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The impact of interface alignment structure on aesthetic appreciation and usability rating

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Abstract

Although interacting with visual displays of websites is a central part of our everyday online practices, little is known about the impact of geometric principles on users' perceptions.

In an exploratory study, canonical interface layout structures were extracted from websites for different purposes, such as education, medicine or finance, amongst others. Preference for the obtained prototypes was then rated in a quasi-experiment (n=65) following aesthetic and usability criteria (Lavie & Tractinsky, 2004).

Our results indicate that vertical and horizontal alignment properties, such as different degrees of symmetry and complexity, shape the rating of expressive and creative aesthetics, as well as perceived usability.

This contribution aims at shedding light on geometric constraints in UX analysis and giving an outlook on potential impacts of preference on content comprehension in an ecological setting.