

Symphony of Colors

COLORS ON THE WEB: HOW THEY WORK

In his book "Ergonomia do objeto (Object Ergonomics)" professor João Gomes Filho points out that "any work or reading done on the monitor (logically depending on more or less time viewing the screen) represents physical effort and tiredness, and fundamentally sight tiredness for the user-reader". Thus, that is one of the main challenges when speaking about the chromatic composition of a site, since the objective is to avoid that users consider the colors as being an obstacle in their period of experience. "There is a fundamental point in João Gomes Filho's statement that relates to technology. Reading off the screen is not as comfortable for users as reading printed material. It is the result of differences such as luminosity and resolution, which are likely to be solved with the advancement of technology", Globo.com designer Felipe Memoria explains.

According to the expert, another fundamental issue is taking care with certain combinations that may increase even further the discomfort when reading off the screen. "Designers love using a small variation in contrast between background and text. Who has not had to select a piece of text in the browser to be able to read it? Some specific combinations can also cause the sensation that the text is 'vibrating', which causes great discomfort to look at. In general, too high a contrast is not very pleasant. Too low a contrast might even look nice, but increases the potential for wrinkles on users' foreheads. It is important to know how to make color combinations in order to avoid it from being an obstacle for contents consumption and the experience as a whole. Contrast problems can distract the user from worrying about what really interests to worrying about small problems that should not be a hindrance. By the end of the process, negligence in design can produce in the user a memory that that site caused a lot of hard work. And people do not like having to work hard".

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USABILITY OF COLORS

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Thus, the function of a chromatic composition is to act as a facilitator for the different areas on the screen to be noticed just as they were designed. "Colors play a fundamental role in interface organization. No matter how well designed a wireframe is, if the colors do not follow the logic of hierarchy and separation of the elements designed in the architecture, the work will be tainted. Moreover, care must be taken for the colors to make sense to the user. The use of green and red is a good example. Green is, among other things, associated to concepts such as 'continue' and 'permitted', whereas red is, many times, associated to ideas such as 'forbidden', 'stop', 'error', and so on. The

choice of colors for certain elements should not clash with the mental model of users. Therefore, the use of green for error messages and red for messages of success, for example, at first can confuse the user when understanding the message”, Felipe Memoria claims.