mix. The team has contributed to numerous high-end cases and has a proven track record. They bring 5+ years of experience in the legal sector, financial services and international corporations. Their track record includes among others; Rabobank, Houthoff, Dutch Authorities Consumers and Markets, DNB (De Nederlandsche Bank), AEGON, RMA (Rekenkamer Metropool Amsterdam), JRC European Commission, Rathenau. The team has contributed to multiple high-end court wins.

They are thought leader in the field of legal design inside and outside of the Netherlands and is recognized for their unique approach. The team has a strong culture and go-get-it mentality, they are used to working together and strive to gain the best possible result. Their passion for what they do shows when working with them.

Sarah van Hecke is a communication scientist with a specialization in attitude and behaviour. She focuses specifically on the influence of imagery and design on behavior. In recent years she has implemented the Legal Design discipline within the legal profession. At Deloitte she advises on how visual design can be used to achieve communicative goals.

Lisanne van Weelden is assistant professor at Utrecht University. She performs research on visual communication with a focus on data visualization. She is interested in the design of data visualizations and the cognitive effects of this design. At Deloitte she valorized her knowledge by advising on how visual design can be deployed to achieve communicative goals.

Anne Mels studied journalism with a specialization in information design. She has an interest preference for visualizing complex issues. After a career at the Dutch financial Times, she focused on Legal Design. At Deloitte she designs infographics that make complexity transparent.

Matthijs Peters is a creative designer, out of the box is his second nature. After studying communication and multimedia design, he started working as a junior designer at Deloitte. With a broad interest and experience in different media, he gives every project its own refreshing and creative twist.