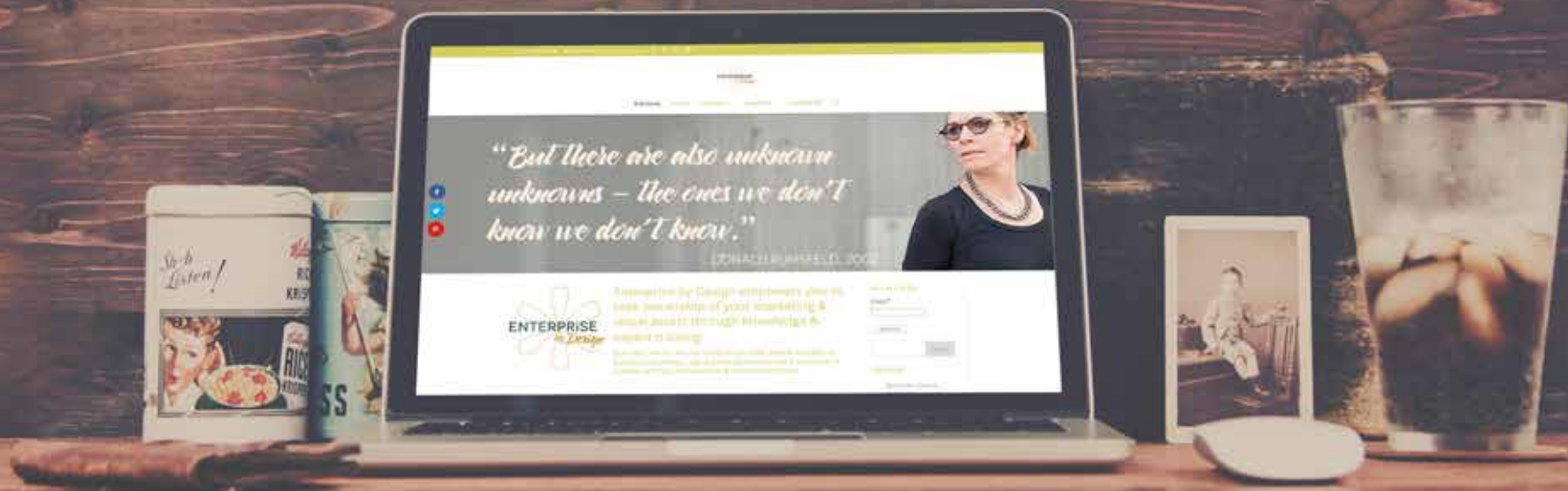




Colour YOUR BUSINESS



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Colour is energy.

It has a physical effect on us has been proved time and again in experiments.

When blind people were asked to identify colours with their fingertips they were all able to do so easily.

This is because colour is light which travels to us in waves.



The colours of our environment affect our behaviour and mood.

When yellow daffodils, bluebells and colourful crocuses appear, we immediately begin to feel livelier.

When grey skies and rain or snow surround us we instinctively draw in and tend to hibernate.



Colour Symbolism ...

Colour symbolism is the associations we, as humans, have been conditioned to make about colour. Many of these responses will be cultural ... take green for instance:

Indonesia: traditionally green was forbidden

Mexico: national colour standing for independence

Middle East: traditional colour of Islam & luck

Eastern cultures: luck

China: green hats for men are taboo because it signals that their wives have committed adultery!

South America: death

America: money

Globally: military

Spiritually: healing



Colour Psychology ...

We know anecdotally about the sorts of messages colours tend to convey. But we need to bear in mind that the meaning any particular person gets from a colour depends on a multitude of factors such as age and gender, personal preferences, upbringing, and cultural differences.

In 1984 independent researcher Angela Wright set out to develop a unified theory of **colour psychology** and **colour harmony**. The theory resulted from exploration of the following questions:

- How does colour influence mood and behaviour?
- Why do individuals have different aesthetic responses to the same colour?
- What affective differences are there between different versions of the same spectral hue?
- Are there any universally attractive colours?

Her findings became the foundation for the re-knowned the 'Colour Affects System'.

These effects are unaffected by culture, gender or age and are therefore predictable.

based on A Theory of Colour Psychology and Colour Harmony by Angela Wright FRSA.

The 'Colour Affects' System ...

The principal tenets of this theory are as follows:

- Each hue affects distinct psychological modes.
- The psychological effects of colour are universal.
- Every shade, tone or tint can be classified into one of four colour groups.
- Every colour will harmonise with every other colour in the same group.
- All humanity can be classified into one of four personality types.
- Each personality type has a natural affinity with one colour group.
- Response to colour schemes is influenced by personality type.

based on A Theory of Colour Psychology and Colour Harmony by Angela Wright FRSA.



RED: physical

Positive: Physical courage, strength, warmth, energy, basic survival, 'fight or flight', stimulation, masculinity, excitement.

Negative: Defiance, aggression, visual impact, strain.

Being the longest wavelength, **red** is a powerful colour. Although not technically the most visible, it has the property of appearing to be nearer than it is and therefore it grabs our attention first. Hence its effectiveness in traffic lights the world over.

Its effect is physical; it stimulates us and raises the pulse rate, giving the impression that time is passing faster than it is. It relates to the masculine principle and can activate the "fight or flight" instinct.

Red is strong, and very basic. Pure **red** is the simplest colour, with no subtlety. It is stimulating and lively, very friendly. At the same time, it can be perceived as demanding and aggressive.



BLUE: Intellectual

Positive: Intelligence, communication, trust, efficiency, serenity, duty, logic, coolness, reflection, calm.

Negative: Coldness, aloofness, lack of emotion, unfriendliness.

Blue is the colour of the mind and is essentially soothing; it affects us mentally, rather than the physical reaction we have to red.

Strong blues will stimulate clear thought and lighter, soft blues will calm the mind and aid concentration. Consequently it is serene and mentally calming.

It is the colour of clear communication. Blue objects do not appear to be as close to us as red ones. Time and again in research, blue is the world's favourite colour. However, it can be perceived as cold, unemotional and unfriendly.



YELLOW: Emotional

Positive: Optimism, confidence, self-esteem, extraversion, emotional strength, friendliness, creativity.

Negative: Irrationality, fear, emotional fragility, depression, anxiety, suicide.

The **yellow** wavelength is relatively long and essentially stimulating. In this case the stimulus is emotional, therefore yellow is the strongest colour, psychologically.

The right **yellow** will lift our spirits and our self-esteem; it is the colour of confidence and optimism.

Too much of it, or the wrong tone in relation to the other tones in a colour scheme, can cause self-esteem to plummet, giving rise to fear and anxiety. Our “**yellow** streak” can surface.



GREEN: Balance

Positive: Harmony, balance, refreshment, universal love, rest, restoration, reassurance, environmental awareness, equilibrium, peace.

Negative: Boredom, stagnation, blandness, enervation.

Green strikes the eye in such a way as to require no adjustment whatever and is, therefore, restful.

Being in the centre of the spectrum, it is the colour of balance - a more important concept than many people realise. When the world about us contains plenty of green, this indicates the presence of water, and little danger of famine, so we are reassured by green, on a primitive level.

Negatively, it can indicate stagnation and, incorrectly used, will be perceived as being too bland.



VIOLET: Spiritual

Positive: Spiritual awareness, containment, vision, luxury, authenticity, truth, quality.

Negative: Introversion, decadence, suppression, inferiority.

The shortest wavelength is **violet**, often described as **purple**. It takes awareness to a higher level of thought, even into the realms of spiritual values. It is highly introverted and encourages deep contemplation, or meditation.

It has associations with royalty and usually communicates the finest possible quality.

Being the last visible wavelength before the ultra-violet ray, it has associations with time and space and the cosmos.

Excessive use of **purple** can bring about too much introspection and the wrong tone of it communicates something cheap and nasty, faster than any other colour.



ORANGE.

Positive: Physical comfort, food, warmth, security, sensuality, passion, abundance, fun.

Negative: Deprivation, frustration, frivolity, immaturity.

Since it is a combination of **red** and **yellow**, **orange** is stimulating and reaction to it is a combination of the physical and the emotional. It focuses our minds on issues of physical comfort - food, warmth, shelter etc. - and sensuality. It is a 'fun' colour.

Negatively, it might focus on the exact opposite - deprivation. This is particularly likely when warm orange is used with black. Equally, too much **orange** suggests frivolity and a lack of serious intellectual values.



PINK.

Positive: Physical tranquillity, nurture, warmth, femininity, love, sexuality, survival of the species.

Negative: Inhibition, emotional claustrophobia, emasculation, physical weakness.

Being a tint of **red**, **pink** also affects us physically, but it soothes, rather than stimulates.

(Interestingly, **red** is the only colour that has an entirely separate name for its tints. Tints of **blue**, **green**, **yellow**, etc. are simply called light blue, light green etc.)

Pink is a powerful colour, psychologically. It represents the feminine principle, and survival of the species; it is nurturing and physically soothing.

Too much **pink** is physically draining and can be somewhat emasculating.



GREY.

Positive: Psychological neutrality.

Negative: Lack of confidence, dampness, depression, hibernation, lack of energy.

Pure grey is the only colour that has no direct psychological properties. It is, however, quite suppressive.

A virtual absence of colour is depressing and when the world turns grey we are instinctively conditioned to draw in and prepare for hibernation.

Unless the precise tone is right, grey has a dampening effect on other colours used with it. Heavy use of grey usually indicates a lack of confidence and fear of exposure.



BLACK.

Positive: Sophistication, glamour, security, emotional safety, efficiency, substance.

Negative: Oppression, coldness, menace, heaviness.

Black is all colours, totally absorbed. The psychological implications of that are considerable. It creates protective barriers, as it absorbs all the energy coming towards you, and it enshrouds the personality.

Black is essentially an absence of light, since no wavelengths are reflected and it can, therefore be menacing; many people are afraid of the dark.

Positively, it communicates absolute clarity, with no fine nuances. It communicates sophistication and uncompromising excellence and it works particularly well with white.

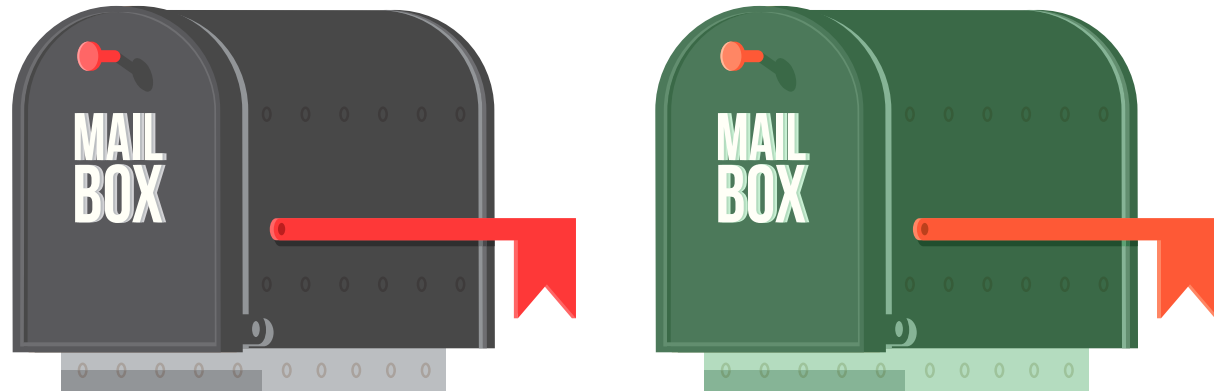
Black creates a perception of weight and seriousness.



BLACK.

It is a myth that black clothes are slimming:

Which of these boxes do you think is bigger/heavier?



The truth behind the myth is that black is the most recessive colour a matter of not drawing attention to yourself, rather than actually making you look slimmer.

Most people swear the black one is bigger in fact, they are the same size. Black is the densest colour and creates perceptions of heaviness



WHITE.

Positive: Hygiene, sterility, clarity, purity, cleanness, simplicity, sophistication, efficiency.

Negative: Sterility, coldness, barriers, unfriendliness, elitism.

Just as black is total absorption, so white is total reflection.

In effect, it reflects the full force of the spectrum into our eyes. Thus it also creates barriers, but differently from black, and it is often a strain to look at. It communicates, "Touch me not!"

White is purity and, like black, uncompromising; it is clean, hygienic, and sterile. The concept of sterility can also be negative.

Visually, white gives a heightened perception of space. The negative effect of white on warm colours is to make them look and feel garish.



BROWN.

Positive: Seriousness, warmth, Nature, earthiness, reliability, support.

Negative: Lack of humour, heaviness, lack of sophistication.

Brown usually consists of red and yellow, with a large percentage of black. Consequently, it has much of the same seriousness as black, but is warmer and softer.

It has elements of the red and yellow properties. Brown has associations with the earth and the natural world.

It is a solid, reliable colour and most people find it quietly supportive - more positively than the ever-popular black, which is suppressive, rather than supportive.

Group 1: Morninglight

(Echoing the natural patterns of Spring.)

Group 1 colours are clean, clear and fresh:

Hue: Warm (contains yellow)

Value: High (little, if any black)

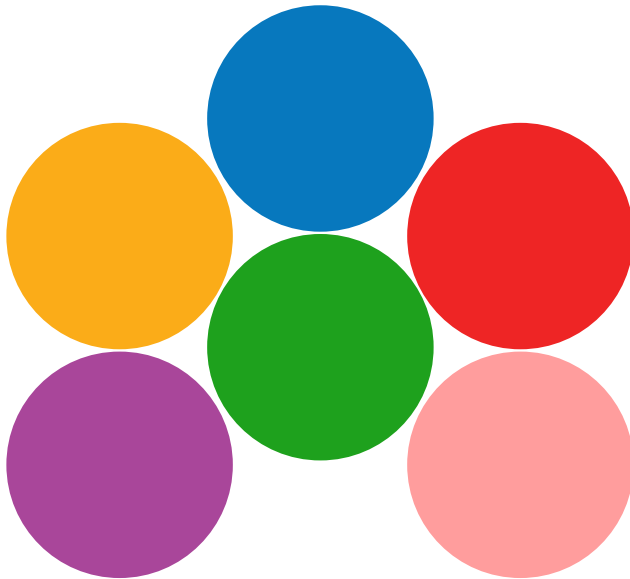
Chroma: Mid to Relatively Low

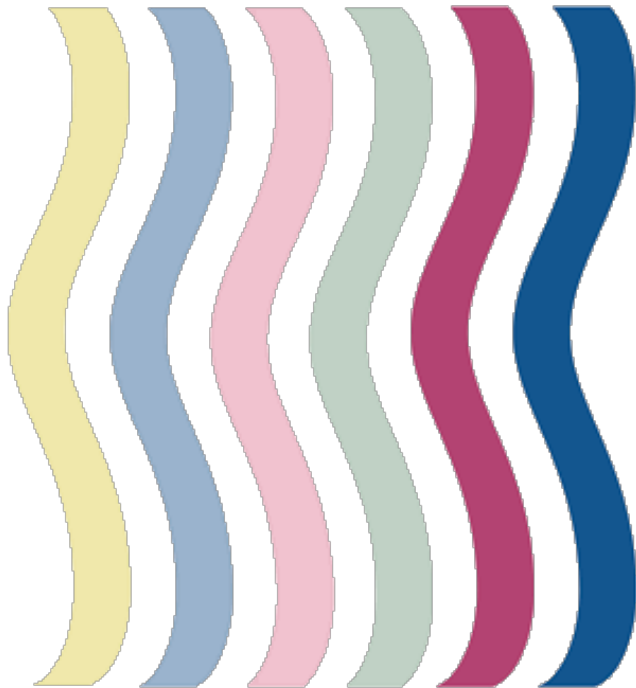
Clear, delicate warm colours containing no black.

Negatively, they may be perceived as insubstantial, frivolous and cheap.

In brand communication, these colours will be most appropriate for brands focusing on youth, fun, media and optimism etc. e.g. toy companies; PR and marketing, childrenswear, leisure.

TIP: Chroma is a measure of color purity in the Munsell color system





Group 2: Dreamlight

(Echoing the natural patterns of Summer.)

Group 2 colours are cool, subtle and delicate:

Hue: Cool (contains blue)

Value: Mid range (most contain grey)

Chroma: Relatively low

These tones are cool, contain more grey and, whilst also delicate, are not necessarily light.

Negatively they may be interpreted as draining, unfriendly, aloof, elitist, and 'wishy-washy'.

In brand design, these colours are most appropriate where calm order, timeless elegance and delicacy are required. They are the antithesis of vulgarity and work well, for example, for up-market lingerie brands, luxury hotels and law offices - as well as for government buildings, medical centres etc.



Group 3: Firelight

(Echoing the natural patterns of Autumn.)

Group 3 colours are rich, fiery and offbeat:

Hue: Warm (contains yellow)

Value: Mid to low

Chroma: Low to high

These tones are again warm, but much more intense and fiery. They contain black in their mixing (e.g. olive green is yellow mixed with black) but black itself does not belong in this group.

Misused, group 3 tones can convey heavy, old-fashioned, boring predictability and bossiness.

In brand design, these colours are easily the most widespread. They are particularly appropriate for well-established companies (of all types) with a proud heritage: for example, world famous department stores all seem to have instinctively adopted them long ago - and they do not appear to feel any need to change them; these colours are appropriate for any brand where strength and integrity are important - e.g. sports, construction, organic food production.

Group 4: Starlight

(Echoing the natural patterns of Winter.)



Group 4 colours are cold, and either very light, very dark or very intense.

Hue: Cold (Contains blue)

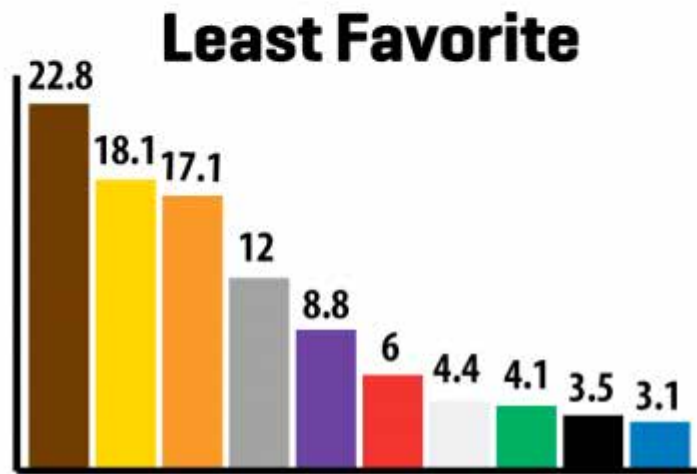
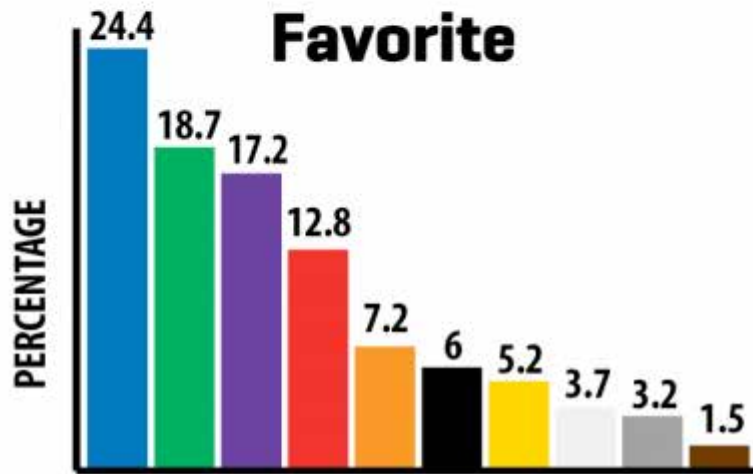
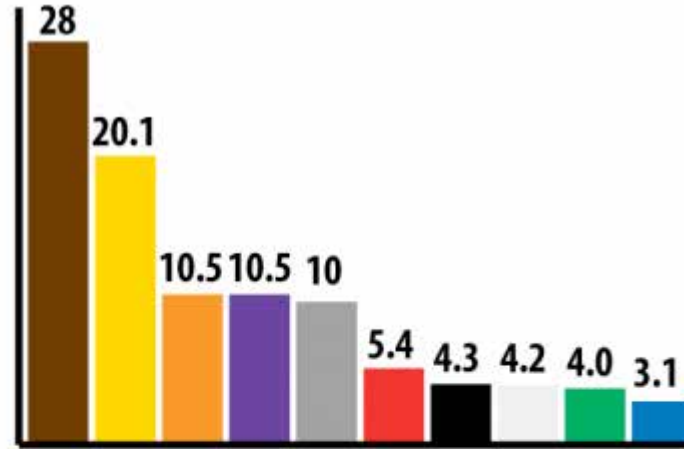
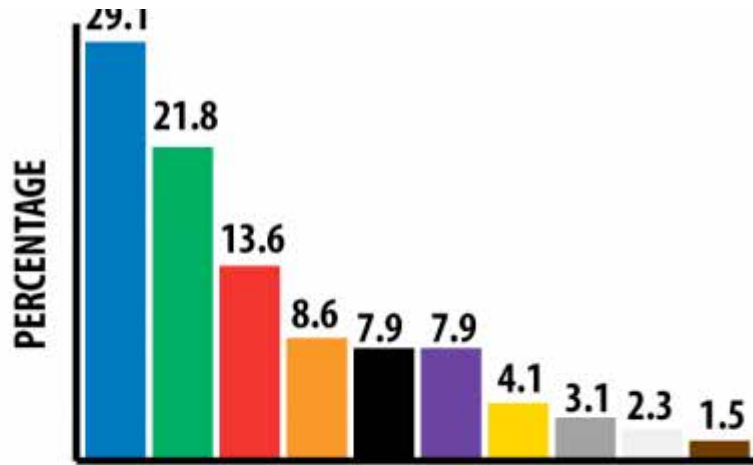
Value: Extremes (very light or very dark). No mid tones.

Chroma: High

These colours are very clear and strong, with no subtleties.

The potential negative perceptions of Group 4 are cold, uncaring, unfriendly, materialist, and expensive.

In commercial use of colour, these colours are widely used for aspirational brands. They communicate uncompromising standards, leadership and status. They are appropriate for state-of-the-art products, cutting-edge design and anything that could be described as glamorous, sophisticated or ultra chic.

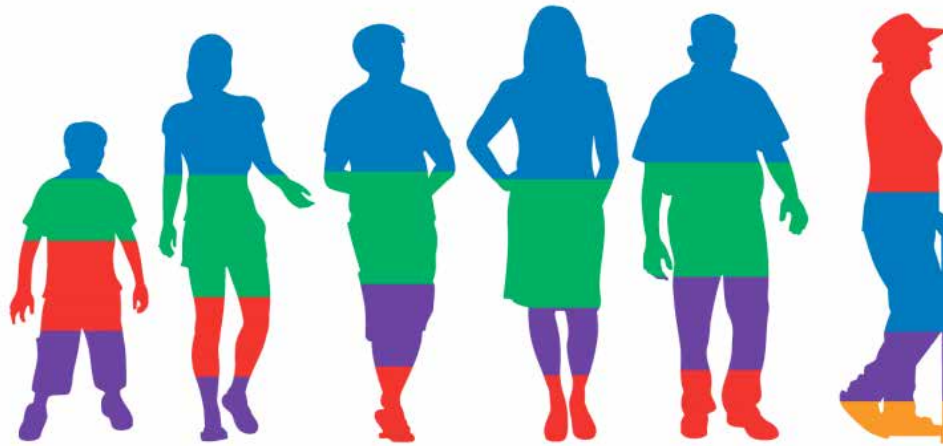


From the day babies are brought home and wrapped in their pink or blue blankets, assumptions have been made about gender and color. While there are no concrete rules about what colors are exclusively feminine or masculine, there have been studies conducted over the past 7 decades that draw some generalizations.

Colour naming: men keep it simple. What a man may simply call 'purple', a woman may have variants ... grape, plum, aubergine, lavender etc.

survey conducted by <https://www.hotdesign.com>

FAVORITE



AGE:

0-18

19-24

25-35

36-50

51-69

70+

LEAST FAVORITE



Colour preferences: by age

The top 4 colours

These survey results highlight the importance of considering colour psychology in your branding.

If you're designing something for the under-70 crowd, you can't go wrong with blue or green.

If you're creating something for seniors, using red could be a great choice. And, unless there's a strong reason for using brown or yellow, you might want to avoid them as your primary colors.

survey conducted by <https://www.hotdesign.com>

What does each colour convey?

What are your brand's personality traits?

		Sincere	Exciting	Competent	Sophisticated	Rugged
RED	EXCITING FIERY BOLD AGGRESSIVE ACTIVE		✓			
ORANGE	FRIENDLY DELICIOUS CONFIDENT EXCITING	✓	✓			
YELLOW	HAPPY OPTIMISTIC CONFIDENT FUN		✓			
GREEN	PEACEFUL HEALTHY CALM NATURAL	✓		✓		✓
BLUE	TRUSTWORTHY DEPENDABLE STRONG	✓		✓		
PURPLE	CREATIVE REGAL FLAMBOYANT SMART		✓		✓	
BLACK	BALANCED CALM LUXURIOUS SENSIBLE	✓		✓	✓	
BROWN	NATURAL RUGGED DEPENDABLE EARTHY	✓				✓

Image by Mark Gamtcheff at Baker Marketing • Copyright ©2015

The Five Dimensions of Brand Personality is a framework developed by Jennifer Aaker to describe and measure the "personality" of a brand in 5 core dimensions, each divided into a set of facets. It is a model to describe the profile of a brand by using an analogy with a human being.

Marketing man, Mark Gamtcheff has combined the conventional wisdom about colours and their meanings and visually cross-reference against Aakers work & come up with the Brand Colour Matrix

How Are Major Brands Using Colour?

Colour is known to have a powerful psychological impact on people's behavior and decisions, and this knowledge is used by designers and marketers in making decisions.

It's been found that colour can often be the sole reason someone purchases a product, where 93% of buyers focus on visual appearance and almost 85% claim colour to be their primary reason for purchase!

Look at how each of these well known brands harness the psychology & the personality of their customer in their brand colours.

~ poster courtesy <http://visual.ly/color-emotion-guide>

COLOR EMOTION GUIDE



27 HOW MAJOR BRANDS USE COLOUR



Let's analyse 2 well known brands:

McDonald's chooses high-energy colors like red and yellow which appeal to children, kindle appetites, and create a sense of urgency. Of course, Ronald McDonald himself is popular with the kids, but he's also sure to agitate parents quickly. This facilitates faster customer turnover.

It's scary to think how powerful this tactic has been for Micky D's, which might not have been the same ridiculously big chain it is today without using red and yellow so effectively. McDonald's sure wouldn't be so popular trying to market all that unhealthy food using the color green!

Off topic but interesting: The symbolism behind the arches was intended to represent a mother's nurturing breasts, subconsciously making hungry customers feel comforted and at home.

Interestingly, the only major global brand to use green as its primary color is Starbucks. Using green shows that Starbucks hopes to promote a sense of relaxation in their cafes, inviting customers to come in for a coffee break during a stressful day.

How are you incorporating color into your branding and marketing efforts?



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