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The design of the LifeSans type family is part of the Web art project lifeismeaning.com. The interface of “Life is Meaning” is a Flash Web site that visualizes the information of public thoughts stored in a database.

This lowercase sans serif typeface, which is part of the project’s system of signs, has for purpose to present the data from the three different age groups (young, adult, and senior). Each of these groups is represented by a different weight (light, medium or bold).

LifeSans’s letters are exclusively designed in lowercase. This decision is mainly based on maintaining a uniformity in the rhythm of the text. As it is a multilingual application, numerous vowels and diacritics needed to be designed as well.

Technical constraints were that the family letters were supposed to have the same width to technically integrate into the Flash coded application. I also wanted to emphasize the height of descenders and ascenders to make the letters more distinguishable in a small size when used on screen.

The typeface is not fully finished, but is rather in a research phase. The bold weight has been developed further in terms of more sophisticated shapes and completeness of signs; the light and medium weights are currently in draft form.
“To get a smile every day”, “To balance what I have to do and what I choose to do”, “To take my coffee in the morning with the people I love”, “My meaning in life is to worship of Allah”. These fragments are answers to the question: “What gives meaning to your life?”

The environment the LifeSans font family was designed for is a Flash Web site, which visualizes the information of public thoughts.

The visualization shows the three weights (light, medium and bold) of LifeSans embedded in the project which represent the three different age groups (young, adult, and senior).
loved love à la façon créative qu'on la perçoit, et qu'on la transmet life itself, the best thing in the world l’amour and living live to the fullest with new experiences and challenges my friends and my family, loving them and being entre amis vivre pleinement se réaliser en respectant sa nature et en harmonie avec les autres créer avec des gens dans une inspiration commune the worlds we’re trying to make out of our ideas partager une bonne bouffe healthy balance between family social life and work career im altenheim ausstellungen bergwandern ein gutes buch lesen freiheit leben zu können on the day of the week success love, energy, ideas, art, solidarity my life meaning is to worship of allah by practicing all the actions that follows islamic rules and guidelines in your life wearing the sweater knitted by my grandma depends etwas neues lernen web eating after a long time my grad certificate at concordia playing music new media me surpasser et avoir l’impression d’accomplir quelque chose de bon pour moi being loved by those i love je fülle meine tage mit leben, nicht mein leben mit tagen jesus going through highs and lows making other people smile treffen von inspirierenden designern love, art, connection with people and with nature love helping out my family and taking care of my partner die dinge die mir spass machen mensen erleben the sunny weather sleeping long on weekends get tuned into music and forget about other things love mixing physical and emotional pleasure following jesus going through highs and lows making other people smile treffen von inspirierenden designern love, art, connection with people and with nature love helping out my family and taking care of my partner die dinge die mir spass machen mensen erleben the sunny weather sleeping long on weekends get tuned into music and forget about other things love mixing physical and emotional pleasure following jesus going through highs and lows making other people smile treffen von inspirierenden designern love, art, connection with people and with nature love helping out my family and taking care of my partner die dinge die mir spass machen mensen erleben the sunny weather sleeping long on weekends get tuned into music and forget about other things love mixing physical and emotional pleasure following
to balance what i have to do and what i choose to do   to get a smile every day   to take my coffee in the morning with the people i love   my meaning in life is to worship of allah

7/9pt LifeSans light

to balance what i have to do and what i choose to do   to get a smile every day   to take my coffee in the morning with the people i love   my meaning in life is to worship of allah

9/10pt LifeSans light

to balance what i have to do and what i choose to do   to get a smile every day   to take my coffee in the morning with the people i love   my meaning in life is to worship of allah

10/13pt LifeSans light

to balance what i have to do and what i choose to do   to get a smile every day   to take my coffee in the morning with the people i love   my meaning in life is to worship of allah

14/16pt LifeSans light
to balance what I have to do and what I choose to do
to get a smile every day
to take my coffee in the morning with the people I love
my meaning in life is to worship of Allah

LifeSans medium

18/24pt LifeSans medium
to balance what I have to do and what I choose to do to get a smile every day to take my coffee in the morning with the people I love

my meaning in life is to worship of allah

immer wieder etwas neues lernen
gute freunde zu haben

to balance what I have to do and what I choose to do to get a smile every day to take my coffee in the morning with the people I love

my meaning in life is to worship of allah

LifeSans bold

18/24pt LifeSans bold
und gestalten

enkelkinder hüten
gute filme im kino ansehen
ratdouren mit freunden
tanzen klaviertakten
mut zum risiko
die eigenen grenzen ausloten

LifeSans: The Creation Process

This is a documentation of the work-in-progress of designing the font family Life Sans: LifeSans light, LifeSans medium, and LifeSans bold.

This documentation does not show every detail of the process, but should give an overview of the important steps.

What follows is a list of 11 steps to creating the typeface.
1 Drawing/Sketching of LifeSans light

Some letter shapes are inspired by traditional calligraphy. The outer shapes of the LifeSans light version build the basic shapes and width for the other weights.
2 Drawing LifeSans bold

Based on LifeSans light, I pushed the bold weight to be as bold and thick as possible, while still keeping it readable.

By looking at references, such as other typefaces or books, I worked on details of single letters of LifeSans bold.\textsuperscript{1,3}
3 Reworking LifeSans light based on LifeSans bold and vice versa

The sketching process was a back and forth between LifeSans light and LifeSans bold. I modified shapes drawn for LifeSans bold in order to match them for the LifeSans light weight and vice versa.

As LifeSans light and LifeSans bold determine the basic shapes, LifeSans medium is in between them and could finally be sketched out.
4 Scanning

The final drawings of LifeSans light, LifeSans medium, and LifeSans bold are scanned and made ready to work with in Adobe Illustrator.
5 Drawing the type family LifeSans in Illustrator

I drew Bezier curves for all letters and worked on details. For example, I was trying to get a proper “s” done.

I based the Illustrator drawings for LifeSans light and LifeSans bold on the bold weight.
For the first time the typeface appeared in a printed form.

This helped to better see which letters stick out from the other letters, those who do not have the right amount of black and white shape.²
7 Using Typetool

For the next step, I used the vector graphics, which had been created in Illustrator, in Typetool. I started with LifeSans bold.

As an example, I cleaned my curves up by using the functionality "nodes at extremes".
Applying Metrics and Kerning

LifeSans bold spacing was checked and manipulated with the help of Typetool’s metrics window.

After having adjusted the metrics, the space around a single letter, the kerning was applied. Here, the letter spacing between letter pairs is adjusted so that all letters have similar blank areas in between each other.

Between the metrics and kerning process, printouts were made.
Completing the LifeSans family

LifeSans light and LifeSans medium went through the same process mentioned above to improve shapes, metrics and kerning simultaneously.
Life Sans Bold: Printing and working on details

I reworked details on letters, checked them on a print-out and so on.

The printouts helped me to see if letters were too thick, too wide, too dense or too dark.

Eventually, I concentrated on only designing the bold weight further.

The following pages show different versions of Life Sans bold that have been developed over time.
meeting the souls closest to my heart, and helping them with their path as they assist me with mine science, curiosity and creativity spending time with my kids spending time with my kids microcontroller being alone
Generating the font and testing on-screen

After auto hinting the font, and adding its font info, I generated the font.

LifeSans was then embedded in the Flash application "lifeismeaning.com". The bold weight looks decent, whereas the light weight disappears and is not readable.
Results and future work

. Eventually, I focused on the LifeSans bold weight, for which I developed more sophisticated shapes and more glyphs. I wanted to get at least one weight properly designed in my restricted schedule.

. Because of the fact that LifeSans uses the same width for letters in all weights, the bold version has a condensed feel. This could be improved in future work if this technical restriction requiring the same width for all versions could be eliminated.

. LifeSans light is too thin for on-screen use, although hinting has been applied. A solution could be found by increasing the size in the visualization of the Flash application.

. LifeSans light and medium definitely need to be reworked in terms of shapes, metrics and kerning. For example, right now, LifeSans light looks too stiff.

. The use of the LifeSans typeface in printed matter should be considered. This could be a font used at the same time for print and web.
Bibliography

1 Fontlab, Indications to design a typeface, poster.

