

A Syntropy of Beauty: Building Expanse's Bold New Design and Brand

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"The coral has the beauty of the rose, the color of blood, the clear nature of crystal, the heat of the fire." Vittorio G. Rossi

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The Design Challenge

I came to [Expanse](#) just under three months ago for the great professional creative challenge of my career: create a design system and brand that resonated with our enterprise SaaS customers, as well as the government and national defense champions at the core of our customer base. I needed to convey the high-stakes urgency and severity of security breaches with the hope that our product offers: allowing our customers and prospects to Know Your Internet through a lens of accuracy, speed and confidence. How do you convey safety and hope in a world of despair and risk? How do you create a bold, high-end, bespoke, differentiated brand in an industry accustomed to bright blues, darkness, and convention?

Expanse is a first-of-its-kind Internet Operations Management platform company with solutions for IT and Security. We index the entirety of the Internet, every single hour. Why does that matter? The Internet was once supposed to encapsulate innovation, collaboration, safety and possibility. Now, it's become a cesspool for bad actors. Expanse, quite simply, is here to restore the promise of the Internet. We protect the world's most important organizations by discovering risks on the Internet that no one else can find. So, how do you translate this simultaneous urgency and hope?

Thank you for visiting Expanse.
How can we help you?



Here's how.

The Orb



In close collaboration with St. Louis creative agency, [FINAO](#), which stands for “Failure Is Not An Option”, we set out to create a design system and brand that answered all of these challenges. I quickly built a team of the industry’s best designers, animators, the world’s best project manager, and a web dev genius, to, with FINAO, quickly elevate and leverage a small favicon at the core of our brand; what internally we call the “Lambda Orb”. While the Lambda part of this represents “anonymous expression” in code, the dot on the other side, while quite literally an “Internet asset”, is also a north star, a beacon. This foundational piece represents the risks, exposures, and darkness of the Internet, combined with its great potential for hope. It’s what our CEO Tim Junio refers to as almost a “yin and yang”.

I wanted initially to seize [on this idea of dots](#). And how we could use dots and hard lines to represent, on an abstract level, the state of the Internet we come to work every day fighting to protect. Eventually, I wanted to create a system that would allow us to see forms, both risky, and hopeful, in this mosaic system. We created initial abstract concepts to help understand what “movement” might look like for our brand.



The Mosaic

We eventually settled on pulling that “mosaic” back a bit to represent a simpler system of transparent cells and mosaic “artifacts” that evoke calm, order, and safety. There’s an underlying “structure” that harkens to our academic roots, our founders who grew out of Stanford, DARPA, and the CIA. You will see the underpinning of an elite brand, with modern, bold use of colors and negative space.



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Attack Surface Reduction

Identify exposed Internet Assets as the first step to reduce your attack surface. Our multi-petabyte machine learning framework will find your "unknown unknowns" for you while your IT team focuses on other critical problems. Your team could endlessly search for those unknowns without ever finding all of them because they are limited by what they know to look for, the datasets readily available to them, and how much information a given person can process at a time. Let computers do what computers do best, and leave your people to do what humans do best.

[Read the White Paper](#)

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Intelligent Internet Inventory

Access an accurate, complete, always up-to-date inventory of your Internet Assets.

[Learn More](#)

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Internet Operations for IT

It's time for IT to have a management solution that moves as fast as the business.

Learn more

Every enterprise organization is in the middle of a digital-transformation project; it's the new normal in the 24/7 competitive environment. Your organization is rolling out new services across the globe, which your employees and customers need to access from anywhere.

Explosive growth has challenged IT teams to track and secure every asset.

- Services get launched in minutes.
- Anyone with a credit card can create a new cloud instance and shadow IT.
- Everything is done online.
- Legacy systems go unpatched.

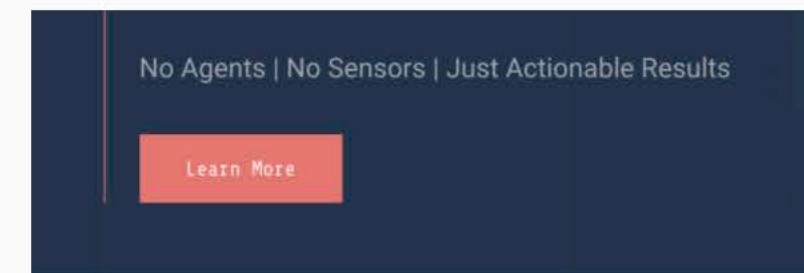
IT teams are stuck. The legacy IT Operations tools are not built for the

In most of the hero images, we seize on photos from the real world, looking down from above on objects, surrounded by patterns. In that, and in other design elements (like a faint grid) there is conveyed a sense of order out of chaos. Hope among the fray. A beauty in the natural order of things. A syntropy (order), if you will, rather than what many would argue is nature's ultimate state, entropy: disorder.

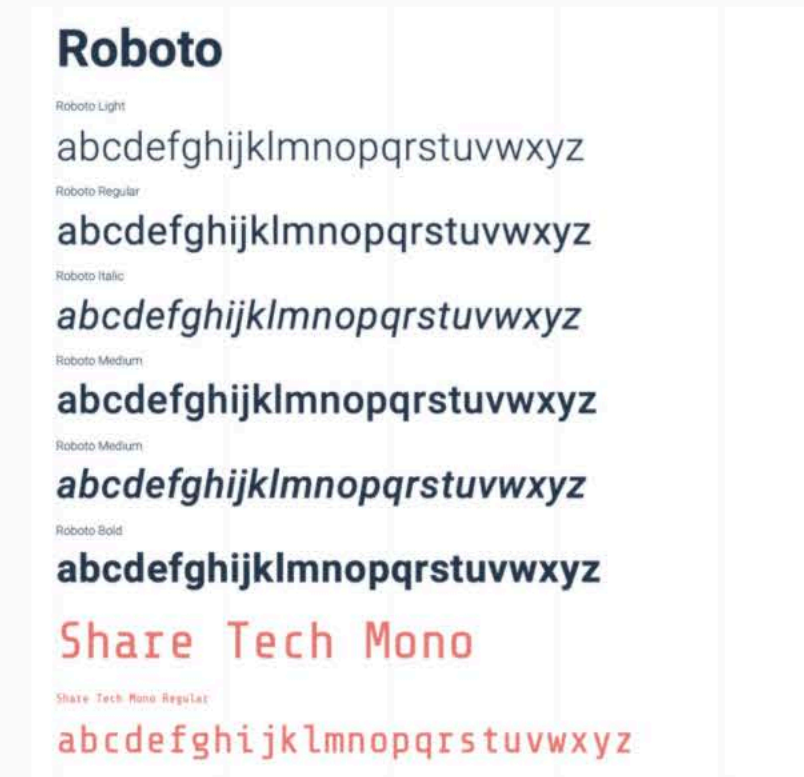
Slab Action

In researching Expanse's customer base, I came to understand the company's government and military roots, where top-secret government documents were created, often in some derivative of typewriter days, with reliable serif fonts like Times New Roman and Courier.

Because these top-secret government documents are serif and haven't evolved much since typewriter days, we thought it would be a nice nod to our roots to "evolve" that look with a slab serif secondary font, which is distinguished as a CTA. It inspires action.



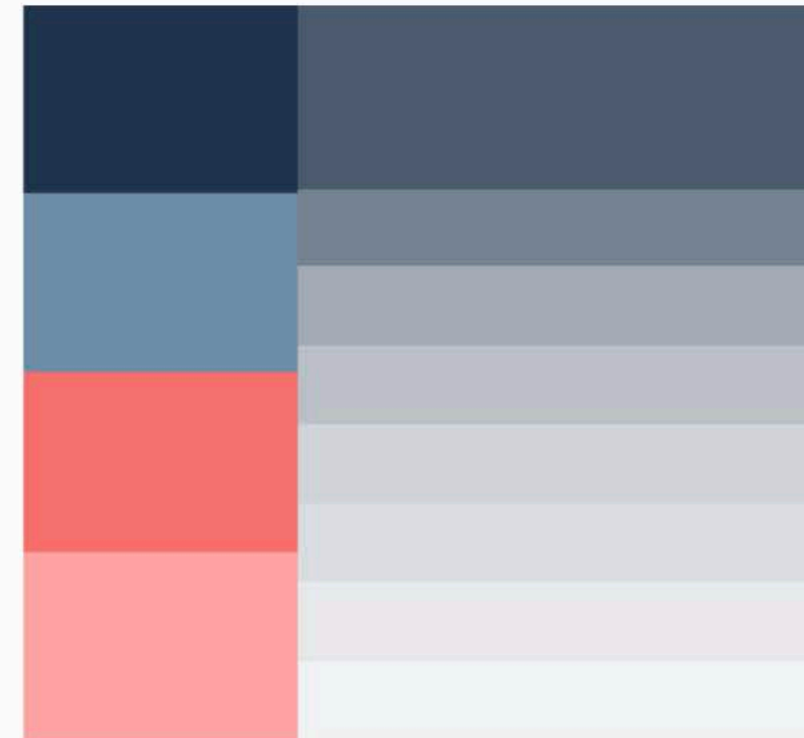
Fonts



Grey Lady

This is the first iteration of an evolving color palette that we will develop as Expanse grows and expands its customer base. One size does not fit all. We need a color palette that will evolve with the brand, so there will be some instances where that coral color dot will be a more traditional blue or even the same color as the dark navy or black logotype, particularly with some of our government contracts.

We opted for a sophisticated, elite, almost “gun metal” dark navy blue as our primary color that projects power and reach, heft and significance, and harkens to our military “blues” roots. It also grounds us in the Enterprise SaaS space. We will see variations of this throughout our brand. We have paired it with a robust group of greys that portray stability and safety, and convey Enterprise appeal. We have a heavy secondary accent color that is coral or sea foam. The combination evokes the sea, a place filled with risk, darkness, death and exposure, as well as great beauty and life and promise.



Vicious Grandeur

The sea is a tricky terrain. Actually, I guess it's not terrain. It's the absence of terrain. The negation. It's full of risk, potential harm, certain death, under the right circumstances. It's also full of sheer beauty, opportunity, adventure and hope.

Then there's the fog. In its all-consuming and vicious grandeur.

The Internet, as it exists today, might best be described in this way, full of risk, and opportunity.

We are excited to launch this design vision to the world, to bring the story of safety and optimism to the Internet. We will evolve this design and brand, every single day, just as we index the entire Internet, every single hour. Expanse is moving fast and making things. Please join us.

"But, he thought, I keep them [the fishing lines] with precision. Only I have no luck any more. But who knows? Maybe today. Every day is a new day. It is better to be lucky. But I would rather be exact. Then when luck comes you are ready." –Ernest Hemingway, "The Old Man and The Sea"