

Exploring the Power of Visual Aesthetics in Advertising

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ABSTRACT

Marketing plays a crucial role in determining the success of any organisation. Businesses can achieve significant growth by implementing a strategy that prioritises the needs and preferences of their customers. A recent study has emphasised the crucial significance of visual attractiveness in attracting customer attention and involvement. A favourable aesthetic experience can enhance the user's involvement with the interface. This article seeks to examine the capacity of utilising visual aesthetics to mould brand identity, impact consumer perception, and affect behaviour in advertising campaigns. This study will use Gestalt theory principles to enable advertisers to create more impactful and captivating advertising that captures viewers' attention, facilitates information processing, and improves brand recall. The study will utilise a quantitative methodology, using data collected via a self-administered questionnaire. The data analysis will employ structural equation modelling (SEM). The study's findings will unquestionably equip advertising marketers to improve product promotion techniques and tailor advertising campaigns.

Keywords: *Advertising, Visual aesthetics, Advertisements, Communication*

INTRODUCTION

Creating an eye-catching advertisement is essential in the field of marketing, as it has the power to influence consumers' perceptions and capture their interest (Enschot-van Dijk & van Mulken, 2014; Köksal, 2022). Research has shown that carefully crafted advertisements that incorporate visually captivating elements can significantly improve brand recognition, cultivate favourable perceptions of the advertised product, and ultimately influence consumer actions (Bolt, 2014; Kaushik, 2021). Utilising reflections in advertising can significantly enhance the visual allure of a product (Sharma & Kumar, 2022).

Visual aesthetics in advertising encompasses the creative and sensory elements that elicit a favourable reaction from customers. Creating visually captivating and alluring commercials requires a strategic approach to design, imagery, and form, emphasising the importance of visual appeal in capturing consumers' attention, shaping their perception of a brand, and driving their purchasing choices. According to a recent study, customers are greatly influenced by visually engaging commercials that are customised to meet their needs (Yunita, 2022). Visual elements play a crucial role in advertising as they combine shape and content to convey powerful metaphors that enhance the message. Utilising visual aesthetics can greatly enhance the impact and effectiveness of advertising, leaving a lasting impression on customers and shaping their perception of brands. Visual design plays a crucial role in shaping customers' perceptions, memories, and behaviours when it comes to the impact of advertisement. According to Negrin and Tantawi (2015), visual communication has the ability to engage and make a memorable impact.

Asuzu and Olechowski (2023) found that the presence of visual aesthetic value in advertisements significantly influences consumer perception and purchasing decisions. The researchers also highlighted the importance of visual aesthetics in captivating commercials, emphasising their significant influence on customers' attitudes and intentions towards the advertised products. Consumers are more likely to purchase products with an appealing aesthetic, especially when presented in visually appealing ways on popular social media platforms like Instagram (Yunita, 2022). Similarly, Sharma and Kumar (2022) conducted a recent study which found that showcasing a product alongside its reflection can significantly enhance its visual appeal and positively influence consumers' perception of the product. Integrating visual imagery and design elements in advertising can significantly boost consumers' perception of product appeal. Moreover, studies have shown that incorporating visual intrigue and detailed product descriptions in advertising enhances consumers' perceived value of products, thereby increasing their willingness to pay for them. Understanding the importance of visual designs in advertising, it becomes crucial to align the visual properties with the needs of the target segment. This guarantees a positive influence on consumer perception (Kaushik, 2021).

When it comes to advertisements, the inclusion of visual aesthetic elements has a significant impact on consumer attention, perception, decision-making, and ultimately, purchasing behaviour. Clearly, in a world saturated with information, a visually appealing advertisement has the ability to stand out and grab the attention of potential customers. Eye-catching designs can substantially enhance an advertisement's visibility in a crowded setting, increasing the likelihood of it being noticed and remembered. Understanding the power of visual aesthetics in advertising can significantly enhance the effectiveness of marketing communications and foster stronger customer engagement. Tarta et al. (2020) found in a recent study that the aesthetic dimensions in advertisements significantly influence consumers' perception of stimuli and purchase decisions. This would provide valuable insights for marketers to develop effective marketing strategies.

THEORY UNDERPINNING

Gestalt Theory

Gestalt theory highlights that individuals see objects more as a whole than as separate parts. Gestalt theory aims to elucidate how humans organise perceptible items into identifiable patterns through the establishment of connections between them. Gestalt theory posits that individuals engage in information processing in order to comprehend their surroundings. According to the concept, the entirety is not larger than its individual parts, but it is also distinct from those parts (Wertheimer, 1938).

The concepts of Gestalt psychology, including proximity, resemblance, continuity, closure, and figure-ground, elucidate how individuals perceive visual elements as a cohesive entity. The principles of Gestalt theory have a significant influence on the visual aesthetics of advertising design. They improve perception and aesthetics in advertising, resulting in impactful and cohesive visual designs (Yaman & Yaman, 2022; Hamed, 2022). Additionally, they contribute to the creation of effective images and consumer preference (Liu & Lee, 2023), enhance design and consumer engagement (Chuang, 2019), and are utilised in advertising to create impactful and cohesive designs (Nikiforova et al., 2023). Furthermore, the application of colour similarity in advertising enhances unconscious scanning and brand attitudes. (Chiu et al., 2017). Moreover, the gestalt theory serves to integrate the perceptual process, exerting influence on the visual aesthetics employed in advertising (Gilchrist, 2022). It plays a role in shaping the visual aesthetics and assists in the formulation of advertising design concepts. It improves the effectiveness of visual communication tactics in advertising campaigns (Rosa & de Rangel Moreira, 2023). Undoubtedly, Gestalt theory principles are essential in advertising to generate visually compelling and coherent designs that effectively direct viewer perception and interpretation (Khamis et al., 2023). Thus, advertising can effectively apply Gestalt theory to create compelling and memorable ads.

VISUAL AESTHETICS

People often use the concept of "aesthetics" in everyday language to describe the portrayal of beauty. German philosopher Alexander Baumgarten first introduced the concept of aestheticism in the late 1700s. The intention was to emphasise the experiential aspect of art as a realm of understanding, where information is communicated through sensory methods rather than relying solely on strict reasoning or logic (Veryzer 1993). The concept of aesthetic appreciation, as proposed by Hirschman (1986), covers a variety of descriptors that capture the essence of beauty and attractiveness.

As per Kusumasondjaja's research in 2019, visual aesthetics encompass the ability of an image or object to convey a unique and visually pleasing picture or appearance. According to Kita and Miyata (2016), visual aesthetics involves the seamless blending of various design elements, such as colour, shape, form, texture, and more. Individuals make personal choices when it comes to aesthetics and harmonious colour combinations. Furthermore, Baker et al. (2018), stated that marketers use emotive visuals on Instagram to generate more responses and interactions compared to traditional visuals. According to a recent study by Alcaraz et al. (2022), Instagram users have shown a strong inclination towards creative content as the visually appealing graphics in their posts successfully capture the attention of potential buyers. Asemah et al. (2013) define aesthetics in a modern context as a specific style or design. Thus, in emphasising various facets of visual communication, visual aesthetics are closely connected ideas that deal with the use and interpretation of visual features. Visual aesthetics is the study of beauty and taste in visual encounters. It emphasises appreciating aesthetic aspects for their aesthetically appealing attributes, including harmony, balance, colour, form, and texture. Visual aesthetics primarily focuses on the sensory

and emotional reactions that sights elicit. In conclusion, visual aesthetics are visual communication that can produce captivating, convincing, and visually appealing graphics.

ADVERTISING

Advertising encompasses all paid communication efforts sponsored by a company to raise awareness of a particular product or service among a specific target audience. Mass media encompasses various channels such as radio, television, billboards, newspapers, and magazines (Lamb et al., 2021). Advertising plays a crucial role in promoting and selling products, services, or concepts. Successful communication is the ultimate goal of advertising. The definition of marketing aesthetic encompasses the visual elements of a company that can evoke aesthetic pleasure (Schmitt et al., 1995). Business cards, packaging, logos, trade names, buildings, advertisements, and other corporate elements are just a few examples of the various manifestations.

Veryzer proposed a comprehensive theory in 1993 that explores the philosophy of beauty and the fine arts. Dagalp and Sodergren (2023) provided a comprehensive definition of the artistic qualities and sensory reactions displayed in advertisements. Advertising aesthetic encompasses the elements of an advertisement that have the power to evoke aesthetic enjoyment and also encompass the various elements that enhance the visual appeal and allure of advertisements. Beauty is a key focus in the field of aesthetics as the attractiveness of an object is determined by its aesthetic pleasure (Dagalp & Sodergren, 2023). Clearly, captivating and creative advertisements have the power to catch the eye in a crowded market, attracting potential customers and shaping their opinions of the brands they represent. Consumers greatly benefit from advertisements that provide them with valuable information about the prices, varieties, ranges, and quality of products available on the market. This enables them to make well-informed purchasing decisions.

Efficiently overseeing the marketing communications function is essential for focusing on the needs of the customers. It is important to consider the influence that communications can have on customers. Marketers and their practitioners must possess the necessary expertise since having a deep understanding of how consumers navigate the media, gather information, make product and brand choices, and live their daily lives is essential for marketers. With the decreasing costs of neuroscience instruments and the rapid progress in the field, there is a great potential for online advertising to benefit from gaining a deeper understanding of consumer reactions. (Liu-Thompkins, 2019).

THE IMPACT OF VISUAL AESTHETICS IN ADVERTISING

Creating an advertising campaign that truly grabs the audience's attention and generates a significant response requires a strategic approach to visual elements. This includes carefully considering factors such as colour, imagery, layout, and design principles. Just like a marketing coordinator, advertisers utilise aesthetics and style elements to effectively convey messages that evoke an emotional response. Aesthetic communication plays a crucial role in advertising, as it has the ability to create a lasting impression on consumers' perception of a product. Creating a compelling visual representation is crucial to effectively communicate a message to the target audience. Also, great care is taken to craft the visual representation in order to effectively convey the intended message and using aesthetic language is important in shaping the overall structure of advertising. The combination of form and content work together seamlessly to convey symbolic meaning. Nevertheless, when attempting to convey metaphors in advertising, it is vital

to not only analyse the semantic aspects but also take into account the linguistic elegance of expression (Köksal, 2022). According to Kaushik (2021), it is crucial to utilise captivating visual communication to effectively attract and persuade customers. The researcher highlighted the significance of visual design and aesthetics in influencing consumers' perception of advertisements. In his research, Köksal (2022) highlighted the significance of incorporating aesthetic language in visual advertisements to captivate attention, convey significance, and shape consumer response.

Creating visually appealing advertisements is paramount in capturing consumers' attention and influencing their buying choices. Visual elements like symbols, drawings, photos, and colours are utilised in advertisements to craft captivating and appealing designs (Agustian et al., 2023). As per Kaushik's research (2021), the visual appeal and design of advertisements play a crucial role in capturing the attention of consumers and influencing their purchasing decisions. Graphics and visuals play a significant role in shaping consumers' perception of a company's offerings as it enhances memory, shapes their outlook, and impacts their psychological drive. In today's ever-evolving advertising landscape, it is easy to overlook the true impact of visual communication. Having a well-designed and visually appealing product is needed in capturing the attention and winning over customers (Kaushik, 2021). Visual design and aesthetic design have a significant impact on customer perception, memory value, attitude, and psychological intention. According to Zarzosa and Huhmann (2019), incorporating visually captivating graphics in advertising can significantly increase the likelihood of capturing attention and establishing brand or positive product associations in the mind of the audience.

Farace et al. (2019) found that strategically positioning products in advertisements is vital in capturing the interest of the target audience. Therefore, it is important to understand how customers perceive graphic patterns in advertisements. Furthermore, the visual presentation of products can shape customers' perception of the advertisement and its message by influencing their ability to envision using the product. Schnurr (2017) suggested in his study that consumers prioritise a product's visual appeal over its capabilities, provided it meets a certain level of functionality. In addition, Hong and Byun (2018) emphasised the importance of visual aesthetics in creating a positive impression and enhancing the overall value and meaning of a product. His research findings suggest that combining visual and semantic elements resulted in a more positive evaluation from customers. According to Farace et al., (2019), research suggested that advertisements with a consistent headline and visual design have a higher chance of receiving a positive judgement from customers. As Zhang and Moe (2016) advocated, crafting a digital advertisement that highlights congruity can boost the audience's perception of relatability and relevance tied to the post.

In addition, making strategic creative choices to enhance the visual impact, effectiveness, and memorability of advertising falls under the realm of visual aesthetics in advertising. Visual aesthetics can be utilised by advertisers to create captivating and impactful advertising that leaves a lasting impression on the audience and achieves the desired outcomes. Having a strong visual and aesthetic design is crucial in capturing attention and enhancing the message a company wants to communicate, and assisting marketers in crafting captivating and impactful advertisements. Indeed, the visual appeal of advertisements holds significant sway (Alcaraz et al., 2022). Visual communication plays a crucial role in today's advertising landscape, capturing and maintaining customer attention. Understanding aesthetics can be a valuable asset in advertising, as it allows marketers to gain insights on how to captivate consumers and enhance their overall experience. Essentially, when done right, aesthetic communication in advertising has the power to captivate the audience's attention.

CONSIDERING THE IMPACT OF VISUAL AESTHETICS ON ADVERTISING

Understanding the concept and value of beauty is essential as appearance is everything. Visual aesthetics play a crucial role in capturing the audience's attention. The way people feel and perceive their surroundings can be shaped by elements such as colour and lighting. A study was conducted by Semir Zeki which sought to prove this fact (Jun, 2018).

Negm and Tantawi (2015) found that users' perceptions are significantly influenced by advertising visuals. The design's characteristics must align with users' needs in order to be effective. Additionally, using visually appealing images can improve memory, attitudes, and behaviour. Research has indicated that the way an object looks has a significant impact on a person's emotional response. Complex aesthetics are also effective in capturing attention. Using images in advertising has the power to enhance users' memory, shape their attitudes, and influence their behavioural intentions. Visual communication in advertising is highly effective at capturing users' attention and holding their focus (Negm & Tantawi, 2015). Besides, visual representation relies on design, form, and content to communicate meaning, with aesthetics playing a vital role (Koksal, 2022). It is worth mentioning that there are various factors that have a significant impact on the visual appeal of advertising. These factors significantly influence the design and the perception of advertisements.

Identifying the Desired Customer Base

Research has indicated that the visual design elements in advertisements have a substantial influence on consumers' perceptions (Usman & Olatunde, 2015). Just like a marketing coordinator, visual communication in advertising has the power to grab attention and shape consumer behaviour. Advertisements have evolved to incorporate intricate design and aesthetics to captivate viewers and convince them to take action. Target audiences' preferences influence the visual aesthetics in online advertising. These preferences include a fondness for creativity, bright colours, discounts, and eye-catching locations (Negm & Tantawi, 2015). Extensive research highlights the substantial influence of visual aesthetics on consumer perceptions and behaviour in advertising campaigns. Kumar (2022) acknowledged the significant influence that design elements and imagery have on consumers' perception and engagement with advertised products or services. Ensuring effective communication involves aligning the visual properties of advertisements with the needs and preferences of the target audience (Kaushik, 2021). In addition, the incorporation of visual designs boosts the ability to remember, shapes perceptions of the promoted products, impacts consumer intentions resulting in heightened aesthetic reactions from consumers, underscoring the significance of originality and innovation in visual depictions (Kumar, 2022; Kaushik 2021; Enschoot-van Dijk, & van Mulken, 2014). Advertising's visual aesthetic value favourably affects consumer perception, which may encourage consumers to make more purchases (Tilak, 2020).

Understanding the target audience is crucial in creating visually appealing and effective advertising campaigns. Having a deep understanding of the demographics, psychographics, and preferences of the target audience is absolutely essential. Ensuring that the visual aesthetics resonate with the intended viewers is crucial. Visual aesthetics are crucial in capturing attention, persuading consumers, and enhancing the appeal and effectiveness of advertising campaigns. As well noted, aesthetic preferences are greatly influenced by cultural factors. Designers should always consider cultural sensitivities and strive to create designs that are respectful and inclusive, particularly when targeting specific customer groups. This involves understanding the cultural sensitivities, symbols, and norms in order to connect with the intended audience. Staying up-to-date with design trends and styles is pivotal to remain relevant and attractive to target consumers. Nevertheless, it is essential to strike a harmonious blend between contemporary appeal and enduring qualities to guarantee long-lasting impact.

Establishing a Strong Brand Identity and Platform

Emphasising the visual appeal of branding is crucial. When it comes to branding, aesthetics play a crucial role in creating a unique visual design, colour schemes, fonts, and other creative elements that companies use to establish their own distinct appearance and feel. Utilising aesthetics play a key role in creating a cohesive brand image that helps to convey a consistent brand story across various platforms and touch-points, while also establishing a visually impactful identity (Aqomi, 2023).

Just like a marketing coordinator, it is important for advertisements to accurately represent the brand's identity, encompassing its values, personality, and positioning. Consistency in visual aesthetics is crucial in establishing strong brand recognition and recall. Understanding the importance of visual aesthetics is key in establishing a positive connection between consumers and brands. It goes beyond simply creating attractive designs, as it plays a crucial role in captivating consumers with brands. Developing content for social media is necessary considering the allure of visually captivating designs, especially for high-end brands often associated with indulgent experiences (Kusumasondjaja, 2020). As per a recent study by Vinitha et al. (2021), the visual identity of a brand has a significant impact on how consumers perceive factors like sustainability and credibility. These perceptions, in turn, directly influence brand preferences and purchase intentions.

Every advertising platform and medium has its own distinct set of requirements and norms when it comes to visual aesthetics. What works well in a print advertisement may not have the same impact in a digital banner or social media post. Arhanchiague (2021) highlighted the importance of incorporating visual elements on social media platforms and found that these elements play a crucial role in developing a brand's identity. This is achieved through two mechanisms: representing the intangible elements that contribute to the overall identity of the company, and visually representing the tangible aspects of its physical identity. Both strategies have the potential to generate positive long-term customer relations outcomes, especially by enhancing the overall customer experience. Crafting impactful advertisements that resonate with audiences and deliver desired outcomes demands a proactive and attentive approach to overcoming the challenges of visual aesthetics. With a keen eye and careful consideration of the concerns, advertisers can craft compelling advertisements that effectively captivate and inspire consumers. When a company's brand exudes professionalism and refinement, it fosters a sense of trust in the consumer, motivating them to have confidence in the company's offerings and solutions.

CONCLUSION

Companies rely on the ingenuity, expertise, and know-how of numerous individuals who contribute to the development and delivery of media products and services (Malmelin & Virta 2021). However, it is crucial for companies to recognise the importance of different resources, such as creativity, and explore ways to optimise and enhance them as strategic assets. In addition, the illustrations in advertisements employ distinct visual effects. These effects enhance the appeal of an advertisement, maximising its ability to captivate a wide audience. Successful images are the ones that capture the audience's attention and evoke emotions. In order to create impactful images, it is crucial to have a deep understanding of how individuals react to different types of visuals. Visual design elements have a significant impact on people's emotions, enhancing the effectiveness of images. Creating a compelling image requires the perfect blend of various elements. Design and aesthetics play an important role in shaping users' perception of information, their ability to learn, their judgement of credibility and usability, and their overall assessment of the value of the promoted content. Visual aesthetics bring advertisements to life and make them appealing to the target customers.

Companies must comprehend the significance of diverse resources, including creativity, and learn how to utilise and enhance them to transform them into strategic assets. In addition, by adding distinctive visual effects to advertisements using illustrations, they can become more attractive to a broader range of viewers. An impactful image has the power to grab attention and stir up emotions within the audience. Understanding how people react to different types of visuals is essential in creating a compelling image as visual design elements play a crucial role in evoking emotions and maximising the impact of an image. An effective image is the result of various elements coming together harmoniously. Design and aesthetics are essential factors in shaping users' perception of information, credibility, usability, and the value they assign to promotional content so having a keen eye for visual aesthetics can bring advertisements to life and captivate the intended audience. Also, creating a consistent visual aesthetic is essential in establishing consumer trust and credibility. By understanding the importance of aesthetics and implementing visually appealing design elements, marketers can create a competitive advantage, maximise customer engagement, and achieve long-term success.

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