



“ The Importance of color for online sales”

This ebook explains what is color, elaborately explains the different importance and psychological aspects of color and how proper use of colors can help to augment online sales.

Know about:

- ❖ Color
- ❖ Types of color
- ❖ Color wheel
- ❖ Choosing colors
- ❖ Importance of color
- ❖ Colors and psychological aspects
- ❖ Color and Internet marketing
- ❖ Color theory
- ❖ Color scheme
- ❖ Tips for proper use of color in ecommerce

Color effects how we perceive the world around us. It can affect our emotional and physical responses to visual stimuli, and can even govern how we interpret these stimuli. This is why color is so important in fields of graphic and environmental design, and why graphic designers, interior designers, and architects go to such great lengths to understand the influence of color and to use it in just the right way.

Until recently, though, very little emphasis has been placed on the importance and overall influence of color in the field of web design. In fact, there still seems to be overall a kind of ‘anything goes’ atmosphere on the Internet with regard to web design in general. But the way in which we access the Internet, combined with its increasing impact on our everyday lives, now requires a more thorough understanding of the influence of color for designers who wish to create websites that effectively attract and positively influence visitors to them.

And so, we would like to introduce with this article the influence of color on web design in general, beginning with the foundations of color theory and leading to some important tips for using color to create more powerful and influential websites overall.

A Brief Introduction to Color Theory

Color theory is a large branch of science that encompasses every aspect of how humans see and interpret color. We will begin with only a brief introduction to color theory here, outlining its more salient points for gaining a better understanding of how to harness the power (and avoid the pitfalls) of using color in web design.

If you find that you would like to learn more about this fascinating subject, there are several websites on the Internet that cover the subject in much more detail.

When we speak of color, we are referring to the visible, or optical, spectrum – that portion of the electromagnetic spectrum that is visible to the human eye. Many students are introduced to the colors of the visible spectrum through a kind of funny mnemonic - the famous

Mr. ROY G. BIV, whose name serves to remind us of the first letters of each color as follows:

R Red portion of visible spectrum, having wavelengths from about 630-760 nanometers (nm)

O Orange portion of the visible spectrum, from about 585-620 nm

Y Yellow portion of the visible spectrum, from about 565-590

G Green portion of the visible spectrum, from about 520-570 nm

B Blue portion of the visible spectrum, from about 420-490 nm

I Indigo portion of the visible spectrum, from about 420-440 nm

V Violet portion of the visible spectrum, from about 380-420 nm

The wavelengths here are measured in nanometers. A nanometer is one billionth of a meter, or about the length of seven tiny hydrogen atoms lined up side-by-side.

Very small! And very impressive that our eyes are able to discern the difference between colors ranging only a few hundred nanometers total in the visible range.

You might notice some overlapping or portions of the spectrum that aren't accounted for; this is because our eyes and brains vary a bit in how we detect and interpret colors.

Primary Colors

Of all the colors in the visible spectrum, three colors are special in that all other colors in the spectrum can be created from different mixtures of these three. These are the three primary colors. For our purposes here, the primary colors are red, green, and blue on the visible electromagnetic spectrum above. But many of us learn from early childhood that the primary colors are red, blue, and yellow. The difference arises from the source of the light we perceive. If the source emits light at a specific wavelength in the visible range, then it represents an additive color system. If the source reflects light at a specific wavelength in the visible spectrum, then it represents a subtractive color system.

The two are further distinguished as follows:

Additive color systems are producers of light, like television or computer screens. If you've ever washed such a screen you might have notice that water on the screen has a magnifying effect, in that you will be able to distinctly see that the screen is made up of tiny red, blue, and green 'dots.' These dots are the color building blocks for an additive color system, with all other colors represented by some mixture of these three, and white being what you get when all three are used in equal amounts. These are more important for this article, the types of color systems you will be dealing with in web design.

Subtractive color systems, on the other hand, are materials or substances that actively reflect ambient light to produce various colors. These systems do not produce any light on their own, but instead are dependent on the way materials reflect surrounding light sources to determine the color we see with our eyes. If you mix the three primary colors together equally in a subtractive color system (for example, equal amounts of red, blue, and yellow

paints), you will get something closer to black than to the white you get by equal mixing of the primary colors of additive sources.

Secondary & Tertiary Colors

Mixing two adjacent primary colors creates secondary colors. In our additive color system, if you mix red and green you will get yellow. Mixing red and blue will yield magenta, and mixing blue and green will give you a cyan color (kind of a light blue). Tertiary colors lie in between the primary and secondary colors, and it is here where you can see the importance of the word ‘adjacent’.

The Color Wheel

A very useful way to display the relationships between primary, secondary, and tertiary colors is by displaying the colors on a color wheel.

Sir Isaac Newton was the first to present colors in a circular diagram, or color wheel, in 1666. It is often the first step in any presentation of color theory, since it is very useful at demonstrating the relationships between different colors as they are created from the primary colors.

As more and more colors are added to the wheel by mixing the colors already on it, the net effect is a representation of the visible spectrum that turns back on itself, so that the violet and red ends join together.

The idea is to start with a wheel representing only the three primary colors—red, blue, and green for our additive color system. Allow a little mixing at the boundaries and you get the secondary colors and new boundaries. Allow further mixing at the

boundaries of secondary colors, and you have the tertiary colors, and so on.

Color Terminology

There are a few terms that crop up often in color theory: hue, value, saturation, tint, and shade.

These are defined as follows:

Hue – Hue is kind of synonymous with ‘color’ itself. Different hues correspond to specific portions within the visible spectrum, so that hue may be defined generally as the spectral color name. The specific hues that we refer to are Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, and Violet as described above.

Value – Value is a measurement of the light and dark properties of color, and all colors are associated with specific values. The hues have a ‘natural’ value for which they look the purest. Some colors are naturally light, like yellow, and some are naturally dark, like indigo or violet. An interesting characteristic of value is that it can exist without hue, as in black, white, and gray.

Saturation – Saturation is a measure of a color’s intensity. It is often the most difficult color term to understand, since it is often confused with value. One way to look at it is that saturation is not so much about light and dark, but more about paleness and brightness. A saturated color is high in intensity, or very bright. An unsaturated color is low in intensity, or very dull.

Tint and Shade – Tint and shade describe how a color varies from its original hue through a change in value. For example, if we add white to a given color, the lighter version is called a tint of that color. If we had black, the darker version is called a shade of that color.

Effectively Using Colors on the Web

As with any printed work or structural design, the primary purpose of (virtually) all web pages is to convey some kind of information or feeling to others. It is not surprising, then, that color should play an important role in how well this is done for web sites, too. An effective use of color can aid tremendously in getting a message across; it can help people get the most out of their visit to a particular website, or ultimately sell them on a particular product. The very nature of the Web and how people use it, though, makes the use of color even more important on the Web than in traditional printed work, interior design, or architecture. This is largely due to the variations in the monitors manufactured and currently used. A poor choice of colors in designing a website may not only make it less effective overall—it can also make it unreadable to visitors and can ultimately drive them away.

How Monitors and Screens Display Colors

We discussed in the introduction how monitors use tiny red, green, and blue dots in different combinations and different intensities to convey all the different colors we see. Each point on a particular screen is actually a group of three little colored dots, situated so close to one another and to neighboring groups of dots that our eyes are unable to distinguish them separately, and we see them as a homogeneous distribution of color.

Such a configuration of primary-colored dots allows a monitor to generate virtually any color in the visible spectrum. For example, if all the red, blue, and green dots on a screen are emitting the full 100% of their potential intensity, you will see a pure white screen. This potential intensity varies on a scale from 0 to 255 for each dot of each color, with lower numbers corresponding to lower emitted intensities.

So, all colors can be represented by a series of 3 numbers ranging from 0 to 255, and the fully white screen in our example would be designated 255, 255, 255 for “full red”, “full green”, “full blue.”

A very bright, pure green screen would be designated 0, 255, 0, and a much darker green would be designated something like 0, 100, 0. Finally, this kind of structure gives $256 \times 256 \times 256$ possible color combinations – or over 16 million possible colors!

Designating Different Colors on the Web

On the Web, these groups of numbers are a little different, though, because they are represented in HTML and CSS by their hexadecimal values. The least informative definition of a hexadecimal number is a number having base 16, but it's a necessary start in learning to work with such numbers.

Our everyday system of numbers is base 10, and is a direct consequence of our having 10 fingers. The ‘base’ is made up of the 10 digits (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) with which any possible number can be represented. As we count upward in our base 10 systems, each time we reach another ‘ten’ we either add another digit to our number or increment our multiples of 10.

The hexadecimal system has 16 as a base instead of 10. The sixteen unique digits that make up the hexadecimal system are 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, A, B, C, D, E and F. Hexadecimal notation in HTML and CSS for specifying colors on web pages is in the form of “hex triplets” having the format #RRGGBB (for the red, green, and blue components, respectively). The trick to maneuvering around hexadecimal numbers and their conversion to decimal numbers is to remember that A, B, C, D, E, and F correspond to 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15, and you increment the letters just as you would increment the integers – with integers themselves.

For example,

$$1A = 1*16 + 10*1 = 26$$

$$1B = 1*16 + 11*1 = 27$$

$$4B = 4*16 + 11*1 = 75$$

$$FF = 15*16 + 15*1 = 255$$

So, if a color is represented in hexadecimal notation as #FF4B1A, its decimal triplet would be (255, 75, 26). As you can see from our example, FF corresponds to the highest intensity level, 255. The “beauty” of this system is that all numbers – from 0 to 255 – can be represented by only two digits.

Web-Safe Colors

The idea that some colors are ‘safe’ or ‘unsafe’ for web pages was alluded to in this section’s introduction, and we would now like to go over this idea in some more detail.

Back in the ‘Olden Days’ (about 10 years ago), screens were only able to display 256 colors. Since your operating system uses 40 or so colors, the remaining 216 colors were used to determine the ‘web-safe colors’ by taking 0%, 20%, 40%, 60%, 80%, and 100% of the three primary colors and mixing them up in every possible combination.

Since the number of people on the Internet with monitors capable of displaying only 256 colors is steadily decreasing, the importance of web-safe colors steadily decreases in turn. Even for those still using the older style screens, websites are in general not rendered unreadable by the use of non-web-safe colors. In addition, some studies have shown that only a small portion of the web-safe colors is *truly* safe anyway. All of these considerations have made the overall importance of only using web-safe colors rather controversial in recent years.

Other Influences on Screen Display

Perhaps even more important than the use of web-safe colors is the consideration of the large number of monitors currently used that display High Color. While High Color screens can display more colors than the old 256-color display screens, they are not the True Color screens on the market today that are capable of displaying millions of colors exactly as you want them.

Problems can arise with High Color screens when you mix colors defined within an image with colors defined in HTML code. Such colors are often displayed differently within the browser, even if they are defined to be exactly the same. You can see this

phenomenon if you set your screen to High Color and surf around on the Web for a bit—although the discrepancies are generally small, they will be visible. You can mitigate this problem by using small, single-colored images in your background, or by making your background transparent where you place your pictures, even if they are set against a background defined to be of the same color.

Choosing Color Combinations

Now that we have a foundation of color theory to work with, we are ready to begin looking at how we can combine different colors together in designing web pages. This is often the most difficult part of web design to learn, and it usually takes a lot of time to get a feel for which combinations of colors are most interesting and pleasing to the eye. Nevertheless, there are some general guidelines that can be of tremendous help.

Can You Have Too Many Colors?

According to many web designers, the answer is an emphatic YES! In fact, it is generally stated that it is even more dangerous to use too many colors than it is to use too few. While a page with too few colors runs the risk of being boring, using too many colors can make your page difficult to navigate. Visitors might have considerable trouble finding the information they came to get, and the confusion may cause them to quickly tire and give up altogether. A quick rule of thumb is to try to arrange your web page using three main colors as follows:

First, choose a primary color. The primary color will be used most throughout the page, and will set the overall tone for the entire page. Next, choose a secondary color. This should be a color that is close in hue to the primary color and serves in general to “back up” the primary color in all instances. Secondary colors should not

contrast too greatly with primary colors. Finally, pick a highlighting color. The highlighting color will always be used to emphasize key portions of your web page. It should contrast more with the primary and secondary colors, and therefore should be used with care and placed evenly throughout the design. Complementary or split-complementary colors are generally used as highlighting colors, and will be described in greater detail below.

Learning to Use the Color Wheel

The color wheel introduced earlier is a very useful tool for choosing colors that combine in a way that is pleasing to the eye. Following are some ways for using the color wheel to discover the most effective color schemes for your designs.

Using Analogous Colors – The Analog Colors are colors that lie on either side of any given color on the color wheel. Analog color schemes are widely found in nature, like the red, orange, and yellow of fall leaves (in fact, the red, orange, and yellow color scheme is the most widely used. For this reason, a site that uses analogous colors in its design usually feels more harmonious to those who visit it. It is customary to use analogous colors as secondary colors.

Using Complementary Colors - Complementary colors are those colors that lie directly opposite one another on the color wheel. In looking at the color wheel, you will see that these are the highly contrasting colors. For this reason, complementary colors are often used as highlighting colors, as described above.

Using Split-Complementary Colors – Split complementary colors are the colors analogous to a complementary color. These colors are useful for providing high contrast colors that do not stand out quite so much as true complementary colors, often resulting in a more harmonious distribution of color than you would get by using the complementary colors.

Using Triad Colors – If you select three hues on the color wheel that are equidistant from one another, you will have a triad. Triads are great for creating designs that maximize the variety of colors used without sacrificing balance, and they're also fun to experiment with. You can get a lot of very interesting color

combinations that are also very pleasing to look at by trying out different color triads.

Other Variations of Color

Besides choosing colors based on their positions on the color wheel, there are many other variations that can be used to create more effective web designs:

Monotone Chromatic – Monotone chromatic color schemes employ a single hue and several variations in tint, shade, and saturation. Care should be taken when using only monochromatic colors in an overall color scheme, though, since it can sometimes be a bit boring.

Monotone Achromatic - Monotone achromatic color schemes employ only grayscale colors ranging from black to white. As with monotone chromatic schemes, care should always be taken to avoid monotony, although using an achromatic scheme with a single bright color for highlighting can be extremely effective.

Contrast

Contrast is a measure of the dissimilarity between two colors. In web page design, the amount of contrast used is one of the most important considerations. In order to make content more readable on all types of screens, you usually want high contrast between your text and background colors. Black and white yield the highest possible contrast. In using other contrasting colors for text and background, you run the risk of the text becoming utterly unreadable for some viewers, so a lot of caution is in order. Some of the more important types of contrast important to web design are as follows:

Contrasting Hues – Related to the description of complementary colors above, contrasting hues are most easily defined by their

positions on the color wheel. Colors that are further away from one another on the color wheel display higher contrast, with the highest contrast provided by complementary colors that are directly opposite one another. Analogous colors, therefore, provide the lowest contrast. In choosing text colors, contrast of hue is generally insufficient for making text legible, and should be combined with some other form of contrast.

One type of contrast of hue is the contrast of warm and cold colors. Warm colors are those colors that appear to be close up, while cold colors appear more distant. As a result, it is often effective to use warm colors for symbols, highlighting, or text, and reserve colder colors for backgrounds.

Contrasting Values – For attaining very large contrasts, it is often beneficial to use contrast of value. As mentioned earlier, black and white provides the largest contrast of all color schemes, and is in essence a contrast of value. In general, very large dissimilarities in intensity can be very easy to read and harmonious to look at for text and foreground symbols, while low-contrasts in value can provide subtle background differences that are very pleasing to the eye.

Contrasting Saturation – Contrast of saturation is usually used for designs not requiring a lot of added emphasis. By using a set of colors with varying saturations set against a gray background, you can create a transparency effect that can be quite interesting.

Combinations of Contrast – In general, creating high-impact web pages involves the use of a combination of the types of contrast described above. This is especially true for text, since it requires high contrast to be readable. Working against the natural values of colors can often lead to trouble, though, and care should be taken when employing contrast of value. For example, using a color combination in which yellow appears darker than blue would look and feel very strange.

It should be stressed one last time that correctly using contrast is crucial for displaying text. Black and white, blue and white, and black and yellow color schemes tend to offer the highest readability, while combinations of red and green or red and blue can create dizzying effects that make reading extremely difficult.

Considering Color Blindness – About 8% of the population is afflicted with some form of color blindness, so this is another aspect that should be carefully considered when making color selections. For web design this is of particular importance, since the wrong choice of colors can easily result in a page that is completely unreadable for people suffering from even mild color blindness. The best way to avoid this is to design your website so that color is not the only visual cue and there is always a strong contrast between text and background. Using a lot of blues and yellows will also help mitigate many of the problems arising from color blindness.

Overall Impact of Color

The human eye is capable of detecting about 7 million colors. Some colors and color combinations can act as eye irritants, wreaking havoc on human vision and even affecting human health, while others can be soothing and impart an overall feeling of well-being. Consequently, the appropriate use of color can maximize productivity while minimizing visual and physical fatigue.

Harmony

More than anything else, the effective use of color is dictated by a sense of harmony. Harmony is defined as an overall pleasing arrangement of individual parts within any composition or design, and visual harmony is defined as something that is pleasing to the eye. The consistent use of harmony in web design actively

engages the viewer and creates an inner sense of order and balance in the visual experience.

If you don't always keep an eye toward creating harmony, you run the risk of designing something that is either so boring it is incapable of engaging the viewer, or so confusing that the viewer finds it difficult even to just look at.

Always keep in mind that the human brain will passively ignore what it cannot recognize and actively reject what it cannot understand. Harmony keeps everything in balance.

A harmonious use of color can help you as a designer deliver visual interest and a sense of logical structure and order.

No matter where you go on the web, you will find nowadays that almost every web site is selling something. From individuals selling services to large corporations selling the same merchandise simultaneously sold in store chains, commerce has taken to the Internet like a fish to water, and every kind of conventional business can now be found on the web. In fact, this is the reason that the use of color in website design is currently such a hot topic of interest. Competition is becoming so fierce that to stand out on the Internet and thrive as a business, as much care should be taken in setting up an Internet “store” as in choosing a location or decorating a more traditional storefront. The exact same formulas for success apply.

A successful Internet “store” must be, first and foremost, accessible to everyone who enters it. Once inside, customers must be able to comfortably navigate the store’s contents or easily access information about the services provided. And finally, they must be provided with a means of quickly and successfully completing a purchase or procuring a service online. As is evident by what we have learned about color theory so far, color is tremendously important to achieving this success.

First, we have covered the more technical function of color, and learned that the use of colors must be in accordance with existing technology, while simultaneously heeding the rules defined by our own ability to discern color and be influenced by different color schemes. Second, we have learned how designing with colors can aid in conveying the right information to customers. Third, we have captured a glimpse of the importance of color in creating the appropriate navigational tools for effectively maneuvering around the complex electronic spaces upon which these stores are built. And finally, we have learned much of the use of color in creating an overall sense of visual harmony that holds onto a customer’s interest in the online shopping experience.

Following are several web-specific tips that can also help you use color more effectively when designing a business website:

Always select the most appropriate colors by analyzing your website's products or services as well as your target market. One of the most essential and commonly overlooked aspect of using color in website design is the importance of choosing colors that bear some kind of relationship (either symbolic or literal) to the product or service you are trying to sell.

Always use the color harmony principles discussed above to create a pleasant and overall balanced visual experience. In particular, always ensure that the colors of all the components on your website (navigation system, banners, buttons, and text) work well together, and that there is some common attribute that dynamically unites them all. .

Always use color to create the most functional user-interface design. All other means considered, color remains the most effective way to direct the eye to the most important areas on your web page. This always takes some careful planning on your part as a web designer. You should always keep in mind what you would like the viewer to see first, where the 'ideal' eye should move next, and how much time the viewer's attention should be held by each area.

This is closely related to "Signal Detection Theory," or the study of how the brain is able to synthesize information when the colors and shapes within the visual field are held at a minimum. The key is to strike a balance between too many colors and shapes inhibiting focus and too few colors and shapes weakening the brain's natural signal detection ability.

Always convert website images to the correct file formats. This will help you to consistently deliver the best quality images with

the best possible colors. It will also decrease file sizes and shorten download times.

Never be afraid to experiment with new ideas, but always keep in mind the basic relationships between colors and their many different forms, and all the different ways that their presentation will affect the viewer. When all is said and done, color will always play a pivotal role in your customer's final decision to buy your product or procure your services.

The use of color is one of the most powerful tools you have at your disposal in designing a website, or any other medium with which you are attempting to relate to or communicate with other people. Color is so powerful that it can persuade, motivate and inspire when it is used in a balanced and effective way, and so crucial that it can completely drive people away when its overall influence is poorly understood and it is used poorly or inefficiently. In short, color is far more complex than many of us give it credit for.

The best ways to solidify your understanding of the power of colors from here is to experiment and to observe. Experiment with color wheels and color theory, and try applying the different techniques outlined here to get a feel for how they affect overall design. As you visit other pages online, take note of how effective different web pages are at engaging you, and look for similarities in their overall color schemes or special features that best capture your attention. As a starting point for understanding the relativity of color, observe the effects colors have on each other, and their relative warmth or coolness. And finally, always try to remain aware of noticeable differences in your own perception of color as you are exposed to different values and saturations of the various hues. In observing and experimenting in this way, you will gain a far better understanding of the overall importance of colors, and be well on your way to being able to create more powerful and more influential web designs.

Colors and their psychological influence in Marketing.

Colors speak in many languages. As we verbally communicate to people in different dialects, so also the effect of colors in non-verbal communication. The best example would be the nature. Nature the creative artist has made the best ever color combinations on earth, whether it is in flowers, in butterflies or in other millions of living creatures. We the civilized world had the basic lessons of the uses and impacts of the color from the Mother Nature.

The effect of colors in influencing the mind of the prospective customers is high. Colors represent the moods and the sentiments. It is not a blind symbolic representation but an effective way of communicating the feelings spontaneously and strongly. The changes we observe on earth with the advent of the spring, the blossoming of the colorful plants and the joyful moods of the birds and other living beings all have been so synchronized that it stands testimony to the fact that color do have an effect on the human mind and the living beings. While the nature has used the same for its continuity, reproduction and sustenance, we today make use of the same for our selfish motives more so in getting attracted the target market - the ever expanding clientele, the language of the colors has evolved as an effective marketing tool.

The Use of color in marketing:-

The children are the softest targets of the bright colors. Being unaware about the deep pits of life they tend to carry away by the colors that sparkle and shines that is why we see all wafers, chocolates and toffee wrappers in bright appealing colors. If you are the one who joins the kids in watching the cartoon network you may not have any more reservations on the impact the colors make on these tiny tots. Many intelligent marketers who advertise their baby items or health drinks use dark color combinations for the villain as well as for the heroes as they have realized that it is the child that influence the decision of the elders. Spilling with all dark and dull colors would be most destructive in such situations. Hope you may now appreciate and understand the power of the colors in influencing the young and the old .

It is not only the children who are moved by the colors but every one who has an aesthetic appeal. Nobody would like to see their favorite web site filled with all lifeless and moody colors unless of course the site is something about mourning or of a tragedy. Not only has the web site needs to contain the appropriate colors but also the right combination. A proper mix of colors that is suitable for the occasion and the subject may speak better and convey the right meaning. A site for the holidays need to focus on the colors suitable for the vacation that it offers like blue for a sea side resort, green for the hill resort and the right combination of grey and brown for a historical place. One need not have to read the whole contents to get an idea of the content should the web site is planned to convey the language of the colors.

The influence that the logo and the colors make in the minds of the millions of customers the world over has been kept in view while formulating the web sites of the leaders of all the brands. One may wonder the impact and the impression the logo of the Mercedes Benz the leader of the premium car industry makes in the minds of

the prospective buyers. The famous star logo in gray color in their sites stands as the testimony of a well-conceived design and color. The color combination one finds in their web pages attributed to various sales locations the world over speaks volumes of the right selection. While the gray color ornaments the rocky terrain, it is the blue shade in the sea side location at Hong Kong that makes the site distinct. The combination of yellow and black in a neon light night location indicates the apt choice by an adept designer. One may not however conclude that it is the color in the marketing that has the final say! But it does make a beginning in the process of selection. A web site or a television advertisement that cannot induce the interest of the prospective buyer or that cannot motivate the viewer to stay tuned or stay connected can do little in making their product popular.

The R&D department of many a an automobile manufacturer or home products firms knows the value of appealing and innovative colors, that get reflected in their new makes year after year. Think about a product that has not moved along with the changing taste and interests. Quite possibly the product may not be in existence by this time. Most of the branded products whether it is a health drink for the children or a designer fabric has moved well with the changing tastes and time to stay ahead the containers of soft drinks and health drinks are best examples. From the colors of the VIBGYOR the world has moved a lot with the advent of the computer aided designs and colors that allow us to reproduce any color combinations of the nature.

While talking about colors it would be most appropriate to discuss about the basic three color models used in graphic designing. While determining the color to be used one need to understand the nature of business that uses the same, the targeted market or segment, the people, region or age group and a host of other factors. One may well appreciate the colors of the bikes the youngsters use and the colors of other automobiles. The former

may be a bit sharp, dark and active to suit the mood and the mind of the rider.

Every color represents a unique characteristic; emotion and personality .It is in fact a symbol of the human mind... The psychology behind the preferred colors itself is in fact a well researched subject that throws light into the benefits of using appropriate colors to reflect the moods of the situations. Can anybody think of sending a single dull colored flower bouquet for a birthday of the loved one? The colors speak the language of the heart and needs careful planning and attention so as not to lose the intensity in the communication. Let us come back to the three basic color combinations.

Color models or combinations:-

The basic color combinations used in the graphic designs are CMYK, RGB and Pantone.

The first one that is CMYK is best suggested for printed images. The abbreviation that stands for cyan, Magenta, Yellow and black. This is best suited in printing the full color photographs and results in reduction of printing costs as it support more number of printable colors. One has to bear in mind that the same is not suitable for single color printing and they do not come in metallic, silver or gold that is called the spot inks.

The second model that is called the RGB, the Red Green and Blue is best suited for web designs. The display devices have one great advantage that they need to spend little on colors. One can be liberal in using the colors of course not make it gaudy or too much expressive. As already indicated there is no limitation for the innovation in shades in the present day scenario supported by computer aided designs and colors.

The best color model for the logos is the pantone color. They are also suited for the corporate brochure as it gives the exact appearance as it appears in the non-print media such as web site or Television. This also tends to give consistency. However they are best suited in plain paper rather than on glossy ones.

The psychological impacts of the colors are beyond words. Each color distinctively represents a mood, response and an impression though this may also vary with combinations and Medias. There are some common principles to the psychological side of the colors .let us see what language these colors speak to the world. The country culture and the custom also add to the meaning of the colors yet universally they convey some common meaning across the globe and the cross section of communities.

Colors and the psychological Impact: -

White is considered as the color of purity, honesty innocence and openness. The white projects the dirt and filth and it conveys the absence of all these negativity. It also represents virginity and the marriage in the USA. It is slightly paradoxical that eastern culture does not recognize it on occasions of happiness. It represents widowhood in India though the color is considered as pure and innocent.

Black the color of death accepted universally, also represent darkness, gloom and despair. The color of grief and sorrow might have symbolized all these since it represents the absence of light and the life during night in the early days though the modern nights are livelier and brighter than the days.

Blue is the color of the sky and the sea. True to their quality it represents depth, trust and imagination. It is the color of the poets and the creative mind. It also signifies concentration, cooling and sedative. Excessive use of blue leads to melancholic symbolization. Psychologically the blue represent trust and cleanliness besides order and security. The color is used by many banks in the USA as a symbol of trust.

Green is the color of the nature, the plants and the grass. No better color can represent the life and vibrancy of the nature. Yet it is commercially controversial in some part of the land like France and China. It is the color that gives mileage in the Middle East.

The psychological impact of green is being natural, active fresh and young. (Remember all unripe fruits are green),

Yellow is the color of philosophers and thinkers. It represents hope and maturity. This color has specific meaning in the east especially in India as it represents wisdom and considered as sacred as it denotes the preceptor and the guide.

Red is the color of action and danger .It is exciting and stimulating. Psychologically it is the color of the power energy, passion danger and also love. Red gives different meanings in combinations with other colors like green it symbolizes Christmas and with white it represents Joy in the east.

Gold is the color of wealth and affluence. It also represents vibrant energy like the rising sun. The color has a royal touch and is good in advertisement of products that are royal, elegant and costly. It is of course not so natural.

The purple that appears rarely in nature also represent spirituality, and mystery and also arrogance. It has to be used with caution as it represents different moods and meanings in different parts of the world.

Brown is a color effectively used in US for food items but not so in Columbia. It represents gloom, earth reliability and patience. It is not live and cheerful and cannot be used where action and happiness finds a place.

Apart from the well accepted theories of colors one is well advised to study the customs and the culture of the target market segment, For the color that spells success in east may invite gloom in the west and vice versa. It is not easy for the customer to free himself from the accepted and imbibed norms of the colors as per his custom or belief and the impact it may make on the sub conscious mind cannot be ignored by any prudent and sensible marketer.

The psychological response towards colors and its effective use in today's marketing is a subject worth considering for research. No wonder the automobile manufacturers especially the car segment spend millions of dollars for the purpose that has proved the use and the utility of the concept of the influence of color in the modern marketing philosophy.

Color, psychology and sales:

It may seem surprising to learn that colors do indeed have a psychological effect on the customer and product. This can be better understood by taking an example into consideration. An average American male of age thirty, and who enjoyed baseball in his childhood so much that most of the memorable times of his childhood are connected to his participation in his high school's baseball team. With this attachment to the varsity team, he is sure to have an affinity with the color of the team. Supposing the color of the team was red, and then he will definitely have a liking for red, and so on. Henceforth, whenever he sees red, he sort of remembers the memorable times he had spent in his varsity team as a member of the team; and thus will choose red for most color schemes.

Consequently, there may be cases of people dreading some colors. Like for example, a person who was the victim of an accident will always remember the color of the car that got them into the accident. Though the scars of the accident would have gone, and the victim recovered from the accident, the memory of the vehicle and its color will always remain vivid in the mind. This thought of the color provides anxiety to the daily life of the victim, and he or she will never like that color!

Similarly, there will be many colors that one will either hate or love because of some psychological stimulus that may have affected everyday life some years ago. There are also many colors that have some subconscious reference on one's collective psyche that in turn helps in effectively communicating the important aspects of a product. For example, the colors red and blue are usually used to show hot and cold for lots of products. This may seem like common sense, but in reality, the hottest of fires glow blue, and sometimes, severe cold also leads to burns!

However, people have usually grown with this association of red and blue in their minds, which is rather difficult to change. And this is why it can be said that the usage of color association for communicating some aspects of products can give a positive influence on potential customers.

The connection between psychology and Internet marketing:

Internet marketers are always on the lookout for ways of creating good impressions on viewers, as the business is always dependant on good impressions! The customer spends only a few minutes to gauge on the competence of a company through the marketing tool. So this few minutes prove to be very valuable to the Internet marketer.

The first thing Internet marketers have to concentrate is the web page, which emphasizes for an importance of good design and the right color choices. Remember, that the first impression is the important impression and thus has to be made the best of them.

The secret to a successful web page is to consider it as your store front, and thus has to be treated respectfully. The important aspects of a successful web page is its content, having a niche in the market, good customer service and a high subscriber list. This is along with good web page design and proper color choices in the web page. In fact, it is taking these aspects into consideration that viewers look over your web page with. However, whatever the impact your content gives to the viewer, it is important that you also work on making them feel at home when they are visiting the page. Otherwise, the only thing they may do is to leave your web page!

It may be surprising to learn that it is possible to control the mood of visitors to your website through the colors you use on the website. However, this is an aspect that is usually ignored. The reason colors can control the mood of visitors is that human emotions are generally triggered by colors. However, it is necessary for you to have some knowledge on which color triggers which emotions!

In fact, if colors are used correctly, it is possible to make some difference between the customer buying and selling your products. This is possible on choosing the right color combination for both your site and product.

Everything in our lives has colors; the food we eat the clothes we wear and the places we go. All of these colors have some form of psychological and emotional response in people and it is these responses that reflect our nature and the things that spark emotions and responses in us. It is a fact that color is the first thing that we notice, and it is also the last thing that is forgotten. So color proves to be a very powerful tool if used properly. It can be considered to be the path to ones thoughts, feelings and desires and is thus a point worth discussing about.

Now we come to the part on which color to use in internet marketing. It is always better to use the main content on some white background as this is softer on the eyes and provides some professionalism to the viewer. Moreover, white is a color that triggers thoughts of purity, peace and perfection to the viewer. Though white is a very important color, it is not sufficient using only white on the website. You will also have to complement the site with other colors too. Everyone has some creativity in himself or herself. So all that has to be done is to use the huge color spectrum to choose the best colors to use on the website.

To help you, let it be known that red is a color that generally stimulates warmth, hunger and excitement to the viewer. It is the cooler colors like green and blue that help enhance calm and content feelings to the viewer. If you want an object to look heavier, use dark colors; and to make them look lighter, use light colors.

Yellow is a color that generally stimulates a lack of worry, while black is a color that designates a troubled state. However, it is not

always that the respective colors mean the same things to all people. Sometimes, the color yellow may mean cheap, the color green may mean money or greed while the color black may signify death or elegance!

So it can be seen that color is basically considered to be a science and is a great weapon in Internet marketing. However, you have to choose colors with great thought as the color basically identifies you and your product. And once a color is owned by you, it will always be associated to you and your company. Famous and typical examples to exemplify this are logos like Coca Cola being associated with red, Tide orange and John Deere green. Remember, that the color of a logo has the same impact, if not more, than the logo itself.

Whenever you venture to choose colors, it is important to use logic and choose colors. For example, different products need different colors to describe them; green says pine in a cleaner and mint in a mouthwash. Blue signifies strong mint, like icy cool mint and even dinner plates. Red signifies cherries, strawberries and apples. No one chooses gray for laundry detergent as no one really wants gray clothes; only brightly colored clothes.

Gray and brown are two colors that greatly affect moods, as they generally seem depressing and somber. However, with tints of red, they give a more cheerful attitude. However you use gray and brown, they usually suggest weight and something heavy so visitors will be offered stableness and strength with these colors. Other colors that signify solitude are burgundy, oyster, blues and beige.

Color is an important aspect of business; don't neglect it:

The world was once a black and white world where the television had black and white programs and publications were mostly black. However it was in the 60s that all this changed to produce what we see today. Color is now considered the best means of drawing attention to any media. We have our own tastes in the world, so different people have different ideas in associating colors with products. There is no actual answer on what the best color would be for the product; everything will have to be done by chance.

You can now find the best equipment and personnel in the printing industry that helps produce beautiful labels. The same importance is now applied to producing the appropriate label as it is to producing a product. There are many family owned companies that guarantee in creating a label with 100% satisfaction guarantee and that gives a lasting impression.

Today, brand awareness is a point of major concern for most companies. Using varied logo or product colors only decrease your marketing efforts. Moreover, the effectiveness of retail space too is greatly reduced with the wrong colors. Sometimes, the varied colors of different products may make a unique product blend with the other products on the store shelf. It is uniformity of a color that is very important in creating brand awareness and a presence in retail atmosphere. With the use of the densitometer and spectrophotometer, you can avail of readings that guarantee color consistency all the way round.

The best way of making your product stand out from other products is with colors and materials that pop. Large manufacturers know that value of color density and vibrancy and this is why they are always striving for color brilliance. You are sure to experience increased sales of your product with a good shelf appeal.

How effective is your marketing?

It is through effective marketing that you can stand out of the crowd, while setting your own standards. The public is always supportive of the innovative leader of trends, and not copycats. However, there are many companies out there that waste thousands of dollars with ineffective marketing. So instead of following their footsteps in wasting money though advertising, it is better to follow these keys to increase marketing IQ.

The first key is to find your advantage by finding what it is that your organization does better than the competition. Marketing means communicating the advantage of your business over others and so to compete in the market place, it is necessary that you know what your company offers that is better than the competition. You can find out what makes you better than your competition through a SWOT analysis. However, while finding out what is advantageous in your company, don't base it on a unique product.

Today, it is difficult to remain having an advantage over competitors because of modern technological know-how. It was easy to maintain an advantage in the past as others found it rather difficult to copy products. However, today products are, and can be copied within a few days or weeks. Today, you find many software applications that are copied immediately, which make it rather difficult to maintain a competitive advantage on competitors. This is the reason there is now emphasis on customer service and other components in the marketplace. Don't consider low price a competitive advantage as this can be very easily and quickly copied by the competition. Today, competitive advantages depend on service, longevity and reputation.

Realize the purpose of your business and service. Define what exactly it is that you intend to achieve, and how you intend to measure success. The answers to these questions are important in

defining your purpose as you need a clear mission to determine the goals of your organization. On developing a clear purpose, make all levels of the organization stand in alignment to go in the same direction. This can be done by getting stake holders involved in developing the mission, instead of having a few decision makers decide on what is best and handing it down to be followed.

Aim at creating an image that promotes image and awareness through your advertising. You have to first create an image to implement any promotion. You can define an image as both a physical visual representation and a concept. It is necessary to have the right look to compete today. Having a good product is not sufficient; you should also have the capacity of attracting the attention of the audience. So create a look that not only enhances the image of the product, but also maintains alignment with the mission. The look should also promote the competitive advantages of the organization.

The important parts of an image are logos, colors, style and branding; and it is the symbol of your company and product. So it should be very pervasive in communications. Use the right colors to promote the right messages, as it is these colors that provide recognition of your brand.

Colors are one of our strongest means of communication. But although they play a distinctly significant role in our regular day life being used to them we tend to not notice this obvious bit of fact.

Take for instance the colors of the clothes you wear, many of us unconsciously wear gray on days we feel down and choose to wear brighter colors on days, which are comparatively more happy. Our wedding attire is primarily white (for Christians at least) which signifies purity and pristine ness, whereas the official color for funerals is the starkly opposite black, the color of grief. Flashy sports cars are red, whereas more sophisticated cars like stretched limo's for instance are a somber white or black. Thus you see we communicate ideas regularly with colors, usually without even knowing.

Colors for websites

Like in any other business establishment, colors are extremely vital for a website. This is because the net is a non-verbal medium and communicating any idea here is almost completely based on visual stimuli. Under the circumstances therefore it is of some value to make a first impression on your customers, right at the first glance before you delve into the technicalities. A pleasing website is always a welcome sign for browsers, if your website doesn't please the viewer almost immediately then he/she can opt out of it almost immediately in a matter of a click.

Most companies however do not appreciate the importance of the color scheme of their website. Which is probably expected given that such a fundamental detail might seem frivolous and tacky to most who are looking to put up a site of great practical importance. Most will argue that the success of a website will depend on its content and not on what it looks like. While this is obviously true it would probably be hasty to decide whether or not the appearance

of anything contributes to its success. Consider the fact that all of us decide on a number of things primarily based on what it looks like far before we actually use it. A toothbrush for instance (which obviously cannot work well just because it looks perfect) tends to be advertised in terms of what it looks like. This is because our visual senses decide for us what pleases us or does not please us even before we consider their practical utility.

Similarly when we visit a website if its graphics, color schemes and holistic design is attractive we will immediately be interested in it. Since most people tend to ignore this fact therefore they employ technicians rather than creative designers, who have a sound knowledge about colors and their usage, to create their websites. As a result most sites look drab and do not have the attractive power to keep customers interested long enough to find out what the exact contents of the website are.

Color and the use of psychology:

Color is said to have a psychological affect on your product and customers. Sometimes a customer may have some memories connected to some color that may be either pleasant or unpleasant. Sometimes, a person may connect himself or herself with the color of the uniform of the school team or college team he or she was playing in during youth. If the uniform was red in color, then anything red that he sees will connect him to his past and the happiness he experienced while playing in the team. Similarly, some colors may evoke unpleasant memories of the past of the customer.

Supposing a customer was the victim of an accident. Although the wounds of the accident may have healed, the vision of the color of the van or car that had hit the customer will remain vivid in the eyes of the customer. So if the vehicle was a blue vehicle, whenever the customer saw anything blue in color, unpleasant

memories of the accident tend to return to the customer. With all this, it can be seen that many colors are usually attributed to some psychological stimulus that may have affected the customer a few years or decades ago. These colors will remain in the minds of the visitor for a long time to come.

On the other hand, there are some colors that give a subconscious reference to something else that remains in one's collective psyche. It is this subconscious psyche that helps to communicate aspects of a product. For example, the colors red and blue always describe hot and cold for many products. However, before you remark that this fact is mere common sense, remember that sometimes the hottest fire turns out to be blue in color while it is also sometimes possible to get some 'burns' due to extreme cold! However, as we usually grow with the association that red signifies hot and blue signifies cold, it is this association that is usually used in many products which is quite effective. Remember that it is rather beneficial to communicate some aspects of your product using color association which in turn influences any potential customer.

It may be rather surprising to learn that many of the huge corporations that you find around you have gained recognition with their logos after spending millions of dollars in determining the best colors for the logo. They know that the perfect color is the best for increasing the profitability of a product.

There is proof of the importance of market research of colors for a product in the New Orleans Hornets of the National Basketball Association. The city of New Orleans was provided with an expansion team for basketball. However, the team management knew that like all other expansion teams, this expansion team too would take some time to bring sufficient profitable attendance to its organization. Despite this, they decided to capitalize on the high potential of the market base of the NBA. So they went on to determine and design the Hornet's optimal branding and identity.

So with months of market research, they revealed their new logo that consisted of a cartoon-style hornet that had a teal, purple and gold color scheme. This design became an overnight success through which the Hornets led the league in jersey and accessory sales without any competition of a play off spot for some time to come. With this example, it was proven that color and branding is indeed a profound driver of a product in the market place.

Importance of Color in Web Design

Websites don't constitute of only images and text. The website is basically a marketing tool that represents its company, employees, owner and products. Besides all this, a website is also considered to be a personality. So you may wonder how a website is considered to be a personality. Well, it is because it portrays positive and negative symbolism and emotion to the visitor that it is considered to be a personality.

When we meet people face-to-face, we find that our bodies and faces tend to emit unspoken meanings. Our smile, laugh, gesture and even becoming nervous all convey different feelings. And it is these nuances that contribute much to communication. And this is the same feelings that the website conveys. The only difference that can be mentioned here is that the website conveys these nuances with color, and we, without any color! It is with this color that we learn some meaning of the website. Colors tend to make us happy, angry, nervous, sad, comfortable and also very trusting. It is very easy to start on web designing by first choosing a graphic, and then to design the website around the graphic. However, this may sometimes present a derogatory impression to the visitor of the website. It can be said that these colors sometimes contradict the content of the website without you actually knowing much about it.

Which colors should you use on your Website?

There is no generalized cannon regarding the usage of colors. A number of professionals are often capable of creating varied atmospheres with a variety of colors. This of course is based on their level of skill and comfort with colors in general.

While no exact advice might be given regarding the colors you should use for your site, a general briefing about most colors might be done. Following we look into the characteristics and individual components of most popular colors.

Colors are generally divided into various categories based on the 'feeling' they are said to emanate. Broadly, these categories can be described as Cool, Warm and Neutral.

Cool Colors

Include blue based colors like all shades of blue, green, purple, silver etc. these usually produce a feeling of serenity and calmness and are perfect for Business sites given the natural sophistication of the shades. However avoid using these shades alone since they can produce a distant cold feeling if not combined with colors from other groups.

Individually, **the color blue** is immediately connected by the mind with natural elements like the water and the sky, and are therefore associated with trust and stability.

E-commerce sites, banks and other similar institutions might consider keeping large amounts of blue on their palette.

The color green has similar naturalistic associations. It is usually found to be associated with freshness and youth. Green is a very versatile color and can be used for a number of sites. It has found to be successful in sites related to hygiene and beauty. If you choose green as a possible color for your site, do not forget to consider the various shades available. Remember all shades of

green might not work for your site. Darker Greens like Emerald and jade colors are connected to money and esteem where as lighter shades, like mint green etc. are associated with freshness.

The color purple has for years been regarded as a symbol of regality and sophistication. It is in every way as royal a color can get. It is both a spiritual and a sensual delight. Consider darker shades for sites, which deal with new-age products etc. Lighter shades like lavender lilac etc. are more feminine in their appeal and can be used on sites dealing with more sentimental or personal products. A number of Undergarment Company's have successfully utilized light purple shades on their sites.

Silver can either be glitzy and metallic or soothing and expensive. Your choice of shade will decide the message you want your customer to get. High tech sites have in the past used silver to give themselves a sleek cool look, and the risk has been known to pay off. However, if your design isn't particularly cutting edge use silver sparingly, either for some parts of text or for special decorations etc. Used extensively it can often be a bit of an eye sore.

Warm Colors

Includes colors like red, pink, orange gold and their likes. These tend to be excitable in nature and can be painfully overwhelming if used alone. Most of these colors are regarded as what is popularly called 'bright' and therefore work well on flashy sites targeted towards youngsters. However red can be used in various ways on various sites, it is generally very adaptable and creates an ambience of its own.

Red is a mute signal for energy. Seeing red quickly fires up your pulse rate, blood pressure and adrenaline level. You can either

choose to shock your customers with letter box red's or give them a more warm welcome with burgundy and blood red's.

Pink has traditionally been connected with femininity and romanticism. It can also represent youth and spirit. For more sophistication consider magenta and fuchsia.

Orange is a fierce fun-loving color. It is usually seen as warm and inviting and connected with sunsets and Halloween. Using a more tempered shade of orange rather than a fluorescent, neon shade is preferable since the latter tends to be too much for the eyes. Orange has worked well for point-of-purchase graphics and specials.

Yellow is the color of friendship and understanding. It communicates comfort and imagination and has been used well by the food service industry, probably due to the abundance of the color in food stuff (bananas, lemons etc.).

Neutrals.

Neutrals spell class and dignity. Colors like beige, gray and taupe have been considered classics for decades now. They are timeless in their sense of moderation and elegance is always in fashion.

Pure white is one of the simplest and yet beautiful colors in the world. How you use the color will obviously decide whether it works for your particular site or not, but on the whole it's the one color which immediately attracts attention due to the pristine atmosphere it creates.

Black, another absolute classic. Black means mystery, enigma and power. Black is also in many way sophistication personified. However steer clear of using too much of black on your site since

this might look too dark, causing text etc. to become too difficult to read.

Your choice of color will immediately create a certain image of your company in your potential customers mind. This is because different colors are interpreted differently by people. For instance green can mean envy to some but can also simultaneously be a symbol of wealth to others. Technology allows us to create a number of combinations of the colors we decide to use, these in turn help us emphasize the preferred effect of the color we have in mind.

The ultimate point of using the right color and getting the right design for your websites obviously is to get proper attention from your audience: your customers. Whenever you are choosing your colors therefore keep this final point in mind, you want to play your cards right and hit the right chords with your customers, you want to sway them your way and convince them to see the color the way you want them to, for all these reasons it is important for you to understand the basics of color psychology (discussed in brief in the above section).

Choose a color, which suits your brand. Most brands for instance have this great affinity for red. This is because red commands immediate attention. But that doesn't mean that it works for all brands. Don't jump into the bandwagon simply because it has taken some to their desired destination. Remember your brand has a unique identity and you would want to emphasize that with your palette. For this you will have to take into consideration your target group, and gauge their general attitude towards colors. This may or may not be parallel to your own, and therefore trusting your personal choice might not be the exact way to go about it. For instance, you may hate pink but if you are dealing with a cosmetic brand specially targeted towards women between the ages of 15-25 pink might be a darned suitable color. Your final motive is to

please your customers and not yourself, your choice of colors should thus reflect their taste and not your own.

Consider the age group, social class and gender of the people you want to target your marketing towards while considering the color scheme for your site.

It has been found that youngsters have a tendency to like basic bright colors like red, green, yellow etc. Adults on the other hand prefer darker colors like black etc. if not muted neutral shades. People from different classes have also exhibited varied tastes in colors. The working class for instance has been found through a recent survey to be more drawn to primary colors. Whereas the middle class and higher sections of the society are attracted to muted shades like salmon, beige etc.

Our sex too plays a major role in our color preferences. Generally speaking, women tend to like bright colors like red, orange, yellow etc. whereas men like cooler shades like blue, green etc. better.

A number of colors tend to be in fashion at a certain period of time, these are what is called the “current trend” in terms of color. While choosing such colors might work periodically, on the whole it’s far wiser to go for a shade, which will outlast any such fad.

When selecting a color for your site try and maintain its palette keeping in mind the rest of your marketing materials. This will mark that color or palette as yours, such that your customers will always associate that particular color with your brand. This sort of trust will add to your brand identity and also create a positive trustworthy image of your company in your customers mind.

How to use the hues and tones of popular colors for your website:

While selecting a color careful thought must be given to the psychological effect the color will bring to the prospective consumer and the people who are working with this colors. The reason for this is that no additional expense is incurred to do this and it remains an integral part of your product.

It creates the right impression for your company. Judicious use of colors reflects the healthy thriving state of your business. It makes you more approachable.

A survey shows that a popular hamburger chain found the colors red and yellow having a positive effect on the customers. It also observed that:

1. It brought in more customers
2. Attracted them to enter the store
3. Made them feel better about investing their money there.

Colors make people respond to them in different ways. Some have a bright positive effect while others turn people off. Many people consider color to be personal choice. To a certain extent this is true. It is important that the colors we wear and the colors we use in business have a positive vibe. Usually people are unaware about the emotional effects colors have which leads to discord both at home and business. The wrong choice of colors lead to irritability on the personal front while it may lead to financial losses in the business sector.

The modern marketing man must be astute about colours. Personal preference is one thing but marketing stratagems based on colors are a different ball game. The colors must correspond to the kind of business you are in or the product you are trying to market and advertise.

The complete color reference manuals have been unavailable until now. The companies which had commissioned such a research usually kept mum about it as they did not want to divulge their strategies to the public.

Last fifty years of research shows that...

Colors have a major effect on our behavior

- Why do fast food chains follow the same set of color patterns?
- What is the best office colors based on efficiency output?
- What is the relation between color conditioning and work output?
- Why red shouldn't be used in products for men?
- What color will attract more business?
- What colors will increase sales?
- What are the best colors for print advertising?
- What colors will make customers more comfortable to spend their money?

The right colors can propel your business. For example if you are in the business of sweets blue or mauve should be the color, which dominates your ambience, blue being the color of sweetness. While on the other hand you never should use green as it represents an astringent taste.

What colors are bound to improve your sales?

Dr. Max Luscher the father of color psychology has developed a color test, which has proved to be immensely successful for the last twenty years. His test finds out a behavioral pattern as far as responding to colors are concerned. In the field of packaging

products and the corporate image he has found out a certain color range, which is PSYCHOLOGICALLY EFFECTIVE. According to him the range of colors subconsciously dictate the consumers preference.

Fundamental objectives of color decoration:

- To lure potential buyers.
- Attract customers to the establishment
- Make the customer feel comfortable about the surroundings
- Make the customer see all the advantages of purchasing the particular product.

Any establishment in order to be successful must make the customer satisfied so that they can always think of coming back to the shop. Along with the quality of the product, price the degree of comfort a customer derives from the transaction is a very important factor for business to flourish.

The establishment must be place where the customer can come and see the products, thus the visual impact of the place becomes very important. The visual impact must be such that the customer feels drawn to the place and feels a part of it at the same time. First impression is crucial and color plays a huge role in determining this impression as it linked to the emotions rather than pure rationality.

The complete color manual takes into consideration many more colors and explicates:

- The image the color represents
- How the person feels about himself/herself wearing it
- The sphere in which the color is to be used
- The disposition of the person using it
- The emotional effect it brings

- How to coordinate other colors with it
- What kind of color suits which kind of product

Some would argue that black and white has a greater impact but it is undeniable that color has a certain hypnotic effect on people and this the black and white layout, text and graphics cannot do.

How color affects individuals

This is obviously a speculative phenomenon but it will be interesting to note that color preferences change with age

The selection of color for your website is absolutely critical. You can take professional help but you must make sure that the web page designer is not just a programmer but also a graphic designer and a marketer.

But how do you understand what colors are best for your website? This is a tricky question to answer. You might take professional help to sort this out, but the following table will help you tackle this question a bit better. The same color depending on its intensity and value induces different reactions.

Red. It can, stimulating, energizing, exciting, and appetizing. Red induces an adrenalin rush and increase of blood pressure. Fire engine red has more impact than burgundy.

Pink. It can be happy, romantic, spirited, and youthful. Vibrant pink is used most in the cosmetic industry. It is advisable to use pink for trendy products, which are not very expensive. The difference between immaturity and certain sophistication is the line between bubble gum pink and fuchsia/magenta.

Orange is adventurous, inviting and energizing. Orange is the hottest colour and has similar arousal effects like red. Neon orange is considered to be loaded but a tempered vivid orange is perfect for instant recognition and purchase. Orange combines the drama of red and cheeriness of yellow.

Yellow is a warm, sunny, vibrant colour, which brings in a sense of cheer. Yellow speaks of imagination. It is extensively used in food industries because of its familiarity. The eye notices the highly reflective yellow before it perceives any other colour thus pale yellow is an excellent choice for instant product purchase.

Brown is a sensible, rich and durable colour. Brown has got an earth tone, which brings in a sense of organic stability. Brown if used in the wrong shade brings in an appearance of dirt hence it is avoided in fashion industries, whereas it is used frequently in the food business because of its connection with chocolates, coffee and root beer.

Blue is a cool serene and consistent color. Blue like brown has an organic feel about it, which brings in the sense consistency as blue is always around us. For this many banking institutions use blue while many corporate houses make use of the cold dispassionate aspect of the colour, which works in opposition to the warmth of the individual customer.

Green is a soothing refreshing colour. It works well in beauty and hygiene products for its toning and soothing effect. Mint green is seen as fresh while bright green is usually associated with foliage and grass. Emerald green represents elegance while a deeper shade of green is associated with wealth and stature. Green can also act as a nice neutral.

Purple is a sensuous, elegant colour. It brings in a sense of enigma and is regal in character. It is best for creative, new or cutting edge

products. Lavender has a certain nostalgic appeal while deep purple is the colour of sophistication.

Neutrals classics are quality colors, which are timeless in their appeal. The tones of beige, gray are markers of that timelessness.

White is simple and pristine. White is representative of clean elegance. It might become a stark if not complemented with other colors which go along with it.

Black is a powerful and classic color. Black is seen as expensive, dramatic and elegant. Though it is used in mourning its positive attributes outweigh its negative aspects. It is used in gourmet.

The colour scheme of the web page is also of utmost importance. You must pay attention to the contrast. The background should be such that it facilitates readability and makes the message stand out in sharp relief. Light shades are not to be used as it might hamper readability.

You should not use too many colours. Maximum 3 to 4 colors should be used for the website. Decide beforehand about the colors and stick to it.

Complementary colours. There are opposite colors on the colours wheel. The 3 commonest sets are:

- Red and green
- Blue and orange
- Yellow and purple

These colours work together well to increase the overall visual quality.

Analog colours

This approach includes identification of similar colours on the colour wheel. Red has its analog colours in orange and yellow. In moderation these combinations look good otherwise it can become too bright.

Chromatic colours

In this approach one uses different hues and shades of the same colour. This brings in a sleek and professional look.

Choosing colour combinations from the nature

Learn from the organic combinations found in plants landscapes etc and learn from them.

One must also consider colour blind customers, so make sure that the page is easily readable

Different types of media call for different color schemes. When one speaks of color schemes, it refers to the choice of colors that are to be used in the design of the media. The most common color scheme today is one with a white background, with black text.

The main reason for the usage of color schemes is to create some style and appeal in matter to be published. When choosing appropriate colors for a color scheme, it is the colors that create an aesthetic feeling that will accompany each other when used together. The most basic of color schemes involve two colors that look well together. However, there are more complex color schemes that include several colors mixed together. However, these advanced color schemes are usually based around a single color; like multiple colors being used together on a black background in a magazine page.

Color schemes not only consist of different colors, it also consists of different shades of a single color. Different shades of blue that range from light to dark make a beautiful color scheme. Color schemes usually refer to choice and the use of colors that are found outside aesthetic media and context. However, sometimes, it may be used only for purely aesthetic effect and practical reasons. This can be found on the color patterns and designs that one sees on vehicles, and more prominently in military vehicles where definite color patterns are used for identification purposes of friend or foe, camouflage and for the identification of certain military units.

Usually, color schemes are referred to as trade dress, and are usually copyrighted like Kodak film and Tide laundry powder.

About color schemes:

When you refer to a light-on-dark color scheme, it refers to the color scheme that uses light-colored text on a dark colored background. This phrase is usually used when speaking in terms of computer user interface design. CRTs were first used to form computer user interface images. The phosphor here was a dark color that lit up brightly when the electron beam hit it. Depending on the phosphor that is applied on the monochrome screen, the human eye makes this phosphor appear green or amber on black. The RGB screens also followed the same principle, with its beams set to form white.

The teletext is what prompted research on primary and secondary light colors and combinations to find out what matched the new medium the best. And through this research, it was found that from a palette of black, red, blue, magenta, cyan, yellow and white, it was cyan or yellow that looked optimal on a black background.

It was the WYSIWYG word processor that introduced the opposite color scheme of dark on light, so as to stimulate the look of ink on paper. However, there has always been a dispute amongst vision and perception researchers on which is actually better to read; text on a dark or light background.

Individual devices of digital cameras, scanners, monitors or printers all produce different colors. This is why it is rather difficult to obtain some predictable color reproduction of each device in the digital darkroom. However, if you follow the instructions of monitor and printer calibration using your well-characterized equipment, you may get some decent results without much use of color management. However, many a time, you may feel like going further, to get some better results.

You may feel like improvising color matching between the monitor and printer, sending out images to be printed on a large

format Light Jet printer, reproducing colors as well as possible and working with fine art papers or nonstandard inks. However, to achieve all this, it will be very important for you to get familiar with different software packages and procedures related with color management.

Different color schemes:

With the use of different shades, tones and tints of the same color monochromatic color schemes now look like different colors with variety and interest. With a single color scheme, you are sure to get some peaceful and harmonious response. Though monochromatic colors can produce some claiming effects when tying things together, they prove to be rather dull or boring with the deficit of color contrast and liveliness.

Then there are the analogous or side-by-side color scheme as it is called that adds depth, visual appeal and energy to its product. You can make out the effect of this by placing two or three colors that are related to each other on the color wheel. The resulting combinations prove to be rather flexible and attention-grabbing which in turn helps in providing some harmony to the setting. However, there is one problem with this color scheme, and that is the addition of a forth color. On the addition of a fourth color, the original effect gets spoiled. When combining colors, remember that the analogous color combinations of yellow, orange and red provide life, and at the same time, heat up its space. In the meantime, combinations of blue, green and teal help to cool a space.

You can create complimentary, contrasting or opposite color combinations using colors that come form the opposite sides of the combination. For example, a warm color, when used with a cool color usually results in a spectacular combination; like yellow and purple, blue and orange and red and green. Moreover, these color combinations prove to be rather pleasing to most people as these two colors usually contain all the three primary colors, to make the color scheme complete and well-balanced.

You will find lots of literature solely meant for color schemes. However, if you do attempt to read this literature, it is more than likely that you will end up confused. So in the end, it is always

better to use your judgment and choose the colors that will go well with each other. Use the colors that you like the best, and work around them! As sometimes, choosing the right color proves to be rather tedious!

On following these ecommerce web site design tips you are sure to find more visitors interested in your website, with many more wishing for more. The best thing to do to capture the attention of the visitor would be with an interesting headline or perhaps an inquisitive question. It is the headline that captures a visitor's interest and, remember that the visitor only spends not more than a few seconds to decide on whether to explore the site or move away!

Make sure that your website loads quickly in all browsers by limiting large graphics, flash presentations and animations. You should use all of this only if you need to give an overall message to the visitor, and not for just some entertainment value. Keep color schemes and background patterns as simple as possible as sometimes too much an overbearing color scheme may prove to be irritating on the computer screen. Use only white or pale shades as background colors for text areas and dark or black font to ensure maximum readability for the visitor.

When composing your message on the website, compose it so that the visitor's needs, interests and desires are satisfied. Then you have to demonstrate how the product and website can help fulfill these needs of the customer. It is basically of not much use placing much emphasis on the website owner's accomplishment or

business history, so don't waste time on this. If you do feel you need to mention all this, mention it in the 'about us' page.

If you use a conversational style in the text and message, the visitor will feel much more relaxed and interested in your website. Don't use much of dry corporate syntax and technical jargon as then only visitors well versed in this language can use the website. The more the human element you add in your website, the more attractive it appeals to visitors. Remember that most Internet users are intelligent and educated. So it is better to proofread your text for spelling, grammar and punctuation. Too many mistakes will produce a negative impact on you and lose your professionalism.

Websites that are clean and free of clutter provide greater efficiency. Use as much white space to surround graphics and text as this provides for easy readability. Limit your paragraphs to five or six lines for clearer reading. To make navigation easier to the visitor, add standardized menus on each of the pages of the website. These menus should have links for the other pages on the website so that the visitor can navigate between individual web pages through a single click of the mouse.

If you have a large site, break the content into numerous sections and then create pages for these sections. Most surfers don't have the patience to scroll down long pages. Display your name, company name, and address; email link and some telephone number in one of your web pages so that the visitor will have more trust and confidence on your site and you!

Before you actually publish the website to the Internet, it is better to check and validate the HTML code of your site by visiting some HTML validation site. It is always better to test all your web pages for its proper resolution after its publishing; but before any promotions. This is because sometimes a web page may look great on browser but not work on another browser. The three most

commonly used browsers today are MS Internet Explorer, Opera and Mozilla Firefox.

All these tips mentioned here will help a novice Webmaster create a successful eCommerce website design. However, there is actually much more about the optimization of websites for search engines. Sufficient tutorials and resources are available for free on the Internet and are easily accessible with a single query on a major search engine.