

DIRECT FORUM

November 2021

VOLUME 17 ISSUE 11

Direct Forum is a free email newsletter containing useful direct marketing tips, news updates and how-to information. It's convenient, informative and I am not trying to sell you anything!

1. Attention, attention...and how to capture it.

2. The effects of colour on our buying behavior.

3. Video of the month: The unfinished votes.

Attention, attention... and how to capture it.

Lately, trying to capture your target audience's attention is getting a lot of attention.

For years researchers have known that most of the media platforms, including television and videos, only capture our attention as passive recipients. We don't fully pay attention to the advertiser's messages.

It's often just background noise.

Even social media platforms are not doing any better.

This is partly because of the profile growth of so many new competing platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, etc., but mainly because your target audience is being bombarded by thousands of messages every minute of the day. They have busy lives, they multi-task and so they are becoming marketing resistant.

They have developed a form of **'selective intake' mechanism.**

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This lack of stickiness is showing up in all areas of marketing:

- Newspapers and magazines are barely hanging in there.
- There are hundreds of TV channels to select from.
- Coupon redemption is down to 5%.
- Click through rates on Internet banners is lower than 1%.
- Big sales rebates and incentives do not drive traffic the way gate crasher sales once did.

So, what is the answer?

I believe it has always been there right before our eyes.

Surprise, surprise...it's direct mail!

Why? Because when you get a letter in the mail it does capture your undivided attention.

Plus, direct mail is the only medium I know where you have three dimensions to work with, and no limits on how much information you can provide. It even allows people to actually hold your product in their hands, when you send them a sample of it.

However, keeping that attention depends on the message inside and on the messenger who crafted the letter.

Once upon a time, a great opening sentence or headline on the outer envelope or at the start of the letter was enough. And of course, you still need those.

But today, you don't just need to attract their attention; you need to keep their attention—from sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph. Otherwise, you have lost your reader.

So, bulletproof your copy. Because people now have a shorter attention span, start by organizing the information for them. Above all, be clear about exactly what you want them to do, and why they should do it—now.

SO, HERE ARE SOME HINTS ON HOW TO DO THIS EFFECTIVELY

1. There is magic in numbers: Numbers attract attention, so you can use them to make a point.

Example: "How to get rid of your cold in 4 simple steps."

Or you can even use them by adding a time element.

Example: "How to get rid of your cold in 4 simple steps – in just 7 days."

2. Challenge the reader: People love a quiz and will attempt to test their knowledge

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Example: “There are 4 simple steps that can help you get rid of your cold. Do you know what they are?”

Or you can even extend the thought by giving a clue.

Example: “There are 4 simple steps that can help you get rid of your cold. Do you know what they are? One of them even costs less than a penny per day.”

3. Provide plenty of value: Just because prospects have decreased attention spans, it doesn't have to follow that letters need to get shorter. It has always been true that when you give people the feeling that they are getting a lot of stuff for their money—value—they are more apt to buy. A long letter makes it seem like you're getting a lot, even if the reader just scans it.

However, if you feel the letter needs to be shorter, because people don't have time to read it, then highlight the main points to ensure that you have covered the important selling points.

- 4. Never ever drop the still effective P.S.**
If nothing else people will glance at who the letter is from and the P.S.
- 5. Make it quick, even if it's long.**

The trick to overcoming the perceived attention span problem is to make a letter a quick scan, with important words and ideas highlighted to pop visually by using underlines, highlights, colour and handwritten margin notes. Lists and bullet points are extremely effective. Sidebars work well. So do short sentences, small paragraphs and white space, and a repeat of the words you want heard.

- 6. Use subheads to break up your copy blocks.**
- 7. Make sentences short and sharp.**
Write the way they talk.
- 8. Specifics outpull generalizations.**

Example: The phrase “lifetime guarantee” produces a lower response than “guaranteed for 20 years.”

- 9. If you cannot personalize your letter, then maximize your donor's image.**

Example: Instead of writing, “Dear friend,” Change it to “Dear valued donor,”

Words matter a lot, and there is a significant difference between “friend” and “valued donor.” Most donors prefer to see themselves in the latter descriptive words.

10. Questions are automatically reader involving, because they are less threatening and help develop rapport with the prospect.

Example: Be a diplomat, don't say, "You're drunk." Rather, pose it as a question: "Are you drunk?" The words are identical, but the psychological impact is entirely different.

Other examples include: "Why I am sending you this message." vs. "Why am I sending you this message?" And "You won't stand by and let it happen" vs. "Will you stand by and let it happen?"

11. Finally, show, don't tell. Showing rather than telling involves the audience.

For example, when you say, "The girl was pretty" you are telling the reader something about a particular person.

But if you said, "I was stunned by her charm and elegant grace as she walked past me, her perfume drifting in the air, with shoulders erect, her blue eyes sparkling," you're showing us.

The moment we can visualize the picture you're trying to paint, you're showing us, not telling us, what we should see.

Many words like 'attractive, fabulous or fascinating' are words that 'tell' us what to think. They don't reveal or describe in specifics what is unique about the person or event you are describing.

As a writer you have the power to take charge and draw your readers in to show rather than tell.

As Albert Einstein famously said: *"Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world."*

The effects of colour on our buying behaviour.

Ever wonder if colour plays any role in our buying behaviour?

In the marketing world, the use of colour is a studied science. It plays a greater role in your purchasing decisions than you may think, because colours can make you feel a certain way about a product or a company.

Yes, it can trigger a specific desire or mood and a slight change in colours can affect the sales of a product too. Did you know that colours can encourage us to spend money or even gamble?

Colours have universal perceived meanings. Here is a quick rundown of what they symbolize:

BLUE – Blue is seen as a very positive colour. It connotes trust, security and responsibility. It is also associated with creation and serenity. Because blue instills trust and security, there are many products that use this color.

Blue is the colour of choice for the UN flag.

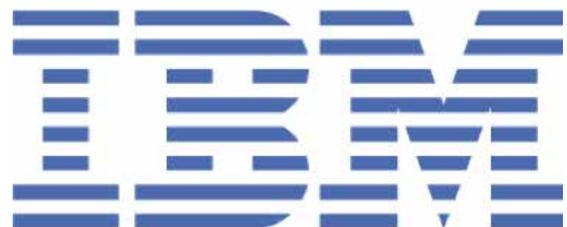


It's also Allstate's logo, which claims that you are in good hands.



Source: AllState Insurance

And IBM is also known as "Big Blue."



Source: IBM

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The robin's egg blue Tiffany boxes immediately signal that Tiffany is a brand that can be trusted.



Source: Tiffany & Co

RED - Red stands for power, energy, aggressiveness and provocation. Red cars are seen as fast cars and upscale designer Christian Louboutin is famous for his glamorous shoe designs that cost anywhere from \$400 to \$4,000 dollar^e

His shoes all have one distinguishing feature—bright red soles.



GREEN - Symbolizes health and nature. It has a calming, clean feel, especially when it comes to lighter shades of green.

Green also represents freshness. Think the Jolly Green Giant and Subway.



Source: Green Giant



YELLOW - Yellow is the colour of vibrancy and optimism. It can also be motivating and captivating. Many signs are in this colour because it helps get the attention of customers, especially if it is against a darker coloured background.

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Source: McDonalds Corporation

PURPLE - This connotes royalty, sophistication, nostalgia, and exclusivity, making it perfect for selling expensive items.

For centuries, purple has also symbolized nobility and wealth. Like the Queen of England's crown in purple,



Source: andysroyalty.com

Cadbury chocolate has been associated with purple for over 100 years because it was Queen Victoria's favourite chocolate,

It's believed the Cadbury brothers chose it as a tribute to her. Cadbury won a fight against Nestle to trademark purple in the U.K.



Source: Cadbury.com

PINK - Dark shades of pink are very energetic and instill a feeling of excitement while lighter shades give it a romantic feel.

Did you know that for the first 100 years of modern branding, you could not trademark a colour. But all that changed when Owens-Corning began making fiberglass insulation in 1938.

The insulation material was white. So, after many years of all insulation

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looking alike, Owens-Corning made the decision to dye their product red in 1956.

The result, the red dye made the fiberglass wool look pink.



Source:usedvictoria.com

The pink insulation was shipped out, but the company wasn't happy with the colour. So Owens-Corning abandoned pink and went back to the original colour. Then they got the most unexpected response.

Installers began asking for the PINK insulation.

So the company stuck with PINK. It was a marketing master stroke.

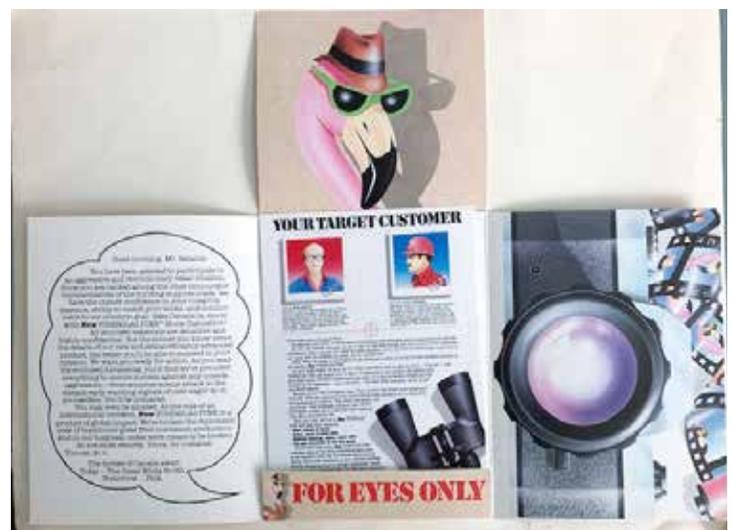
In 1987, Owens-Corning made history when it became the first company to trademark a colour. They had proved to the courts that their insulation was clearly identified as pink, and they had spent over \$50 million dollars marketing it as such. They even spent money to license the Pink Panther as their mascot.



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In 1988 I had the honor of launching Fiberglass Pink in Canada. I worked with the direct marketing arm of Hayhurst Advertising.

It was a highly successful launch and below is the launch folder we used to promote it. Other elements of the campaign to hardware stores included a clipboard, a collapsible sunglasses and even a brass key, each with a fun message.



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ORANGE - This colour can be effective for children because of its cheerful, friendly and fun feel.

It is also the best colour that can be seen from a distance on the road during a fog or on a clear day, as tested by the US military.

BROWN - This shade elicits simplicity and stability. It also looks very down to earth.

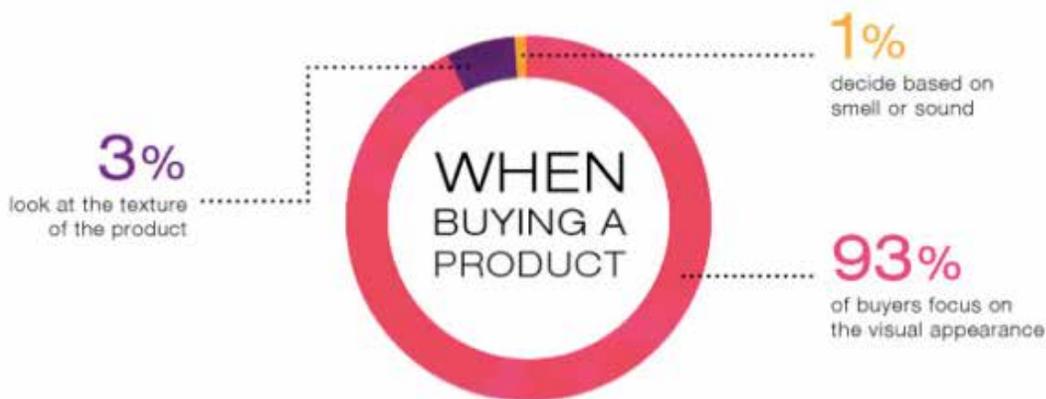
Black - Black promotes a serious or classic campaign. There is

also sophistication and exclusivity in this colour, which works well with expensive products.

White - This color looks very plain but when used, it shows purity, cleanliness and is very enticing to the human eye.

Every color has an equivalent meaning behind it and conveys a certain feeling, which makes them all the more vital for businesses to consider before choosing a colour scheme for their products or logos.

THE COLORS USED BY A BRAND CAN INFLUENCE A CUSTOMER



COLOR CAN OFTEN BE THE SOLE REASON FOR PURCHASING A PRODUCT



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Video of the month: The unfinished votes.



This is a great example of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) and it shows the persistence of the parents of Parkland shooting victim Joaquin Oliver, who launched a new initiative to encourage young people to vote in the last elections in the USA.

On February 14, 2018, Manuel and Patricia Oliver lost their 16-year-old son Joaquin during the devastating school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. In a new campaign from the Olivers' gun safety non-profit, "Change the Ref" and McCann Health NY, Joaquin "lives" once again to deliver a message asking voters to

cast their ballots in support of those who can make a change, and help to end gun violence.

For this campaign, Lightfarm was invited by McCann Health NY to capture Joaquin, through AI technology, imploring viewers to vote to support those who back gun-safety measures, to "replace" the vote he would have made had he lived. Joaquin and some of the other student victims would have had their first opportunity to cast their vote in the year's 2020 election.

Link to video <https://vimeo.com/465077929>

Credits

Advertising Agency: Doner

3D: Diego Maricato, Diogo Reis and Ramon Lima

Rigging: Mex and Eris Soares

AI: Diego Maricato and Bruno Sartori

Pós Video: Thiago Paladino and Mululo

Pós Still: Milton Menezes

Agency: Global Chief Creative Officer: Matt Eastwood

Chief Creative Officer NY: June Laffey

Executive Creative Director: Tim Jones

Group Creative Director/Copy Writer Josh Grossberg

Creative Director/Art Director: Fabio Rodrigues

Associate Creative Director/Designer: Felipe Leite

Director of Integrated Production: Ed Zazzera

Producer: Eva Pipa

Senior Project Manager: Regine LeConte

Group Account Supervisor: Warren Wyatt

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1806-77 Harbour Square
Toronto, ON
M5J 2S2

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