

Graphics Image Builder

Great advice on how to improve your corporate identity, marketing materials, and product design.

Unlocking the Symbolic Meaning of Color



Color is a magical element that gives feeling and emotion to art, design and advertising. By understanding the symbolic meaning of different colors, you can choose the right color to support and emphasize your design. Learn how to use color as a functional design element. A dominant color or overall color scheme can determine the tone of your document. Certain colors will help your product, corporate document or advertisement attract specific audiences and evoke desired responses. The information below will give you some generally accepted guidelines on the symbolic meanings of color and how you can use it in your marketing materials, logo or packaging design.

Yellows — Coral, orange, amber, gold

Symbolizes: Energy, caution, warmth, cheer, joy.

Use yellow for signage in work situations warning of danger. Yellow is also good for any project that needs to evoke feelings of lightheartedness, humor or friendliness. Yellows are often associated with the following characteristics: homey, friendly, soft, welcoming, moving, excitement or adventure. Good for press kits, stationery and shopping bags.

Reds — Mauve, magenta, crimson, scarlet, poster red

Symbolizes: Power, romance, vitality, earthly, energy.

Reds evoke highly charged emotions such as aggression, danger or love. Red makes us pay attention and catches our eye immediately. Use reds on items that need to grab attention. In the financial arena, red symbolizes a negative direction.

Greens — Lime, leaf green, sea green, emerald, teal, sage

Symbolizes life: Foliage, grass, trees and water.

Greens are sensuous and alive. Green is associated with the following characteristics: friendliness, dependability, freshness, nonthreatening, safe, secure, healthy, strong, expensive, primitive. In the business world, green symbolizes growth and prosperity.

Blues — Cyan, sky blue, ultramarine, violet, purple, azure

Symbolizes: Peace, law and order, logic, analytical, intelligent, honest, calm, clean, good will, tranquility, compassionate, serious, thoughtful, quiet, reflective, regal, classic, dependable, trustworthiness, tradition, magical. Blues are often used for older, more mature audiences and situations. Blue is common in financial institutions, hospitals, legal and medical professions. Purples have long been associated with royalty.

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**Brought to you monthly
by Karen Saunders
of MacGraphics Services**

Karen Saunders specializes in designing ads, logos, one-sheets, book covers, and marketing materials that win awards. A professional graphic artist for two decades, Karen answers your artistic and technical questions through this monthly ezine. Visit www.macgraphics.net to see samples of her work, or call Karen directly at 303-680-2330 to discuss your project.

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