

THE ESTHETICS AND SOME COMPONENT ELEMENTS OF THE VISUAL ADVERTISING. ADVERTISEMENT GRAPHICS

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Abstract. Nowadays, in the circumstances of a harsher and more aggressive competition, it is difficult to conceive the success of a firm on the market, without drafting and developing a coherent, unitary advertisement plan, in order to place into the attention of the consumer, more and more strikingly, the image of the product or of the brand, or of the producing firm.

1. Introduction

The graphic design exists for a very long time, even if this word has been used for only a short period with the aim of defining the design activity.

Before the IInd World War, the graphic design was very frequently named „commercial art”. The word „commercial” had to make a distinction between art and reproduction, distinction that can also be met today. As a sequence, the different way of training: the artist is at a art school, while the commercial artist was making his apprenticeship next to a printer, during the daytime and in a technical school, during the nighttime.

But, in a short period of time, the advertising graphics knows an unthinkable development, a miraculous assertion: it covers everything, from the design of a bus ticket, to that of the emblems of automobiles, from the design of the packs of cigarettes, to the graphical layout of a poster, from the design of the sigle, the brand of the product and the factory, to the design of the leaflet, folder, catalogue.

The designers of this type closely collaborate with specialists from other fields: psychology, photography, economy, marketing, electronics etc.

Starting with the extremely explicative, declarative message, getting to the compared advertising, you can reach nowadays spectacular, original elements and unexpected connections; the advertising message has become much more elegant, more elaborate and efficient from the point of view of the effect upon the consumer. The concepts like attractive and selective informing, advertisement, visual shock, advertisement in competition, originality, idea, advertising joke give an answer to the consumer's barely guessed needs, incites him to the acquisition of a certain product.

2. The components of advertising

The title, text and graphics – are the components that make the engine of advertising work. And, to flap its wings, we must take into consideration four elements.

- **attention** because, without it, nothing from the content of an advertisement matters. Nobody will ever see the title, not to mention the text and graphics, if attention is not active;
- **knowledge**, that is more important than observing and it means the overcoming the lack of attention;
- **attitude**, comes out from our identity and shows the people's feelings about the product or service that is advertised;
- **action**, the aim of the whole exercise.

So, as the advertisement designers from the last decade found out, the advertisement that uses the title, text and graphics must draw the attention, build the knowledge, change the attitude and modify the action.

2.1. Title

For printed advertisements – in newspapers, magazines or in the form of posters – the most important element is the title. By title we refer to: title for a printed advertisement, title for booklets, the opening line of a radio or television advertisement. It could also mean the lines for beginning the letters that represent the direct correspondence, postal cards, scripts for telemarketing, but here we refer only to advertisement.

The title may have one of the following functions:

- captivation of the attention
- stimulating the interest for the message
- to rouse the curiosity or to push the reader to run through the actual text of the advertisement
- making the offered benefit evident
- stimulating the receptor towards the buying action
- the compendious presentation of the sales offer
- identifying the product or the offerer.

If we can find a good title, aiming at the proper public, and if we can offer it a real benefit, we will have an almost certified advertisement. Under these circumstances, the text can be, as simple as that, a continuation of the idea that the title generates. The greatest problem of all the titles is the fact that they are boring, ambiguous and do not invite the readers to read more.

The title can be composed before or after the proper text of the advertisement. As a rule, there are composed numerous title variants; from all these some will be chosen for testing them on a representative sample of target-public, in order to select the form that has the best impact upon the customers.

The attractiveness of the title may be increased by attaching some illustrations or by its formulation as a news introduced by „new”, „release”, „today”, etc. For the title to be easy to remember, it is advisable to be as short as possible, it must not be longer than two lines. It does not need to be necessarily conceived as the resume of the information in the advertisement (even though it could be a function of the title), but as a „hook” with that we catch and attract the potential client.

2.2. Text

This should be: easy to read, informative, clear, honest, simple, motivating, competitive, concrete, credible. Certain words are for the ear and are very likely for radio, while others are for the eye and, even if they do not sound good when you hear them, they look excellent when are read.

If if everybody knows that an extraordinary idea must be expressed using extraordinary words, not anyone knows such words. Marketing means dealing with what

you say and the way you say that. Saying what is right, but using unproper words is a loss of time and money and it also represents a mistake that could be avoided.

Certain words have the power to positively change the opinions of potential clients and make them think right. On the other side, other words have the power to change the opinions of potential clients in a negative way and make them think wrong regarding a certain company, a certain product or brand.

There are some “magic” words that can be very beneficial if they are comprised in the text of a commercial. Some of them are:

free	pleasant	healthy	tested
advantageous	sure	good	certified
save	now	easy	neat
discover	alternative	earnings	cozy
money	success	fun	yours
results	profit	value	true
happy	wished	new	

As there are “magic” words, that can help us advance more quickly on our way towards the set aim, there also exist “tragic” words that can put a spoke in our wheel. These words must be avoided as much as possible, while they make the reader lose his interest, make him stop reading. They can undermine the effort made with the help of marketing. Some examples of “tragic” words could be:

buy	difficulty	failure	loss
obligation	wrong	cost	order
unsuccess	decision	tax	lamentable
bad	task	contract	hard
sell	death	regret	

There are “magic” phrases that can convince people see things the way we do, make them wish them and buy them. See some of them: limited period offer, discount of ... %, made on order, only this month, clearance sale, etc.

2.3. Graphics

One of the most important aims of the graphic presentation in advertising is to avoid the cliché. It is good to draw attention through graphics, but, at the same time, not to forget our goal.

One of the most important task in graphic presentation of the promotional advertisement is the creation of a strong visual impact. Another major task is to combine graphics with the title, the first paragraph and the text. The need for teamwork between words and images is crucial. The letter is not beautiful if this can not be read. A legible text is imperial. It is not about the letter that is too luscious, but about the column of the text – too narrow or too wide.

There are many rules that all the valuable Artistic Managers obey, even if they are advertisements producers or illustrators:

- the idea must be stronger than the artistic part
- the artistic part must help with the captivation of the readers' or televiewers' interest
- identification of the product must rule over the artistic part of the commercial
- the artistic part must not rule over the advertising announcement
- the advertising announcement must not be created in a hurry
- it is not advisable to have an artistic part that is stronger than the text

Graphics represents a clarity island in the chaotic sea of communications. It visualizes the advantages, it brings words to life, implies the potential clients and is always looked at as a means of achieving a goal, not as a goal itself.

Where the commercial regarding competition means survival, no expenses are too big, no specialist is too expensive, no effort is a special one, no idea is original, no graphic posture is luxurious enough, as long as all these offer the excuse of a place that is "higher" in the competition scale.

The colours, forms, graphics of the brand, presentation of the packs, presentation and selling store, vehicles of the company, storehouses, estates, correspondence paper, denomination of the products, the logo of the company must present a well defined style within the entire external manifestations of the company.

The advertising of a company/ product begins with the brand of the factory/ product, so with the emblem. It is the shortest advertising message, is a concentration of visual identification of a company, its problems and good parts, the prestige of the performance, good taste, etc.

The basic rules of conceiving an emblem may be:

- choosing, accepting, styling of an image representing: an object, a being, a subject, a notion, until the loading with the desired semification;
- choosing from the initial ideogram some geometrised elements that will communicate the sense of the ordered idea;
- accepting the sense through the word, initials, letter that are meaningful;
- inventing a sign, an abstract symbol, operating with suggestions, metaphors (like a letter of an alphabet that is so far unknown, has not been invented);
- using in alliance (with variable shares) the above mentioned formulas (adjoining, commixture, confusion, completion).

Regarding the brands, the requests that these have to respond to are:

- representativeness and harmony – between the word and the figurative element the harmony is necessary: both must express the same idea, to suggest the product and especially its quality; stamping in the memory has a double and long lasting effect;
- plainness – the essential condition of the figurative brands (the stylized graphics is preferred, the complicated one will not be memorized);
- clarity – easy to recognize and quickly read by those whom they address to;
- conciseness – short words (two-four syllables), easy to define and memorize.

For a sign to be used with a brand title it must present a certain number of characteristics, named "validity conditions", foreseen by the legislation of the countries. So, in order to be accepted from a juridical point of view, the brands must be arbitrary, nondeceptive (to reflect the reality), in conformity with the exigencies of the public order and good virtues.

The emblem, brand, as a visual expression of the image of the company, have a special importance for the promotional activity that is displayed by:

- the facilitation of the tasks regarding the selling due to the information of the public, using simple visual expression upon the company that offers its goods;
- the assertion of the character of the company that exerts its influence not only upon the public, but also upon the employees for which the affiliation feeling must be created;
- the using of a selling accelerator of the selling product by applying, for example, the symbols on the packs, thing that is recommended for all other products fabricated by that company;
- the accomplishment of some special actions for using the symbol on the letterhead of the letters, on advertising gifts offered by the company, on the means of transport used by the company. The poster will be remarked as a major type of arts of the

advertising graphics, where the report of the written message – visual message has obviously modified in the favour of the latter one, especially with the urbanization of the modern world, the new typographical technologies and the intense usage of the photography. The poster uses very special means, that competes for the symbol-image condition, for the plastic metaphor of maximal condensation with a maximum impact.

The evolution of the poster has been marked by the occurrence of printing, chromolithography and, not in the last place, by the transfer of a rich professional luggage from the painting field. Already between the two World Wars one can speak about “schools”, national schools (France: cultural poster, show, commercial poster; Germany: propaganda poster, commercial poster; America: commercial poster) and schools that were part of artistic currents.

After the IInd World War, the commercial poster vertiginously develops, especially “in the West”, patronaged by the market economy and the competition law, under the conditions of a top technology (computer processing).

In order to communicate, to attract and persuade, to incite in the language of the poster, there will be outlined some attributes that will become sine qua non conditions of existence: expressiveness, maximal synthesis in the message, clarity, permanent inventiveness for finding plastic and even technical solutions, slogans, persuasion force.

We give a special importance to the “visual shock”, that is much more important as the more and more rapid rhythm of life exludes the extended observation, reading and reflection time. Being a street art, the art of a moving environment, coloured and fast-moving, the poster must shock, must strike not only the retina, but also the mind, imagination and the subconscious. In a permanent contest with the environment, but also with other posters, for the precedence of being observed, it is also in a permanent contest with itself in the assaying of being always new, unexpected, shocking. The efficiency of the poster is tested by the degree of its quick response to the necessity of the moment, the big drafts bringing concomitantly hundreds of messages in as many different places, by the persuasion force that is based on synthesis, clarity, shock and symbol-image.

3. Aesthetic elements of the advertising graphics

No matter the type of the advertising graphics, the main elements of its aesthetic are:

Form. From studying the forms that can be perceived in alignments of points, lines, surfaces, volumes, can be concluded that “the alignments are made in the sense of achieving a privileged form”. “The privileged forms” are equable, simple, symmetric. The best forms are those that are easy perceived, strike, that remark themselves the best. These are defined mathematical forms (the foursquare, triangle, ellipse, rectangle) and then come the natural forms (animals, plantes) and at the end are the imaginative, intuitive forms.

The theoreticians of the form consider this phenomen strange, this true subjugation force of certain ensembles being a consequence of the principle: “maximum satisfaction with minumum effort” or of the principle of the nervous mental expenses economy. So, when a surface is destined to receive an advertising message, it is necessary that the division asked by the content of the message is agreeable for the eye, harmonious and not arbitrary.

Motion. Studying the functioning ways of the reflex of the visual attention, has been observed that the visual attention is easier awaken when motion is present.

So, in advertising, using motion in every possible situations is an advantage,

reaching, due to a repeated, rhythmical engagement, until the assaying of creating that hypnosis, that fascination, very favourable to fix the attention.

It is obvious that, using the motion in advertising is not always necessary, but it is relatively easy and always effectual to suggest motion inducing what determines the immediate, reflex reactions.

Colour. The attention drawn upon a colour, the feelings that form inside ourselves, can lead to interest or disgust. All the objects, all the texts are, as a consequence, automatically bound to the coloured ambience, to their presentation. The warm colours attract more than the cold ones do and the juxtaposition of these two types of colours emphasize the impression. The inharmonic associations of colours can produce a violent impression, aggression, but the harmonic associations prove to be attractive. The colours have a different dynamic action. A colour can evoke without ambiguity a degree of temperature, a feeling, a degree of plasticity (rough/ soft).

The most frequent observations made upon the psychological action of each colour, observations that may be considered by advertising, are the following:

- *Red* – warm colour, inspires vivaciousness. It is a dynamic colour that does not accept the domination of other colours. Being the colour of the fire that burns and the blood that brings life, it has the symbolic signification of love, pride but also of aggression, violence and power.
- *Yellow* - warm colour, releases the spirit, illuminates the eye. It gives the impression of warmth, light, plenitude, relaxation and rest. The symbolic correspondences are: for golden yellow – wealth, prosperity, purity, mirt; for dark yellow – prudence; for citron yellow – devilry.
- *Green* – combination between a warm colour (yellow) and a cold one (blue), green becomes more and more cold as it get closer to blue, so according to the quality of the mixture, it attracts or rejects the audience. A law variation in the tonality of green leads to important variations in the tonalities of complementary colours (especially red) and disturbs the harmony. Green invites to calm, rest and is the symbolic colour of hope.
- *Blue* – the coldest colour, of a weak luminosity. It emphasizes the dynamism of warm colours and is often chosen for this reason as background or for being in opposition with the coloured details. On a multicoloured surface, it requests much space for equilibrating the red and yellow forms. Giving the impression of mildness, often associated with the idea of inaccessibility, blue simbolizes loyalty, fidelity, ideal, dream.

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