

IN PURSUIT OF ELEGANCE

Why the Best Ideas Have Something Missing

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The Web site for this book is at www.InPursuitOfElegance.com

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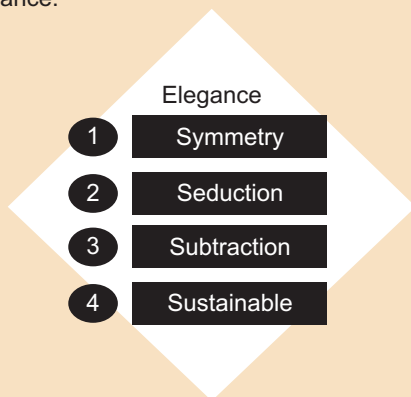
MAIN IDEA

From time to time, certain events, products and services capture public attention because they display a rare trait – elegance.



To make something elegant is an elusive target but that's why elegance is so noteworthy when we find it. Elegance has the power to cut through background noise and deliver a profound experience which changes minds, shakes markets and alters our views of things, often forever.

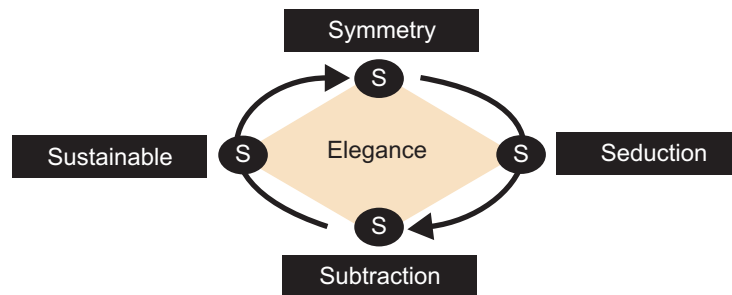
What's noteworthy about elegance is this is something where what isn't there is just as important – if not more important – than what is there. Elegant ideas are always uncluttered, but that's not all. There are four key elements of elegance:



It's the collective execution and fusion of these elements which makes elegance happen. There must also be a blend of logic and creativity in the way these four elements are balanced and offset against each other.

"The full power of elegance is achieved when the maximum impact is extracted with the minimum input. What isn't there can often be as or more powerful than what is there."

– Matthew May



Overview – The importance and value of elegance Pages 2 - 3

Elegance is achieved when you accomplish the maximum impact with a minimum input. You have achieved elegance when adding anything would detract from the desired effect rather than enhance it. When something is elegant, it combines unusual simplicity with surprising levels of power to come up with something which is entirely noteworthy.

Element #1 – Symmetry Page 4

Symmetry is an organizing principle in science, business and society at large. Nature also uses symmetrical patterns everywhere. For a solution to be considered to be elegant, it must be symmetrical – it must work in any situation and under any circumstances or conditions.

Element #2 – Seduction Page 5

We're all naturally curious – it's part of being a human. We look for patterns everywhere and therefore sit up and pay attention when something we expect to be there is not. This is why elegant solutions to problems often have a piece that's missing. The absence of that piece seduces us to want more.

Element #3 – Subtraction Pages 6 - 7

Elegant solutions or ideas are always uncluttered and focused. They cut to the chase because whatever doesn't add value has been deliberately subtracted. This runs contrary to human nature because our first instinct is generally to keep adding more and more to things. The genius comes in knowing which pieces to subtract in order to make something elegant.

Element #4 – Sustainable Pages 7 - 8

Elegant ideas have uncommon simplicity and surprising power. They're also sustainable – meaning they can be maintained indefinitely rather than for limited promotional periods only. Elegant ideas require no ongoing trade-offs to be made because they achieve the maximum effect with the minimum effort. Elegance is enduring and timeless rather than well-intentioned but unsustainable. Sustainability is the most elusive quality of all when it comes to true elegance.

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