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Logitech's POP Keys Keyboard

This design object has been around in the past in the form of a typewriter. Since then, it has evolved into what is now called the keyboard. The keyboard has gone through different transformations for the casual user, office worker, or gamer. The keyboard I would be referring to will be Logitech's POP Keys which was released in November 2021. This is described as a wireless mechanical keyboard that includes customizable emoji keys. Logitech has produced multiple variations of the keyboard focusing less on design and more on economical price value. Logitech was slowly falling off the market and this led to a shift change in the company focusing more on design.



The design behind this keyboard, I believe, holds influences from Marinetti's *The Futurist Manifesto* such as "we declare that the splendor of the world has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed." This refers to the present being far behind from the past because as new technologies arise, new forms of inventions occur, and thus the future would always be better. Futurism emphasizes the idea of people having a future-forward mindset and youthfulness. In reference, Logitech's POP Keys keyboard was created to appeal to the Gen Z

audience. A young audience that was born into a digital world and lives life on their own terms while being expressive and conscious of aesthetics. The keyboard offers a new form of keycaps that reflects expression through the use of emojis. This addition signifies a push forward into how we communicate by the means of a machine. The bright colors such as red, yellow, and blue pop out to the eye and speak of the fierce and unique approach to life right now. Through Marinetti's eyes, these colors could possibly reflect his belief of futurism being the thrill of facing danger, being courageous, and being fierce in revolt.



Aside from the design providing the keyboard its aesthetic appeal, there is a design that gives the keyboard function. The keyboard is considered an everyday item the average user uses. Thus, the keyboard serves as a tool that provides function. This 'form and function' are influences that may originate from Walter Gropius' *The Theory and Organization of the Bauhaus* manifesto. Gropius states, "Man, who creates and constructs, must learn the specific language of construction in order to make others understand his idea." The Bauhaus is a school that sought to bring together training in art and craft. He explored the idea of not only making art as something

to see but to providing art to something that provides a function in our lives. The Logitech POP Keys keyboard can be seen as such an example. This keyboard is mechanical and each key has a switch underneath so it provides the user with a precise and airy feel. The emoji keycaps is another function that helps the user express themselves at their convenience. Before this, physical keyboards did not offer this option. This relates to Gropius' point that we have infinite space and our realization of things must make it into the material world; it must be created into form for it to exist as a function.

An interesting regard to this keyboard is that although it consists of function and form, the overall design may serve form more so than function. Logitech's intention to target the Gen Z audience brings the keyboard to look aesthetically appealing while bringing average keyboard functions. The key caps on this keyboard strays away from the average square and rectangular shapes it usually has and it uses circular and oval shapes instead. Its keycap design is an influence from the typewriter used before the keyboard. Aside from this, the keyboard is also much more compact than the regular keyboard so its functionality is technically reduced. It is considered a 75 percent keyboard. The decision to use 5 keycaps as expressive emoji options may be a decision point for those who think that it is better kept to its previous functions.

Overall, the keyboard has come a long way and has been broken down into different user appeals. As previously mentioned, there are the office workers, the gamer, the average user, and now the users who are style-conscious. The Logitech POP Keys keyboard can be seen as new of its kind because Logitech was known as the go-to for an economical office keyboard. Even though some people may say that its function is mediocre, I believe that because we now live in a digital world, this is a keyboard that is keeping up with its time and audience.