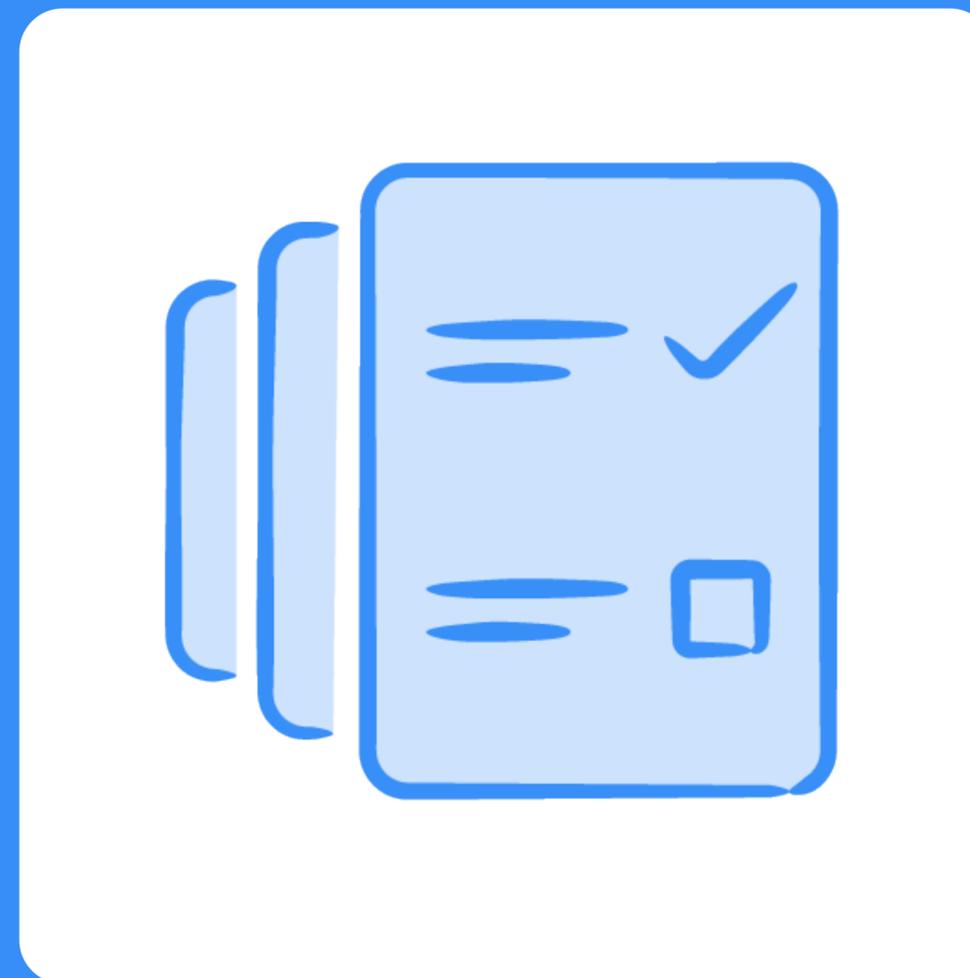
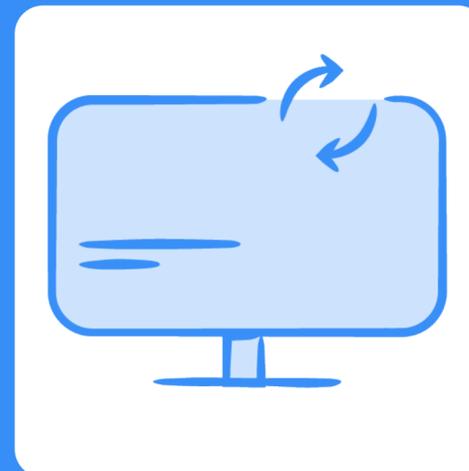


Monotype.

# Global font use & forecasting survey report.

2024.



November.

# 2024

survey completed.



**73%**  
of those  
surveyed are  
over the age  
of 35.

## Demographics.

Among those surveyed, almost half come from a company size of 10 people or fewer, with 26% being sole proprietors.



## Overview.

Monotype's 2024 Global Font Use & Forecasting Survey Report explores how members of the design industry select and use fonts, their pain points and preferences, and their views on the impacts of emerging technologies like variable fonts and AI.

Our hope is that through investigating both current trends and future projections, we can help creatives remain competitive and ahead of the curve.

**As always, we make the survey results publicly available to support and inform type designers, foundries, and the overall creative community.**

# Survey design.

Last year, Monotype partnered with independent market research company Censuswide to create a 30-question survey, which was available in English, Spanish, French, German, Japanese, and Portuguese.

Together, we designed the survey to collect a wide range of data from individuals and organizations involved in the design and typography sectors. We sampled participants from various sources, including research partners, email lists from typography-related platforms, and online advertising. We kept our reach broad to ensure a diverse representation across different demographics and industries.

Responses poured in from more than 13 countries, totaling 4,777 participants!

These individuals represented an array of company sizes, ages, job titles, and years of experience.

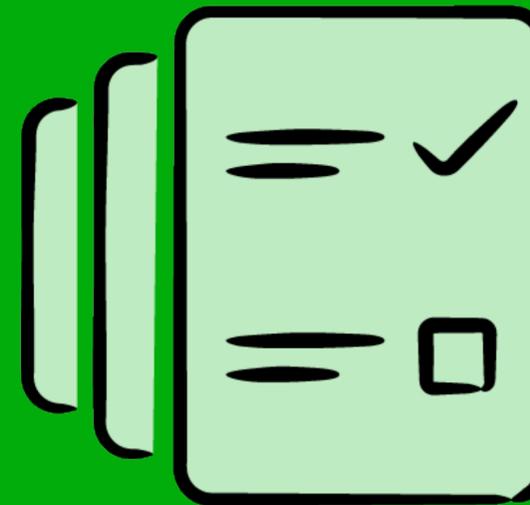
Among the respondents were graphic designers, creative directors, business owners, IT administrators, and others.

We hope this survey offers valuable insights into the importance of fonts in design projects, font purchasing behaviors, and the evolving role of technology in shaping the future of typography.

**We are so grateful to everyone who took the survey and shared their feedback.**

# 4777

**graphic designers, type designers,  
and brand leaders participated.**



**13+**  
countries  
represented.

**6**  
languages.

Sans is supreme.

52%

surveyed said they've used sans serif styles the most over the past 12 months.

62%

admitted to relying on familiar font pairings.

## From search to selection.

Choosing the right font is an integral part of the design process that requires careful consideration. After all, many factors are at play when making a font selection.

Creatives prefer fonts that are accessible and easy to read, with 76% ranking these attributes as top priorities. They also value the variety of weights and styles available within a font family.

**“I typically like a workhorse font that has a lot of widths and weights.”**

— Business Owner.

Interestingly, 32% of designers select a font out of necessity for a specific project, coming across it organically during their search.

In contrast, the novelty of a font or its discounted price has significantly less influence on their decision.

The need for clarity, beauty, and versatility remains at the forefront for creatives, with 59% believing general aesthetic quality matters most.

However, some do conduct a more thorough evaluation of their options, with more than half, 52%, typing out their own words and phrases in the font. Close behind are those who prefer seeing the entire character set.

When it comes to font pairing, many participants acknowledge that while it isn't necessarily challenging, it is time-consuming. So, it's no surprise that 62% resort to using familiar font pairings to expedite their design process.

**“It was beautiful, legible, and available in a variable web font format.”**

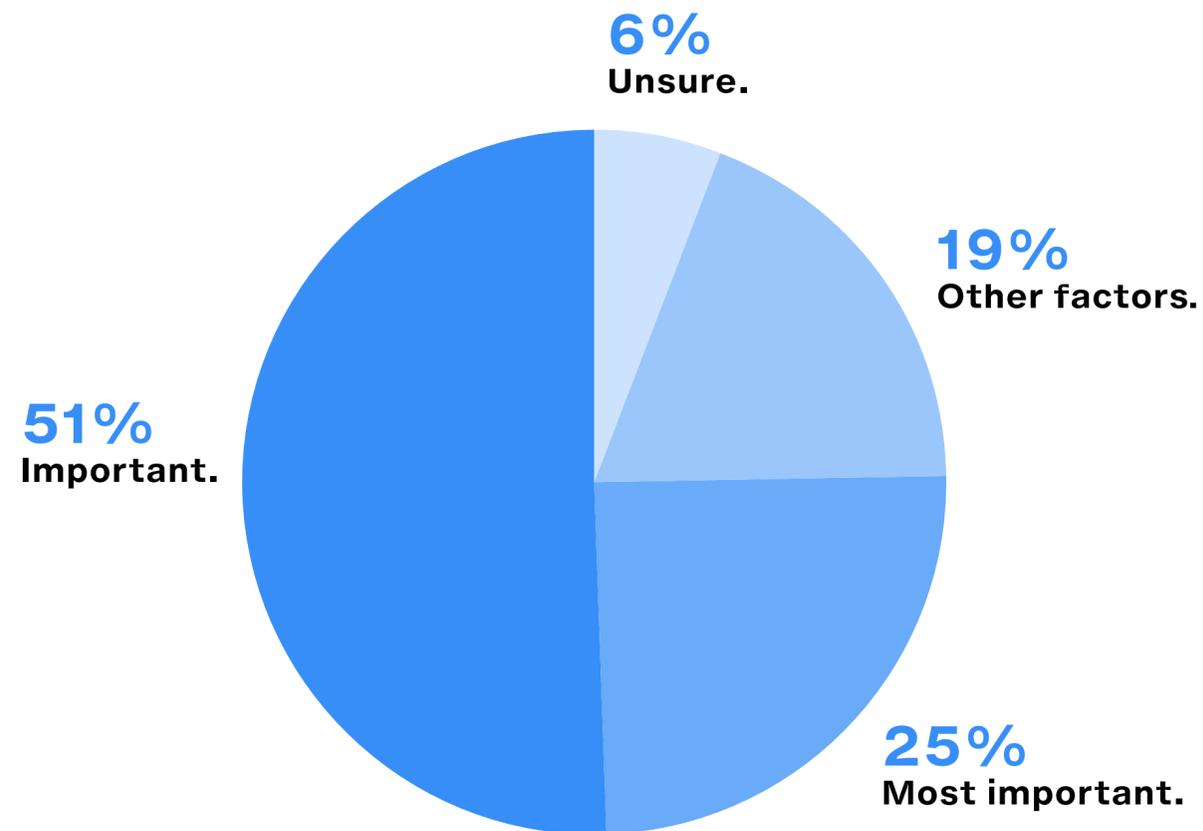
— Creative Director.

No matter how designers come across their selected fonts, one style consistently emerges as the favorite — the sans serif.

In fact, 52% report using sans serif styles most frequently over the past year. The sleek, clean lines of sans serif fonts make them a go-to choice for a wide range of design projects.

## Font selection.

When choosing a font to use in a project, how important is the typeface's accessibility and legibility?



What is your biggest pain point when working with fonts?



## Decision-making.

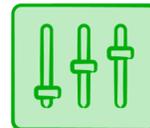
### The five most important factors impacting font selection decisions.

General aesthetic quality.



59%

Range of weights or styles in the family.



41%

Price.



38%

User accessibility.



29%

Alternates, ligatures,  
& other extra glyphs.



22%

## The fuel behind font purchasing.

When it comes to buying fonts, various factors influence customer decisions, such as accessibility, versatility, and price. 70% of creatives rely on a few marketplaces as the first place they search for fonts before going anywhere else, while only 59% check specific foundries before browsing font marketplaces.

**“If it’s a logo, I may only look at the characters I need. If it’s for a large project, I also want a range of weights. Price is always a factor.”**

– Graphic Designer.

This approach is likely due to the simplicity of using fonts readily available in design programs. The hassle of applying a different workflow or process to accommodate a single font just isn’t worth it for creatives. We discovered a similar result in the 2019 edition of this survey.

In general, participants have a positive experience purchasing and downloading fonts from font services, with the top three most popular marketplaces being Adobe Fonts, Google Fonts, and MyFonts.

## Budget.



# 17%

of overall marketing, brand, and design budget is spent on font-related purchases.

## Complexities of font licensing.

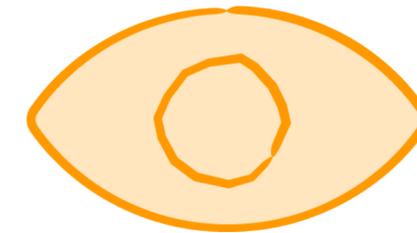
Font licensing and management remain confusing for many individuals and organizations. In fact, 47% strongly feel that font licensing is challenging to understand.

Often, font licensing involves navigating complex legal agreements dictating font usage. Confusion arises not only from understanding these legalities but also from effectively managing multiple licenses across various projects and teams.

**“Ensuring we track font purchases, have the proper licensing, making sure the appropriate people in our company have access to those fonts...it’s a lot to deal with.”**

— Creative Director.

**More than 50% state they are more likely to buy a font if they see examples of it used in brands or products.**



This widespread sentiment indicates that despite the critical role fonts play in design, there is a substantial need for clearer guidelines and more intuitive tools for licensing and managing font assets.

## Design budgets.

Despite the importance of fonts in branding and design, many brands are still not dedicating a significant portion of their creative budgets to font purchases. 45% only allocate 1-10% of their marketing, branding, and design expenses to acquiring fonts.

One possible reason could be the availability of free fonts online, allowing designers to access various typefaces without incurring additional costs. Budget constraints could also be a factor, requiring businesses to prioritize other elements over fonts.

Whatever the case may be, we see these findings as a unique opportunity to showcase the value of carving out a generous budget for fonts.

# More than just fonts.

There are many benefits to a font subscription, such as the vast selection of fonts, simplified font management, and the scalability of plans. In fact, 68% are currently using a font subscription service.

On average, respondents have four design-related subscriptions, almost 90% of which rely on services like Adobe Creative Cloud, Canva, Shutterstock, and Monotype Fonts.

**“I have access to a wide selection of fonts without limitation of use and without worrying about the right licenses for my projects.”**

— Graphic Designer.

Sentiments regarding yearly subscriptions and perpetual desktop licenses are a bit more complex.

40% of participants prefer an annual font subscription, but 37% find perpetual font licenses more suitable for their font needs, likely because it's a straightforward one-time purchase.

The font subscription model addresses the common challenges designers face: font discovery, prototyping, and ensuring proper font licensing. Creatives enjoy font subscriptions because they are far more than just a type library; they provide advanced tools and expert insights that streamline their creative work.

As a result, 57% would be willing to pay for a subscription service that offers search, discovery, and licensing all in one place.

Font tools.

68%

use a font subscription service.

4



average number of design-related subscription tools.

## Top 3 most popular marketplaces:

Adobe Fonts.

55%

Google Fonts.

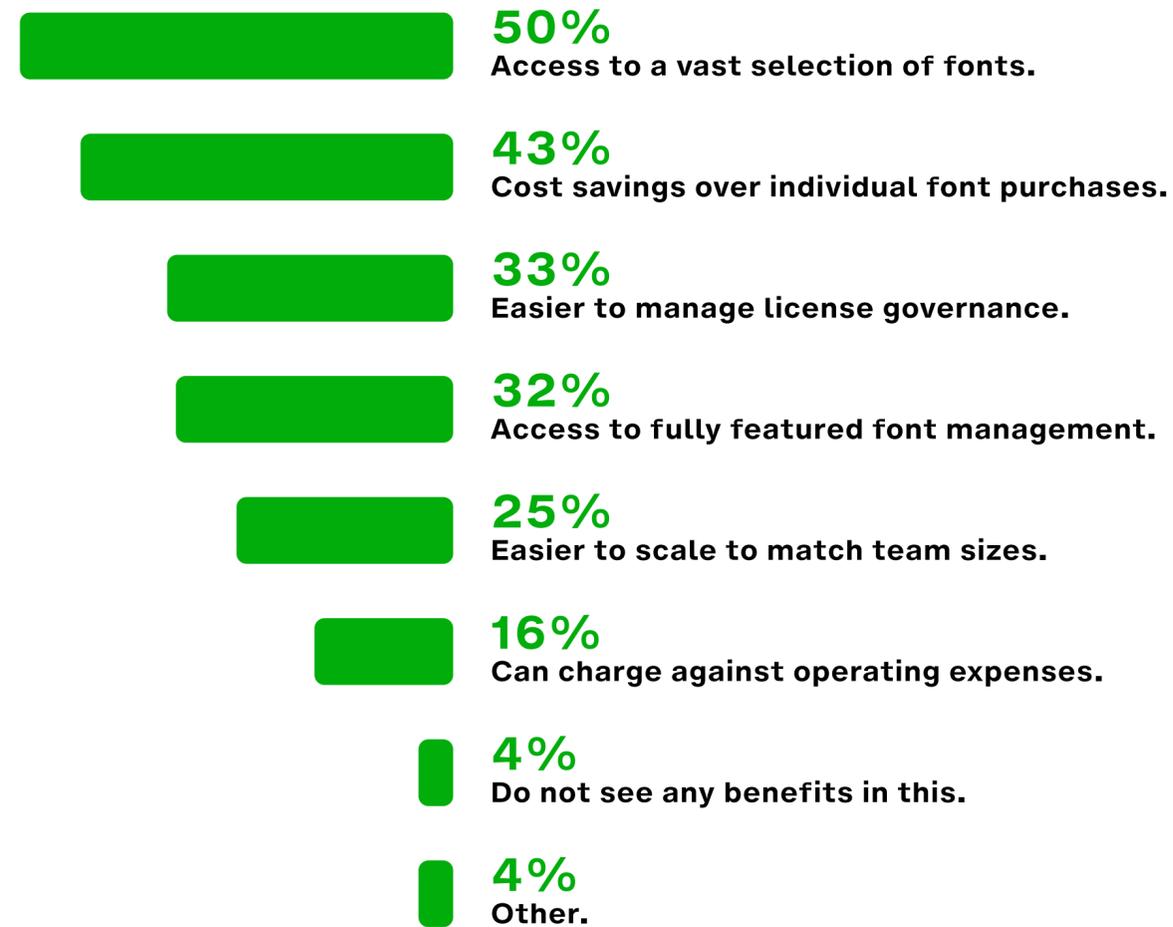
49%

MyFonts.

41%

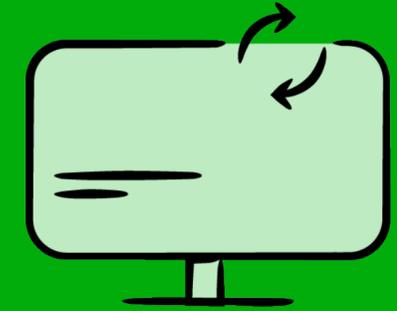
## Subscriptions.

What do you perceive as the benefits of using fonts from a subscription service?



# 40%

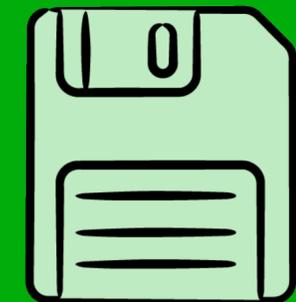
prefer purchasing a yearly subscription.



VS

# 37%

prefer a perpetual desktop license.



# Integrating AI.

Artificial intelligence is becoming progressively widespread as a transformative technology in the world of fonts.

Unsurprisingly, 98% of participants are familiar with AI, and almost half view AI as a valuable resource for visualizing typography in real-world settings and aiding in font pairing.

And while it is true that creatives recognize the potential advantages of AI, its adoption remains fairly limited.

**“It will definitely change the industry, but we will adapt. Not dissimilar to when desktop computers entered the industry.”**

— Creative Director.

62% of participants do not use AI to choose or design typefaces, and some even share concerns that this technology could replace the role of a designer.

**“I am eager to see how AI impacts type design and technology. As with all else it will have positive and negative ramifications.”**

— Creative Director.

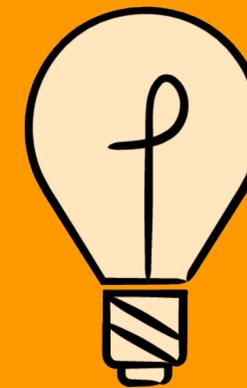
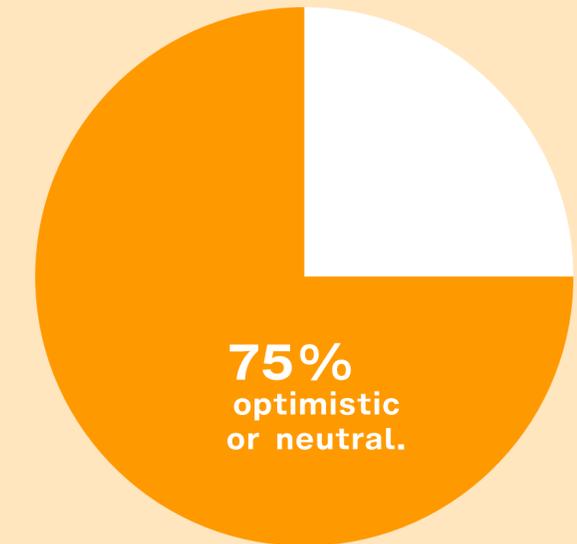
While there are some mixed feelings about AI, the overall reception is positive, indicating a promising trajectory for its uses in the type industry. AI will likely revolutionize how we create and utilize fonts, offering exciting opportunities for the future.

AI.

91%

can see the potential for AI tools to be useful in the type industry.

75% surveyed are optimistic or neutral about the impact of AI on their roles, while only 21% are pessimistic.



Many of those surveyed don't realize they are already using type tools powered by AI.

# Variable fonts.

Variable fonts enable designers to adjust weight, width, and other attributes within a single font file. This flexibility has led to more efficient workflows, reduced file sizes, and innovative creativity.

But how do creatives feel about this technology overall? 48% of participants are optimistic about variable fonts and believe they can change how fonts are made and used in the future.

**“Variable fonts are a powerful tool for designers. Most designers don’t know enough about typography to use variable fonts effectively...a lot of bad work, but every so often a nugget of gold.”**

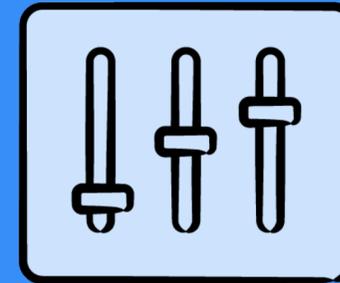
— Graphic Designer.

Meanwhile, 28% are undecided about the impact of variable fonts, and 9% don’t know anything about them altogether.

**“I am optimistic about variable fonts as I believe they have already changed how fonts are made and used — this isn’t the future any more.”**

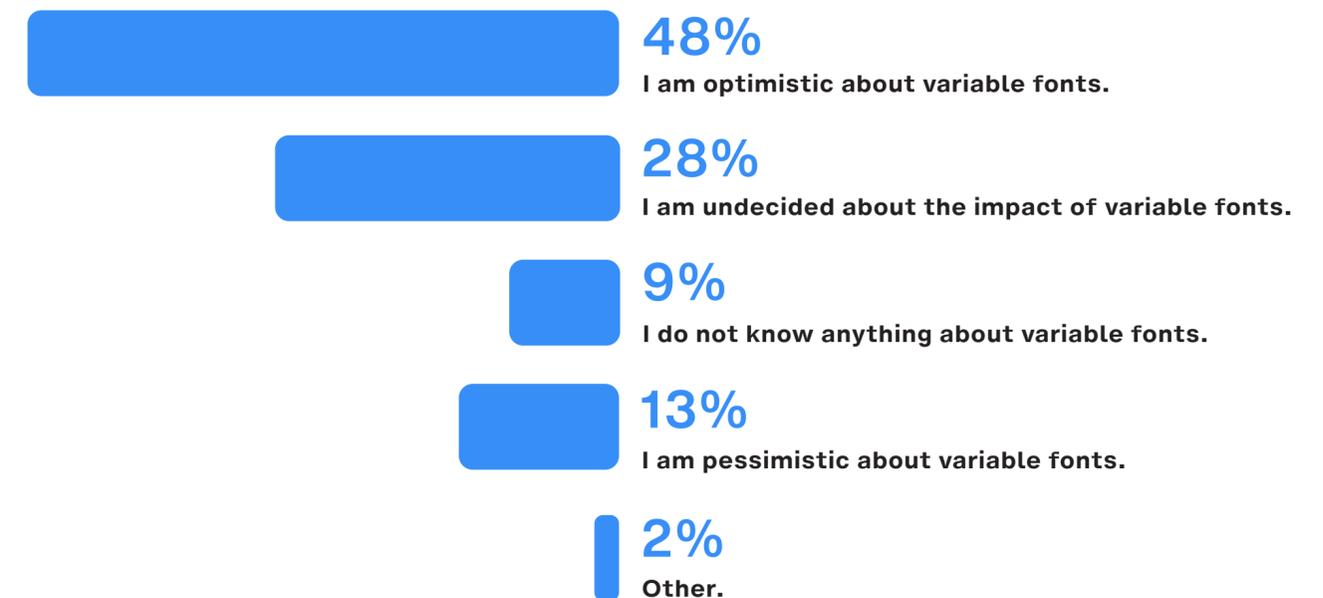
— Creative Director.

Although variable fonts continue to grow popular in the design world, there is still a lack of awareness and understanding about these fonts within certain segments of the population. Bridging this gap could unlock new creative possibilities and improve user experiences across various platforms.



Nearly half of respondents feel optimistic about the impact of variable fonts on the type industry.

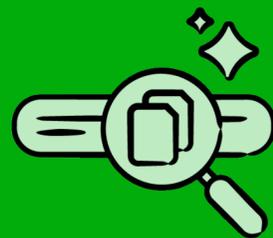
## How do you feel about the impact or potential of variable fonts in the industry?



## Branding.

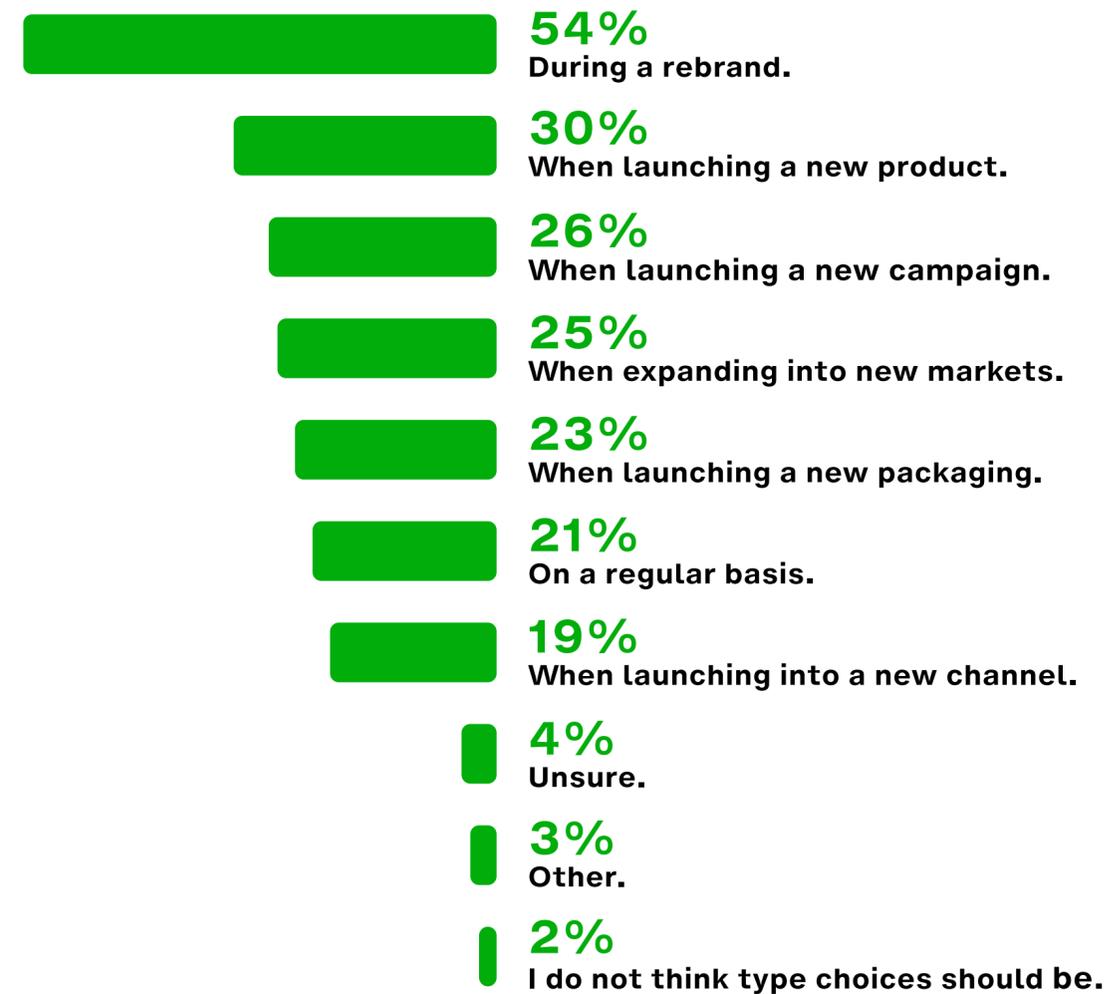
# 71%

are choosing new fonts at least once a month.



Over half of respondents feel type choices should be re-evaluated during a re-brand.

When do you feel type choices should be re-evaluated for a brand, if at all?



## Behind the brand.

One thing is for sure, designers know that typography is critical to their daily creative processes. 83% acknowledge that typography plays a crucial role in their design decisions. They value the uniqueness and specificity fonts can bring to their brand. And when it comes to shaping their brand identities, 75% agree that having a distinct and memorable style is essential.

**“A lot of my clients have brand guides and they specify what font is to be used — the challenge is making sure everyone on the team is using the same font.”**

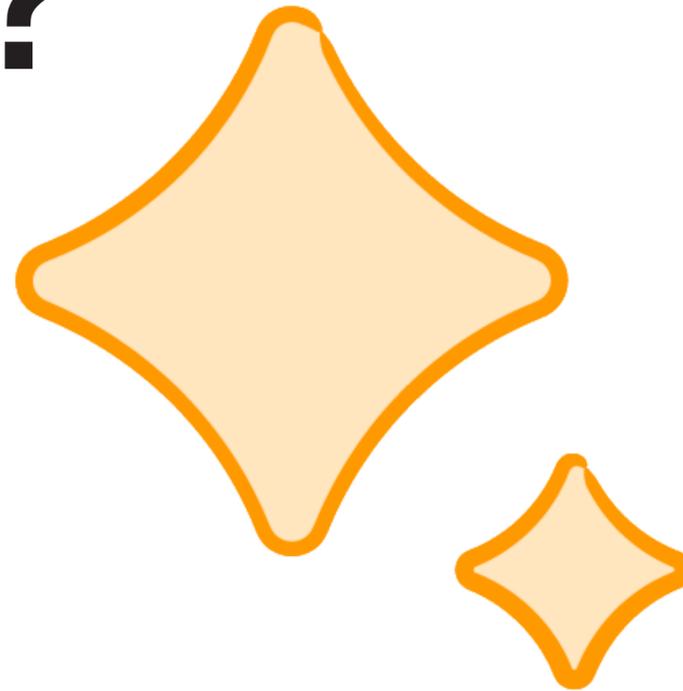
— Graphic Designer.

Some believe there are circumstances in which a fresh typeface is especially necessary, such as for new product packaging or a rebrand. As a result, a significant 97% of designers and brands are opting for new fonts, with 71% selecting them at least monthly.

# So, what now?

The future of typography shines brightly, with customers increasingly recognizing the critical role fonts play in connecting with their audience, especially when it comes to legibility and accessibility.

Fonts are no longer just aesthetic elements; they are vital tools and software that, when utilized effectively, can significantly enhance how we communicate and engage with audiences. We believe the more we embrace this perspective and continue to investigate what matters to creatives at large, the more the type industry will grow.

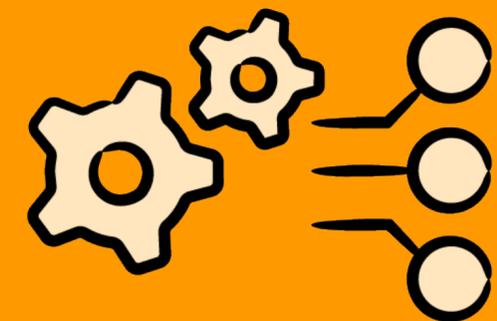


82%

cite typography as one of the top three critical components to their design decision-making.

85%

view choosing a distinctive font as critical to shaping a brand's identity.



# Fans of font subscription.

Font subscriptions are becoming increasingly popular among creative professionals, and brands have a significant opportunity to grow their business by aligning with this trend.

By offering subscriptions, organizations can address the needs of designers for easy access to a wide range of fonts, intuitive font search and discovery, and prototyping capabilities. This model also empowers designers to focus on their projects and creativity by offering clear and straightforward licensing agreements.

# 85%

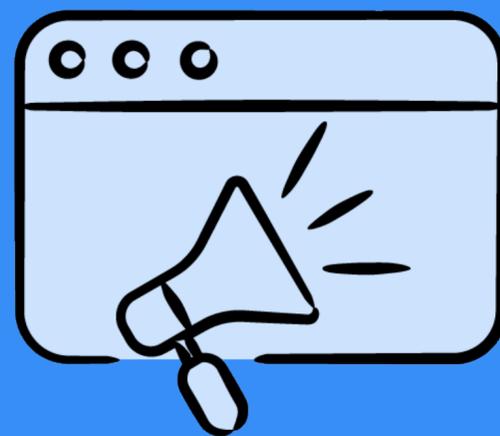
would value a subscription more if it offered functionalities beyond fonts.

Monotype.

## Looking ahead.

A font subscription can address the top three pain points.

1. Font discovery.
2. Prototyping.
3. Proper font licensing.



# Making AI work for you.

While opinions on AI are varied, with some expressing concern over its implications, there is a growing consensus that it holds significant promise in the type industry. From the prototyping phase to putting fonts into production, AI is a valuable and powerful tool — it enhances design processes, automates repetitive tasks, improves font recognition, and streamlines collaboration.

Yet despite AI's promising role in the future of typography, designers' talent, skill, and passion ultimately bring creativity to life.

# Fonts matter.



The 2024 Global Font Use & Forecasting Survey Report is just one of the many ways we can listen to what creatives have to say about the future of fonts, but collecting survey insights is just the beginning.

When it comes to innovating the type industry, a thoughtful and proactive approach is necessary — one that is open to refinement, innovation, and countless voices at the table. We look forward to implementing new ideas from the creative community, both shared in the survey and yet discovered. This transformative journey of fonts is full of promise, and we're ready to hit the ground running.

The Global Font Use and Forecasting Survey was conducted by the Monotype Foundry Team in collaboration with independent market research company Censuswide. Romeo Ruz and Colleen Good oversaw the project, with assistance from ThoughtLDR. The report was authored by Emily Fritz and designed by Ashley Escobar.

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