

# Visual Designer

Are you a world-class designer who believes that usability and desirability go hand-in-hand?



## What Cooper visual designers do

Cooper visual designers are responsible for balancing usability with desirability—using color, style, type, icons, information design, and visual hierarchy to clarify data, indicate relationships, hint at behavior, and communicate about brand. In collaboration with interaction designers, design communicators and other team members, they:

- + Conduct research that gives clients insight into their brand.
- + Create a visual language strategy that achieves brand and user goals.
- + Iteratively refine a visual system that supports the interaction that makes people want to spend time with the product, and that engineers can build.
- + Present visual design work and rationale, helping clients assess the work based on the brand and persona goals rather than personal opinion.

“I’m given the opportunity to become an expert in virtually any domain. I may not be a brain surgeon, but I know how they work and what’s critical to their success. How many visual designers can say that?”

Jayson McCauliff,  
Senior Visual Designer



## What it takes to be one

We're looking for candidates with 3+ years doing visual design for digital products, ideally in a consulting environment. You're a smart, collaborative, pragmatic consultant who's all about solving visual design problems. You also:

- + Have superb information and graphic design skills (and a Bachelor's degree in graphic design or a closely related field).
- + Understand interface and interaction design principles as they relate to web sites, desktop applications, handheld devices, and environments.
- + Understand branding as it relates to user experience.
- + Combine the courage of your convictions with the willingness to ask for help, follow direction, and exchange constructive critique with peers.
- + Communicate clearly about design, from delivering persuasive presentations to writing detailed style guides.
- + Have a sharp wit and a manner that inspires trust and confidence in clients.
- + Consistently deliver brilliant design on a deadline.
- + Can crank out multiple unique stylistic approaches to a problem.
- + Have a desire to keep learning throughout your career.
- + Understand the capabilities and limitations of common GUI technologies.
- + Are a master of common graphic design and Web design tools.



**“It's not about being a designer on staff, but being responsible for the entire aesthetic part of a project.”**

**Imon Deshmukh,  
Visual Designer**

We like animators and print designers, but that's not the job we're hiring for. We're looking for people who want to work full-time at our San Francisco office. We occasionally use contractors.

Sound like fun? Send a résumé, cover letter and work samples to [careers@cooper.com](mailto:careers@cooper.com). We also strongly encourage you to try your hand at our [visual design challenge](#).

# Visual Design Challenge

## Overview

The aim of these exercises on the following pages is to help us determine how well you might fit the **visual designer** role. We are looking for examples of your ability to:

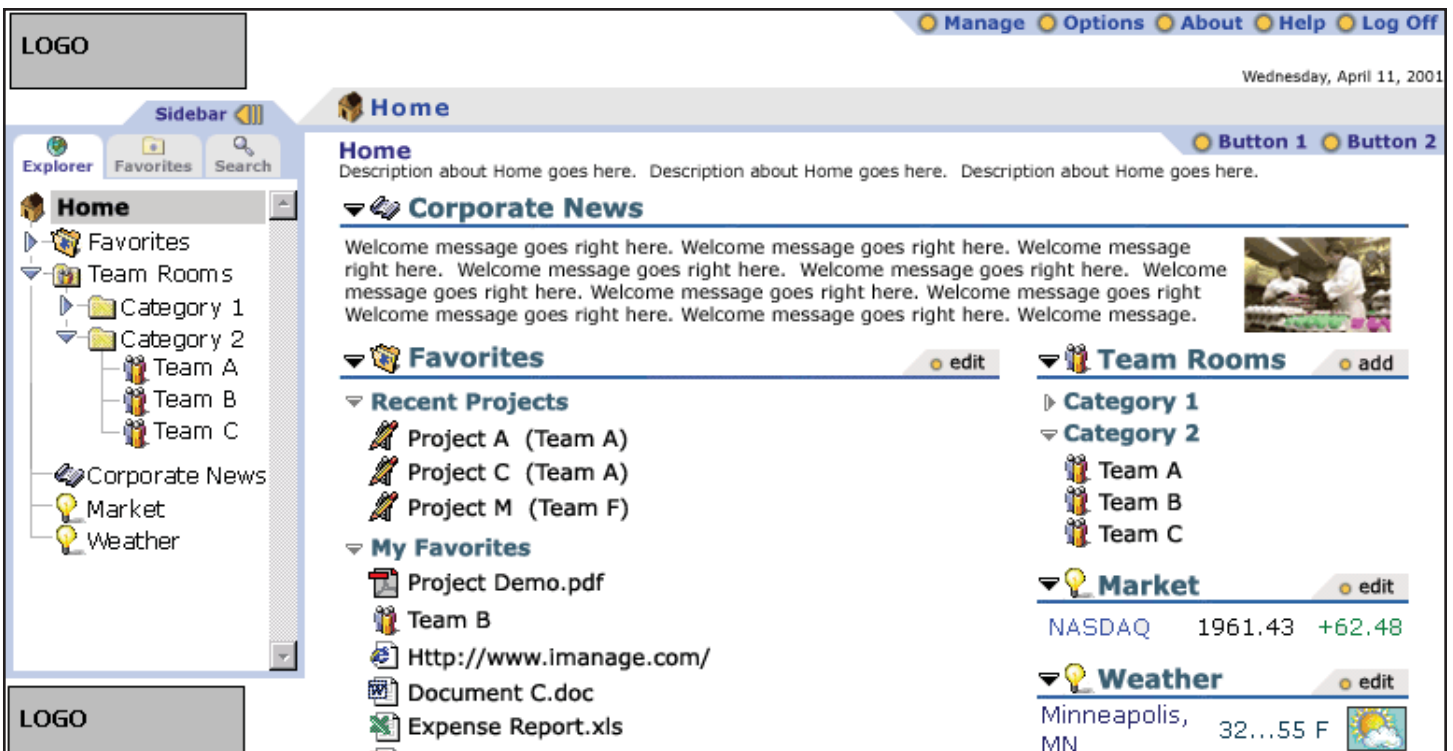
- + Identify and solve design problems
- + Describe your design and tell us why it's good
- + Understand the people for whom you are designing
- + Excel at both conceptual and detailed design

Above all: **Have fun!** If this exercise isn't fun, this job probably isn't for you.

Obviously, this is a take-home test, so feel free to use whatever tools you feel you need, but make sure the response is your own. Provide enough illustration and written description of your designs, in whatever medium you are comfortable, to get your point across. Finished art is not necessary. Spend as much or as little time as you wish, but an hour on part one and no more than a couple of hours on part two should be plenty.

## Part One

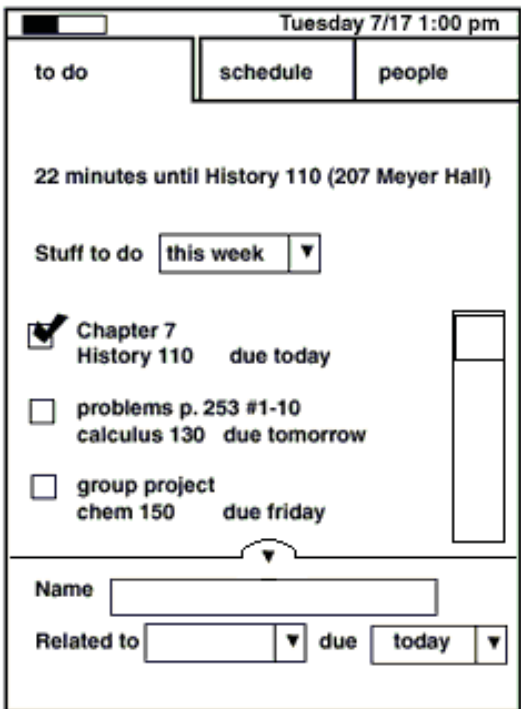
This is the home page for a document-sharing portal. The page has two frames. The frame on the left (called the "sidebar") contains three tabs that switch among different search modes. The frame on the right contains a set of general administrative links at the top. The gray strip displays a "bread crumb" trail as a user drills into various content areas; each drill-down has its own name and icon in the bread crumb trail. The content area below contains modules that can be collapsed.



How do the visual design choices shown here enhance or detract from the user experience? Write down a few thoughts. (We're looking for constructive critique; we don't need you to draw a new visual treatment unless you feel that's essential to getting your point across).

# Visual Design Challenge

## Part Two



This screen sketch represents part of the interaction design of a mobile phone application for college students. The screen is full color and 320 pixels (width) by 480 pixels (height). The phone is a touchscreen device. This is not for iPhone and the client doesn't want a look that will be mistaken for iPhone, Android, Mac, Windows, or any other operating system.

The small bar at the top is a battery power indicator.

The three tabs are navigation through the primary applications on the device. Each tab should have an icon; it's up to you whether you also use the text labels.

The first bit of text is a countdown meter so our college student knows whether he should read a chapter or go get a sandwich. It's the most important piece of information on the screen.

The "stuff to do" control is a pull-down that lets him select to-do items for today, this week, or some other time period. The list displayed below is scrollable (that's a crude scrollbar on the right of the sketch). When items are checked off, they remain visible during the session, then disappear in the next session. The list is sorted on due date by default.

At the bottom is an area for creating a new entry. The "name" field is filled in with the press of a finger, which displays a soft keyboard. The whole area can be collapsed (like closing a drawer) using a small toggle control at the top.

**Your mission:** Create a visual design that enhances the usability of the screen, as well as adding aesthetic appeal. A single bitmap is plenty—no need to go crazy with alternative styles unless you want to do so.