

## **“Different Colors Different Meanings – A New Marketing Tool “**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

Color is sometimes referred to as the *silent salesperson* because it transfers a meaning on a subliminal level. ((Eiseman, L. (2000) ‘The Pantone Guide to Communicating with Color’, Grafix Press Ltd, New York)) If this is so, selecting the ‘right’ color for your logo, Marketing & Advertising tools can give you a competitive advantage by making you stand out from the crowd.

Colors are more than a combination of red and blue or yellow and black. They are non-verbal communication. Colors have symbolism and color meanings that go beyond ink.

As you design brochures, logos, and Web sites, it is helpful to keep in mind how the eye and the mind perceive certain colors and the color meanings we associate with each color.

This paper will give a quick overview of what each color stands for. Some questions we generally want to be answered:

- What color represents your brand's personality?
- What color suits the characteristics of your product/service?
- What color does your competitor(s) use & why?

Color symbolism is the use of color to represent traditional, cultural, or religious ideas, concepts, or feelings or to evoke physical reactions. Choosing colors based on symbolism or color meanings can apply to everything from clothing to wall paint to home furnishings. In desktop publishing and design choosing color based on color meanings applies to print and electronic projects from logos to Web site backgrounds.

**KEYWORDS:** Brand's Personality, Culture, Traditions

Color Wheel- **WHY COLOR MATTERS IN ADVERTISING & MARKETING**

**INTRODUCTION**

In an increasingly competitive and saturated market, communication needs to be carefully targeted. Few companies have a brand that is powerful enough to generate a quasi uniform perception world-wide. For most companies it is important to understand what the impact of communication and colour use will be on the targeted group. Therefore it is not only important to understand its meanings but also to find easily applicable rules for translating them. This short research analyses the impact of colour on consumers belonging to different cultures, and how each of them perceives them. In the Internet age these differences are particularly relevant to online advertisers since colour is the first thing that you notice on a web site or banner, even before you can understand which language is being used or what the message says. But how to use colours cleverly and what is colour?

**Colour Theory**

We can see over 7 million colours. These are built from some basic building blocks:

1. **Primary colours**- Red, blue and yellow are the basis of all other shades, and can't be created by combining other colours. If all three are mixed together in equal amounts, they will make black.
2. **Secondary Colours**- This is the term used to describe the three colours that are created by mixing two primary colours together. There are three secondary colours: violet (made up of red and blue); orange (made up of red and yellow) and green (made up of yellow and blue).
3. **Tertiary Colours**- These come from mixing one primary with one secondary colour. These are six: saffron (red and orange); lime (yellow with green); lavender (blue with violet); purple (red with violet); amber (yellow with orange) and turquoise (blue with green).

When combining white or black to the above-mentioned colours you obtain tints and shades, while tones describe the depth of a colour. Neutrals are subtle shades from the palest range of colours (beige, cream), and are used for balancing vibrant or rich colours. Cold colours have a high proportion of blue in their make-up, such as violet blue and some greens, and they have a calming effect. Warm colours have more red and yellow in their make-up. They are energising.

One of the key elements of building a strong brand is color selection. Every color has a different feel and various associations. By choosing a color or a combination of colors for your brand identity, you will take on those associations. Colors will evoke certain emotions and feelings towards your brand so it is vital to choose a color that will represent your identity effectively.

### **Why Color Matters**

If you own a color in your industry, this color will symbolize your product. This can act as a great identifier. For example, if you sell physical goods, your packaging will stand out from the competition. The color will also be recognizable on any promotional media and your logos.

### **How to select your color:-**

**Colors aren't tied to any particular industry** - though some may be better suited for some services/products than others. You should aim to pick a color that will represent your brand's personality best. One that will give your customers the right impression the first time they see it.

**You aren't limited to one color-** Some brands like eBay choose to go with many colors to represent variety — but you can also choose a couple of colors that work well together.

**Consider differences in cultural interpretations of your color-**For example in the Western world, white is considered the color of purity and peace, however, in some parts of Asia white is the color of death. Make sure the color you select will give the right impressions in the markets you're present in.

**Pick a color opposite to that of your main competitor-** The color of your main competitor is probably the most important point to consider. If you're the first in a new industry or market segment, then you have first picks. Choose the color that represents your product and its personality. If you're second, then that first choice may already be taken. Instead of picking the same or similar color, pick the opposite. Pick blue if your competitor has red, pick purple if they have yellow, etc. A brand's strength lies in its ability to stand out. Picking the same color to that of your key competitor makes you a me-too product. Instead, you want to separate yourself from the competitor, you want to show that you're different.

## **WHAT DOES A COLOR DEPICT**

### **Red**

Red is the color of fire and blood, so it is associated with energy, war, danger, strength, power, determination as well as passion, desire, and love. Red is a very emotionally intense color. It enhances human metabolism, increases respiration rate, and raises blood pressure. It has very high visibility, which is why stop signs, stoplights, and fire equipment are usually painted red. In heraldry, red is used to indicate courage. It is a color found in many national flags.

Red brings text and images to the foreground. Use it as an accent color to stimulate people to make quick decisions; it is a perfect color for 'Buy Now' or 'Click Here' buttons on Internet banners and websites. In advertising, red is often used to evoke erotic feelings (red lips, red nails, red-light districts, 'Lady in Red', etc). Red is widely used to indicate danger (high voltage signs, traffic lights). This color is also commonly associated with energy, so you can use it when promoting energy drinks, games, cars, items related to sports and high physical activity.

**Light red** represents joy, sexuality, passion, sensitivity, and love. **Pink** signifies romance, love, and friendship. It denotes feminine qualities and passiveness. **Dark red** is associated with vigor, willpower, rage, anger, leadership, courage, longing, malice, and wrath.

**Brown** suggests stability and denotes masculine qualities.

**Reddish-brown** is associated with harvest and fall.

### **Orange**

Orange combines the energy of red and the happiness of yellow. It is associated with joy, sunshine, and the tropics. Orange represents enthusiasm, fascination, happiness, creativity, determination, attraction, success, encouragement, and stimulation. To the human eye, orange is a very hot color, so it gives the sensation of heat. Nevertheless, orange is not as aggressive as red. Orange increases oxygen supply to the brain, produces an invigorating effect, and stimulates mental activity. It is highly accepted among young people. As a citrus color, orange is associated with healthy food and stimulates appetite. Orange is the color of fall and harvest. In heraldry, orange is symbolic of strength and endurance.

Orange has very high visibility, so you can use it to catch attention and highlight the most important elements of your design. Orange is very effective for promoting food products and toys.

**Dark orange** can mean deceit and distrust.

**Red-orange** corresponds to desire, sexual passion, pleasure, domination, aggression, and thirst for action.

**Gold** evokes the feeling of prestige. The meaning of gold is illumination, wisdom, and wealth. Gold often symbolizes high quality.

### **Yellow**

Yellow is the color of sunshine. It's associated with joy, happiness, intellect, and energy. Yellow produces a warming effect, arouses cheerfulness, stimulates mental activity, and generates muscle energy. Yellow is often associated with food. Bright, pure yellow is an attention getter, which is the reason taxicabs are painted this color. When overused, yellow may have a disturbing effect; it is known that babies cry more in yellow rooms. Yellow is seen before other colors when placed against black; this combination is often used to issue a warning. In heraldry, yellow indicates honor and loyalty. Later the meaning of yellow was connected with cowardice.

Use yellow to evoke pleasant, cheerful feelings. You can choose yellow to promote children's products and items related to leisure. Yellow is very effective for attracting attention, so use it to highlight the most important elements of your design. Men usually perceive yellow as a very lighthearted, 'childish' color, so it is not recommended to use yellow when selling prestigious, expensive products to men – nobody will buy a yellow business suit or a yellow Mercedes. Yellow is an unstable and spontaneous color, so avoid using yellow if you want to suggest stability and safety. Light yellow tends to disappear into white, so it usually needs a dark color to highlight it. Shades of yellow are visually unappealing because they lose cheerfulness and become dingy.

**Dull (dingy) yellow** represents caution, decay, sickness, and jealousy.  
**Light yellow** is associated with intellect, freshness, and joy.

## **Green**

Green is the color of nature. It symbolizes growth, harmony, freshness, and fertility. Green has strong emotional correspondence with safety. Dark green is also commonly associated with money.

Green has great healing power. It is the most restful color for the human eye; it can improve vision. Green suggests stability and endurance. Sometimes green denotes lack of experience; for example, a 'greenhorn' is a novice. In heraldry, green indicates growth and hope. Green, as opposed to red, means safety; it is the color of free passage in road traffic.

Use green to indicate safety when advertising drugs and medical products. Green is directly related to nature, so you can use it to promote 'green' products. Dull, darker green is commonly associated with money, the financial world, banking, and Wall Street.

**Dark green** is associated with ambition, greed, and jealousy.  
**Yellow-green** can indicate sickness, cowardice, discord, and jealousy.  
**Aqua** is associated with emotional healing and protection.  
**Olive green** is the traditional color of peace.

## **Blue**

Blue is the color of the sky and sea. It is often associated with depth and stability. It symbolizes trust, loyalty, wisdom, confidence, intelligence, faith, truth, and heaven. Blue is considered beneficial to the mind and body. It slows human metabolism and produces a calming effect. Blue is strongly associated with tranquility and calmness. In heraldry, blue is used to symbolize piety and sincerity. You can use blue to promote products and services related to cleanliness (water purification filters, cleaning liquids, vodka), air and sky (airlines, airports, air conditioners), water and sea (sea voyages, mineral water). As opposed to emotionally warm colors like red, orange, and yellow; blue is linked to consciousness and intellect. Use blue to suggest precision when promoting high-tech products. Blue is a masculine color; according to studies, it is highly accepted among males. Dark blue is associated with depth, expertise, and stability; it is a preferred color for corporate America.

Avoid using blue when promoting food and cooking, because blue suppresses appetite. When used together with warm colors like yellow or red, blue can create high-impact, vibrant designs; for example, blue-yellow-red is a perfect color scheme for a superhero.

**Light blue** is associated with health, healing, tranquility, understanding, and softness. **Dark blue** represents knowledge, power, integrity, and seriousness.

### **Purple**

Purple combines the stability of blue and the energy of red. Purple is associated with royalty. It symbolizes power, nobility, luxury, and ambition. It conveys wealth and extravagance. Purple is associated with wisdom, dignity, independence, creativity, mystery, and magic. According to surveys, almost 75 percent of pre-adolescent children prefer purple to all other colors. Purple is a very rare color in nature; some people consider it to be artificial.

Light purple is a good choice for a feminine design. You can use bright purple when promoting children's products.

**Light purple** evokes romantic and nostalgic feelings.

**Dark purple** evokes gloom and sad feelings. It can cause frustration.

### **White**

White is associated with light, goodness, innocence, purity, and virginity. It is considered to be the color of perfection. White means safety, purity, and cleanliness. As opposed to black, white usually has a positive connotation. White can represent a successful beginning. In heraldry, white depicts faith and purity.

In advertising, white is associated with coolness and cleanliness because it's the color of snow. You can use white to suggest simplicity in high-tech products. White is an appropriate color for charitable organizations; angels are usually imagined wearing white clothes. White is associated with hospitals, doctors, and sterility, so you can use white to suggest safety when promoting medical products. White is often associated with low weight, low-fat food, and dairy products.

## **Black**

Black is associated with power, elegance, formality, death, evil, and mystery. Black is a mysterious color associated with fear and the unknown (black holes). It usually has a negative connotation (blacklist, black humor, 'black death'). Black denotes strength and authority; it is considered to be a very formal, elegant, and prestigious color (black tie, black Mercedes). In heraldry, black is the symbol of grief.

Black gives the feeling of perspective and depth, but a black background diminishes readability. A black suit or dress can make you look thinner. When designing for a gallery of art or photography, you can use a black or gray background to make the other colors stand out. Black contrasts well with bright colors. Combined with red or orange – other very powerful colors – black gives a very aggressive color scheme.

## **COLORS IN ADVERTISEMENTS:-**

Back in the 1950s, people depended mainly on the radio, the printing press and the black and white television as media for advertising. These three media largely limited the visual experience of the viewer, as there was not a wide spectrum of colours used here. However, as technology advanced and introduced the television with colour and the Internet, advertisements have become increasingly vibrant and diverse, along with the importance of colour in advertising.

Colour is all around us. It is the lenses by which we perceive the world. Often, we take them for granted, not realising the effects specific colours may have on us that others do not, and also some colours that hold cultural significance or have stereotypical ideas associated with them. Since the world has perceived light, we have perceived colour. How we register colour is when light beams enter our eyes, pigments in our eyes determine the different colours and lastly will send out a message to our brains. Thus, colours do affect how we feel and react to certain advertisements. Because we do not actively think of colours and the ideas they remind us of, the effect colours have on us is subliminal. Although we are not conscious of it all the time, this affective effect colours have on us is very powerful, as humans have been conditioned to accept colours to represent specific ideas such as the stereotypical blue for boy and pink for girl.

Thus, it is essential for designers of advertisements to be aware of the different responses different colours will bring about and thus have the ability to make the choice of which colour to use to enhance their advertisement. Generally, colours can be compartmentalised into two categories ?warm, bright and loud colours like red or orange and passive, serene and soothing



colours such as blue or green. Designers must use these colours to their favour and compliment the general attractiveness of the advertisement or the underlying message. Colours, other than emotionally affecting people, also have physical effects. They may affect the visibility of an object, for instance, a yellow or white object may look larger than the same object of other colours. Another example would be that human responses are 12% quicker than usual under red lighting.

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### **Physical and Cultural Color Reactions:-**

Sometimes colors create a physical reaction (red has been shown to raise blood pressure) and at other times it is a cultural reaction (in the U.S. white is for weddings, in some Eastern cultures, white is the color for mourning and funerals). Colors follow trends as well. Avocado, a shade of green, is synonymous with the 60s and 70s in the minds of some consumers.

### **Color Relationships:-**

In addition to understanding color meanings, it helps with mixing and matching colors to know the relationship of adjacent, harmonizing, contrasting, and complementary colors. below is a brief synopsis:

- **Adjacent** or **harmonizing** colors appear next to each other on the color wheel. Harmonizing colors often work well together but if too close in value they can appear washed out or not have enough contrast. A harmonizing trio could be something like blue, light blue, and cyan or perhaps red, orange, and yellow.
- **Contrasting** colors are separated from each other by other colors -- they come from different segments of the color wheel. The further apart, the more the contrast. Red (from the warm half of the color wheel) contrasts with green and blue (from the cool half of the color wheel). Shades of purple contrast with shades of green. Contrasting colors that are directly opposite each other on the color wheel may be described as **clashing** colors -- see the description for complementary. Despite the name, colors that clash are not always a bad combination if used carefully. They provide great contrast and high visibility.
- **Complementary** colors are on opposite sides of the color wheel -- they are each half of a pair of contrasting colors. For example, blue is a complementary color to yellow. Green is complementary to purple and magenta. A pair of complementary colors printed side by side can sometimes cause visual vibration (clash) making them a less than desirable combination. However, separate them on the page with other colors and they can work together. Note the

spelling. These are not *complimentary* colors. They don't always flatter (compliment) one another but they do complete (complement) each other.

On each of the cool, warm, mixed, and neutral pages are links to profiles of specific groups of colors with descriptions of their nature, cultural color meanings, how to use each color in design work, and which colors work best together.

Four different groups of colors:-

- **Cool Color Meanings** (calming): Blue, Green, Turquoise, Silver
- **Warm Color Meanings** (exciting): Red, Pink, Yellow, Gold, Orange
- **Mixed Cool/Warm Color Meanings**: Purple, Lavender, Green, Turquoise
- **Neutral Color Meanings** (unifying): Brown, Beige, Ivory, Gray, Black, White

### **What Colors Say About Your Personality:-**

#### **Red**

The color red is the hue at the long-wave end of the visible spectrum, evoked in the human observer by radiant energy with wavelengths of approximately 630 to 750 nanometers. Boring! Who cares what the color red literally means -- right.

The color red evokes dominance, power and attention. Red clothing will definitely make you stand out from the rest of the crowd and will mark you with sexual energy. Red is a commanding color that should be worn once in a while, for those times when you really want to make a statement and be different.

Here are a few striking red fashion items you could wear to make your statement:

- Red V-neck or crew neck **sweaters**
- A sturdy red windbreaker
- A red umbrella
- A red button-down shirt
- A red suit with matching red shoes (only if you're looking to do a little pimpin')

## **Peach/Pink**

Peach and pink project an upbeat attitude and calming characteristics, as well as good health. Remember, these explanations are generic and won't apply to every man wearing such colors. So don't think you'll look healthier just because you're wearing a pink or peach sweater, although it might liven up your outer shell.

Here are a few peach or pink fashion items that can lighten up your appearance:

- A peach button-down shirt (for late afternoon cocktail parties)
- Pink was in last summer -- but won't be this summer.
- A peach wool cardigan or crew neck sweater (with dark indigo jeans)

## **Black**

The color of darkness is undoubtedly the most popular color in fashion. A man wearing black suggests elegance, authority and power. When worn properly, **black** clothing also conveys neatness, simplicity and great versatility.

I don't know of any piece of clothing or fashion accessory that doesn't look good in black. Never hesitate to go with black -- just don't wear all black, all the time.

## **White**

White clothing is a sign of virtue and can give you an extremely clean appearance. This obviously implies that your white clothing should be spotless. White clothing can also point towards a higher social status, and looks very preppy.

You can look *zestfully* clean with this white fashion apparel:

- A white button-down shirt
- In summer, a nice pair of white linen pants
- A trendy white winter/spring/fall jacket
- For summer galas, a well-tailored white suit will set you apart

Today, however, you'll learn what some of the most popular colors in fashion can actually say about your individuality.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF COLOR'S IN LOGO**

The American Marketing Association defines a logo as a "word, phrase or graphic, that is used as a continuing symbol for a company, organization or brand." At Bruce Clay, Inc. we take that definition one step further. We believe your logo is the first line of contact between you and your audience. It identifies your product or services to your customer and distinguishes you from your competition. Your logo is extremely important in helping your company create and maintain its brand in today's marketplace and is key to successful branding.

Why are logos so important? Because all we had to do was mention the logo and you instantly pictured the logo and identified the company name, didn't you? It is that immediate recognition that makes logos so important to marketing and to the success of your company. If you want your company to be successful, you need your logo to be a member of that list. An effective logo can make a small company appear more like a big business and help keep customers loyal.

An effective logo can help sell your product and give your customer's an image to help them define your company and its goals. **The goal of your logo is to build a brand, not to sell a product.** Your logo should appeal to your customer's emotions, sell a lifestyle, and give your product a recognizable personality.

An effectively designed logo will be easily recognizable and follow four main principles. It will:

- Positively represent your company
- Be unique and memorable
- Follow the basic logo design principles
- Be multi-functional

Your logo will often be the first glimpse a user gets of your company. As a result, it's important your logo accurately depicts who you are. It will set the tone for the rest of your customers' interaction with your company, so make sure your logo represents your company as a whole, not just a portion of it. For example, think of NBC's peacock logo. The logo incorporates multi-colored feathers with each feather representing a different division of the company. Google also does this. Each letter is a different color to represent all of their different components. Granted, if Google tried to include ALL of their components they'd run out of colors!

Your logo should also depict the nature of your business. For example, if you are a tire company, using your brand name printed in fanciful script is probably not a good idea. Customers will not associate fanciful characters with dependable tires. In this case, if you are going to go with a

text-based logo, you should try using solid block letters (think Midas). This will help your customers associate your company as being sturdy and dependable. Exactly how they want their tires.

A good design is crucial to the success of your logo. In order to engage and excite your audience it must be useful, readable and visually pleasing. Studies have found that well-designed logos are easier for customers to remember. When designing your logo, keep in mind the logo must look just as good in full-color as it does in black and white. A strong design will help your logo be remembered. Your logo design should be based on three main factors: shape and color

- **Shape** - Shape is a very powerful thing when constructing a logo. It can be used to represent your company's stability, flexibility, or power, depending on what shapes or lines are used. Long, angular shapes, like rectangles, are said to be somewhat dominating; while round, proportionate shapes symbolize harmony and/or perfection. Just using lines can convey an array of emotions, so be cautious of how you use them. Curves and slight edges can help your company create a softer, more casual image. The sharp edges found in a square may represent formality or tension. They are often used for technology-based logos. Use the shape or line structure that best reflects the vision of your company.
- **Color** - Color is uniquely powerful and will be a key component of your logo. Why? Because users instinctively use color to categorize objects and distinguish brands. They associate colors with different feelings. When choosing colors it's more than just picking a color and creating a brand around your selection. Users associate colors with different feelings: Oranges often connote a feeling of luxury or enthusiasm; Reds signify a sense of intensity or passion; White represents purity, youth and stability; Blue conveys peace, loyalty and trust; and Black is said to represent a sense of mystery, mourning or sophistication. So make sure you're using your colors wisely. Using your colors appropriately will reassure consumers and help establish customer loyalty.

Many users have come to associate companies solely by their color. Think about it. A woman sees a small light blue box and she immediately knows it's from Tiffany's. A red-and-white soda can is a can of Coke. People know Mary Kay Pink, UPS Brown. Campbell's soup comes in a red and white can, while Progresso comes in blue. It's how we associate them. What colors represent your company?

There are three main types of logos: combination, logotype and iconic logos. While there is no rule that says one is superior to the other, it is your job to select the logo that best represents your company and the one you feel with have the most impact on your audience.

- **Combination Logo** - Combination logos feature a symbolic icon, as well as text. An example of a combination logo would be the McDonalds logo, which contains the name of the company as well as the infamous golden arches. Another example would be the hotel chain Hyatt's text and curved line logo or Puma's logo which mixes the company name and the image of the jumping puma.
- **Logotype Logo** - Logotype logos are comprised of text only. An example of this would be the Google logo, which displays the brand name in various colors. Other examples would be the Kellogg's red script logo and Hertz's blocky logo.
- **Iconic Logo** - An iconic logo is comprised of a symbol or graphic only. There is no text. An example of this would be the Nike swoosh. A customer needs no words to distinguish Nike's iconic swoosh symbol. Another example would be Adidas' three stripe logo.

|                      |   |  |
|----------------------|---|--|
| <p><b>RED</b></p>    | <p>hot<br/>passion<br/>Love<br/>rebellious<br/>powerful<br/>sex<br/>radical<br/>excited<br/>bold<br/>devil</p>                |    |
| <p><b>ORANGE</b></p> | <p>warm<br/>fall<br/>summer<br/>retro<br/>mellow<br/>solar<br/>friendly<br/>rococo<br/>cottage<br/>inviting</p>               |    |
| <p><b>YELLOW</b></p> | <p>solar<br/>happy<br/>cheerful<br/>summer<br/>fun<br/>energetic<br/>jubilant<br/>young<br/>sun<br/>friendly</p>              |    |
| <p><b>GREEN</b></p>  | <p>environmental<br/>money<br/>natural<br/>organic<br/>Profit<br/>earthy<br/>grow<br/>Dublin<br/>trust<br/>jealous</p>        |   |
| <p><b>BLUE</b></p>   | <p>liberal<br/>cold<br/>smart<br/>Progress<br/>music<br/>trust<br/>freedom<br/>royal<br/>medicine<br/>launch</p>              |  |
| <p><b>PURPLE</b></p> | <p>royal<br/>mystical<br/>victorian<br/>decadent<br/>vanity<br/>romantic<br/>elegant<br/>stylish<br/>sensual<br/>eclectic</p> |  |
| <p><b>BROWN</b></p>  | <p>rustic<br/>furniture<br/>fall<br/>earthy<br/>cottage<br/>library<br/>warm<br/>romantic<br/>colonial<br/>book</p>           |  |
| <p><b>MULTI</b></p>  |   |  |

## **Colour Associations Across Cultures**

A survey was conducted among high school students in 20 countries, asking them to rate 7 colours in 12 semantic differential items. The results were reported for the dimensions of evaluation, potency, and activity. Blue was the most highly evaluated colour, followed by green and white. The most potent colours were black and red. Red was the most active colour, whereas black and grey were the most passive colours. In another test, subjects from four cultures (Japan, People's Republic of China, South Korea and the USA) were asked to state which one of eight colours was most closely associated with 13 words often used to describe consumer products. The results indicate some similarities and some dissimilarities across cultures. All four cultures associate blue with high quality and red with love. Purple is associated with expensive for subjects from Japan, PRC, and South Korea. In contrast, respondents from the United States associate purple with inexpensive. Black is consistently associated with expensive and powerful across cultures. Colour combinations are considered culturally bound with certain ideologies and traditions (Geboy 1996). The combination of colours selected for product logos and communication may convey meaning as a result of the specific colour pairings. For example black and red signifies happiness to Chinese people, and therefore the colour combination is commonly used for wedding invitations. This is very important when choosing the colours for a logo, or the dominant colours of a banner.

## **A Spectrum of Colour Meaning**

An interesting pattern of colours forming a spectrum of meaning is evident across all countries. Close examination of the eight perceptual maps shows that a straight line can be drawn with red on one end and the blue-green-white cluster on the other end. The meaning associations along this spectrum run from „active“, „hot“, and „vibrant“ (associated with red) to „calming“, „gentle“, and „peaceful“ (associated with the blue-green-white cluster). The remaining six colours tend to locate approximately equidistant between these endpoints. This research also found that respondents from different countries have different tendencies with regard to matching colours in a logo design. More specifically, some groups tend to match or select only colours they like equally (respondents from Hong Kong and Taiwan in particular). Alternatively, other groups of respondents seemed to match colours that share the same meanings, and others paired colours whose associations were complementary.



## **CONCLUSION**

This paper shows just how colour can be a critical factor in Communication and the power that it can exert on perception in various Cultures. The study of the impact of colours on internet surfers and consumers has been extensive, but it is still at the beginning as far as cross-cultural localization is concerned. Findings should now be integrated to other research results on webvertising effectiveness such as banner burnout rate (the decrease of effectiveness after a certain number of impressions), integration into the environment, the use of the word „free“, the effect of animation, the development of eye-tracking technology, etc. In particular the use of color-cluster research could prove very helpful in identifying clusters of colors with similar meanings, or in deciding whether a color combination needs changing in order for the ad to retain the same symbolic meaning.

The scope for research and application is very wide, and in a world where only 43% of Web users speak English, with the prospect of them shrinking to 35%, the importance of every aspect of localization increases steadily.

Research reveals people make a subconscious judgment about a person, environment, or product within 90 seconds of initial viewing and that between 62% and 90% of that assessment is based on color alone.

Thus, advertising can be enhanced through the use of specific colours to attract attention on the most fundamental level, to support and emphasise products that will appeal to the target group, and to reinforce the underlying meaning of the advertisements.

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