

TOPIC OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Law for Designers –

a set of tools to facilitate solving of legal problems and
familiarize designers with legal issues related to their work.

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FIELD

art

DISCIPLINE

visual arts and conservation

Katowice, 2019

topic

The topic of doctoral dissertation is developing a publication consisting in a set of tools to facilitate solving of legal problems designers face in their work and familiarizing designers with legal aspects related to their professional activity.

The goal was to identify the most difficult and frequent problems of the design profession and develop a handbook to make designers aware of the significance of their creative work as well as the ways of respecting the accessible resources; it will also present situations in which designers are entitled to employ the means of safeguarding their rights.

Stage I : content of publication

The first stage of work involved the analysis of designers' state of knowledge in reference to copyright protection related to their work, studying their level of awareness and ability to deal with problems at every step of their work, from the moment of entering into collaboration with their business partner / client, through the design process, to the ending of collaboration. Such an analysis was conducted based on surveys, conversations and in-depth interviews with lawyers who collaborate with designers and with designers themselves. Additionally, the study collected designers' inquiries about copyrights from internet fora and social media. The resulting base of c. 250 questions and problems served as a basis for the further development of content.

From the very beginning, the partners to the substantive matters of the project were four lawyers from the So In Law legal firm: Weronika Bednarska, Anna Golan, Maryla Bywalec and Żaneta Lerche-Górecka. The editing partner of the project is the Od.Nowa publishing house, specializing in legal publications.

After the question-base analysis, the content was divided into 3 main parts:

→ in theory

The first part of the handbook discusses the fundamental concepts and notions connected with copyrights related to designers and is further divided into 7 chapters: author and work; copyrights; inspiration, compilation, plagiarism; infringement of copyright; fair use; image rights; trade marks. The body text is supplemented with leading questions, examples and diagrams.

→ in practice

The second part of the handbook consists of questions and answers, divided according to the stages of the design process (before, during and after).

→ samples

The third part of the handbook includes and discusses 12 sample documents of the most common contracts and notices. Ultimately, the samples will be made available as plain text documents.

The subject matter was proofread by Łukasz Maryniak, PhD.

Stage II: publication design

The second stage of work involved developing the graphic design of the publication. The book was design vertically, on 175 × 254 mm format – reduced fifth of 1:1.4 side proportion. This format helped avoid associating the publication with a classic textbook and designing a layout accounting for its division into three parts of diametrically different structure.

The book layout is asymmetrical – its left side is like the right. The margin proportions were based on the body text leading of 14pts. The page was vertically divided into 12 modules, allowing for various mutual composition of texts, diagrams and illustrations. The main colour scheme is black and dark pink. Pink is used as spot colour in diagrams, leading questions and side notes. The book also contains the full colour illustrations as examples of legally disputable situations in graphic design.

→ in theory

The “in theory” part is set to the proportion: 9 modules – body text, 3 modules – side notes. The leading questions cut in the body text by 2 modules. The titles and key words are released to the margin by the height of the leading.

→ in practice

In the answer field, the “in practice” part is set analogically to “in theory”. The question is set in two asymmetrical columns to the proportion 4:8 modules. The narrower column is the thematic field of the question, the wider one – its full content. On the left outer margin there is additional navigation informing to which moment of the design process (before, during or after) the question refers.

→ samples

The whole “samples” part is designed on uniform-colour background, with white space of the discussed document, visually referring to the text editor interface. The left side contains the discussed document in one column, the right is dedicated to comments, set in two columns. The “document” employs the grid of baselines but extends onto the margins in order to keep the A4 format proportions, inconsistent with the margin proportions of the book.

The publication was set in Neue Haas Unica Pro and Tabac typefaces in G1 and G3contrast styles.

The book consists of 228 pages and was digitally printed on untreated offset paper, with Swiss brochure binding and two flaps.

Future of the design

After the final proofreading and developing the system for sharing the sample contracts, the book will be published by the Od.Nowa publishing house.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Korzeńska', with a long, sweeping underline.