2019 Communication Design Competition

On behalf of Xplor International, we would like to thank you for your participation in the 2019 Communication Design Competition.

This document will provide an overview of the program as well as the specific information you will need to create your submission.

Why Customer Communications? - Bills, statements, direct mail and policies drive the economy and the economic engine for any organization. How an organization communicates with their customers is not only part of the total customer experience but drives response that can impact cash flow, revenue and customer retention.

As technology evolves, transactions between organizations and their clients are changing. It is important that the right information is available to the right people at the right time. In the past, this was done exclusively through paper documents that chronicled these relationships at regular intervals. Today, new technologies allow real time interactions between clients and the organizations that serve them.

The Challenge - Each team is presented with the same ordinary, bland statement and accepts the challenge of re-designing it with the intent of making it more functional, aesthetically pleasing and expanding its purpose to include making the communication a marketing opportunity.

It is the responsibility of the team to research and determine how to integrate various options and enhancements while re-designing the communication into a final submission. Do not feel limited by the questions below or statement above. Consider all elements that go into design and incorporate them in your design submission and/or include them as a consideration in your presentation.

The communication needs to be accessible via print, web and mobile. Additional channels can be presented in the final submission.

A few questions to get your mind going:

- How do I make the communication more personal, whereby the recipient feels a connection beyond the original intent?
- What can I do to make the communication more aesthetically pleasing, easier to read and comprehend?
- What features do I include to support production automation?
- How can I utilize excess white space on the communication to market and promote other products and/or services?
- Does my communication address legal requirements imposed by local, state and federal agencies?

The Team and Eligibility

- A team consists of up to five Xplor student members from the same university.
- A university can have multiple teams.
- Each team can only submit one entry.
- A student can only participate on one university team.
- Submissions must be received by **March 4, 2019**

The Process

- Each team will designate a leader.
- Each leader will sign up their team to participate in the competition by **January 15, 2019**. To do so, send an email to Jennifer Smith at Jennifer@xplor.org. Be sure to include contact information for all team members, including first name, last name, phone number, and email address, and designate the leader.
- A sample of the water bill statement to be redesigned along with the demographic profile of the hypothetical recipient was provided to each university advisor on12/5/2018**.** The packet will be sent to the team captain upon receipt of the team roster.
- A webinar hosted by Xplor International the week of **January 21, 2019** will review the challenge and process. At this time, we will clarify any questions posed by the teams.
- Each team will submit their final designs to Xplor International in .pdf file format by **March 4, 2019 at 8pm in your local time zone**. Each team will also submit a presentation outlining the various elements and logic used in the re-design at the same time.
- Each team will be scheduled for a webinar and provided one hour to present their design to the judges using the submitted presentation. Presentations to judges will take place **March 12 and 13, 2019.** Specific time(s) will be established as we get closer to the deadline.

Award Selection Criteria - The judges will review your design in advance of the presentation and will ask any clarifying questions during your presentation. The winning team is selected based on:

- Design elements selected in re-design
- Design elements not considered in re-design
- Presentation and explanation of re-design

Some of the considerations of the re-design are:

APPEARANCE
Reader's eyes are drawn to important information first
Effective use of white space
Type sizes used enhance readability
Type is appropriately aligned
Graphics (tables, graphs, charts) are used effectively
Logos are used effectively
COMPLIANCE / LEGAL
Time to pay / late payment warning
Interest charges

ORGANIZATION
Information/sections flow in a logical order
Important information is easy to find
Like information is grouped
Contact information is easy to find
Hierarchy of information is clear
Content is placed appropriately for use with Window envelopes, payment coupons, etc.

TYPOGRAPHY
Font families chosen reflect the tone of the content
Number of font families used is appropriate
Font weights are used appropriately for emphasis
Widow and orphan rule consideration
Consistent look between output channels

COLOR
Color is used with discretion
Color highlights only important information
Colors chosen are document appropriate
Colors chosen work well together

PRODUCTION AUTOMATION / OPERATION CONSIDERATIONS
Postal barcodes
Post processing - barcodes/OMR,sequence numbers
Payment coupon
Allow for alternate payment options (ACH, credit card, check, etc.)
Return address
OCR Scan Line
Internal remittance processing / change of address
FAQs and Contact information
Accessible via print
Accessible via web
BONUS ITEMS
ACCESSIBILITY
Color is used to facilitate the disabled
Large font, Braille copy
Document security regardless of output channel
PDF/UA
ADDITIONAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS
Transpromotional Marketing

Make sure to consider production technology for different output and how it affects color, typography, etc. for print, display, mobile.

Award Process - The judges of the 2019 Communication Design Competition are industry experts. Some will represent the end user enterprise community and some will be from the vendor community. Each judge will have a specific area of design expertise.

- The winning team will be advised on **March 15, 2019** and regret notifications will go out to the other teams shortly thereafter.

Winning Team Recognition

- The winning team is presented with a plaque during the XPLOR19 Industry Awards Ceremony on **April 23, 2019** at the Mandalay Bay Las Vegas.
- The winning team's university will be awarded a minimum of USD $2,000 to be used towards travel expenses for at least one student on the winning team to attend XPLOR19.
- Each member of the winning team is presented with a platinum passport to attend XPLOR19 on **April 23-25, 2019** at the Mandalay Bay Las Vegas. It includes all Xplor educational conference sessions, the vendor forum, Thursday lunch and evening networking events**.** (Travel and incidental expenses are not included.)
- The winning team (or designated student) has the opportunity to present their design to XPLOR19 attendees in a 25-minute educational session on Wednesday, April 24th from 4:30 pm – 4:55 pm.

The Problem

1. Attached is the ordinary, bland statement that will be used in the competition. The demographic profile of the individual receiving the bill/statement is:

   a. Married Male
   b. Age 71
   c. Two children, one boy age (41) and one girl age (38)
   d. Retired
   e. Has vision impairment - Uses glasses with very strong prescription and is color blind

2. You are not restricted to a single page. The document can contain multiple pages including such things as promotional items (Transpromo), backers, terms and conditions, etc.

3. The mailing piece is currently a 7" x 10" bill but you are not restricted to that size the document will utilize a window envelope and a return envelope for mailed payments.

4. When looking at the various output channels, consider security. (i.e.passwords, encryption, etc.)

To all, best of luck. We thank you for your participation and hope that you have the benefit of both learning and having fun.