



# Long live typography is dead!

That's a bit cliché I hear you say, okay then, it's at least a reboot of the access that's needed. We have seen the industry surrounding typography evolve through many facets of convenience for both the typographer and the type designer. The introduction of movable type, the introduction of the computer and the current next major game changer, going online.

But this could actually spell the end or even the death of typography as we know it. By making something more accessible, or convenient to the masses, you're in danger of making it obsolete. Of course we will still have a use for typography, but opening Pandora's box to those whom previously had no means of access, or even have the notion to attempt any access, could end up as a complete catastrophe!

If you look at the other areas of the industry that have opened up this box of convenience, you will reveal the battlefield and bare witness to its casualties.

However, the traditionalists will always hold their ground, new bunkers of excellence will be built to protect the cause. But the constant attack of convenience will forever leave its scars.

Whilst we always expect the similar to happen within any industry that move forward with technological advancements. The creative industry with the introduction of the computer and it's legions of software and other digital advancements has been waging war on the entire professional arena for decades.

Digital technology has destroyed many processes, or at least moved them to an accessible area of convenience, that many purists will see as simply lowering the standards. Photography using film, moving to digital cameras and home scanning facilities. Bureau Reprographic operators pushed aside to the straight to plate or even directly to paper digital pre-press technology. This technological blitzkrieg is advancing at an alarming rate, and it's not taking any prisoners. However, it has left fractions of resistance behind it's battle cry of 'Print is dead!' And 'Read on screen'. But it is the convenience of ability to built it yourself that's now the problem.

The computer was the start of this, but the introduction of the Linotype library and the Adobe's PostScript fonts, completely opened up the convenience to the

masses. Desktop publishing was fully born, bypassing typesetters and replacing them with graphic designers who had the ability to make up a page on screen. Now we find that anyone with the technology can set up production, but it's this convenience and uncontrolled access that is lowering the standards. The 'do it yourself' somehow falls in line with the same 'that will do' level of mentality.

We have seen the requirement of knowledge taken into a new 'drag and drop' society, with the introduction of HTML5 and CSS3. Yes the advancement has the benefit of allowing the use of fonts beyond the viewers system or embedding within a plugin driven software. But this direction of convenience also opens the same box of convenience and substandard quality.

The type industry has already seen it's fair share of fonts produced by uncontrolled masses of home grown inexperience production. But it's the introduction of the 'Drag and drop' online font production of convenience that has the potential to hammer the final nail in the typographic coffin. Unless control and order is quickly adopted.

We are educated enough to understand that typography has a set of rules to guide us in making the correct decisions, all in honour of the appropriate treatment of type. But this all depends on the perception of the reader and intention of the

typographer, both of which require an interaction and an emotional response. It's about successful communication.

But can these rules prevent the play? This could be rules set by a client, or a brand guide. But what about the typographic rules too? There is potential of becoming a prisoner within the pages of type do's and don'ts, with the grids as the bars holding you in. But the rules are there to guide us and prevent total chaos and anarchy. A lawless typography no doubt lead to a war of words, leaving typographic history with generations of widows and orphans. We the typographers are responsible for continuing to walk this narrow baseline. Creatively pushing the boundaries, whilst raising the standard.

We must stop viewing typography through rose tinted glasses! The principles of the professional must be set high, else convenience makes everyone typographers! Standards will be lowered and typography will die!