

Design Standards

The Zoomstats documentation team

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As every project, ZoomStats arrived to the point where the interface design starts to play an important part for the product. ZoomStats now has many talented people with a shared interest - to create the quality Open Source analytic software.

However, since each contributing designer owns special skills and preferences, there is a need on ZoomStats to standardize the Artistic Choices. Graphical Design standardization will allow us to equally share the skills we currently have without overlapping efforts and throwing losing developments away. The bigger and greater we get, more difficult it is becoming to organize the tasks between the designers.

For us to work as one solid team, the requirements are this:

1 Branding

Each designer must follow a certain color schema if working on the general ZoomStats design.

This means, that, unless we are making a theme/skin (which purpose is, in fact, to be an alternative application design) we should keep the consistency within the following parts:

1. ZoomStats logo
2. Project Homepage
3. Main ZoomStats design

By doing so we can preserve ZoomStats brand. We will be publicly recognized and known as a unity.

ZoomStats logo should always remain untouched. It is ok to be adjusting it if this is really needed to be fitted into somewhere, but before doing that, you should always ask the designer who made it in first place (the designer of current logo is Forest Young [forestyoung]).

ZoomStats also should follow its color schemas. That is, the main colors to be used on every official presentation of ZoomStats. And, again, to be able to change these schemas, remove, alter or introduce a color, you should ask first. If pluses are higher than minuses, why would anyone have a problem with it? But personal deviations are not allowed when working in a team.

ZoomStats home page is composed of two parts - quality content and information presentation. The first is the responsibility of ZoomStats Documentation Team, while the second is of anyone who contributes to the site's development. So, each step on design, layout, navigation and content positioning should be discussed within the whole team. Important is that, the color schema if what ZoomStats has as its brand.

ZoomStats presentations should also follow these rules. Where needed, innovations are welcome.

2 Logos

When thinking of the strongest and most timeless logos you have ever seen, one thing will come to mind: they are all simple in design, economical, aesthetically integral and crisp. In most cases they will have used only 1 - 2 colors (excluding white). They rely on the same principle as flags for representing nations. You are in a sense creating a flag for a company. If you can imagine a country with a photoshopped flag with lighting effects and smoky atmospheric effects, that country would not be taken seriously. The simplicity of a design, while considered "boring" by the amateurs, allows the stark lines to be more memorable and universally accessible (...just ask a baby about contrast against a white background).

Once created our logo, any updates to it should be considering the above ideas. Please, keep that in mind.

3 Presentations

When a product takes off, and package design and letterhead, etc. come into play, those designers who did not account for a black and white xerox of the logo or grayscale newspaper layout will be sorry for the decision to be "flashy" in color. Of course, altering the logo at that point undermines the consistency and brand identity.

You should always keep in mind branding concepts, target audience, and aesthetic consistency.

4 Skinning

Skinning is a feature (and nothing more than that) that ZoomStats incorporates to allow its users choose the preferred design as they work on the daily basis. The choices for skinning can be wise, very wise. It won't matter much what kind of theme you prefer to choose, but as long as you keep one thing in mind - every style for every skin will include one thing in common - the logo for ZoomStats. In this ONLY case, the logo can be a bit different in colors, BUT it must be the bridge between that skin design and ZoomStats brand design. Such bridge can be thought as something that reminds you the logo you saw once on the website while you perfectly know the design was completely different.

Since skinning is too hard to describe in one shot, please present every ideas on it to the group. Only this way we can be making final decisions.