

10 WAYS

VISUAL COMMUNICATION

Can Transform Your Business

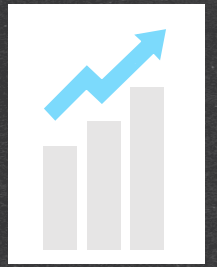
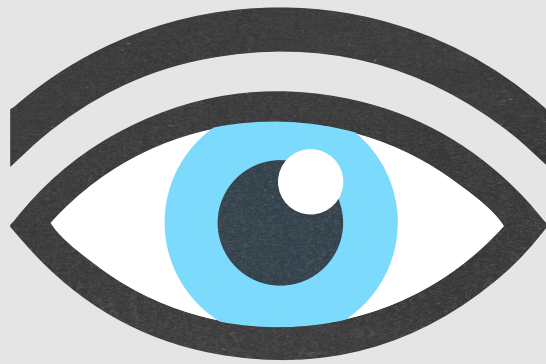


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INTRODUCTION

Imagine your business as a network of streets and highways and all your customers and clients as drivers. Now imagine that along every road, every sign consists of a white field with black text—no red octagons telling people to stop, no green rectangles indicating on and off ramps or street names, and no orange or yellow warning signs to alert your customers of any special conditions. Oh, and no lane markings either—customers will have to weave and wander without any visual guidance. There are no billboards, which maybe seems nice at first, but there's no scenery for them to detract from, either. Your business could be the Pacific Coast Highway, but all anyone would see is an

Such is the world of business without visual communication—or poor visual communication. Businesses often make the mistake of viewing prospects and customers as static individuals, just sitting there waiting to be reached or appearing out of nowhere at your storefront, website, or advertisement. But your audience is moving fast, driving, going, racing, living—how can you expect to grab the attention of someone zipping by if you don't have powerful visuals to direct their eyes and communicate instantly?



Without effective visual communication, your business is lost. Even if potential prospects know you exist, which is doubtful, they don't know where to find you, why they would want to, or what they would do if they did.



With effective visual communication, a prospect approaching at 73 mph can take notice in a blink and hit the brakes, maybe even change lanes.

Now, it's a safe assumption you employ visual communication on a number of levels.

But here are two other safe assumptions:

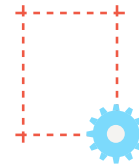
*you aren't using as much visual communication as you could,
and what you are using could be better.*

The point of this piece is to show how visual communication can transform your business on every level—from improving customer experience to exponentially increasing revenue.

To be clear, this isn't about becoming the coolest, hippest company. Visual communication is much more than just a shiny object meant to distract people in a society drowning in sensory overload. Good visual communication is good business. Always has been, always will. In an era where there are seemingly infinite ways to communicate visually with your audience, there's simply no excuse for not reaching out and guiding your audience in the way proven to work best.

The best news of all is that effective visual communication is perfectly attainable, in the right hands. In the hands of trained, experience professionals, visual communications can revolutionize the state of your business. It happens all the time, and here are ten ways it has been proven to work.

STRATEGIC PLACEMENT



A strong visual can be as inconsequential as a fallen tree if it's in the middle of a forest with no one around to see it. But . . . what if you could place that video of a falling tree before the eyes of only people who have frequented websites similar to www.fallentree.com and who live in areas where donations to nonprofits like your Fallen Tree Rescue Mission?

Seem silly? The fake nonprofit might be, but the concept of strategically placed imagery is anything but silly to companies such as Julian Bakery, who used geographically targeted banner ads on websites ranking high among keywords closely linked to their products in areas where their products were sold in stores.



They saw their impressions skyrocket by **330%**, their conversions go up by **35%**, and their customer base increase from 100 to 1 million in three years.



We work in an era in which we can target our ideal audience with uncanny specificity. The targeting is available from a number of providers on various platforms. So much focus is placed on making images go viral, but from a business perspective it's more important to evoke an emotional response from the people you truly want to reach.

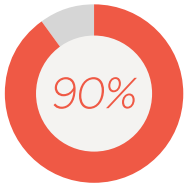
If you are careless about the placement of your visuals, you can wind up turning your important cause and emotional ad into an unanticipated joke.

Like this billboard preaching the importance of work safety with the headline, "Where's daddy?" next to a photo of what appears to be a mother and daughter grieving the absence of a father. On a worksite, that delivers a powerful reminder to follow safety precautions. In close proximity to a billboard for Spearmint Rhino Gentlemen's Club? **Slightly different effect.**⁽¹⁾

1. <http://www.digitalvidya.com/blog/julian-bakery-leveraged-google-display-network-to-increase-impressions-by-330-dmblog-0206/>

THE POWER OF COLOR

Color may be the least understood aspect of visual communication and one of the very most important.



A study showed that up to **90%** of snap judgments made about products are based on color alone. That isn't to say the decision to purchase is color-fueled completely, but that all-important first impression is almost always driven by color. We may want to expand our customers' minds, but we need to be aware of that basic psychological connection that color can create.



Help Scout

Old Logo



Help Scout

New Logo

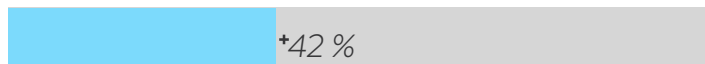
Help Scout's approach to converting their logo to a simpler one-color design is a fascinating exploration into how color played a role in establishing a clearer emotional connotation with their audience that has led to a much better communicated sense of who they are and where their expertise lies.¹⁾



The effective use of color increases brand awareness by **80%**,



and color makes someone who sees an ad **42%** more likely to read it than strictly black-and-white copy.



It seems pretty clear Facebook agrees on the importance of color with the introduction of a rainbow of color choices for otherwise text-only posts. It's too early to have significant data on the long term effects, but any Facebook user knows just from their personal feed that the boost in engagement is undeniable.

1. www.helpscout.net/blog/psychology-of-color/amp/

E-BOOKS

Let your audience judge you by your ebook cover. Even though ebooks aren't exclusively graphic in nature, their appearance on a website or landing page and their effectiveness as a marketing and even revenue-generating tool are extremely beneficial.

If you're reading this ebook, let's face it, you know there is value in the platform of a way of connecting with an audience interested in your field of expertise.

It's really just a very simple instrument for allowing people who are interested in what you know and do to raise their hands and say, "I'd like to know more." Because of the information it can convey and direction and understanding it provides your audience, an ebook is a mutually beneficial form of visual communication for everyone involved.

But ebooks are making authors and companies around the world a lot of money just from sales alone. While traditional book publishers have seen a decline in ebook sales for the past couple of years (that is, books with ISBN registrations), that doesn't tell the whole story. As this report, which encompasses all ebook sales regardless of the presence of ISBN, ebook sales have risen each of the past three years.



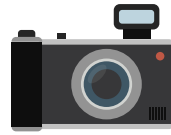
In fact, in the US alone, self-published, non-ISBN authors sold nearly \$600 million in ebooks in 2016.^①



Ebooks can be a great visual marketing tool to add to your repertoire, but they can also transform a business with an added, unconventional revenue stream.

1. <http://authorearnings.com/report/dbw2017/>

PHOTOGRAPHY



Let's take a step outside of the business world (kind of) and turn to President Trump. All political drama aside, photography played a major role in the way the public, and the president, reacted to the deaths in Syria caused by sarin gas in early April. The images that surfaced were horrifying, and President Trump's reaction to them drew immediate attention.

As one article put it, "Senior administration officials and members of Congress who spoke with Trump said the president was especially struck by two images: young, listless children being splashed with water in a frantic attempt to cleanse them of the nerve agent; and an anguished father holding his twin babies, swathed in soft white fabric, poisoned to death."

Later that week, Trump responded with military action. Again, political drama aside, the immediate reaction throughout the media, even among outlets Trump had labeled "fake news," was largely supportive. It appeared that what galvanized and unified the emotions of what had been political adversaries was the universal sorrow and grief shared by all who viewed those photos. And it came at a time when finding agreement on anything seemed all but impossible.⁽¹⁾

Photography has the potential to trigger an emotional response in mere milliseconds.

So when a business wants to establish an emotional connection or initiate a persuasive response, the right photo can work wonders—and the wrong one can create distance. **Think professional photography is too expensive? Think again.** Unique, powerful photography should be one of your most valuable digital assets, because it quite simply puts money in your pockets.



This is especially true when seeking to build trust. A perfect case study is the development of the dynamic startup, Airbnb. When the company first began, investors were slow to hop on board for the simple reason that it seemed so unlikely to work—what tourist is going to want to stay in some guy's apartment? The words might sound ridiculous, and, at the outset, the images looked just as frightening.



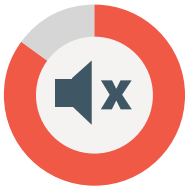
Airbnb hosts were taking their own photos, so trust was almost impossible to foster. That's when the company's owners tried a winning experiment: they rented a \$5,000 camera and took professional quality photos of their New York listings, one by one. Within a month, their revenue had doubled. They then established a program that employed a team of professional photographers nationwide for their hosts to boost their listings with professionally taken photos and boosting their income by more than \$1,000 per month.⁽²⁾

1. <http://www.smh.com.au/world/horrible-photographs-of-suffering-moved-donald-trump-to-action-against-syria-20170408-gvgxz3.html>
2. <https://growthhackers.com/growth-studies/airbnb>

VIDEO WITH TEXT



Obviously videos are ubiquitous online. No one questions the ability of videos to increase SEO, post and site engagement, and deliver content like never before. But here's a fact that might take you by surprise: *America is returning to the advent of the silent movie . . . sort of.*



According to a recent study,
85% of videos watched on Facebook are viewed with no sound.

Think about that for a second. Video is overtaking all other formats as the most viewed content on the internet, and on its most popular platform, it almost always is silent.

The opportunity to embed text into your videos is enormous—**really, it should almost be mandatory.**⁽¹⁾



1. <http://digiday.com/media/silent-world-facebook-video/>

INFOGRAPHICS



Infographic use rose in 2016 –58% of B2B marketers used them as compared to 50% in 2015. That was the largest increase in use of any marketing tactic.⁽¹⁾



The genre of infographics is making huge strides as far as what is possible. Perhaps the most remarkable one we've seen in a long time came from BuzzFeed's Spies in the Skies interactive infographic, showing the flight paths of federal surveillance aircraft all across the US. It's a great tool to check out if you want to be really impressed and depressed/paranoid at the same time.⁽²⁾

Another great example of infographics that has the power to transform a business—or simply a person's way of thinking—is Randall Monroe's epic Timeline of Earth's Average Temperature. It's one graph of the earth's average temperature over the course of 22,000 years, peppered with observations factual, fantastic, and occasionally downright farcical—about a five-minute read in all. It takes the reader on a leisurely stroll through history as the temperature slowly meanders from left to right and occasionally back toward the left over the course of several millennia . . . with a sudden, surprising hook at the end. It takes readers from laughing out loud to cursing under their breath—and ready to do whatever it takes to take action. **It's a must read.**⁽³⁾

So ask yourself . . . If there was one point that would drive customers to your door if they suddenly knew and understood it, what would you have them know?

With an infographic, you can do just that, and they might not even see it coming.

- [1. https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/visual-content-marketing-strategy#sm.00001394ak1oqheq6x5wkjxqfz8xg](https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/visual-content-marketing-strategy#sm.00001394ak1oqheq6x5wkjxqfz8xg)
- [2. https://www.buzzfeed.com/peteraldhous/spies-in-the-skies?utm_term=.dazyaxk6Ox#.jd4qRJD6gJ](https://www.buzzfeed.com/peteraldhous/spies-in-the-skies?utm_term=.dazyaxk6Ox#.jd4qRJD6gJ)
- [3. https://xkcd.com/1732/](https://xkcd.com/1732/)

WHITEBOARD ANIMATION



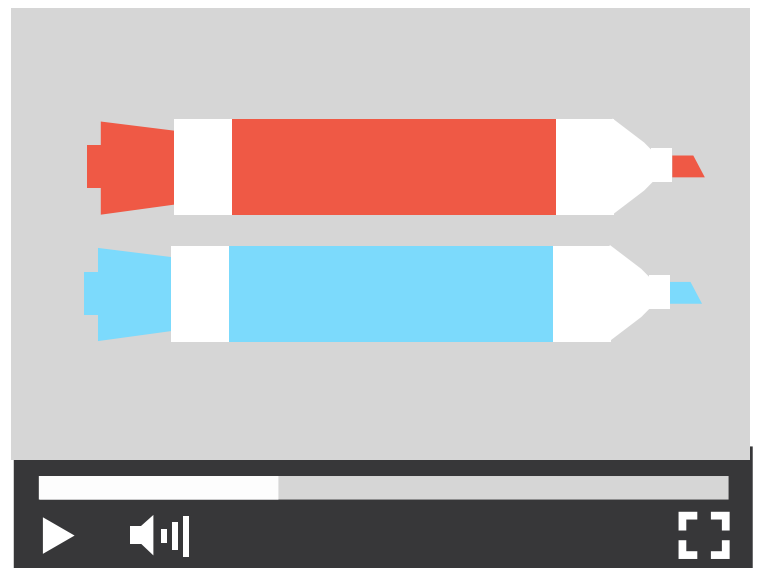
You knew we'd come back to this fact, right? The one that says that **85% of videos watched on Facebook are silent?**

Whiteboard animations are a perfect way to take advantage of video viewers' penchant for sneaking views at times when sound is not an option. True, most whiteboard animations are narrated, but the beauty of this format is that the illustrations make a sense even without the voice track.

That's because the whiteboard animation format features a story told in bite-size, progressive fashion. Not only does it boost long term memory, it also causes a sequence of multiple bursts of dopamine as each illustration is completed.

It literally, scientifically causes pleasure in the minds and bodies of the people watching.

If you could guarantee that everyone who came across your website or a social media post referencing your brand would feel increasingly happy the more they learned about you, **what possible reason could you have not to do it?**



EXPLAINER VIDEO



Short, simple, essentially elevator-pitch videos can work wonders for your business.



If you could increase the likelihood of a purchase by **64%**, would you do it?



If you could communicate **1.8 million words** to your customer in 1-minute, would you?



If you could retain your web visitors for an extra **2 minutes** on average, would anything stop you?

Congratulations, you need an explainer video.⁽¹⁾

1. <https://www.spielcreative.com/explainer-video-statistics-for-businesses.html>

SHOCK AND AWE VIDEO

In 2005, Blendtec was a relatively obscure brand of blender. By the end of 2006, Blendtec was a household name. The almost overnight success was the result of three simple, infamous words: *Will it blend?*



With a budget of \$50, the owner of Blendtec started making his own videos, essentially blending household items—everything from marbles and rakes to iPhones and iPads.



The shock and awe of a video that web users couldn't look away from became one of the biggest viral success stories of all time.

But seriously, this got off the ground with a \$50 budget. It made the company millions, and the money is still rolling in.⁽¹⁾

Maybe you can't guarantee a similar campaign could have anywhere close to those results, but . . . how fun would it be to try?

1. <http://cdn.blendtec.com/files/media/blendtec-history.pdf>

SIGNAGE

It used to be that an oversized in-store video display would be completely cost-prohibitive for anyone but the retail giants—an outdoor one would be unthinkable. But as the cost of those displays has come down, the potential benefits are well within a lot of businesses' grasp.

Consider these statistics—digital signage:

Creates a **31.8%** boost to overall sales volume



Brings in **32.8%** more traffic into stores



Increases customer satisfaction by **46%**



Brings back **32.8%** more repeat customers



Reduces perceived wait times by **35%**



When we talk about visual communication, thoughts almost instantly go to the virtual world, but in reality, color, visuals, video, dynamic text, and solid communication all matter just as much.⁰¹

1. https://nmgprod.s3.amazonaws.com/media/filer_public/8a/85/8a856d42-40ca-47ee-b2c6-7cfb68bbb60a/mvix-asset-digital-signage-statistics-infographic.pdf

CONCLUSION

We hope you've enjoyed this list of ten important, realistic ways visual communication can transform your business. It isn't just pie-in-the-sky wishful thinking.

Excellent visual communication can transform your business the way it is transforming, building, revitalizing, and revolutionizing other businesses every day.



We are visual creatures.

Over **60%** of people consider themselves visual learners.

What are you ready to teach them about your business?



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