The Effects of Different Design Elements on the Perceived Effectiveness of Visual Advertisements

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INTRODUCTION

Any advertisement is created with a specific goal in mind:
• to attract attention;
• to evoke emotional reaction;
• to change attitudes;
• to encourage specific behaviour (or at least an intention to behave)

An effective ad is usually successful in achieving at least several of these goals.

While creating visual advertisements designers use a variety of design elements: manipulate the size of objects, choose specific colours, spatial location, etc. Psychologists agree that these image characteristics are important not only for artistic purposes, but also for the graspable effects on observer. For example, larger size can increase emotional arousal (Codispoti, & De Cesarei, 2007), color images also elicit more specific colours, spatial location, etc. Psychologists agree that for different design elements: manipulate the size of objects, choose specific emotions and on images of commercial products from free stock images databases. 5 variables:

- Size - 24 small and 24 large;
- Colour - 24 color and 24 monochrome;
- Content - 16 commercial (object depicted), 16 social (animal), 16 political (human);
- Emotion - 16 neutral, 16 negative, 16 positive;
- Text - 24 images with no text and 24 images with text (“Buy!”, “Take care!” or “Vote!”).

All images were selected to be as equivalent as possible in both content and visual characteristics.

2 more ads were shown to hide the goal of the study and 2 more ads were constructed from different images (40 based on Geneva Affective PicturE Database – GAPED photos (Dan-Glauser, Elise & Scherer, 2011). 8 – on images of commercial products from free stock images databases). 5 variables:

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2 more ads were shown to hide the goal of the study and maintain participant attention for a total of 50 stimuli.

PROCEDURE

Stimuli
48 ads constructed from different images [40 based on Geneva Affective Picture Database – GAPED photos (Dan-Glauser & Scherer, 2010) and 8 – on images of commercial products from free stock images databases]. 5 variables:

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MEASURES

10-point self-report rating scales. 5 single items:

- Attention - doesn’t attract / attracts attention;
- Emotional arousal - evokes weak/strong emotions;
- Emotional valence - evokes unpleasant/pleasant emotions;
- Intention - doesn’t encourage / encourages to act;
- Attitudes - it is unacceptable/acceptable what is shown.

RESULTS

Results have revealed that individual design elements have significant effects on the effectiveness of ads.

Size – bigger is better. Advertisements constructed from large photos were rated as:
• attracting more attention;
• evoking more intensive emotions;
• more encouraging to act;
• more acceptable.

Colour – grey can be better than colour. Full colour advertisements were rated as evoking less positive emotions compared to greyscale ones despite equivalent content.

Text – the mere fact of text existence is advantageous. Advertisements with text in addition to photos were evaluated as more positive and more encouraging to act than photos only. Even though the text was very simplistic.

Emotional valence of content also influences attention and behaviour. Positive advertisements were rated as more effective in attracting attention compared to neutral or negative ads. At the same time both positive and negative advertisements had stronger effect in promoting behaviour compared to neutral ones.

REFERENCES


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