

Color Combinations

Color has a powerful subconscious effect on every part of our lives and understanding color meanings in business is essential when you are establishing a sign for your business. We don't often realize the impact of our color choices but this can be an invaluable tool to get the best color choices as possible. This month's tip will cover main colors and what they mean for your sign and for your business.

Design Using Red

Often used as a warning sign, red is best used as an accent color as too much red can overwhelm. Red will always elicit a passionate response but the response may be either positive or negative and you may have no control over this response as it will be in the hands of your potential customer. A touch of red can be used as one of the colors on your website to indicate your passion for your business. The color which most complements and balances red is turquoise, although green or blue will also create balance.



Key Words:

Positive Color Meanings in Business:

- action, power
- passion, desire
- strength, courage
- attention-getting
- warm, assertive and confident

Design Using Orange

Apply orange sparingly as it tends to be the most disliked color in the western world. Use it to suggest adventure, fun, and optimism, affordable yet reasonable quality, sociable and easy-going. Orange is an invaluable color in encouraging sales in restaurants, café's, bistros and diners as it stimulates appetite and conversation, contributing to patrons eating and talking longer and spending more money. Orange's stimulation to social communication and the senses makes it a beneficial color for hotels and resorts. Sign designers should consider orange as one of their color choices for its association with journeys, adventure and exciting fun activities. Orange is an appealing color for the youth market as children and teens tend to like its sense of fun and adventure and its suggestion of affordability.



Key Words:

Positive Color Meanings in Business:

- adventurous, risk-taking, vibrant
- stimulating to the senses
- affordable
- warm, sociable, optimistic
- creative flair
- warm-hearted, agreeable and informal

Design Using Yellow

Yellow is a great color for children's products, particularly combined with other bright primary or secondary colors. It is stimulating to their mind and their creativity. For many leisure businesses, particularly those



Keywords:

Positive Color Meanings in Business:

- cheerful, happy, playful, fun
- optimistic, uplifting, illuminating
- confidence, originality,

that promote playful and fun activities, yellow is a beneficial color. It will enhance the promotion of any fun and entertainment. Use yellow where you want to keep people moving. Most people cannot stay for long where there is a lot of yellow. Fast food outlets use it combined with red to encourage people to eat a lot quickly then move on. It is a good to incorporate yellow in the promotion of point of sale purchases - the eyes see yellow first and with so many other distractions in retail stores, you need to capture your customer's attention quickly. Don't use dirty versions of yellow such as mustard - they have negative connotations. Yellow with black provides a warning and is often used in safety signs for this reason.

- creativity
- communication of new ideas

Design Using Green

Green is beneficial for anything to do with health and healing. Green is an ideal color to promote natural, safe, organic businesses. It is also beneficial in the promotion of environmentally friendly businesses. Green suggests something 'new' and fresh. Lime green creates an anticipation of the potential of what is on offer. Green motivates people to join social groups and satisfies their need to belong. Dark green is a good color for money and financial businesses. Use green where you need people to see both sides of a situation as it aids in clear thinking and decision making.



Keywords:

Positive Color Meanings in Business:

- growth and vitality, renewal and restoration
- nature lover and family oriented
- sympathetic, compassionate and nurturing
- adaptable and flexible
- encourages 'social joining' of clubs and other groups, a need to belong

Design Using Blue

Blue is best used for conservative corporate businesses where trust, dependability and honesty are important. Communication businesses which market to individual customers on a one-to-one basis would benefit with some blue in their marketing. Hi-tech and computer technology businesses can benefit from most shades of blue combined with gray. As with turquoise, blue is recommended for any business involved in the area of cleanliness, whether it be cleaning products, water purification or mineral water. It is also beneficial to businesses, such as airlines, boating or air conditioning companies, that relate to the common associations of blue with the sky, air and water. Blue should not be used for food related businesses as it is a color that does not occur naturally in food, except for blueberries, and it is associated with mold and 'off' food. Light blue relates well to the health and wellness industry, to travel and relaxation. Dark blue is a serious color which inspires integrity and honesty and is often used by political organizations, religious organizations and legal firms for this reason.



Keywords:

Positive Color Meanings in Business:

- loyalty, trust and integrity
- reliability and responsibility
- conservatism and perseverance
- authority, devotion and contemplation
- peace and calm

Design Using Purple

Purple is more suitable for businesses related to women or children, although younger men are slowly becoming more attuned to it. Academic institutions often use medium shades of purple or violet as they inspire intellectual thought and achievement. Purple portrays wealth and extravagance when combined with the richness of gold. Lighter versions of purple are suitable for businesses targeted specifically at the female market. Lavender suggests nostalgia and works well for businesses selling old lace, sentimental handmade craft items and antique goods.



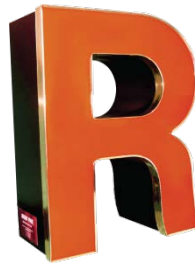
Keywords:

Positive Color Meanings in Business:

- unusual and individual, creative and inventive
- mystery, fantasy and the future
- Royalty, luxury, education and elegance

Design Using Gold

Businesses marketing items of high perceived value will benefit from the use of gold. Gold combined with dark red, dark blue or dark green imparts a message of quality, wealth and prestige.



Keywords:

Positive Color Meanings in Business:

- wealth and prosperity, abundance
- value, quality, luxury, expensive, opulence

Design Using Silver

The color silver reflects quality craftsmanship and artistry and would benefit businesses offering a first class quality service or product or those selling exquisite items to the prestige market. With its modern sleek appearance, silver is appropriate for the hi-tech, innovative computer market and scientific and technological companies. Silver also works well for any businesses promoting and featuring quality modern appliances and equipment.



Keywords:

Positive Color Meanings in Business:

- modern, sleek, high-tech, scientific
- illusion, imagination
- sophisticated
- wealth and riches

Design Using Black

Black is beneficial for businesses selling luxury, elegance and sophistication. These types of businesses include those selling high quality professional products and luxury goods, and up market car companies. Using black is seen as cutting edge and trendy. The youth market tends to be attracted to black with its sophistication and rebelliousness. Black can be used to create a dramatic effect when combined with bright, rich, jewel colors such as red, emerald, cobalt, yellow, magenta and orange. However, in general, using too much black can be intimidating and unfriendly - think of the salesman with the black suit and tie or the black shirt and pants.



Keywords:

Positive Color Meanings in Business:

- authority, power, control
- strong, contained, formal
- seductive, mysterious

Design Using White

White is probably the best color to use as the background color for signs. It allows all other colors to reflect from it and makes all colors except yellow and pastels to be very readable. Using white for negative space on your sign makes it look clean, open and uncluttered. With its suggestion of simplicity, cleanliness and safety, white works well for businesses promoting hi-tech products, kitchen appliances, bathroom items, infant and health related products and those promoting order and efficiency. Depending on the business, it is advantageous to add other appropriate colors which will reflect the individuality of the business as, on its own, white is sterile and cold.



Keywords:

Positive Color Meanings in Business:

- innocence
- purity, cleanliness
- simplicity
- immaculate and neat
- self-sufficient, pristine and open

Design Using Gray

Gray This is a safe color to use in many business applications. It is neutral and serious and can be combined with almost any other color to impart different messages and to reach different target markets. Gray is suitable for legal and financial businesses to suggest power and control, particularly when combined with some white and black. Combining it with blue suggests credibility, trust and reliability. Surprisingly, gold can work well with gray to suggest professional and high quality. Light gray can create a hi-tech look when combined with other colors such as turquoise, light blue, dark blue or yellow.



Keywords:

Positive Color Meanings in Business:

- intellect, knowledge, wisdom, security
- perceived as long-lasting, and classic
- sleek, professional, mature
- refined, dignified, conservative
- neutral, contemporary

Design Using Brown

Brown is appealing to most men due to its strength, reliability, durability and practicality (it hides the dirt). It is not as well accepted by women unless they are involved in outdoor activities and farming. With its connection to the outdoors and down-to-earth activities, brown is suitable for businesses promoting outdoor products and services. Earth moving, landscaping and farming businesses are inspired by the use of brown, along with anyone marketing wholesome and organic products. Durability and credibility as well as homely and comfortable are positive messages given by the use of brown. Light brown suggests neatness, openness, approachability and friendliness. Medium brown relates well to nature, wholesome food and agricultural products when you relate it to color meanings in business. Dark brown relates well to sophisticated and professional men's products when combined with gold or cream.



Keywords:

Positive Color Meanings in Business:

- practical, earthy and down-to-earth
- durable
- stability
- homely, comfortable, warm
- wholesome, natural and organic