

# WHAT IS VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN? A VISUAL EXPLANATION FOR STUDENTS, UNIVERSITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Visual communication design is the professional discipline of multi-disciplinary graphic design. Through research and across an array of media channels, designers use images and type, space and time to create and give form to strategies, content, and ideas for communication and expression. Visual communication design can shape and affect how we think, behave, understand and experience information.

Considering a global context and the significant evolution and expansion of the roles, responsibilities, priorities, values, opportunities, challenges, tools and techniques of graphic design, Northern Kentucky University changed the name of its undergraduate program to Visual Communication Design (VCD). This name more accurately describes the robust state of current practice and the future trajectory of the field. Encompassing the combined forces of head (ideas and strategies), heart (emotion and empathy), and hand (making and craft), this poster features an original diagram that was designed to explain the program name and spread understanding of the

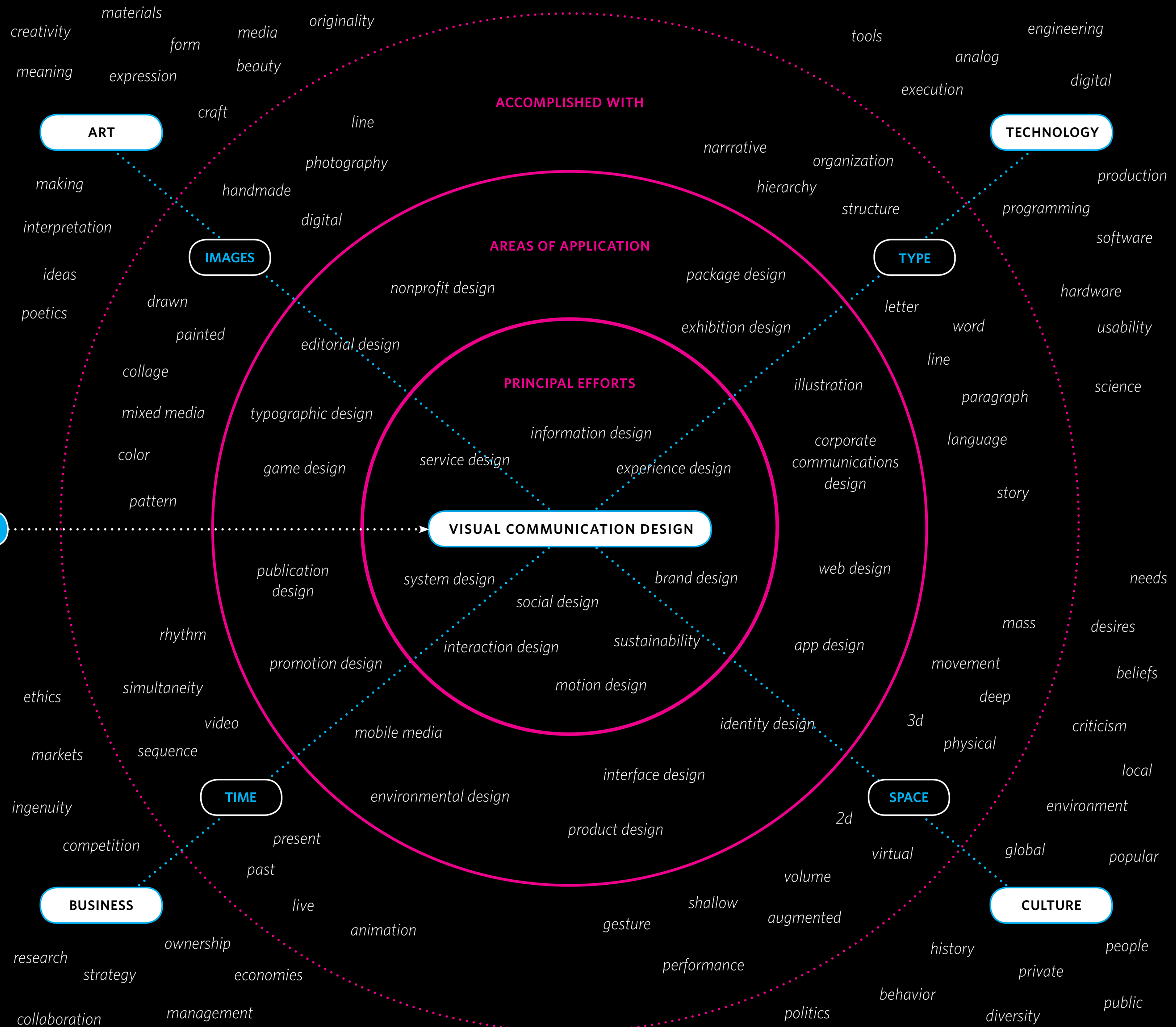
richness and breadth of the ingredients, applications, uses, and contributions of professional-level activity in this field among students, the broader university, local and regional communities.

The diagram illustrates that visual communication design lies at the intersection of art, technology, business and culture. Considered in spheres, and from an implicit embrace of media agnosticism, it accounts for principal efforts of the field; the most common areas of application; and the main tools used in visual communication design. This interpretation was created by Associate Professor Julie Mader-Meersman during a process of reimagining the design and communication of the NKU curriculum.

The poster is used in courses, meetings with other units on campus, and on a large-format digital display in a public area of the Department of Visual Arts, which houses the VCD program. The poster can be downloaded for use at other schools.



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Presented by Julie Mader-Meersman for the DEC AIGA 2013 Head, Heart, Hand Conference | Minneapolis, Minnesota Associate Professor, Visual Communication Design Northern Kentucky University | Department of Visual Arts MFA, University of Washington

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