

Akzidenz-Grotesk

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(Redirected from Akzidenz Grotesk)

Akzidenz-Grotesk is a realist sans-serif typeface originally released by the H. Berthold AG type foundry in 1896 under the title Accidenz-Grotesk.^[1] It was the first sans serif typeface to be widely used and influenced many later neo-grotesque typefaces. Max Miedinger at the Haas Foundry used it as a model for the typeface Neue Haas Grotesk released in 1957, and renamed Helvetica in 1960. Miedinger sought to refine the typeface making it more even and unified. Two other releases from 1957, Adrian Frutiger's Univers and Bauer and Baum's Folio, take inspiration from Akzidenz-Grotesk .

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Design

Contemporary versions of Akzidenz-Grotesk descend from a late-1950s project, directed by Günter Gerhard Lange at Berthold, to enlarge the typeface family, adding a larger character set, but retaining all of the idiosyncrasies of the 1898 face. Some new weights, condensed and extended widths were released under the title Standard.

The design of Akzidenz-Grotesk may have originated from the c. 1880 typeface Royal Grotesk Light from the Berlin foundry Ferdinand Theinhardt Schriftgiesserei^[2], who also supplied the regular, medium and bold weights of the typeface. Günter Gerhard Lange added other weights as AG Extra Bold (1966) and AG Super (1968). In 2001, Günter Gerhard Lange added more variants to the family including Super Italic and Extra Bold italic.

In May 2006, Berthold announced the release of Akzidenz-Grotesk in OpenType format, under the name Akzidenz-Grotesk Pro. The Pro family offers extended language support for Central European, Baltic and Turkish as well as Welsh, archaic Danish and Esperanto and is available in CFF PostScript OpenType. Berthold also released Akzidenz-Grotesk Standard, which includes glyphs of Western European character set, in both PostScript and TrueType flavored OpenType.^[3]

In May 2007 Berthold announced the release of Akzidenz-Grotesk Pro+, which includes Cyrillic and Greek characters.^[4]

Akzidenz-Grotesk Next

In December 2006, Berthold announced the release of Akzidenz-Grotesk Next.^[5] Designed by Bernd Möellenstadt and Dieter Hofrichter, this typeface family features readjusted x-heights and weights throughout the family, giving a more consistent type design. The family consists of 14 variants with 7 weights in roman and italic, in a single width.

Akzidenz-Grotesk

Aa Ee Rr Aa Ee Rr

Buchdruck

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz0123456789

Typeface

Category

Foundry

Akzidenz-Grotesk

Sans-serif

H. Berthold AG

Akzidenz-Grotesk	Folio	Helvetica	Univers 55
C	C	C	C
G	G	G	G
J	J	J	J
Q	Q	Q	Q
R	R	R	R
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
7	7	7	7

Comparison of distinguishing characters in Akzidenz-Grotesk, Folio, Helvetica, and Univers 55.

Similarities to other typefaces

Akzidenz-Grotesk is sometimes at first glance mistaken for the Helvetica or Univers typefaces. The similarities of Helvetica and Akzidenz-Grotesk are apparent, but the subtle differences include the uppercase and lowercase **C** and the uppercase **G, J, R** and **Q**.

Aside from the subtle differences in these individual letters, Miedinger's primary change to Akzidenz-Grotesk is Helvetica's higher x-height, the distance from the baseline to the height of the lowercase letter **x**. The general effect is that Helvetica appears more oblong while Akzidenz-Grotesk maintains circular counters and bowls. Both Helvetica and Univers are more regular and have a greater consistency of stroke weight.



Linotype sells a version of Akzidenz-Grotesk under the name "Basic Commercial." This is based on Linotype's digitization of the typeface, which is also sold under the Akzidenz-Grotesk name by various foundries; Linotype uses a different name to avoid trademark infringement.^[6]

References

Sources consulted

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- Fiedl, Frederich, Nicholas Ott and Bernard Stein. *Typography: An Encyclopedic Survey of Type Design and Techniques Through History*. Black Dog & Leventhal: 1998. ISBN 1-57912-023-7.
- Kane, John. *A type primer*. Prentice Hall: 2002. ISBN 013099071X.
- Macmillan, Neil. *An A-Z of Type Designers*. Yale University Press: 2006. ISBN 0-300-11151-7.
- Berthold Fonts (<http://www.bertholdtypes.com>) .

Endnotes

1. ^ Akzidenz-Grotesk Goes Greek and Cyrillic (<http://www.microsoft.com/typography/links/news.aspx?NID=5786>)
2. ^ Akzidenz Grotesk roots (<http://www.typophile.com/node/4567>)
3. ^ Berthold Announces the Release of Akzidenz-Grotesk in OpenType Format (<http://www.creativepro.com/story/news/24218.html>)
4. ^ AG goes Greek and Cyrillic (<http://www.microsoft.com/typography/links/news.aspx?NID=5786>)
5. ^ Berthold Releases Akzidenz-Grotesk Next (<http://www.microsoft.com/typography/links/news.aspx?NID=5711>)
6. ^ Thread on Typophile (<http://www.typophile.com/node/9579/61260>) containing Linotype's official explanation of the origin of Basic Commercial, in response to an accusation of forgery.

External links

- Berthold AG web page for Akzidenz-Grotesk Pro (http://www.bertholdtypes.com/bq_library/790030.html)
- Typowiki: Akzidenz-Grotesk (http://typophile.com/wiki/akzidenz_grotesk)
- An ode to Akzidenz Grotesk on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L5ol02WPaYM>)

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Categories: Berthold typefaces | Grotesque sans-serif typefaces

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