

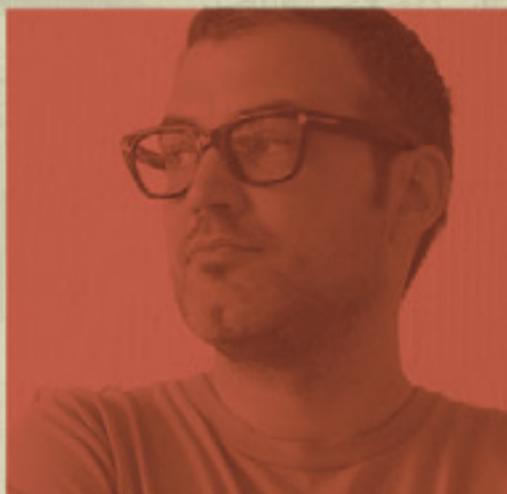


2013

# TRENDS

## WEB AND MOBILE

by [AWWWARDS.COM](http://AWWWARDS.COM)



# TRENDS Project

EDITOR IN CHIEF and ART DIRECTION: Awwwards Team. 2013  
Awwwards Blog

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# Preface

## Chapter. 1

# Why Trends

The Awwwards community are a faithful audience, always interested in learning and dedicating their time to acquiring the necessary technical knowledge to apply in their daily work. With the noble aim of being a useful tool for our community, at the end of 2012 we decided to gather the opinions of renowned experts on how the web industry will evolve in the complex times we live in, in this tower of Babel of technologies and devices that's rushing towards us.

Of course, nobody can know for sure what might happen in the coming months and years. In fact, many of the interviewees were hesitant to give an opinion on trends. Curiously, in the end some very similar ideas emerged to make up, more than a prediction, a Ten Commandments of needs based firmly on their own experiences as users.

**“Trends is not only a prediction for 2013. It reflects a natural interest in how all aspects of web design will evolve over the next few years.”**

Trends is not only a prediction for 2013. It reflects a natural interest in how all aspects of web design will evolve over the next few years. We don't actually know whether we will need to make a similar publication in 2014; things in this industry change quickly, so it's possible

that in less than 12 months many of these trends and technologies which now seem to be blossoming will have disappeared completely.

## How is the document structured?

The idea was to ask all the participants more or less the same questions to get a kind of "data map" which would help us visualize "the future of the web". To this end, we had the invaluable help of 28 renowned experts in different areas of the industry. They are the ones who have given this project its shape.

**“The idea was to ask all the participants more or less the same questions to get a kind of data map.”**

## The end motivation?

Honestly... you'll see as you read the document, because this is exactly what can be taken from almost all the contributions...building a more useful, accessible and efficient web for the user without forgetting that design is a powerful tool that not everyone is able to use with skill and honesty.

# Interviews

## Chapter. 2



# Dan Mall

Design Director at Superfriendly Co.

Dan Mall is an award-winning designer from Philadelphia. Founder and Design Director at SuperFriendly, co-founder of Typedia and swfIR, and singer/ keyboard player for contemporary Christian band Four24. Dan writes about design and other issues on Twitter and his website.

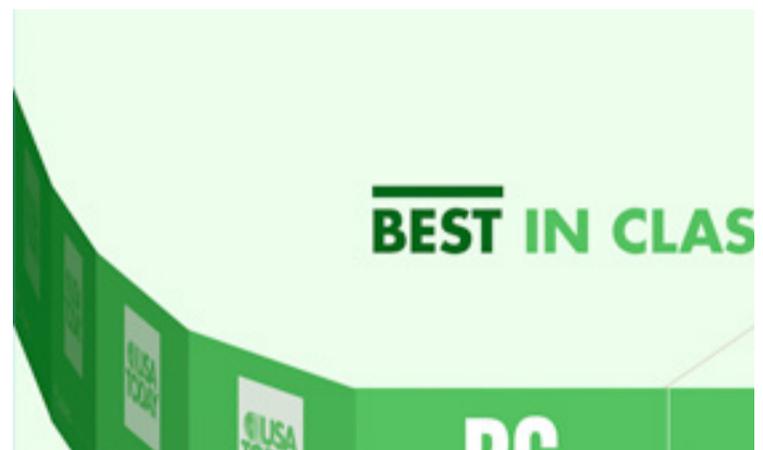
**“We’ll see people more broadly understanding mobile devices.”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

I've never been good at predictions, but I think (hope)? we'll see people more broadly understanding mobile devices—computers we can hold in our hands as opposed to having to sit at a desk to use—as the web, not just an “on-the-go”, abridged version of the web.

### What animation techniques and effects applied to navigation and user interaction will we see? Will we finally move beyond Parallax scroll?

Gosh, I hope so. I've seen very few sites that use parallax as a conceptual construct as opposed to a technological gimmick. As touch-enabled devices are becoming more ubiquitous, I think we'll see a lot of experimentation around touch interactions. Here's one of my recent favorites by Rally Interactive co-founder Ben Cline.



### What do you think we'll see in layout and UI design in 2013?

**Simplicity, app-inspired design, responsive, single page websites, alternative navigation patterns...?**

There's an interesting battle currently being fought between photorealistic graphics and flat aesthetics, led by Apple and Microsoft's Windows 8. I think we'll see a lot more push and pull with these styles over the next year.

**“It's interesting to see design and technology simultaneously getting bigger and smaller.”**

**Touch and gestures, media queries, responsive, retina display, webfonts, realtime web... How do you think these techniques and technologies will evolve and what will be next?**

It's interesting to see design and technology simultaneously getting bigger and smaller. On one end of the spectrum, we find browsers evolving more

rapidly than ever, with designers and developers pushing technologies like WebGL, hardware acceleration, and 3D in the browser without having to rely on plugins. On the other end, we see mobile access necessitating simpler, faster sites and heralding the need for optimizing. I'm curious to see how each evolves.

### **When looking for potential employees or collaborators what catches your eye?**

Great design taste in a portfolio usually gets my attention, but what keeps it is hunger and passion for the work. I also try to look for some form of richness; I like seeing small moments where it's obvious that he/she pored over the details.

### **What technologies are your team training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?**

Everything! We're certainly doing the web work we love so much, HTML/CSS/JS, mobile-first responsive design, WordPress, ExpressionEngine/otherCMS's—but are also venturing a bit into Objective-C and OpenFrameworks as we do more native mobile work. We're even creating some physical installations that connect digital and analog. More on that soon!



# Karen McGrane

Content, User Experience Strategist



Image by Alison Grippo

Karen McGrane is a content strategist and user experience designer with 15 years of experience making big, complicated websites. Currently she is Managing Partner of Bond Art + Science.

**“Mobile is not the Lite version. I think this will be the year of the mobile website, no more desktop redirects.”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

Most major organizations are starting to see about 10% of the traffic to their website coming from mobile devices—which means it's time to move on putting a content strategy for mobile in place. I think this will be the year of the mobile website, no more desktop redirects or bare-bones landing pages. It's time to think of the mobile website as every bit as "real" as the desktop website.

### What should be the new design principles for web and mobile design?

I have three big principles that inform my approach to content strategy for web and mobile.

**“You don't get to decide which device people use to visit your website. They do.”**

1. You don't get to decide which device people use to visit your website. They do. If you're sitting around debating whether "people will want to do that on mobile," you're too late. People are already trying to do it. It's our mission—and our responsibility—to deliver a great experience to them, on whatever device or platform they choose to use.

2. Content parity is the goal. Too often, we fall into the trap of thinking mobile should be the "lite" version, offering a subset of content and features. Or we just want it to be different for the sake of being different. For most organizations, providing a consistent experience across the desktop web and mobile web should be the foundational goal.

**“We fall into the trap of thinking mobile should be the lite version.”**

3. It's not a strategy if you can't maintain it. Lots of great ideas flop in the execution, because no one took into consideration what would be required from the internal web, production, or editorial teams. With digital teams now juggling lots of different platforms, it's even more important to focus on the needs of the people who will maintain the site.

## What do you think we'll see predominate in layout and UI design in 2013?

**“Designers have a huge stake in knowing what the content will be.”**

I expect to see growing recognition from the design community that the content can't be “somebody else's problem.” Designers have a huge stake

in knowing “what .” What that means is that designers should be asking about “how the content will be structured.” What are all the chunks, and how big are they? Instead of treating the content like an afterthought, or something wholly separate from the rest of the experience, designers will make sure it's the centerpiece.

## In technological and social terms, how do you think the web will evolve in the next few years?

The proliferation of platforms isn't going to stop. We're going to see increasing numbers of wildly divergent platforms, some of which we've been talking about for years. Interactive television. In-kitchen devices. In-car audio interfaces.

Someday soon, speech-based interfaces will get good enough—remember all the years when touchscreens sucked? Once touchscreens reached the point where they just worked, it launched an entire new wave of innovations in hardware, software, and interaction models. Speech isn't there yet, but it will be.

This means that we have to stop building containers and then creating content to fit. Our content is going to find its way to places we never even dreamed, and we don't have the time, resources, or budget to create new content for every platform. Instead, all of us need to work together—designers, developers, and content strategists—to create the right content, structured for reuse, and then design around it.



# Jenn Lukas

Interactive Development Director at Happy Cog

Jenn pursued a Multimedia & Web Design degree. She has worked on numerous projects for top-tier clients and was named one of Mashable's 15 Developer/ Hacker Women to Follow on Twitter, and you can find her on Twitter posting development and cat-related news.

**“This year I hope to see content still at the forefront.”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

I just LOVE CSS Transitions, especially when applied to hovers. Adding the right amount of fade or movement to a link, really adds a helpful amount of interaction while keeping things classy and not going the way of Flash tweens. CSS Filters are super neat! With lots of people pushing for designing in the browser, this is one more step away from an image editor. Filters cut down on image sprites and image production and let you adjust your images right in the browser.

“Filters cut down on image sprites and image production and let you adjust your images right in the browser.”

### What do you think we'll see in layout and UI design in 2013?

We've seen a lot of single column designs and single page websites this year, allowing a content-first approach. These patterns provided an ease into responsive design and less pages to load/clicks to make. This year I hope to see content still at the forefront, but pushing into more complicated designs and layouts. Flexbox (CSS Flexible Box Layout Module) is sure to help in aiding interesting layouts on desktop and mobile that aren't dictated by source order.



# Mike Kus

Graphic, Web Designer & Illustrator

Mike Kus is a UK based Graphic/ Web Designer and illustrator, considered one of the best on today's scene. He's co-founder of WorkFu and creator of a few amazing online and print experiences.

**“I think we will see a simpler web emerging. More space, less clutter and decoration.”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

From a visual standpoint I think we'll see (are already seeing) a simplification of Graphic & UI design on both the web and mobile. We'll see less decoration, simple, bold and clear layouts and UI design. I think we'll see less Apple influenced skeuomorphic design, also.

“Simplification of Graphic & UI and mobile design on both the web and mobile. Less is More.”

**What technologies are you training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?**

In the coming months I want to further explore the concept of how to best express a brand or personality through web design and how this can be maintained from the desktop experience through to a mobile experience.

**What should the new design principles be in a future where web and mobile design must be focused on user experience and content?**

I don't think it's a new thing to suggest that user experience and content are a central focus when designing for the web and mobile. It's always been that way as far as I'm concerned. I'll just carry on applying the same design principles I've always used, which are pretty simple: Make sure the content is easily digestible using a simple clear layout, the text is easy to read, and the site or app is easy to navigate and understand. Apply these to all devices.

“Make sure the content is easily digestible using a simple clear layout.”

**What animation techniques and effects applied to navigation and user interaction will we see? Will we finally move beyond Parallax scroll?**

Scrolling triggered animations seem to be hot right now but I'm really not sure what will come next.

**What do you think we'll see in layout and UI design in 2013?**

## **Simplicity, app-inspired design, responsive, single page websites, alternative navigation patterns...?**

Again, I think we'll see a simplification of UI design. Less is more.

## **Can we predict an explosion of creativity in interaction and animation now that the technology is available and becoming more accessible from a web standards point of view?**

**“I don't think human appetite for clever animated web pages will ever die.”**

I think as long as the browser support is in place, yes, designers and programmers will be doing some pretty crazy stuff. I don't think human appetite for clever

animated web pages will ever die. Clients love that stuff!

## **Can you pinpoint any visual trends or design elements that might emerge in 2013, as Letterpress, pictograms, vintage style, lettering, oversizing elements, Overprinted effects, swiss design etc. have done?**

I think we will see a simpler web emerging. More space, less clutter and decoration. A focus on content, layout, clarity and simplicity.

## **What role do you think technologies like Canvas or Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG) can play in game and app development?**

Well, for one, scalable vector graphics take the pain away when it comes to designing for different screen resolutions. Creating multiple graphics for different screen types is a total pain in the ass.

## **In technological and social terms, how do you think the web will evolve in the next few years?**

I think we'll see the web further integrated into our everyday lives. Only a few years ago 'the web' was surfing the web from your desktop and email. Now the web is on your mobile, there's an app for everything from taking and sharing your photos to mapping your run to monitoring your car's performance. This integration will only become deeper.



# Nick Pettit

Teaching Team Leader at Treehouse

Nick Pettit is the **Teaching Team Leader at Treehouse**, an educational video tutorial service that teaches web design, web development, and iOS. Nick has a background in fine art and a passion for technology.

**“I think SVGs will become more popular due to the increasing popularity of displays with high pixel densities.”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design/ development?

Screens with high pixel densities like the new iPad and MacBook Pro will become more prevalent. Responsive Web Design solves part of the puzzle and forces us to think in terms of proportions, but now design must become even

“Design must become even more pixel agnostic. I think designers will start using an SVG-first approach.”

more pixel agnostic. The best way to do this currently is with vector graphics and I think designers will start using an SVG-first approach when creating graphics for their web pages. Internally at Treehouse, we've taken a note from

Responsive design and have dubbed this idea “Scalable Web Design.” Vectors are not practical for more complex imagery, particularly photographs, but they work well in many cases, especially when you go into the design phase knowing that this will be the driving technology. Additionally, I think the recent backlash from the skeuomorphic or hyperrealistic sensibilities of Apple are leading towards an aesthetic that features more flat colors, which is the perfect use case for SVGs. Internet Explorer has added support for SVGs in recent releases, so this approach is now far more viable.

## What technologies are you training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?

I'm personally focused on researching how vectors impact design and UX decision making. While vector graphics do have a few drawbacks, they have a tremendous number of advantages that allow for interfaces that are not practical with raster images alone.

## What should a newbie web developer concentrate on learning?

A new web developer should learn to love learning. The best web developers are very flexible and adaptable to change. They don't spend all of their time focusing on just one language, and instead, experiment with all the possibilities.

## What will the trends be in web programming? Which languages or frameworks will gain more converts in the near future?

I don't see any ground breaking changes in languages or frameworks in 2013, although that doesn't mean there won't be any. Rather, I think the focus will be on the toolchain that front-end and back-end developers use to create web apps. The barrier to entry for new designers and developers is a little bit high, but projects and tools like HTML5 Boilerplate, Bootstrap, Github, Ruby on Rails, Heroku, and countless others have continuously systematized the process. I think this positive momentum will continue, because it allows developers to focus more on their ideas, rather than the implementation.

**“The fight for web standards is finally in a much better place than it was in previous years.”**

### **How do you think these techniques and technologies will evolve and what will be next?**

Technologically, I think SVGs will become more popular due to the increasing popularity of displays with high pixel densities. Beyond that, it seems like the fight for web standards is finally in a much better place than it was in previous years, and the ongoing refinements to the tools that are available to developers are a welcome addition to the equation. Furthermore, companies and individuals care more about design than ever before. Big influencers like Apple and Microsoft have shaken up the long-standing desktop metaphor with iOS and Windows 8, and the world didn't come crashing down around them as one might expect. I think this gives smaller product companies the comfort they need to freely experiment with bold new interface ideas.

The current state of development and design is pretty incredible, and while it will continue to improve, there's never been a better time to build web applications. Now is the time to execute.



# Dave Rupert

Lead Developer at Paravel Inc.

Dave Rupert is the lead developer for Paravel and host of “the ATX Web Show”, a podcast about the local web design and development scene in Austin, Texas.

**“I think the future of web and mobile design is that there is no distinction between the two.”**

“The future of web and mobile design is that there is no distinction between the two. Mobile first responsive web design is probably the trend to stick with in the near future.”

a company in India just announced a \$20 tablet, and college classrooms are glowing with high-end laptops. Mobile first responsive web design is probably the trend to stick with in the near future.

**What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?**

For me, I think the future of web and mobile design is that there is no distinction between the two. Smartphones are becoming the default computer for most of the world's youth,

**What technologies are you training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?**

I'm focusing a lot more on JavaScript and Web Accessibility in the short term. My knowledge of those two things is decent but could always be better and more informed. Over the next few months I'll probably just continue poking holes in what I think I know so I can get better at my weaknesses.

**What should a newbie web developer concentrate on learning?**

There's a saying we have on [ShopTalk](#) (a podcast I co-host with Chris Coyier): "JUST BUILD WEBSITES!" The technologies that you need to be learning will quickly present themselves in challenges you meet when you pick up a side project, start a job, etc. Beyond that, gaining more mastery on the three main building blocks of our industry - HTML, CSS, and JavaScript - couldn't hurt.

**What will the trends be in web programming? Which languages or frameworks will gain more converts in the near future?**

I believe automation and better tooling is the next wave (if not already a current wave) in web development. This covers everything from pimping your text editor to improving the building and compiling of our HTML/CSS/JavaScript.

“Linters, pre-processors, builders, and package managers will play a major role in everyday web development.”

Linters, pre-processors, builders, and package managers will play a major role in everyday web development. There may be a big technical hurdle there to get everyone on board, but that's a great opportunity for developers to make GUIs in order to increase adoption among less command-line-savvy developers and designers.

**“Touch and gestures will be hugely important.”**

**Touch and gestures, media queries, responsive, retina display, webfonts, realtime web... How do you think these techniques and technologies will evolve and what will be next?**

Touch and gestures will be hugely important. Apple's biggest selling products are all touch-based. Microsoft's Windows 8 is a touch-based interface. Chris Coyier recently tweeted that he saw his mom try to tap her TV. Touch-enabled devices are now the default stack, so it's important that our designs have this in mind. I don't think we're far off from where our websites will be expected to have more advanced gesture-based interactions.



# Veerle Pieters

Graphic, Web Designer Lead at Fab

Veerle Pieters is a graphic/ web designer based in Deinze, Belgium. She runs her own design studio, Duoh!, together with Geert Leyseele. Veerle has been blogging since 2003 and is considered number 39 on the list of "NxE's Fifty Most Influential Female Bloggers".

**“It’s important to design from the content point instead of screen resolutions.”**

## **I**n technological and social terms, how do you think the web will evolve in the next few years?

Hard to say, as I'm not a visionary so I can only do some guesswork. Technologically, it will be moving more and more towards mobile, so that aspect

“Technologically, it will be moving more and more towards mobile, so that aspect will become even more important than it now already is.”

will become even more important than it now already is. I see shopping as one aspect of that, and I think we will eventually move towards 50% being done on phones or tablets. Of course, this will not work for every shop, but shops like fab.com will get to that point quicker than others. Socially, I have no

idea if Twitter or Facebook will still be relevant in 5 years. It all depends on what those companies do with their product. If they alienate their customers, and a new kid on the block profits from that, it wouldn't be the first time.

### **What should the new design principles be in a future where web and mobile design must be focused on user experience and content?**

I'm hardly an expert, but I think there is no golden rule that applies to all. Every project is different so that's why it is so hard to create the ultimate process/ tool that everyone likes to use and that works perfectly for every project. I'm not sure if such a thing is even possible. It's a collection of best practices and tools based on personal preference that we have at our disposal today. With the complexity of all the devices out there, I think it's important to design from the content point instead of focusing on all the screen resolutions out there. That's what I think would qualify as a new design principle.

“I think it's important to design from the content point instead of focussing on all the screen resolutions out there.”

### **Can you pinpoint any visual trends or design elements that might emerge in 2013, as Letterpress, pictograms, vintage style, lettering, oversizing elements, Overprinted effects, swiss design etc. have done?**

Trends are something I don't follow or have any interest in. I just do what is right for the project that I'm doing at that time. If it involves something that many believe is over-used, so be it, as long as I feel it has a purpose there. I never look at any website galleries because they usually have a reverse effect on me, and they block my creativity from the overload I receive. That's why I created my own inspiration stream that has nothing to do with web design at all. I try to see my inspiration in things that have no connection to what I'm designing. For me personally, that works fine, but other may feel differently.

### **What techniques are you training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?**

I'm learning about all the information on responsive web design, retina resolutions etc. Not an easy task, as we are still very much in the experimental phase, so nobody knows yet what the best practices of tomorrow will be. Could be I'm wasting my time on something that won't be around anymore in two months. That's what makes it so interesting, things pop-up quickly but disappear as fast too. Nobody knows what will be **the** way in 2015, for example. We all have to learn as we go.



# Denise Jacobs

Web Design Consultant and Creativity Evangelist

Denise R. Jacobs is an Author, Speaker, Web Design Consultant, and Creativity Evangelist. Based in Miami, Florida, she is the author of “The CSS Detective Guide” and co-authored “InterAct with Web Standards: A Holistic Approach to Web Design” and the newly-released Smashing Book #3 and #3 1/3.

**“Storytelling and visual simplicity in web and mobile design.”**

## **W**hat trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

**“People are starting to see the power of storytelling in web and mobile in reaching audiences.”**

audiences and in creating products that resonate with people.

I hope there will continue to be an increase in storytelling in both web and mobile design as well as visual simplicity. People are really starting to see the power of storytelling in reaching

## **What technologies are you training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?**

I'm moving away from training in specific technologies and am instead focused on developing strategies for how to think better under pressure, increase the creativity, innovation and productivity of individuals and teams, and produce and execute more great ideas in less time.

## **What will the trends be in web programming? Which languages or frameworks will gain more converts in the near future?**

It seems like there will be a continued increase in methods to manage front-end development better like the scalable and modular CSS architectures, and also CSS preprocessing languages like LESS, SASS, and COMPASS. I also anticipate more people challenging well-established front-end development solutions and devising new ones, especially as the CSS3 specification gets more solidified.

**“It seems like there will be a continued increase in methods to manage front-end development.”**

## **Touch and gestures, media queries, responsive, retina display, webfonts, realtime web... How do you think these techniques and technologies will evolve and what will be next?**

All of these technologies are pushing innovation and fresh-thinking forward, which I love to see. While I don't know how they will continue to evolve, I do know that the next several months will be ripe for some fantastic new ways to

approach designing with all of the aforementioned combined.

**What do you think we'll see in layout and UI design in 2013? Simplicity, app-inspired design, responsive, single page websites, alternative navigation patterns...?**

Over the years, we have seen a shift from ridiculously complex interfaces (think the Flash-based websites of the early 2000's) to more simple and stark interfaces. Much like the well-known Antoine de Saint-Exupery quote "Perfection is achieved, not when there is nothing more to add, but when there is nothing left to take away", I am looking forward to more designers who also know code who understand what is truly necessary, and in striving for perfection, continue to take away that which is superfluous. Also, I do anticipate more merging of the website and the app interfaces, where they are both simplified to the point where there will be little or no difference between the two.



# Simon Foster

Web Designer

Simon Foster is a tiny one-man web design studio in London, England. He specialises in responsive front-end design, HTML/CSS and web typography. Simon tries to make the websites he designs and builds as simple and intuitive to use as possible whilst still having a unique aesthetic appeal.

**“The thing to focus on is not How a website’s design/layout/UI is executed but Why.”**

## What tendencies do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

I think there are still a surprisingly large number of web designers who don't take mobile devices into proper consideration. I still see sites that are beautiful

**“Less gimmicks, less tricks, less dependency on javascript for a site to work.”**

on a desktop or laptop but really difficult to use on my phone or tablet.

That can't go on forever, so I think we'll see a lot of designers getting on board with responsive/adaptive design

or just simplifying the way they design and build sites so even if they aren't responsive, they are easier to use on smaller devices. Less gimmicks, less tricks, less dependency on javascript for a site to work.

## What technologies are you training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?

Well, even though I do write code as well as design, up until now I've only really gone as far as plain old HTML & CSS. I'll never be a programmer as it isn't in my blood, but I've recently started to learn how to use github and I'll be making a concerted effort to get to grips with SASS soon as they're not really as scary as they seem at first. On the other hand I'm always conscious of not getting too bogged down in focusing on the "how". For me the "why" in design will always be more important. Any type of code, technology or framework is only ever a means to an end. You can be the best Ruby on Compass Jekyll, Git via Haml, Frank Sinatra singing Mongo DB Jerry programmer in the world, but if you haven't thought about WHY you're making this website it won't mean anything.

**“If you haven't thought about WHY you're making this website it won't mean anything.”**

**“I always keep it in mind that no matter how beautiful I make a website the average user only really wants to spend about 10 seconds on it.”**

## **What should the new design principles be in a future where web and mobile design must be focused on user experience and content?**

I think I can see things going back to basics a bit. I love the phrase “Keep it simple, stupid” (even though it is a little over used). Just let users do what they came on your site to do quickly and without fuss so they can get on with doing other things that are more interesting. I always keep it in mind that no matter how beautiful I make a website the average user only really wants to spend about 10 seconds on it. So let them do that, cut the crap.

## **What animation techniques and effects applied to navigation and user interaction will we see? Will we finally move beyond Parallax scroll?**

Personally, I hope we don't see any. I'm not a big fan of things moving all over the screen, just feels like a gimmick too often for me. When flash websites died one of the things I was pleased about was that we could get away from over-bloated sites that needed to load before you could use them and had loads of unnecessary transitions and animations, but they're making a comeback with html5 and canvas/webgm etc.

Of course, I'm not saying NEVER use an animation in a website. When done with subtlety and in the right context they can be great, but more often than not I find them annoying. That might just be my taste, others will probably disagree, which is a good thing.

## **What do you think we'll see in layout and UI design in 2013? Simplicity, app-inspired design, responsive, single page websites, alternative navigation patterns...?**

I think this comes back to “why” and “how” again. The thing to focus on is not how a website's design/layout/UI is executed, but why. As long as the

**“I think this comes back to WHY and HOW again. The thing to focus on is not How a website's design/layout/UI is executed but Why.”**

way you've chosen to build and design your site works for that particular project, then great. Whether it's single-page, responsive, light, dark, covered in gradients or really minimal doesn't really matter as long as it works for that particular client's site. Trends or

movements in web design are not something that I think a designer should

really be trying to emulate or follow when starting a new project. Just because everyone else is making minimal, responsive, one-page sites that look like apps with circles for navigation and Futura for body text, doesn't mean that's right for what you're working on. Do your own thing, ignore trends, start your own trends if you feel like it, and above all think about what the end user needs from what you're creating.



# Bruce Lawson

Evangelist of Open web standards

Opera evangelist, co-author of "Introducing HTML5" and web standards lovegod. Guinness-drinking, kickboxing poetry freak. Man with MS.

**“I think simplicity’s the point. Mobile stuff needs to be simple, but so does everything else.”**

## **D**o you think the kind of simplicity we see in apps is going to be a big thing in design more generally?

Yes. I think simplicity's the point. I often say to people about mobile, the usability gurus always point to mobile as being different because people are time-constrained and task-focused, and therefore you should only give them the information they need to fulfil the task. That's true, but it's also true of everybody all the time. If I go to a train website, I don't really want to see a picture of Richard Branson smiling at me, I don't want to read the Chief Exec's ambitions and life history. All I want to know is what time my train is and how much it is. And I think, yes, mobile stuff needs to be simple, but so does everything else. People have been used to making desktop sites that are full of shite just because they've got space for it, and they need to stop.

**“I think simplicity's the point. Mobile stuff needs to be simple, but so does everything else.”**

## **Do you think web-standards based Apps will end up putting an end to native Apps?**

I doubt standards-based Apps will completely kill native Apps. I think native Apps are temporarily very important because the web-standards stuff hasn't yet got the capability of the native stuff, but the gap's closing.

## **What trends do you see coming in the near future in web design?**

Access to devices capabilities. So, three years ago, if you wanted to access GPS geographical information on your phone, you had to have a native app because you couldn't do that on the web, and now every browser on every device is doing that. And then the ability to upload photographs directly from the web, which we can do now. There's something called getUserMedia, a spec I very much like, and that allows a website (with your permission) to access the videocamera, it might be a webcam or the front-facing camera on your phone, and then it can access the video stream and film you and the Javascript on the website accesses the video feed in real time and can identify where your face is and do facial recognition, and when it determines where your mouth is it'll draw a Super Mario Brothers moustache where your

mouth is. And this, of course is the zenith of tech. But what this is really for is in-browser video conferencing, so the website can access your microphone and your camera and then connect it up to someone else's website where they can hear your voice. You've effectively got video conferencing with no third-party app.

I can't promise anything for Opera, and I certainly can't promise anything for anyone else, but I imagine in the next 12 months that'll be available in the newest browsers on devices that have that capability, yeah. That's all part of web RTC [Real Time Communication] at the moment.

### **You did a talk on what's next in Responsive web design, where you mentioned web on TV. Is that what's next?**

The TV manufacturers really want web on TV to work. I think at the moment the killer app hasn't been invented. Nobody's yet come up with the killer product. TV's great for some things and it's rubbish for other things. Nobody is going to want to put all their social networking stuff up on the telly when your grandma

**“The TV manufacturers really want web on TV to work. I think at the moment the killer app hasn't been invented.”**

and your kids are in the same room. There's things you don't want in a family space. You're unlikely to want to type an e-mail on the TV because your hunting and pecking with the remote for the letters and it's rubbish. But then

TV's great for shared viewing, so I could imagine that a killer TV app would let you look at your Flickr pictures as a slideshow, so instead of the family gathered round a laptop, the family can be gathered round a big screen and it's more sociable. I think that as yet, the technology is there, but we haven't yet worked out how to use it best.

Nobody wants to write a Word document on their television, because a) it's rubbish as an experience because you haven't got a keyboard, and b) TV's leisure, and writing a Word document's work. I work from home so I make sure I only work in my office and the only thing I do in my office is work, so

**“TV's great for shared viewing, so I could imagine that a killer TV app would let you look at your Flickr pictures as a slideshow.”**

I've got differentiation. I think that's

increasingly the case, people want to have that separation, otherwise you just work all the time.

### **Have you read anything recently that's particularly made an impact?**

Yes, I read the [W3C Pointer Events Specification](#), which Microsoft wrote, which is making writing websites that work with a pen or touch or a mouse much more sane and easy and I think it's good work by the mighty Microsoft standardising stuff.

### **What kind of technologies are you looking at learning? Any new stuff you want to get into?**

I'm not a very good Javascripter, so I'm looking to improve that and I'm ultimately interested in just improving my general scripting ability, so I've got a book on Python to read on the train. With a degree in English Lit and drama, I'm not a natural computer person and I'm a bit slower than someone who's done a degree in computer science, but I'm interested in learning that kind of stuff yeah.

### **For someone who's starting out, what would you tell them to learn first?**

**“But anyone who tells them to just learn Javascript because HTML and CSS are easy, not to listen to them.”**

Well if they want to learn web stuff, to learn HTML5 and CSS and then to learn Javascript. But anyone who tells them to just learn Javascript because HTML and CSS are easy, not to listen to them because it's easy to be rubbish at them

and it's hard to be good at them, to write good, structured code. The best way is view source. Find good websites that people recommend, and hit view source, then muck about with it.

### **You mentioned India and China. How do you think those fast-growing economies might affect the web and mobile industries in the future?**

They will affect it in ways I can't guess at, but the effects they'll have will be profound. China, particularly. Somebody told me that statistically, most politicians in the West are politics and philosophy and economics graduates, and most politicians in China are engineers, and there's a huge focus and a

huge respect for engineering out there. You see some phenomenal code and dedication to making great stuff coming out of China, and also India. Places like Bangalore, there's incredible coding in India.

We're seeing an extraordinary rise in consumption of the web in those places. Not so much producing websites, although Chinese social media has just been credited this week with persuading their government to close down some of the forced labour camps, so we're seeing technology enabling people to have a voice and a say, which warms the cockles of my heart.

I'm going to tell a story this afternoon about a website called Igniter. It was set up by three Jewish guys in New York and it's a social network, a dating agency, for nice, Jewish kids in New York who for cultural reasons didn't want to go out on dates one-to-one. So they would organise shared trips to the theatre or picnics, so groups would go out and if people hit it off they could subsequently begin dating, but it was culturally a lot less intimidating. It didn't take off, they spent lots of money advertising it but they only got 50,000 users. And then they noticed they were getting loads of hits from India and Pakistan and places like that, where there's not a great Jewish community but that model of shared dating works very well with extended Hindu and Muslim and Sikh families. They realised that they were getting more signups a week from India than they had in their first year in the US, so they just relocated it. Those three guys who had never been out of North America all relocated to Bombay and they re-branded as India's premier dating agency and they're going great guns there, and that's the beauty of the World Wide Web. That's what you lose if you only think about your own local area. You might think your business is only focused on your local area but if you deliberately restrict it you'll never know whether you have a more global business potential.



# Luciano Foglia

Multidisciplinary Visual Artist

Luciano Foglia is a multidisciplinary visual artist based in Berlin and London. He has been working in interactive design, art and music since 2001. His personal time is spent exploring new ways of expression in music, design and art. He works commercially as a Senior Interactive Designer and Art Director.

**“I think we will see a lot more applications in integration with other services, taking the web beyond the browser.”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

“I see lots of simple and beautiful interactive design concepts coming in the future. Expect a focus on typography and getting the best out of HD displays.”

This is a transition moment in the web design industry. I can see many interesting possible trends coming up. Change is always good, and it's great to see how many designers and artists are taking on these challenges to experiment with new technologies and improve the user's experience on

all platforms. So going back to the question, I see lots of simple and beautiful interactive design concepts coming in the future. Expect a focus on typography and getting the best out of HD displays.

## What technologies are your team training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?

I'm a visual artist and I work as an Art Director and Senior Interactive Designer, so I don't only look for means of expression on the web (even if this is my main channel). I'm also interested in other fields. I mostly use web technologies for my personal projects because of their accessibility. What I'm training in now is WebGL as a platform to receive external stimulus as midi signals, sound and moving images. I think it's a great technology and still pretty fresh. I believe

“WebGL could become a very powerful tool for visual artists to express ideas through the web.”

it could become an amazing platform for the web, but still like many others needs a high level of understanding of code. We have seen very interesting projects done with this technology, but not as many I would like to see. Or maybe not in the way I would like to see them. I'm blown away every time I see its potential. It could become a very powerful tool for visual artists to express ideas through the web. I believe the key is to think outside the box so that we don't limit ourselves just to what the technology was made for.

## In standards-based web design, what animation techniques and effects applied to navigation and user interaction will we see? Will we finally move

## **beyond Parallax scroll?**

As we overcome some performance limitations we will see more rich experiences to come. For sure the emphasis is on “graphic design with a sense of depth” at the moment. Because of this, the scroll gained importance like never before, not only to browse the content but also to interact with it. I would like to see how we creatively take better advantage of it in integration with 3D techniques. Moving beyond Parallax scroll is a matter of time. It will happen as soon as users start to adopt new ways of navigating the content. Every step towards providing a more interactive and immersive experience on the web is a new learning process for the users.

## **In technological and social terms, how do you think the web will evolve in the next few years?**

I think we will see a lot more applications in integration with other services, taking the web beyond the browser. This makes life a lot easier for users and improves productivity. In social terms the internet is playing a very interesting role, not only on a daily basis but also for long-term social change purposes. What we saw in Egypt in 2011 was a clear example of how social media can accelerate a revolution, and we are also seeing it in other parts of the world. The internet belongs to the people and it can represent unrepresented and marginalised sectors of society and provide them with a platform to be heard.



# Ben Cline

Interactive Designer at Rally Interactive

Co-founder and creative director at Rally Interactive. Ben is passionate about interactive design, experiences and strategy.

**“Most innovation with interaction will be through WebGL and native apps.”**

## **What technologies are your team training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?**

Rally Interactive is focused on creating engaging and intuitive interfaces. The technology behind them doesn't matter. For example, last year we launched an iOS app for National Geographic - "National Parks by National Geographic". What many people don't realize is while it was only our 2nd encounter designing and developing on the iOS platform, it was actually the 1st app we've ever built natively in Objective-C. The first iOS app we made, "Canyon Country National Parks", was actually built using a non-native iOS framework called Corona. When it comes to our work, we embrace any technology or platform.

## **What animation techniques and effects applied to navigation and user interaction will we see? Will we finally move beyond Parallax scroll?**

The Parallax effect won't die any time soon. It has been around for as long as I can remember (in the early days of Flash and for a long time in film). When it comes to touch screens, I've started to see Parallax animation become popular as well as gesture based interfaces. I think gesture based apps will continue to grow as users become more savvy with exploring hidden UI's. However, many of us here at Rally believe Web GL has a promising future when it comes to web design. It will take years but eventually HTML will begin to fade as the platform of choice for websites because it was never meant to serve up rich media or interactive experiences in the first place. Most hardcore programmers will probably agree that HTML and CSS mark-up languages are no longer ideal to build on.

**“I think 2013 will be a year of limbo when it comes to [responsive] websites. They will continue to be wildly popular but will lack when it comes to innovation and creativity.”**

and creativity. Most of this won't be the fault of creatives or Agencies, rather website timelines and budgets will be stuck in the pre - fragmented device era. Most timelines will be eaten up testing and optimizing rather than pushing

## **What do you think we'll see in layout and UI design in 2013?**

I think 2013 will be a year of limbo when it comes to [responsive] websites. They will continue to be wildly popular but will lack when it comes to innovation

innovation and creativity. That being said, the native app world is wide open. Gesture and invisible UI's will become more popular and more intriguing while Web GL will [hopefully] start to be supported on mobile browsers, further pushing browser based layout possibilities.

“Most innovation with interaction will be through Web GL and native apps. Unfortunately, the responsive era of websites will temporarily stifle some creativity.”

websites will temporarily stifle some creativity on the web until all browsers consistently support the newest technologies. If companies want to push the boundaries of creativity in responsive design, they will have to commit more time and budget.

**Can we predict an explosion of creativity in interaction and animation now that the technology is available and becoming more accessible from a web standards point of view?**

Most innovation with interaction will be through Web GL and native apps. Unfortunately, the responsive era of



# Aarron Walter

Author of "Designing for Emotion"

Aarron Walter has been building websites professionally since 1999, and has taught interactive design courses at colleges. He enjoys sharing his ideas about education, findability, and design at conferences and organizations around the globe.

**“We’ll begin to move towards an era of flat design that emphasizes legibility and usability.”**

**I**n technological and social terms, how do you think the web will evolve in the next few years?

**“An ecosystem of connected services makes building apps easier, and reduces the burden of content input on the shoulders of users as they can reuse profiles and content.”**

We're heading towards a Web of loosely connected services. Instead of building a web app that needs to do twenty things for customers, we're starting to focus just on core workflows and rely on APIs, integrations, and hopefully [web intents](#) in the near future. We stitch together our favorite services using [If This Then That](#), we pass photo editing tasks over to [Aviary](#), we let [Dropbox](#) hold our stuff then grab it from desktop, web, and mobile apps. An ecosystem of connected services makes building apps easier, and reduces the burden of content input on the shoulders of users as they can reuse profiles and content they've created elsewhere.

**What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design? What do you think we'll see in layout and UI design in 2013?**

In the short term future I see a trend towards [an aesthetic that reflects an honesty of our materials](#).

The heavy use of lighting effects in interactive design will fade, and designers will move towards flat, simple designs that no longer try to emulate the physical world. We'll stop shoe-horning interaction design into illustrated physical objects like books, radios, and calendars, and we'll begin to move towards an [era of flat design](#) that emphasizes legibility and usability.

**“The heavy use of lighting effects in interactive design will fade, and designers will move towards flat, simple designs that no longer try to emulate the physical world.”**

**What technologies are you training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?**

I'm not big on fetishizing technology. It empowers us to make things, but what language, or techniques power a site isn't what moves people. They're moved by the experience we create for them. I'll be thinking about what makes people

tick in the years to come so I can discover ways to create more memorable experiences for people.

**“In our industry and in life, the only thing that is unchanging is change.”**

**What should a web design newbie concentrate on learning?**

Learn to prototype quickly. Learn to use things while you design them. Learn to

not look to trends in your medium for your inspiration, but instead look at the history of other crafts for insights. Learn to change, because in our industry and in life, the only thing that is unchanging is change.

**What should the new design principles be in a future where web and mobile design must be focused on user experience and content?**

I don't know that they'll be any different than they ever have been, but I think we'll be more aware of principles now that our favorite computers are in our pockets. [The heuristics](#) that have guided software design for years still apply to mobile design, but with limited space on mobile devices, we're forced to really consider the value of all elements and options in a UI.

**How do you think fast-growing economies like India or China are going to influence the web and mobile industry?**

I suspect India and China will provide a lot more developers to the web industry, which are greatly needed right now. It's really hard to hire skilled developers as there's heavy competition for them in the industry.



# Trent Walton

Founder & 1/3 of Paravel Inc.

Trent Walton is founder and 1/3 of Paravel, a small web shop based out of the Texas Hill Country, where the lake levels are constant and the chicken fried steaks are as big as your face. Dave Rupert, Reagan Ray, and he have been working together building for the web since 2002.

**“At Paravel, we’re focused on being as device-agnostic and resolution independent as possible.”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

“The most exciting part of design is working to understand all the devices out there so that we can create a single, sensible design that travels across as many of those devices as possible.”

Hopefully, as we progress we'll stop thinking about the the web in separate buckets. Words like tablet and mobile mean less and less as the lines between them and desktop browsing environments blur. For me, the most exciting part of design is working to understand all the devices out there so that we can create a single, sensible design that travels across as many of those devices as possible. That includes things like maintaining hierarchy as well as optimizing for a range of connection speeds.

**What technologies are you/ your team training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?**

At Paravel, we're focused on being as device-agnostic and resolution independent as possible. We're building responsive sites exclusively and are using things like font icons and SVG images whenever possible. There are a lot of UI patterns that need to be rethought to work in a responsive or multi-device environment, so that part of the work is particularly exciting to us.

“We're building responsive sites exclusively and are using things like font icons and SVG images whenever possible.”



# Oliver Reichenstein

Designer at iA Inc.

Oliver Reichenstein studied Philosophy in Basel and Paris. He worked as brand consultant for Interbrand Zintzmeyer & Lux for four years. In 2003, he moved to Tokyo where he founded his design agency, Information Architects (iA). Today, iA has offices in Tokyo, Zurich and Berlin.

**“I expect the app world and traditional Web design to get closer together in terms of functionality and aesthetics.”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

You can already see it happening. Mashable of the The Next Web, polygon.com and Time.com bet on clean, generous, responsive design with a lot of

“Clean, generous, responsive design with a lot of typographic care. I bet that a lot of corporate and news sites are going to follow that trend.”

typographic care. I bet that a lot of corporate and news site are going to follow that trend. The challenge will be to find a good balance between cleanness and density. With the advent of responsive design there is an entirely new set of screen typographical challenges waiting for us. After Web 1.0 aka the nineties and Web 2.0 aka the

2000s, we are about to enter a third phase in Web Design. I expect the app world and traditional Web design to get closer together in terms of functionality and aesthetics. With mobile platforms gaining more and more market share, it might be that within a foreseeable future the main screen Web designers will think about is the mobile phone.

## What should the new design principles be in a future where web and mobile design must be focused on user experience and content?

Simplicity. Scalability. Speed. Stop thinking in fixed widths, platforms, browser versions, download speed standards. Responsive design is not just about responsive layout grids and clever ways of dealing with big picture formats, it is also about a new dimension of screen typography.

## Can you pinpoint any visual trends or design elements that might emerge in 2013?

I try to avoid thinking in terms of surface aesthetics. Interface design gets better

“There will be another generation of further visual simplicity in UID.”

the less you think in terms of style. But from the technical conditions it seems clear that also aesthetically, there will be another generation of furthered visual simplicity in UID. Microsoft went

in that direction and might somewhat turn away from it in further iterations. I am prepared to see the first traces of I've shaping the surface of OSX and iOS, which will definitely result in a simplified cleaner version of Apple's surface design aesthetic. Hopefully, Ive will not just simplify the surface design, but get to a simpler look and feel through a simpler interaction design. Since every trend comes with a counter trend, we can also be prepared for more baroque or playful elements trying to set a counter point.

### **What technologies are your team training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?**

We are exploring the new screen typographic territory, we are working on new interaction patterns for writing and reading on the screen and we are developing new frame works to deal with the multitudes of screens and interaction patterns that contemporary interaction designers need to deal with. Our tools are less and less specific programs or programming languages. We start with research, wireframes and initial mockups, but we soon move towards working in prototypes that slowly evolve into the final product.

### **In technological and social terms, how do you think the web will evolve in the next few years?**

Just as with the new possibilities, Web technology, information architecture, interaction design and screen typography have become increasingly

**“We witnessed the end of the fixed screen format, the end of the pixel.”**

interesting, they have become increasingly difficult. We have to prepare for an increasingly challenging technical setup. Right now there is a clear trend towards a Web that is mostly handled through a small touch screen. I would not be surprised if, for example, we end up with a tiny device with a form factor of wrist watch that has a flexibility to fluidly morph into a bigger device. Thus with a device that in itself has highly variable different screen sizes. We witnessed the end of the fixed screen format, the end of the pixel, and the end of design principles geared by the desire for visual control. In the mean time, the definition of these liquid design principles is far from clear. Things are going to stay exciting.



# Legwork

By Sean Klassen

Legwork was born from the understanding that you can build a sustainable studio on the principles of creativity, innovation and a DIY ethic.

**“People are getting away from skeuomorphic styles and are instead opting for simpler, flatter styles.”**

## **W**hat trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

I think we're going to start seeing more exploration with 3D and immersive video. A lot of Flash sites were going in this direction five or six years ago and then things went back to much more basic layouts after the iPhone came out. The technology is beginning to catch up though.

### **As an agency, what kind of profiles do you look for?**

Good people are hard to find and in great demand right now. We're actively looking for developers that have great javascript skills and still have an eye for design (if you're that person, get in touch!). Since we are a small shop, we need people who are well versed in a number of areas and aren't afraid to jump around and try new things. Things are constantly changing in this industry, so the most important trait you can probably have is a passion for learning new things.

**“We're actively looking for developers that have great javascript skills and still have an eye for design.”**

### **What technologies are your team training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?**

We want to keep pushing what you can do with Javascript, CSS and HTML. Additionally, we build most projects in Ruby on Rails these days. I'm curious about getting more into WebGL and other things like three.js to push the experience envelope further.

### **What animation techniques and effects applied to navigation and user interaction will we see? Will we finally move beyond Parallax scroll?**

**“I think we'll start seeing more and more with 3D. Hopefully people can keep it tasteful.”**

I pray we move beyond the parallax scroll. It's probably the most overused (in inappropriate ways) trend I've seen in the last ten years. There's a time and place for it, but I'm so tired of seeing people do it just because they can. In

most cases the implementation and performance is really bad too. You can't forget that the way something works and feels is just as critical to the design as the visual aspect, if not more so.

Anyway, like I said above, I think we'll start seeing more and more with 3D. Hopefully people can keep it tasteful. We've also been doing a lot with png sequences to emulate things you used to only be able to do with video, but with the added bonus of transparency.

“People are getting away from skeuomorphic styles that have dominated the last few years and are instead opting for simpler, flatter styles.”

**What do you think we'll see in layout and UI design in 2013? Simplicity, app-inspired design, responsive, single page websites, alternative navigation patterns...?**

Single, long scrolling sites will still be popular. They're great for telling a singular story. Responsive sites and mobile targeting will become ever more important. It's probably not long until mobile is the dominant form of browsing. It also seems that people are getting away from skeuomorphic styles that have dominated the last few years and instead opting for simpler, flatter styles (think Windows 8, Sply, etc.)

**Can we predict an explosion of creativity in interaction and animation now that the technology is available and becoming more accessible from a web standards point of view?**

Yes, to a point. IE8 isn't going anywhere in the near future though and it's really just as bad at supporting these new technologies as 7. So, a lot will depend on the audience you have to target.



# Ultranoir

Digital Savoir-Faire, most awarded studio on Awwwards

Ultranoir is a human-sized studio driven by passion. Their byword is 'useful design', since they believe that the role of artwork is to serve the application, its objectives and the end-user - not the other way around. Ultranoir has received numerous awards for its online creations.

**“You will have fast and easy access to what you’re looking for but with creativity, style and even emotion!”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

I'm not really into trends but I know what I would love to see in web design! More experiences, more interactivity, more creativity!

During the last days of Flash, someone said the reason for its ending was

**“We have to create some new experiences with the present and future technology (HTML5, CSS3, JS, WebGL..) and devices. This will be fully possible when 80% of people use modern browsers.”**

that designers went too much into full experience websites, forgetting efficiency and the end-user... and that the future of web will be focused on utility now. That's not totally wrong, I have to admit, but I want utility/efficiency AND creativity. This means that you will have fast and easy access to what you're looking for in any support but with creativity, style and even emotion! Now I can see HTML5

websites reaching the quality, in terms of interactivity, of Flash websites. However, we should not recreate what was done in Flash some years ago (we did this at Ultranoir and I think it's part of the process). Now, we have to create some new experiences with the present and future technology (HTML5, CSS3, JS, WebGL..) and devices. This will be fully possible when 80% of people use modern browsers. That's not the case right now.

### As an agency, what kind of profiles do you look for?

We are always looking for talented front-end developers with great experience in producing advanced HTML websites and also with a strong creative approach. What the market is really missing is more people who mix technology and creativity.

### What technologies are your team training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?

We are always improving our skills in the usual trio: HTML5, CSS3 and Javascript. We are very interested by Adobe's new CSS properties such as CSS Regions and Filters. We have to improve our skills on Canvas, SVG, 3D...

Of course, Front-end will remain a key discipline in our HR strategy but we'll also focus our efforts on UX and content. Better content within a better experience should be the perfect recipe.

## **What animation techniques and effects applied to navigation and user interaction will we see? Will we finally move beyond Parallax scroll?**

As I said before, companies like Adobe are working on some great tools to enhance user interaction. In term of layout design, I think we'll see more and

**“In terms of layout design, I think we'll see more and more websites inspired by print design.”**

more websites inspired by print design. It's already the case. Personally, I study print design (magazine, posters) a lot and I hope web design will reach this quality.

About navigation and interaction, we now have to manage various devices with their own capabilities. On a laptop, you rollover, drag and click and on a tablet you will slide, touch, turn... So we are trying to bring closer both experiences. It's not easy. I saw a great approach on a website done by Hello Monday. We are on the same thinking.

I have no problem with Parallax scroll if it serves the experience. I think this system is perfect for storytelling websites. You scroll down like turning the page of a book. There's still potential here. What I can't stand anymore are some parallax websites using this effect just because they think it's trendy (it's not anymore). Using an effect for the effect is meaningless. But you never know. One day, a guy will come along with a new concept and it will create a trend, as Ian Coyle did when he designed the very first parallax web site for Nike, or When Gabo Mendoza created the first Flash website in the old days.

## **What do you think we'll see in layout and UI design in 2013?**

In 2013 I think we'll have more simplicity and this is for two reasons:

-More and more of our clients want to reach the Asian market and in China for example, IE6 is strong.

-There are too many differences in HTML rendering between all the browsers / OS / devices.

It's a bit of a tower of Babel now. That means that we spend a lot of time writing the same story in many languages so everybody can read it. The impact is that we have to simplify the experience to limit time spent on HTML integration.

**Can we predict an explosion of creativity in interaction and animation now that the technology is available and becoming more accessible from a web standards point of view?**

Once 80% of Internet users are speaking the same "HTML language", we'll see an explosion of creativity. New tools will be available and web designers in the starting blocks! But I think we'll have to wait until 2014. That does not mean we won't see masterpieces in 2013 as some clients ask for websites for modern browsers only. Hopefully! I love to read "for modern browsers only" in a brief!



# Ian Hickson

HTML5 Specification Editor

Ian Hickson is the author and maintainer of the Acid2 and Acid3 tests, and the Web Applications 1.0/HTML 5 specification. He is known as a proponent of web standards, and has played a crucial role in the development of specifications such as CSS. Hickson was a co-editor of the CSS 2.1 specification.

**“Mobile is where Desktop was a decade or two ago, in terms of innovation.”**

## What will the trends be in web programming (front- and back-end)? Which languages or frameworks will gain more converts in the near future?

Languages and frameworks pop up, become fashionable, and die out quicker than I can actually keep up. In practice what matters is using frameworks that do what you need. Sometimes using the ancient “crufty” languages is a better idea than using the new hotness, because it’s more reliable. A lot of programmers

“Sometimes using the ancient “crufty” languages is a better idea than using the new hotness, because it’s more reliable.”

these days use scripting languages and languages with automatic memory management, weak typing, and so forth, because they let you get stuff off the ground quicker than anything else, but there is often a cost, usually in either performance (the system doing stuff tends to be expensive in terms of CPU

cycles and memory), maintenance (strongly-typed, more structured languages can have compilers that catch errors at compile time that are ridiculously time-consuming to catch at runtime), or support (newer languages might not survive the next wave of new cool tech, leaving you with legacy code on an unmaintained toolchain). Often these tradeoffs are the right ones to make - these languages really **do** let you get something off the ground way faster, and that matters (after all, if you don’t ship, it doesn’t matter what language you used). It’s really something each engineering team has to carefully consider.

### What should a newbie web developer concentrate on learning?

Depends what they want to do. There are far more technologies available for developing Web solutions now than any one person could possibly learn at this point, so one has to figure out what area one wants to specialise in - user interface, graphics, back end, networking, storage, computation, etc - and just work on that.

### W3C, WHATWG, Mozilla, Adobe, Google...What have they got in store for 2013?

As far as WHATWG goes, we’ve been expanding to more than just HTML, with

new editors working in the WHATWG mailing list rather than elsewhere. You can see what we're working on here:

<http://www.whatwg.org/specs/>

As far as HTML goes, the thing I'm working on right now is Canvas on workers, but you can see the list of what's next to be worked on here:

<http://www.whatwg.org/issues/>

## **How do you think fast-growing economies like India or China are going to influence the web and mobile industry?**

When working on HTML I try to just look at the world as a single ecosystem, not on a per-country basis, so this isn't something I think much about. Having said that, there are already more people online in Asia than Europe and North America put together. The real dark horse is Africa.

## **Do you think standards-based mobile apps will overtake native apps?**

I'm not sure I agree with the premise of the question. The Web has trillions of pages, after all. Having said that, native platforms and the Web have very different characteristics. The Web is by design radically vendor-neutral, and (to a lesser extent in practice) device-neutral. This has huge benefits: nobody can single-handedly kill the Web, for example. If you write a Web page or application today, and then tomorrow your desktop operating system vendor or your mobile phone handset vendor goes bankrupt, you can just buy another

**“Innovation doesn't happen in multi-vendor discussions. If you have a proprietary platform, it's easy to add features to it.”**

device and your page still works. If you target a proprietary platform - e.g. Amiga, OS/2 - that then loses the support of its vendor, the result is that your application is no longer usable.

The cost of having a system immune to the whims of a single vendor is that by and large, innovation doesn't happen in multi-vendor discussions. If you have a proprietary platform, it's easy to add features to it: you just do it. No need to argue with anyone. On the Web, a feature can only be added if every major implementor agrees it's worth adding, and that usually only happens once it's been proven in a native platform.

**“So native platforms have the edge when things are rapidly innovating. Mobile is where Desktop was a decade or two ago, in terms of innovation.”**

So native platforms have the edge when things are rapidly innovating.

This is why the mobile world today has so much focus on native apps. Every new generation brings radical new features, and the Web will always be behind on those. So the cutting edge is native.

You can see this on desktop: innovation on desktop operating systems has slowed down dramatically, and as a result the Web has been able to mature here. The result is that on desktop, Web apps are doing great (so great that it's viable to create a desktop OS that does nothing but bring up a Web browser, in fact). Mobile is where Desktop was a decade or two ago, in terms of innovation.



# Brad Frost

Mobile Web Strategist and Frontend Designer at R/GA

Brad Frost is a mobile web strategist and front-end designer at R/GA and is based out of beautiful Pittsburgh, PA. He is the creator of Mobile Web Best Practices, a resource site aimed at helping people create great mobile and responsive web experiences.

**“2013 will be the Year of Performance. People are increasingly intolerant with slowness in any experience.”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

I'm calling it right here right now that 2013 will be the Year of Performance. And if I'm wrong in that assertion, I'll slowly eat my words with tears in my eyes then

**“Performance needs to be everyone's concern in order to create truly exceptional multi-device web experiences.”**

crawl into a corner until 2014. Why do

I say performance will be a big trend?

People are increasingly intolerant with slowness in any experience (web or otherwise), so the services that will rise to the top will be the ones that are blazingly fast. I've been talking about

'performance as design' rather than a handful of checkboxes developers need to concern themselves with. Performance needs to be everyone's concern in order to create truly exceptional multi-device web experiences.

## What should the new design principles be in a future where web and mobile design must be focused on user experience and content?

I summed up what I feel is crucially important in my "Principles of Adaptive Design": ubiquity, flexibility, performance, enhancement, and a general notion of being future friendly.

As creators for the Web, it's our responsibility to embrace and preserve the ubiquity of the web, which is easily its biggest asset and easily one of humankind's greatest achievements.

We need to continue to return the Web

to its intrinsically fluid state. We need to respect our users' time and strive to give them a highly performant, snappy experience. We also need to take advantage of the plethora of capabilities offered by devices and browsers, but do so in a way that preserves the other principles of adaptive design. And lastly, everything we do should be built to stand the test of time and should be considerate of tomorrow's landscape in addition to today's.

**“Principles of Adaptive Design: ubiquity, flexibility, performance, enhancement, and a general notion of being future friendly.”**

## What technologies are you training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?

I'm still very much a front-end designer, meaning that I prefer to focus on the interface side of web design. I don't come from a computer science background and I'd very much like to build up a solid computer science foundation. I feel it's the only way to keep myself from feeling like I'm shooting in the dark every time I program.

My other big priority (dare I say new year's resolution) is to learn how to manipulate data. I want to master how to pull in a data set from somewhere, possibly combine it with another set of data, and do something with it. Right now I feel I can clumsily fumble through that process, but that's unacceptable. Data is going more places than ever before, so having a solid grasp on how to utilize and manipulate it will prove to be an invaluable skill.

“Think about how gestures, subtle animations and transitions can enhance (not distract from) the user experience.”

doesn't mean that everyone else should follow the leader. We have a whole slew of animation tools, gestures and device capabilities at our fingertips, and we'll find interactions and animations that are conducive to the environment. Instead of miming parallax all day, think about how gestures, subtle animations and transitions can enhance (not distract from) the user experience.

## What animation techniques and effects applied to navigation and user interaction will we see? Will we finally move beyond Parallax scroll?

I hate parallax. There, I said it. The Nike Better World site was amazing, but that

## What do you think we'll see in layout and UI design in 2013?

I think (and hope) we'll continue seeing interfaces move towards simplicity and intuitiveness rather than bells and whistles. As more people accept multi-device web design as reality, we'll see many responsive patterns evolve and see others fade away. We'll continue to experiment and see what sticks. There's never been a more exciting time to be a web designer. Here's to 2013!



# Hinderling Volkart

By Michael Hinderling, Severin Klaus & Michael Volkart

Hinderling Volkart is one of the most important digital agencies in Europe, based in Zurich, Switzerland.

**“Clear and focused, reduced design. Content oriented!”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

Clear and focused, reduced design. Content oriented!

### As an agency, what kind of profiles do you look for?

We are looking for people crossing the borders between traditional disciplines.

“We are looking for people crossing the borders between traditional disciplines.”

For example: good designers with a sense for web programming or information architecture, or interaction developers with a sense for animations and interactions. Also project managers

with a good feeling for design and communications, which is very rare here in Switzerland.

### What technologies are your team training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?

We see an ongoing shift towards front-end technologies: more and more logic, interaction and visual effects are handled dynamically on the client side.

Browsers and devices are becoming faster and more powerful, opening new opportunities for innovative interaction design and UX implementations. As soon as WebGL arrives on mobile devices we'll see a lot more going on

“We are still extremely excited about the much more intuitive interaction touch devices can provide.”

there. We also expect to see a boost in already available 'native' stuff like video (camera), audio (mic) and CSS effects, with old browsers finally losing their right to exist. We are still extremely excited about the much more intuitive interaction touch devices can provide.

### What technologies will be used for mobile app development?

The best experience is still achieved with native implementations. If the divergence of mobile operating systems continues, we expect a growth in cross-device technologies- that technology should be the browser. This requires a certain common alignment in features, performance and rendering

“It’s important not just to follow trends, but think about which design language is appropriate for a specific content or message.”

across all browser engines. Chrome must become standard on Android, Safari must keep up and allow more fun, and if Windows Phone 8 succeeds we’ll need IE10+ not to fall back into old behaviour. But who knows, all of a sudden we might see Flash enhance

and become important for certain App developments.

### **Can you pinpoint any visual trends or design elements that might emerge in 2013?**

There are various trends. In our opinion it’s important not just to follow trends, but think about which design language is appropriate for a specific content or message.

### **What animation techniques and effects applied to navigation and user interaction will we see? Will we finally move beyond Parallax scroll?**

“We expect to see innovation with touch and the exploitation of device sensors.”

There’s an ongoing trend with Parallax scrolling websites, and it’s been taken beyond reason on many occasions. We still like the scroll interaction per se: it’s intuitive, understandable and allows responsiveness. But we don’t like those heavy one pagers that seek effects only, compromising performance and usability.

We expect to see innovation with multi-touch and the exploitation of device sensors. And we expect to see this slowly arriving on (mobile) desktop computers. But hey, there’s still a way to go.

### **What do you think we’ll see in layout and UI design in 2013?**

More app-like websites. Fully responsive. Touch-optimized interfaces and even touch-optimized websites.



# Jeffrey Zeldman

Founder, Happy Cog. Publisher, A List Apart.

Jeffrey Zeldman is one of the world's most renowned personalities in Web. Guru of Web standards Zeldman is also Founder, Happy Cog™ studios. Author, Designing With Web Standards. Publisher, A List Apart, A Book Apart. Co-founder, An Event Apart. Host, Big Web Show.

**“We have to keep on-thinking about mobile-first & content-first.”**

## What trends do you see coming in web design?

I think people are getting our content in different ways, they're finding it in different ways and they're using different devices and, for good or evil, web-capable TVs are the next thing. So I think we have to keep on thinking

**“I think we have to keep on figuring out what to do with tiny devices that have high-res screens and may have fast bandwidth but may have slow bandwidth.”**

about mobile-first and content-first, I think we have to keep on figuring out what to do with tiny devices that have high-res screens and may have fast bandwidth but may have slow bandwidth. I think there's a lot of stuff to figure out. How do we keep using standards? How do we develop new standards? I think given the wide range

of devices and use-cases, one of my favorite imponderable questions is “I have a screen that wants high-res Retina images, but I'm on 3G”.

What do you send me? And how do you know if I'm on 3G? 50% of the time people are using their mobile in their home or office, where they have fast bandwidth. I don't know, I have no way of knowing what your bandwidth is so what do I send you? Whatever I send you I'm going to make somebody unhappy. Is there some other way to go about it? Can we just carefully choose our images, like, “I'm going to use watercolors where even if it's medium resolution, it still looks cool”. Can we blur the background so that there's less bandwidth even if it's high-def? There's lots of stuff to think about, there's lots of new challenges. I think responding to all those new challenges now, when we're moving kind of faster than reason, that's a big challenge now.

**“I think we're going to see an end of pages, in a way. We're going to stop focusing so much on pages and start focusing on content chunks.”**

And then taking better advantage of mobile. Taking better advantage of geo-location and built-in cameras and all that stuff, whether native or Web App. Taking better advantage of those things.

I think HTML5 is key, because it's so semantic and has new content semantics like "article" and "section". I think it's made for the way we're publishing now and I think we're going to see big changes in how CMSs are designed to accommodate mobile and orbital content and I think we're going to see an end of pages, in a way. We're going to stop focusing so much on pages and start focusing on content chunks, and how we structure them and how we design them for different use-cases, different devices.

### **Which technologies are you focusing on right now?**

Our front-end developers are using Less and Sass now, not just CSS. Less and Sass are CSS preprocessors that can speed up development. We're studying the problem of Retina images and what to do about that. We're looking into and working in native. But mainly we're using good, structural HTML5.



# Rachel Andrew

Web Developer and Director of Edge of my Seat

Rachel Andrew is a web developer, speaker and writer, Managing Director at [edgeofmyseat.com](http://edgeofmyseat.com) and one of the developers of the really little content management system, Perch.

**“We’re going to have better ways to deliver content to different devices and different bandwidths.”**

## What do you think are the key trends that will be coming in the near future?

I think it's very interesting that a few years ago we were all expecting that everyone was going to be on huge screens with high bandwidth, and that's what we were all predicting. We were all saying "in a few year's time we're going to have massive screens and all this space and people are going to have

“A few years ago we were all expecting huge screens with high bandwidth and what's happened is we've all ended up on tiny little screens with crappy bandwidth.”

really fast connections" and what's happened is we've all ended up on tiny little screens with crappy bandwidth. I think it's in that area. What I hope is that we're going to have better ways to deliver content to different devices and different bandwidths. Because at the moment, you know, there's the responsive images problem. How do I

know whether I should be serving a small image, or a retina image, or a giant image for a posh display? Because it's not just on screen size, it's also on bandwidth. If I'm on my iPad at home, on my Wi-Fi, I want the nice images so I can see them on the retina display. If I'm on the train somewhere and I'm going to use 3G, I'd like to have the optimized image. So it's not just screen sizes, it's to do with where you are and that, I think, is the biggest issue with doing responsive design at the moment. You can't just make assumptions based on screen size, you need to be thinking, "Where is this person and what connection are they on?"

The only client work we did this year was this festival website and a lot of the traffic while the festival's on is obviously mobile traffic. But an awful lot of it is also people on laptops, so normal screens but on mobile broadband, either tethered to their phone or with Wi-Fi or whatever. Now, you can't detect those people easily. So it's how do we deal with that issue? There are a lot of people thinking about the responsive images issue and I think this is part of that. How do we deliver appropriate

“You can't just make assumptions based on screen size, you need to be thinking, Where is this person and what connection are they on?”

content, particularly when it comes to images and video as well? And how do we let people make the choice? Because sometimes you might be on a crappy connection but you actually do want to get the big image for some reason. What kind of interfaces allow people to say "Give me the best you've got, not the low quality". That, to me, is an interesting area. It involves working right through from browser manufacturers and device manufacturers. It's not an easy thing to solve, but I hope that's something that will be solved. That would really give us the ability to do truly responsive stuff.



epic  
*creative agency*

# Epic Agency

By Karim Maaloul

Epic is born from the passion and spirit of five specialists. They know how to stand out from the crowd and how to find the perfect creative solution for projects. Epic is a unique blend of mixed experiences but they are all driven by the very same passion, the constant urge for quality and creativity.

**“People are looking for less content, more focused on a particular subject, easier to read and easier to diffuse. It’s time to make the web easy.”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

We are living a strange moment today. We just buried skeuomorphism to adopt

**“We just buried skeuomorphism to adopt a style impregnated with minimalism and striking colors.”**

a style impregnated with minimalism and striking colors. Not exactly an evolution, but rather a rejection of anything that might be identified as a sham. We are having an overdose of fake objects. Today it seems solid blocks of color are all it takes to create

UI elements. For how long? This large discrepancy is likely to reduce in the coming months. Not everything can be colored squares, and we will probably see designs mixing textures and lights with solid colors. We just hope that the mixture will not be too unpleasant.

**“Screens today are either very big or very small and we need to consider all these sizes when designing a website.”**

**What animation techniques and effects applied to navigation and user interaction will we see? Will we finally move beyond Parallax scroll?**

to make the best use of space and not only as an added effect to any static element.

We like it when the animation is used

Screens today are either very big or very small and we need to consider all these sizes when designing a website.

Animating the elements that make up the website is sometimes the only way to make it usable on a smartphone. Like making the content slide to display a navigation panel behind. Or making UI elements appear and disappear in a more intuitive way, depending on the behaviour of the user.

Also, these sliding effects that come from mobile devices, applied to the desktop, help to establish a hierarchy between the elements and different content.

For us, animation should just make things easier to understand and to use. Unfortunately, today too many designers are just trying to create the same effects we already saw in Flash some years ago, with the side effect that the

only recognition they get comes from the technical performance achieved and not the ease of use that these animations should provide to the user.

## **What do you think we'll see in layout and UI design in 2013?**

We think we will have an explosion of micro blogging pages like checkthis. It's probably the most interesting revolution we have seen on the internet for a while. It will totally change the way that people express themselves, allowing people who don't want to run a blog because they think they don't have enough to say to create content on the web anyway.

That means we should learn a new way to organize the information from this behavior. People are looking for

less content, more focused on a particular subject, easier to read and easier to diffuse. An example of that is the classic HTML text editor that we can find on any CMS, so difficult to use for the average person. It's time to make the web easy.

**“People are looking for less content, more focused on a particular subject, easier to read and easier to diffuse. It's time to make the web easy.”**

## **Touch and gestures, media queries, responsive, retina display, webfonts, realtime web... How do you think these techniques and technologies will evolve and what will be next?**

We think we'll see more and more "mobile-first" websites that will make touch, responsive etc. a must for new developments, bringing those techniques on the desktop even further. Then, place/device-shifting will probably boom in the next few years, not just for video but for every content/app available. You'll start a game or task on your desktop, continue on a tablet and finish it on your phone all totally seamlessly. We're starting to see some well-executed examples already today.

## **What will the trends be in web programming (front- and back-end)? Which languages or frameworks will gain more converts in the near future?**

Rails is here to stay (obviously) and node.js will still gain followers (although we are still less convinced about it even if there are successful examples out there). On the front-end, most serious projects will go for either Sass or Less

as the complexity of the UI becomes more and more important. Backbone is gaining a lot of followers these days and will continue in the next few months. The web is a crowded space for back- and front-end framework, it's hard to tell which ones will grow and which ones will lose but it's great actually. We get to discover new tools daily and it's evolving faster than ever making web development both a challenge and a joy.

### **Can we expect an explosion of creativity in interaction and animation now that the technology is available and becoming more accessible from a web standards point of view?**

We are more likely to see one more year of look-at-my-flash-like-website-made-with-html-5 :)

**“The web will be more focused on the content and the way we show it to the world.”**

To be more optimistic, we have seen this end of the year two or three websites that will really change the way we think about, design, and

animate a website in 2013. We think the web will be more focused on the content and the way we show it to the world. Creativity is more a matter of telling a story to an audience than adding a 3D CSS effect to a block. That being said, it's nice that today we can finally add a 3D effect to an HTML element :)

### **As an agency, what kind of profiles do you look for?**

We need people who are able to identify with our clients. Extremely creative designers are really appreciated, but one condition is their ability to imagine how the design is perceived by people who do not have their culture or graphics references. A designer must create a bridge between his own world and his target.

### **What technologies are your team training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?**

We are really excited by the integration of physical objects with digital interfaces. We think it's the next big thing in our business.

On a more technical level, our development team is focused on Ruby on rails, Rubymotion, Mongo DB, but it's not restrictive. We try to use whatever can

# UNIT9

## Unit9

By Yates Buckley, Maciej Zasada, Gilles Boisselet

Unit9 is a multidisciplinary production company. Directors, writers and technologists, working collaboratively to create content, advertising, utility and gaming. Outstanding digital experiences across mobile, physical installations and the web.

**“Digital communication is trying to pay attention to usability, clarity, simplicity... back to fundamental design principles.”**

**W**hat trends do they see coming in the near future in regard to visual design and UX and interaction design? What about content strategy?

**“The buzz-word responsive design is just the beginning of a process involving a more abstract design process for applications that span multiple platforms.”**

The buzz-word “Responsive Design” is just the beginning of a process involving a more abstract design process for applications that span multiple platforms. Rather than thinking about a specific layout and target device we will more and more have to devise design systems that allow the development

teams to build for many different devices. Oddly one important player in this area, I think, will be 3D interface design because it lends itself to being easier to inform an interface across different devices and use cases of the same device.

**And in regard to technological trends related to web development, video games, apps?**

We mainly HTML5 strong consolidation around html5 and gaming for advertising. Apps are still neglected by brands as this market is different, more comparable to the software market. In apps you need to provide more than a brochure or an experience to meet an audience.

Two areas to watch are: video based projects without Flash and Android emerging as a dominant platform.

**“The most important trend that is emerging is the attention to simplicity in interaction.”**

**What do you think has been the most important trend in web design in 2012?**

The most important trend that is emerging is the attention to simplicity in interaction, which is partly seen in scrollable websites but also in the particular interaction devices that allow swipe and touch interactions. This means that generally, digital communication is trying to pay attention to usability, clarity, simplicity... back to fundamental design principles.

**What technologies are your team training in now? What kind of profiles do**

## you look for?

We are mainly working to take our Javascript development to the next level. We don't have any specific specialist technology we are looking to bring in because we already have dedicated teams that cover many areas: native iOS, Android, Unity3d, Python, Cloud Computing, WebGL, Three.js. However we also never stop looking for talent in these areas.

**“We are mainly working to take our Javascript development to the next level.”**

## Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?

One area we are working with is mobile web because it promises a broad audience reach and is catching up to support a lot of what we can do on the desktop browser. We are also focused on technologies that give you a feeling of immersion - just like being there. For example, we're looking forward to the release of hardware like the Oculus Rift and in preparation for this refining a pipeline for 3D content creation whether delivered to browser or on other platforms.

An integrated experience across platforms is essential if we want user engagement. So another important space is the one created by combined technologies such as mobile enhanced live installations. We see these as something more than the parts that compose them and a key connection from the collective to the personal.

But beyond all the technological developments the fundamentals are as relevant as ever: we need good (interactive!) stories, good UX design and interface design. The most important work is paradoxically still something we do with pen and paper.

# B-REEL

## B-Reel

By Roger Pala, Creative Technologist and B-Reel Team

B-Reel is a hybrid production company making digital, commercials, content, products and feature films.

**“We’ll see digital experiences merging with physical objects, the combination of different platforms to enrich one single experience.”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in web and mobile design?

It's already here and nothing futuristic, but I think nowadays responsive design

**“We're going to see more 90s inspired graphics and what's been called the cult of ugly.”**

is getting more and more relevant. It's important that we think about design in a different way than we did before. For the kind of experiences that we do, it's usually not as simple as using some CSS media queries. Art Directors and Designers need to fully understand the

technical possibilities and restrictions of each platform in order to get the best out of each environment.

## Can you pinpoint any visual trends or design elements that might emerge in 2013?

We're going to see more 90s inspired graphics and what's been called the 'cult of ugly', it's been around for a while but it's really starting to take hold, I don't think we'll be in the full grip of it until I spot some 'Raygun-esque' work out there.

I think we'll also see more de-constructed online designed spaces appearing, as a reaction to the pre-defined, customisable, standardised web pages we seem to be creating en-masse right now.

## What technologies are your team training in now? Which disciplines will you be focusing on in the coming months and years?

At the moment at B-Reel London we are lucky enough to have a very rich and varied set of technical skills. Most importantly, we have people talented enough to jump from project to project and adapt to the specific technical requirements of that project. At the moment, we are doing lots of

**“At the moment, we are doing lots of HTML5, Javascript, WebGL, Digital and Physical connections with Arduino and Openframeworks, Processing, etc.”**

HTML5, Javascript, WebGL, Digital and Physical connections with Arduino and Openframeworks, Processing, etc. We are not focused on any specific technology or programming platform, we rather use the best one for each specific experience, not being intimidated but excited by any new emerging technologies.

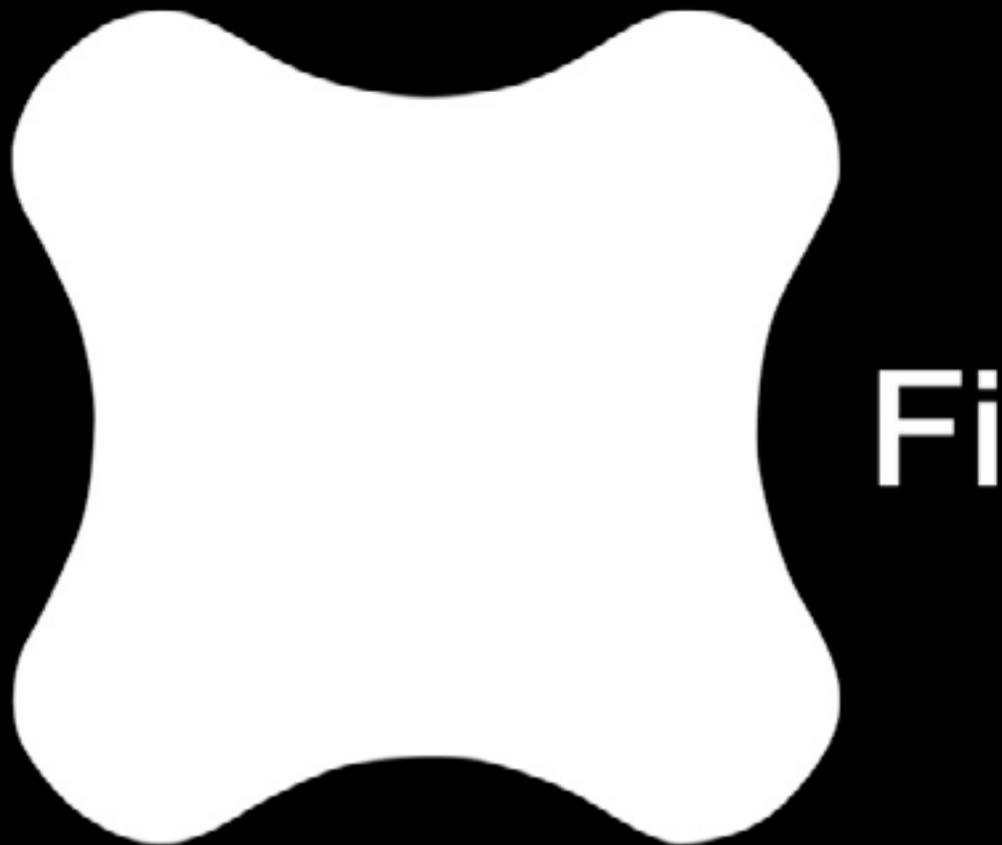
**“We think something we might see pretty soon is the use of CSS filters and especially custom filters.”**

**In standards-based web design, what animation techniques and effects applied to navigation and user interaction will we see?**

We think something we might see pretty soon is the use of CSS filters and especially custom filters. With custom filters you can basically use your own shaders, so it's like having custom CSS 3D Transforms. It's going to be interesting to see how people start to use them and the pros and cons compared to WebGL.

**In technological and social terms, how do you think the web will evolve in the next few years?**

It's always difficult to foresee what's next and sometimes may seem too pretentious to think that we can. However, If we have to imagine something, it's probably some kind of evolution of what we are seeing nowadays: digital experiences merging with physical objects, the combination of different platforms to enrich one single experience and making the interactions more and more natural and seamless.



# F-i London

By Erik Jonsson, Art Director.

Fantasy Interactive (F-i) is one of the world's most famous full service digital agencies. Founded in 1999, it's a favorite of leading brands from Google and Porsche to USA Today. F-i has offices in London, New York, San Francisco and Stockholm. Erik Jonsson is Art Director in London.

**“We can't really design for a specific platform anymore, everything has to work across platforms.”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in design?

I think the biggest one, which has been going on for the past year and was cultivated by Dribbble, is Americana, hand-crafted typography where you basically customize everything. That was a trend that spilled over into everything, so everything is bespoke now. For a while we've been making bespoke design. I think that has to do with all the heritage brands that came online, so the people who made jeans for 120 years but then their family suddenly became

**“So I think customization in design. Not the interface, the interface is going to be standardized, platforms are going to be standardized, but the way we deal with branding and the way it's customized is probably the thing to focus on.”**

famous when they were bought by a bigger company, and they need to keep the heritage feel so a lot of the things we do for them have to be custom. So I think customized designs for everything have been really important, and that's definitely going to continue.

I like that because it goes back to where advertising was 30 years ago, when they'd hire a specific illustrator to set a style for things. That's always been the case, but it hasn't been as important for the past 20 years when things went into a more abstract, Photoshop style. So illustrators are becoming increasingly important for us again when we need to set a specific custom style for a client, a very bespoke thing, and I like that. So I think customization in design. Not the interface, the interface is going to be standardized, platforms are going to be standardized, but the way we deal with branding and the way it's customized is probably the thing to focus on. The problem is just, you never know. So many people have been trying to predict trends. Whatever we do now is going to be so lame in 6 months anyway, so we're just trying to keep up!

**“We can't really design for a specific platform anymore. We can't make an app for only the iPhone, everything has to work across platforms.”**

**What about in terms of technologies? What do you think we're going to**

## **see emerge there?**

I think the fact that so many platforms have come out, and so many tablets - Microsoft is bringing out the fourth addition to the tablet scene - it's just underlining the fact that we can't really design for a specific platform anymore. We can't make an app for only the iPhone, everything has to work across platforms, which makes the core concept of the idea so much more important because it has to shine through. It's really hard to answer that question.

# Hello Monday<sup>tm</sup>

## Hello Monday

Visual Creative Design Studio

In 2006, two graphic designers and a web developer gave birth to Hello Monday in a 350 year-old townhouse in Aarhus, Denmark. Today they have expanded to additional offices in New York and Copenhagen. Hello Monday create trend-setting digital experiences, visual identities and graphic design.

**“2013 will be the year of mobile – once again. Or at least, mobile will continue to grow in importance.”**

## What trends do you see coming in the near future in design?

Recently, a lot of focus has been on responsive design, and this tendency is bound to continue,

but perhaps in a way that is more holistically founded. So, responsive might not only be in terms of design and technology, but also in terms of content and concept. We may see content become increasingly device specific, or maybe the context in which it is presented will become so. Either way, content is key.

We may very well see an increase in solutions that combine mobile and desktop devices in a way that brings users a third experience altogether. a  $2 + 2 = 5$  type of scenario, if you will.

Short term, though, the tendency will probably be a tablet/mobile first approach, but this is most likely a transitional phase.

Add to the above the fact that recently, more and more smart/connected devices have reached the market and have become accessible to consumers, both in terms of price and ease of use.

These devices connect to the internet

via phones and/or desktops or on their own. This calls for a complete rethink of the concept of interfacing with the web. Examples include a variety of personal tracking devices (Fitbit, Jawbone UP, Nike+ Fuelband), sensors (Twine, Arduino powered sensors and others) and appliances (home appliances, lightbulbs etc.)

2013 will be the year of mobile – once again. Or at least, mobile will continue to grow in importance, and with OSs implementing mobile like interfaces, users will adapt to a more mobile friendly internet easily - even when mobile first strategies affect desktop versions of sites.

Internet of things. Designers will very quickly need to adapt to the fact that digital interfaces shift, not only from desktop to mobile, but also from browsers and apps to entire ecosystems across different digital and social channels online

**“Mobile will continue to grow in importance, and with OSs implementing mobile like interfaces, users will adapt to a more mobile friendly internet easily.”**

to an array of displays on actual products. Providing a consistent experience spanning from retina-ready sites to tiny LED displays on physical products will become an everyday task.

### **As an agency, what kind of profiles do you look for when searching for new talent?**

We always look for nice people. Nice is often underrated, but it is immensely important. Nice without skills clearly doesn't cut it, so we obviously look for talent. But we also look for people that have a true desire to do digital, and an innovative take on it, combined with a real sense of craftsmanship. We more or less built our business on these factors, so they are key when we recruit.

### **What technologies are your team training in now?**

We continuously work and train in pushing the limits of Javascript, HTML, CSS, Canvas and WebGL.

Also, combining web technologies with anything that isn't the web - or at least the web as we know it - is a priority, and this spills over into working with Arduino development (or similar microcontrollers) development Mobile and tablet explorations - it's still brand new - and there is an abundance of things that are yet to be done with this media, technology-wise and UI-wise.

### **What technologies will be used for mobile app development?**

Of course, native development will still be the main language used for many apps. But, that being said, we believe that HTML/Javascript solutions (as either web-apps or native HTML/ Javascript apps (packaged with Phonegap or the like) have huge potential - since you can create once and deploy everywhere - and this use will rise dramatically as people figure out how effectively HTML/ Javascript, when used right, can perform on mobile devices.

Flash also has some of the same benefits as the above - but we are excited to see if this will survive the next few years or not.

### **Can you pinpoint any visual trends or design elements that might emerge in 2013?**

Visual will be the trend of 2013. People are creating and sharing images like crazy on services like Instagram and Pinterest, and visually-driven services play an increasingly important role.

This calls for attention to detail in content creation, both in terms of producing high quality content, but also in thinking through the entire life cycle of said content. Relevant questions in this connection may well be: Is this image or video going to be shared on other channels than our own? If so, how will it appear when shared? Can we ensure that the brand identity carries through? How can we entice users to share content?

**“We also see traditional services transforming into a more visual and image driven direction.”**

high quality content, but also in thinking through the entire life cycle of said content. Relevant questions in this connection may well be: Is this image or video going to be shared on other channels than our own? If so, how will

We also see traditional services transforming and moving in a more visual and image driven direction. The new eBay and the new MySpace are great examples of how really complex websites are taking a more straightforward and visual approach. This visual tendency is rapidly evolving, and we will definitely see more websites with larger amounts of images and illustrations.

With OpenType features becoming available in newer browsers through CSS3, typefaces are finally looking as beautiful on web as they do on printed media. We no longer have to limit ourselves to the sparse selection of web-safe typefaces, we can almost pick whatever typeface we want. This will lead to greater and more advanced typography in digital solutions in the future.

Hopefully, with fewer and fewer technical limitations on creating digital solutions, the field in which trends and tendencies develop will naturally widen, and we will experience a more multifaceted landscape of trends. We are no longer at the point where everybody does rounded corners (or parallax scroll sites) because they can, but people can bring all sorts of things to the table.

**“Digital is drawing inspiration from print and vice-versa.”**

We see more of the classic virtues of graphic design being adapted and used in

creating digital solutions. Digital is drawing inspiration from print and vice-versa.

Also, we suspect that an increasing number of digital agencies will assume the role of lead agencies for clients, creating a ripple effect that spreads the best ideas from digital design into print and even product design. After all, with products becoming more and more digital, and more and more companies becoming de facto software companies, the term 'interface' may finally be recognised as not just what meets the user on the screen of their laptop, tablet or mobile, but may refer to the entirety of the interaction with a given product and its surrounding ecosystem - digital or not.

These are all somewhat high level tendencies, but probably also the most interesting ones. If we are to look at concrete tendencies that we feel will be prevalent in 2013, we are most likely looking at factors like:

- More contrast in visual design. On one side of the scale, we will see super simple minimalistic design with lots of white space, while on the other side we will see arbitrary color combinations, colors that range between real and unreal. Like 90s bright colors in combination with a dusty 30s color palette.

- More geometric and sophisticated design, like art deco inspired visuals, with geometric typography and large color surfaces.

**“More and more sites are being developed as Javascript-based web applications.”**

but don't think we have seen the last of it. It is one of a whole host of tools that can be applied to increase the experience, and it will most likely continue to

**“More contrast in visual design, minimalistic design with lots of white space.**

**More geometric and sophisticated design, like art deco inspired visuals, with geometric typography and large color surfaces.”**

**What animation techniques and effects applied to navigation and user interaction will we see? Will we finally move beyond Parallax scroll?**

Parallax scroll has become mainstream, but don't think we have seen the last of it. It is one of a whole host of tools that can be applied to increase the experience, and it will most likely continue to

be so. However, the days are long gone when it was enough to impress users in and of itself. As is the case with most tools, by the way.

Animation-wise, we're starting to see that Javascript is no longer being used to just add a bit of functionality to an experience, but to create the experience as a whole. More and more sites are being developed as Javascript-based web applications. Since the decline of Flash in the browser, Javascript has been gaining momentum to pick up where Flash left off. We're finally reaching a point where Javascript can fully take over this market and create a fully immersive experience across platforms. So much more is possible now, we're just barely scratching the surface.

### **What do you think we'll see in layout and UI design in 2013?**

As the number of touch devices keeps growing, the necessity of things like larger buttons and touch interface-inspired navigation is more present. While skeuomorphic design may have been key in assisting users in transitioning to digital media (if I am used to a paper calendar, it gives me a sense of security that my first digital calendar actually looks and feels like a paper calendar), this need is less present today. So we have seen a movement away from the heavily skeuomorphic school particularly represented by Apple, and on to a very different and much more "flat" and grid-based style as represented by Microsoft's Metro interface, for example. That may have taken things too far in the other direction, and it looks as if the lasting tendency is to be found somewhere in between the two. Google's take on designing interfaces could be an example of this. An inherently digital style, but with clear - though subtle - indications of, for example, navigational elements. A button still needs to look like a button, so to speak.

**“We have seen a movement away from the heavily skeuomorphic school particularly represented by Apple, and on to a very different and much more flat and grid-based style as represented by Microsoft's Metro interface, for example.”**



# Davin Wilfrid

Content Delivery Man at Future Insights

Davin Wilfrid is Future Insights' Product Director, responsible for content and "digital caretaking", yet still finds time to make ukeleles on the side.

**“When the web is in your car and on your eye-glasses, we’re no longer talking about resizing windows for iPhone or Android devices.”**

## **W**hat are your predictions for 2013 and the coming years in web design and mobile and web development?

Convergence. Bill Buxton of Microsoft Research gave an amazing talk at Future of Web Design London this spring about the “social network of

“When the web is in your car and on your eyeglasses, we’re no longer talking about resizing windows for iPhone or Android devices - we’re talking about the need for true flexibility and responsiveness.”

things,” in which the web is a pervasive connection beyond computers and smartphones. When the web is in your car and on your eyeglasses, we’re no longer talking about resizing windows for iPhone or Android devices - we’re talking about the need for true flexibility and responsiveness. But that’s many years away. I think the next few years, we’ll see a far more usable web as

companies like Simple push larger competitors to confront their own onerous web sites and focus more on UX.

**Everyone now knows the famous article by Ethan Marcotte that started the Responsive movement. Are there any other instances like this that you think could start a trend?**

I’m sure there are, but if I could identify them now I’d start my own firm :) The critical thing about responsive web design is that it’s not just nifty design tricks - it’s necessarily the way of the future if we don’t want to have to develop separate versions of everything for every device. I think Ethan (among others) has done an amazing job of elucidating that point.

**Let’s talk about companies like Apple, Adobe, Mozilla or organizations like W3C. Who stands out as heading in the right direction for the future of the web? What involvement do you have with them?**

I’m reminded of Tim Berners-Lee’s famous tweet from the Olympics opening ceremony: “This is for everyone.” It’s going to take all of these organizations

(and more) to keep the web strong, open, and safe. And it's up to the design community to live up to that promise by creating sites that meet standards for accessibility and open access. Of course, that's easier said than done and we're

**“And it's up to the design community to live up to that promise by creating sites that meet standards for accessibility and open access.”**

now saddled with vendor prefixes in our CSS and lots of tug and pull about what to do with responsive images. But I'm optimistic that the web is strong enough to survive these things.

We work with all of those organizations and more (Google, Twitter, Facebook, Microsoft) in one capacity or another. Sometimes they suggest a speaker for a certain topic. Sometimes they sponsor an event or a party at the event. I've been astounded at the goodwill I've seen from just about every speaker or sponsor at our events. In a very real way, it's clear that people who care passionately about the web only want what's best for it.

# Conclusions

## Chapter. 3

# Conclusions

Although we're a pretty self-absorbed group with our heads buried in our work, the user's point of view and their experience of using the site and its content is what is ultimately important

What we've put together in these conclusions is a return to common sense, surely determined by the socio-economic context we're living in. You have to get to your target user, wherever they live, whatever device or browser they

**“Design should serve a function, especially when we're talking about the most powerful marketing tool in existence, the web.”**

use. Though this is what web standards evangelists have been shouting from the rooftops for years, it has now become much more generally accepted.

Design should serve a function, especially when we're talking about the most powerful marketing tool in

existence, the web. Throughout history, we've seen excellent design movements with fabulous theoretical functions around the execution of an efficient design that serves the product. G. Dorfler described a functional construction system as one in which ***“The use of materials is always in accordance with the economic and technical requirements, achieving a union of usefulness and beauty and not just looking for beauty while forgetting about usefulness or vice versa”***.

There are many, many excerpts that could define this publication, but one of the most notably realistic is this from Bruce Lawson: ***“If I go to a train website, I don't really want to see a picture of Richard Branson smiling at me, I don't want to read the Chief Exec's ambitions and life history. All I want to know is what time my train is and how much it is.”*** It seems so obvious, but many designers have been forgetting about the user's needs for years.

## A more or less realistic little story.

Starting out from this **“Data map”** taken from the interviews, we'll tell a short, more or less fantastical story of what the near future would be if our “individual visionaries” are on target with their predictions.

## Content-first Era.

Content-first would be the center of the galaxy. "Content" is the most talked-about term among our contributors, the second being "Simplicity". Content, UX, usability, accessibility and visual design must be guided by this new paradigm of simplicity.

This process of simplification will be the only tool we have to make content accessible and legible for the greatest possible number of devices, with the best user experience.

“Content-first would be *The center of the galaxy* Content is the most talked-about term among our contributors, the second being *Simplicity*.”

## The Agnostics

It seems clear that the future will also be "Agnostic", or at least we should all "pray" (paradoxically) that it will be. Concepts like pixel-agnostic, technology-agnostic, device-agnostic and resolution-agnostic crop up literally in a significant proportion of the interviews, while in nearly all of them it's something that emanates from the need to create a single cross-platform version adapted to all devices.

## The Multiplatform Abyss and the heaven of Cross-Platform solutions.

How to Integrate apps and experiences through multiple devices?

Another standout trend according to our experts will be the unification of

desktop and mobile into a single version. To walk this twisting but essential path, we'll have to find solutions to issues like those raised by Karen McGrane and Jeffrey Zeldman about retina images, optimizing for connection speed, performance and accessibility or how to display the content to the user.

“How to Integrate apps and experiences through multiple devices?”

During the process we'll find stopgap solutions where another paradigm like mobile-first will help us in the process of simplification.

The question is, will this be possible? Surely not, especially if we take into account the next step...

## “The Internet of Things”

Where we'll be able to communicate not only with our fridges and televisions, but even with devices with tiny LED screens. How will we be able to evolve

“Maybe in the near future it will be users who request content from our systems instead of receiving the content we suppose they need.”

towards a rational unification of all this, or at least towards a peaceful co-existence?

something similar to web intents, intuitively connecting APIs .

Maybe Aarron Walter gives us a clue in his vision of the **“Ecosystem of connected services”** through

Who knows, maybe in the near future it will be users who request content from our systems instead of receiving the content we “suppose” they need. It's possible we'll never again design a web like the one we knew, that interfaces may be completely standardized or designed for each device, and these devices connect to our servers to request extraordinarily compartmentalized data.

Maybe one day, a user from a place as remote and mysterious as [this](#) will receive coordinates on his fishing rod to catch a swordfish while contemplating the horizon from behind a graphene screen that shows him how to prepare a delicious recipe with the unfortunate animal.

Well, I think this is going too far forward in time, and in our recently launched careers as clairvoyants. At the moment, we'll have to deploy the only tool we have available, **“simplification to democratize access to content”**.

It's time to emerge from this improvised fable and continue discussing the standout themes.

Our experts foresee an evolution in responsive. The trend until now has been to adapt the content but there are already many voices speaking out for unification to avoid “deciding for the user at the time of serving data” (Karen

McGrane).

We'll also have to devise new responsive interaction patterns, make the most of device sensors, experiment widely with touch-enabled interfaces and work on integration of services and user accounts.

## About visual design and design that is not-so-visual.

In this area, the dominant terms are Simplicity, Minimalism, Clear Layouts, App-style Interfaces, Simplification of UI, Focusing on typography, Less decoration, Less skeuomorphic interfaces, Flat style, Flat colors...

All the contributors agree on simplification on a visual and interaction level. The discovery of new interaction patterns brought by mobile apps have shown their

**“Gradually we'll see the unification of desktop and mobile in one single design. All this will reinforce the ideal of a unique multiplatform product.”**

efficiency and quick response to users' needs. They are patterns for desktop interfaces to emulate. Gradually we'll see the unification of desktop and mobile in one single design. All this will reinforce the ideal of a unique multiplatform product.

Nick Pettit talks brilliantly about Scalable web design and the need to be pixel-agnostic and resolution independent. Exactly this trend towards simplification in design and apparently aesthetic questions, such as flat colors, respond to the need to serve images and scalable elements to retina displays, but also to mobiles with very inferior provisions from the non-western market and to devices such as digital readers.

The idea is to serve a single vector graphic that works well in all environments and has excellent performance on 3G connections. This group also includes icon fonts and the growing interest in design with scalable typographies which has given us opentype. Evidently, we won't be able to substitute all graphics for SVGs or webfonts, but we can do this for a large proportion of them.

All these visual trends are extremely logical, cut out superfluities and serve a need.

## What technologies?

Technology agnostic, of course, is the main idea. In this respect, front-end and back-end developers must be as responsive and adaptive as their projects.

Looking at the data graphic (Chapter 4 - Trending Terms) we can see that the HTML/ CSS/ Javascript trio is the “primordial soup”. Then we have lots of CSS in its various forms, custom filters, CSS Effects, 3d Transforms, Adobe Regions,

“Technology agnostic, of course, is the main idea. HTML/ CSS/ Javascript trio is the primordial soup.”

etc... Preprocessors, HTML5, WebGL and SVGs also stand out.

In server-side languages, the majority of interviewees do not have backend development backgrounds. However, among the agencies the use of Ruby and Python and experimentation with entelechies such as Node.js are becoming more widespread. The multiplicity of frameworks, builders and preprocessors will be another constant.

Nothing new or surprising. We should just highlight the growing interest in WebGL and SVG and the fact that, curiously, nobody mentioned jQuery, perhaps because it's taken as read or because they have high expectations from CSS3.

On the other hand we have the development of native apps for iOS and Android, where there's nothing new either, just the intense and continual increase in demand and the desire to have more suitable cross-platform technologies, based on web standard technologies or not.

## A story from another dimension

Another peculiar situation arises among the digital agencies who work on important projects. **They're the survivors of a past romanticism.** Their requirements are in the area of promotional productions designed for television more than the web.

Now the big accounts knock on their doors using terms like “responsive”, “acces-

bility”, “performance”, but without wanting to renounce classic immersive Flash experiences or accept that they’re completely different and highly incompatible products. It’s unrealistic to expect to make a website to reinforce a brand image that is responsive with retina images and HD videos, and at the same time has high dissemination among a wide target audience in China or Bangladesh.

“Now the big accounts knock on their doors using terms like responsive, accessibility, performance, but without wanting to renounce classic immersive Flash experiences.”

In recent years these digital agencies have urgently needed to find a **reliable substitute for Flash**. The final solution, given the performance and productions costs of CSS3, HTML5 and Javascript, is going to be WebGL, but we’ll have to wait til this or any other technology with similar performance and accelerated graphics becomes accessible for the majority of devices.

The path of these big superproductions will diverge from the way of web standards based applications and its final destination and **natural environment will surely be web TV**.

In the coming months and years we’ll see lots of experiments, as is becoming typical, but it won’t be the dominant trend. As Ben Cline told us, **“Unfortunately, the responsive era of websites will temporarily stifle some creativity on the web until all browsers consistently support the newest technologies. If companies want to push the boundaries of creativity in responsive design, they will have to commit more time and budget.”**

“Innovation always comes from native. The cutting edge is native.”

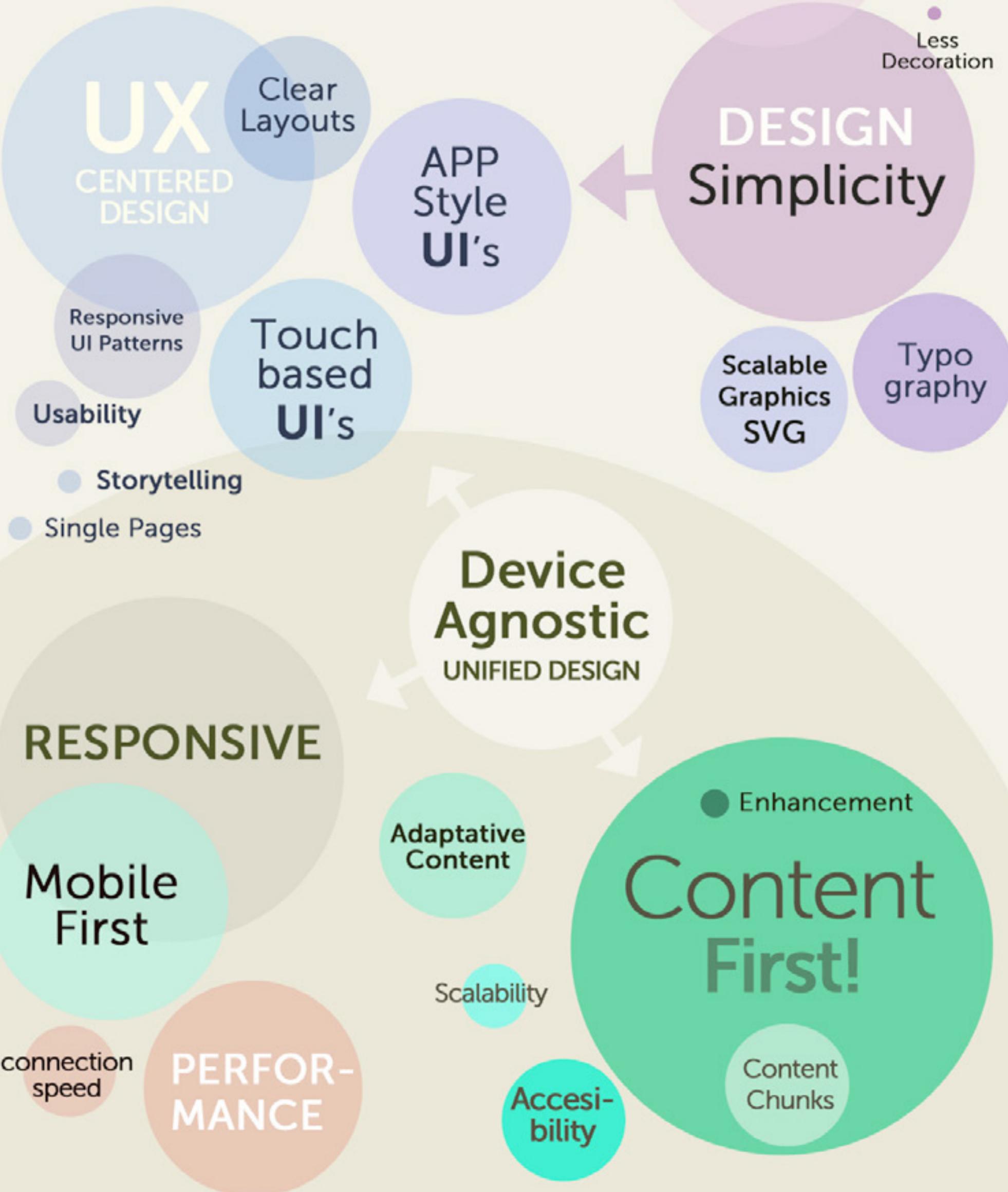
Fortunately, these big agencies and professionals will continue to push the limits of creativity, exploring new ways of interaction, because as Ian Hickson says, in spite of everything, innovation always comes from native. “The cutting edge is native”.

This is as far as our limited contribution to elucidate what the nearish future of the web will be goes. It's just a particular slant on the movements that have been perceptible for a while now. These conclusions won't be anything like the reality, because at this very moment some anonymous genius is probably giving form to a new technological revolution.

# Trending Terms

## Chapter. 4

# VISUAL & UX DESIGN



# WEB AND MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

## Responsive

SVG

webfonts

Icon Fonts

Retina Images

## Javascript

## HTML

## HTML5

Internet of Things

Web TV

Integrate Services & APPS

web RTC

Cross-Platform

Phonegap

Touch Gestures

iOS

## Native

Device Sensors

Android

Unity3D

Open Frameworks

## WEBGL

three.js

## Technology Agnostic

Wordpress

Frame-works

Boilerplate

Bootstrap

Flexbox

Custom Filters

## CSS

## CSS3

## 3D

Pre-processors  
Sass, Less

Transitions

Transforms

Adobe Regions

## Cloud

## Ruby

Builders

Mongo

Node.js

Github

## Python

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# THE END

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