

## Marketing wisely on a shoe-string budget

This is the fifth in a series of articles intended to help chapter marketing teams maximize their "bang for the buck", particularly when faced with a limited budget. Last time we took a close look at the Press Release. This time I want to take a look at using color in your advertising and the impact that colors have in your marketing plan through an overview of the Psychology of Color.

## CHAPTER 6: The Psychology of Color

Perhaps no choice is as vital to marketing as color. When you are selecting the color for a product or for your email marketing campaign, color has tremendous impact on all of us. Subconsciously, we associate different colors with different things.

In this article, let's examine the psychology of color and look at some common associations of different colors. By understanding the importance of color to consumers and characteristics of many individual colors we begin to see the connection between graphic design and psychology. The numbers are pretty fascinating!


"Research reveals people make a sub- conscious judgment about an environment or product within 90 seconds of initial viewing. Between 62\% and $\mathbf{9 0 \%}$ of that assessment is based on color alone"


Ads in color are read up to

than the same ads in black and white.


Credit: WebFX
The psychology of color directly plays into consumer behavior. Nearly $85 \%$ of consumers name color as the primary reason they purchase a particular product. 93\% look at visual appearance when they buy a product and color improves comprehension, learning, and readability.

When you are looking at the best visual choices for your next project, keep in mind the impact that color has.


RED - Creates a sense of urgency, which is good for clearance sales. Encourages appetite, thus is frequently used by fast-food chains. Physically stimulates the body, raising blood pressure and heart rate, associated with movement, excitement, and passion.

BLUE - The preferred color of men. It's associated with peace, water, tranquility, and reliability. Blue provides a sense of security, curbs appetite, and stimulates productivity. The most common color used by conservative brands looking to promote trust in their products.

GREEN - Associated with health, tranquility, power, and nature. Used in stores to relax customers and for promoting environmental issues. Green stimulates harmony in your brain and encourages a balance leading to decisiveness.

PURPLE - Commonly associated with royalty, wisdom, and respect. Stimulates problem-solving as well as creativity. Frequently used to promote beauty
and anti-aging products.
ORANGE \& YELLOW - Cheerful colors that promote optimism. Yellow can make babies cry, while orange can trigger a sense of caution. Used to create a sense of anxiety that can draw in impulsive buyers and window shoppers.

There is some argument whether black and white are colors. Technically speaking, black is the absence of light and white is the absence of color. We'll talk more about that in a later article, but for right now let's consider them colors, as they also have psychological impact.

BLACK - Associated with authority, power, stability, and strength. Often a symbol of intelligence, but can become overwhelming if used to frequently.

GREY - Symbolizes feelings of practicality, old age, and solidarity. But too much grey can lead to feelings of nothingness and depression.

WNNTE - Associated with feelings of purity, cleanliness and safety. Can be used to project an absence of color or neutrality. White space helps spark creativity since it can be perceived as an unaltered, clean state.

Here are some examples of how various companies have applied colors in their branding.


Dan Shaffer, a leading expert on the psychology of color, writes:
"Using orange lettering in your calls to attention is a good strategy because orange psychologically represents a friendly and confident brand, and will tell potential customers that they should purchase your
products and services. Orange is also very attentiongrabbing when used in bright hues.
"On the other hand, green signals a link to nature, wealth, and tranquility. Green is a good choice if you want to relax your customers, or if you want to indicate that your company can bring them wealth. Another way to get a sense for whether or not a color might be a good choice for your brand is by taking a look at the kinds of brands already associated with it. Whole Foods, Animal Planet and Starbucks all use green to indicate a link to nature, which is something consumers want from organic grocery stores, animal shows and quality coffee products.
"Colors develop specific connections for consumers over time, which may be why many social networking sites create their branded images using the color blue. This is because blue relaxes people, but also creates a sense of security and trust in a brand. Sites like Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and Skype all use blue in their branded images to show their trustworthiness to site visitors, while also creating a relaxing atmosphere in which their social media users can post and tweet until their hearts are content.
"By understanding the subconscious psychological effects of colors you use in your branding and advertising campaigns, you can better target you niche audiences and effectively market you company's image in a visually stimulating way. This is especially important when you are redesigning a website or brand image. The psychology of colors is a very powerful tool in web design, graphic design, and other areas of your business.
"And, when utilized properly, you can use the psychological impact of color to your advantage in branding, design, marketing, and promotion materials to get the best possible results from every strategy."

The bottom line is that color plays important role in the message we are trying to get across. Research has shown that predicting consumer reaction to color appropriateness is far more important than the individual color itself. Don't simply use color for the sake of being colorful; rather, use it to create impact and call attention to the important elements of your marketing materials.

I hope you find this information both enlightening and helpful. Next time we'll take a look at color theory and learn more about what color combinations work well together.

