Abstract

Opposites don't attract: The tug-of-war between sans vs san serif fonts in print advertising

In the past, typography was not seen as an element of design as writers were less conscious of the ability of typeface to give meaning. Today, many different typefaces are available and more are being propagated on the web. Typography is crucial in emoting feelings as research has shown that consumers go beyond what is being implied from the message when reading a product label. According to Jass & Childers (2002), an advertising message comprises of three important components, a visual image, a verbal message and a voice used to convey the intended communication. From verbal to visual experiences, typography has enhanced the meaning of text it represents. Typefaces are used as the voice to "speak" to consumers on many occasions. Typefaces should be viewed as more than a design as they are a major tool in used in communicating at all level, from advertising, reports, business writing and legal writing or magazines. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the how typography has impacted visual communication especially in the area of print advertising. We found that through the principle of consistency in font usage, brands capitalize on typography in communicating their messages which further emphasizes the importance of the appearance of verbal messages through typography.

Introduction

Written words make up language and designers are responsible for processing and organization information into an understandable and deliverable format for an intended audience. Credited as one of the fundaments of appreciation of languages and a tool of communication, typography is responsible for how information is organized, delivered and consumed. Typography is how alphabets are assembled together into words, sentences or phrases so as to enable communication to others. We are being surrounded by typography from prints to screens to road signs whereby workers have to ensure that the text is at its maximum capacity by factoring in elements that can affect the legibility against certain conditions like weather, speed and distance.

Visual communication is undergoing a massive transition where the emphasis is on the processing and displaying of data with an end product made of words and images. Graphic designers are not just producing works on paper but also on digital screens of interfaces, emails, websites, mobile telephones, and computer monitors. With the increased availability of desktop publishing equipment, wide varieties of typefaces become available. For graphic designers, the choice of typefaces becomes important especially in combination with images as the chosen typestyle plays a part in an audience's understanding of the message. Typefaces communicate via their physical appearance. There are mainly two categories of major typestyles, serif and sans serif. Typography is varied to offer aesthetic appeal, which can repel or attract the viewer. According to White (2007) type can be divided into two groups: display and text. Text is usually smaller as it is to be read after the display type. The goal of display type is to "entice and cause the reader to move progressively toward the text" (p. 87).

Psychological research has suggested that when visual features of the type were inconsistent with word meanings, viewers took longer time to respond (Jass & Childers, 2002). On the contrary, when typefaces are consistently chosen to reflect the meaning, there is a higher possibility of recall as the message is being reinforced. This suggests that the choice of typestyle, together with its weight and size can complement the look and feel of words in order for the meaning to be effective and clear. Using the principle of consistency, this paper studies congruency in sans and sans serif typefaces used in English-based newspaper advertisements in Singapore to postulate that when a company's logotype and the typestyle used in a company's advertisement are expressed in similar ways, visual coherence in the form of relatedness is achieved. This, in turn, can increase an advertisement's recognition.

Literature Review

One of the earliest studies investigating the appropriateness of typefaces in advertising was in 1920 when Berliner asked research participants to sort 18 hand-drawn letterforms according to their suitability in advertising for four different products. It was found that participants agreed on their choice of letterform for each product (Davis & Smith, 1933). Arguably, serif fonts guide our eyes across letters and are deemed as more readable compared to sans serif fonts. A study conducted by Tantillo, Di Lorenzo-Aiss and Mathisen in 1995 to find out whether type styles can influence our impression and reaction whereby they measured typestyles across 28 semantic differential scales found out that serif fonts tend to exude elegance, charm and emotion compared to sans serif fonts. 250 undergraduate and graduate students with an average age of 24.4 years were their subjects. Six most frequently used typestyles with three serif fonts (Goudy Old Style, Century Schoolbook and Times New Roman) and the other three san serif fonts (Avant Garde Gothic, Helvetica and Univers) were selected. From their study, they found out that sans serif fonts were deemed more readable but less legible than serif fonts.

In 2003, Brumburger investigated whether readers identify certain typefaces as more (or less) appropriate for certain texts. She selected typefaces from a previous study that was found to fit into three personas: "elegant," "direct," and "friendly." She also selected text passages from as previous study which was identified in three categories of text persona: "professional," "violent," and "friendly". The selection of typefaces and texts resulted in nine combinations and participants were given each of the three texts in each of the three typefaces. They were asked to rate the appropriateness of the typeface for the content, tone and style of the given text massage. The results from this study indicated the readers were quite aware of dissonance between text and typeface and perceive certain typefaces to be more appropriate for certain texts. However, the data also suggested to Brumberger (2003) that some typefaces were considered to be appropriate for all purposes. This could be due to the fact that participants were accustomed to seeing the usage of the typeface for a variety of purposes as demonstrated by the case with the ubiquitous Helvetica typeface.

Attesting to typography's increasing popularity was the celebration of Helvetica's 50th birthday at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 2007. The use of Helvetica gained wide acceptance among the masses in 1985 when it was included as one of the five fonts included in Apple's Macintosh computers. Hailed as the modern typeface of the 20th century, its meaning and mood may be changed by its ubiquity. A sans serif typeface, Helvetica's strong and clean lines make it popular choice in corporate logos, government

tax forms and directional signs. Contrary to a serif typeface which are letters with extra bits of "horns" that stick out from, serif typefaces can add a degree of formality. Sans-serif fonts are smoother, without any extra bits sticking out on the edges. (Refer to figure 1). Given the choices of these two typestyles, careful selection of typefaces can exude personae, authority and permanence to words (Roane, 2007).

Visual features of words influence verbal processing at an earlier stage than the actual semantic processing of the written message. This is because the legibility of letters and words are influenced by the choice of typestyles. The use of upper case and lower case letters also affected where the audience first draw their attention which further leads the audience to reading the copy (Bernhardt, 1986). The weight of lines in the typestyle also affected the way the audience decodes the message. According to Drucker (1984), alternating light and bold print as well as the size of the letters could have an impact on the audience. For example, lighter text is ignored on initial reading. This is proof that the size of letters influences the way the audience "reads" a message. In addition, the appropriateness of type usage for a specific application is determined in part by the degree in which it shares features with the application context.
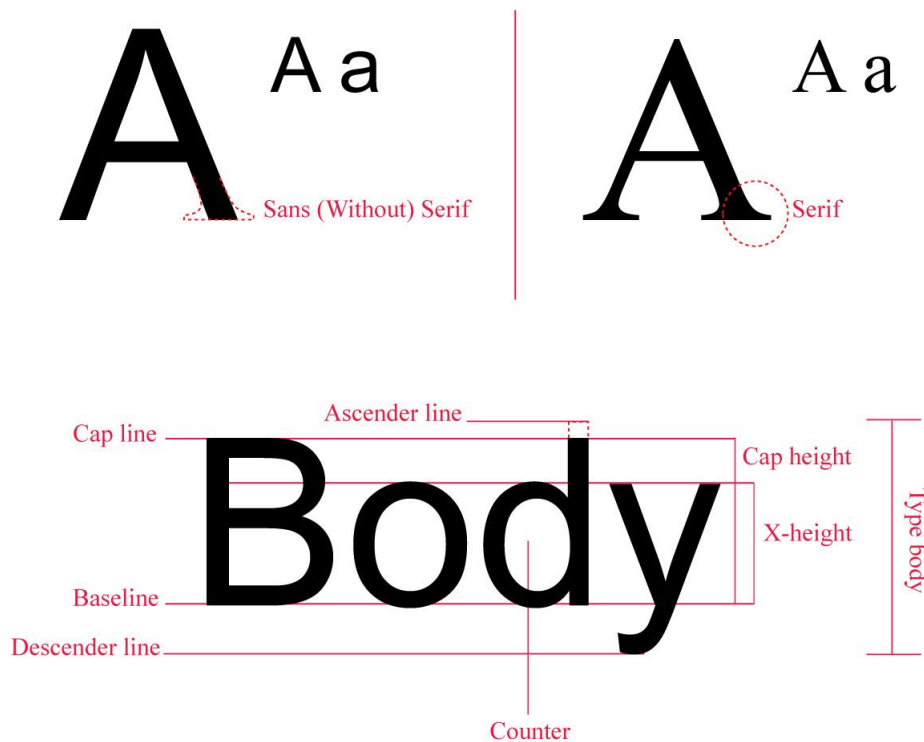
Figure 1. The differences between sans and sans serif fonts and type nomenclature.

According to Doyle and Bottomlye (2006), different type of fonts conveys different meaning for different products which differs in appropriateness of usage. Font-product congruity is a term used to describe when the meaning of a font is in line of the connotation of a product. Factors governing font-product congruity includes learned arbitrary association, figurative association and the ability of the font to evoke more abstract meaning. The readers' interpretation of the meaning created by typography may be culturally learned through the use of typeface. Much like how certain fonts are associated with certain countries, arbitrary association works on the basis that some fonts are tied to certain cultural or environmental conditioning. Figurative association occurs when the characteristics of a font reflect elements in the real world. The display typeface **STENCIL**, for example, is reminiscent of rubber stamped letters that would naturally suggest adaptations from stamped letters. This may prompt associative meaning if the font used for a logo is similar with a product. This is especially true if the connotative meaning of the word is similar to the typeface. Through their physical attributes, typefaces can exude different feels. Wendy's is often remembered and perceived to make old fashioned hamburgers because of the typeface used for their logos (Refer to figure 2) [101 logotypes (n.d.2)].

Figure 2. The Western-styled typefaces used in Wendy's are reminiscent of the Wild West.

When it comes to advertising a product, a brand needs to elude the emotions that are congruent with its status. A Rolex wristwatch advertisement in the newspaper, through placement applicable visual techniques atttempts to convey the message that the brand is elegant and their products are elegant

and is associated with opulence or wealth. Compared to the Rolex brand as demonstrated in figure 3 (101 logotypes (n.d.1), fast-food chain Burger King exudes a different kind of look and feel. While the name mentions royalty, having the word "King" with a roundish typeface shows a "juicy" appearance [Fight Bad Design Org (n.d.)]. This in turn reminds its audience about the nature of the company (Refer to figure 4). In line with Rudolf Arnheim's published findings in 1974, Zhang, Feick, and Price (2006) in their study demonstrated that rounded logos are generally perceived as "harmonious" and less "aggressive" than angular logos.

Figure 3. The Rolex brand exudes opulence and wealth. Figure 4. A roundish type with warm colors add to the juicy appearance for Burger King.

On a perceptual level, angular shapes are deemed as confrontational to its surroundings. Each typeface is being attached their own connotative meaning as shown in the Burger King logo. This would have an impact on the suitability of the typeface chosen for a product or service. Understanding how typefaces can influence our perception gives companies a competitive edge as they can differentiate themselves from their competitors.

In a bold move to "mete out change…" so that the *New York Times* will appear traditional bus less old fashioned", Design Director Tom Bodkin decided to standardize the typefaces for all headlines in the newspaper with just one single family of font called Cheltenham in roman and italic versions with various light and bold weights. [Slate (n.d.)]. Doyle and Bottomley (2006) have highlighted the fact that relationship between font and product may improve the chances of reconsiderations for a product or service. According to their studies, typefaces differ for products with high and low potency.

High potency products includes hammer and whisky and they should be displayed in sans serif fonts that bear straight, angular, heavy and fat with small ascenders and descenders (Refer to figure 1). Low potency products benefit from the opposite qualities of these visual characteristics.

Trends in typography over the years demonstrate many instances that failed to adhere to such suggestions. In 1982, Moriarty who reviewed advertising typography in general interest and trade magazine concluded that special interest magazine ads were making the most to be fashionable but also have the greatest chance of having functional problems. General advertisements in the *Newsweek, Reader's Digest, People* and *Atlantic* and special interest magazines such as *Better Homes* and *Garden, Esquire, Cosmopolitan* and *Gentlemen's Quarterly* had shown little consideration over the potential of typeface. Out of all these magazines, 42% employed the use of sans serif typefaces regardless of the product or services being advertised. In comparison, advertisements in general interest publication command an average usage of 58% for sans serif fonts while special interest publication lags behind. In addition, letter spacing had been reduced significantly with 85% of the display set in tight and touching forms. This was only limited to display type. Preferences in column edge have also changed in the last 20 years with more magazine ads opting for "ragged right" alignment the layout (Refer to figure 5). All these aspects are being classified as fashion trends of typography in advertising (Moriarty, M1982).
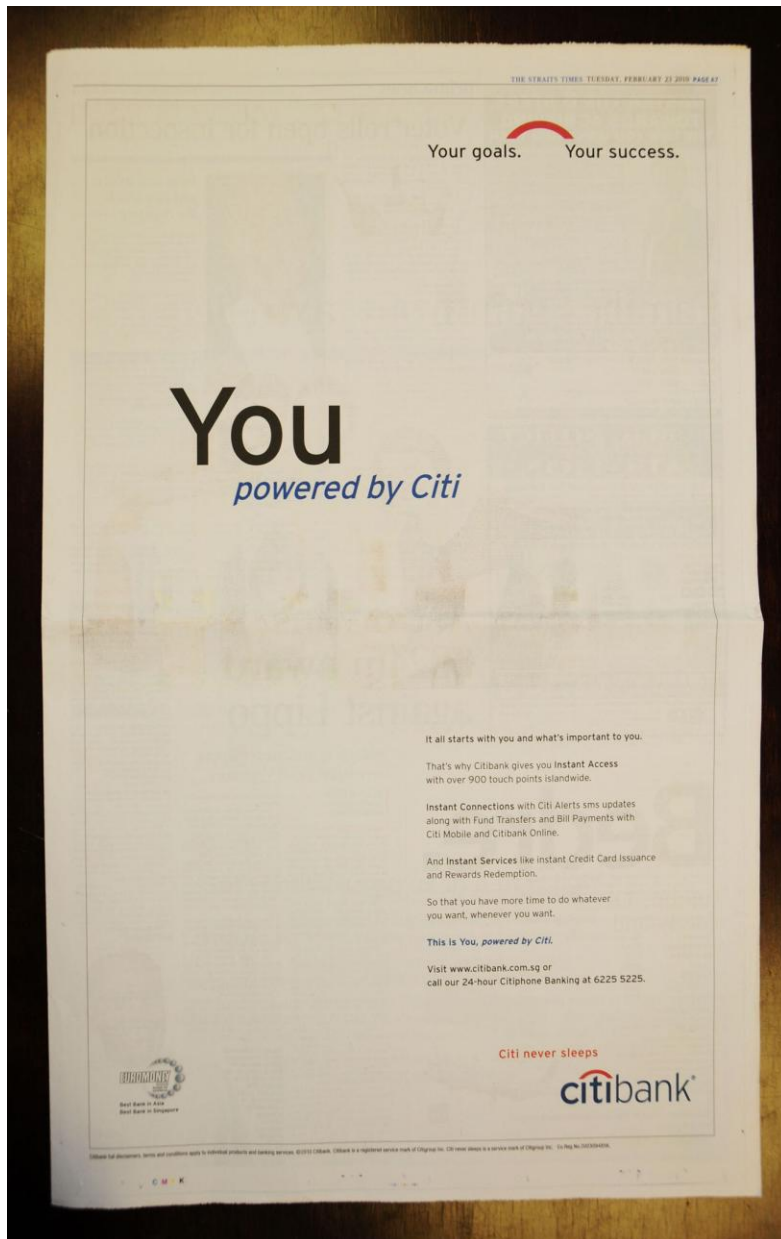
Figure 5. Ragged right alignment in the layout for body copy in a Citibank ad.

The study of tone refers to the treatment of type in relation to the background color (Moriarty, 1982). Moriarty noticed that specifically, there are three types of design treatments which sometimes can lead to readability problems as they decrease contrast. Readability is the relation between reading speed and understanding. These treatments are reversing the type out of a black or colored background, printing the type in color or using color as a background, and printing type over some kind of background pattern or texture (p.292). One notable trends in typography as an art form would be the use of the body text molded into a desirable shape at the expense of legibility of the message. Results have shown that

nearly one fourth of the advertisements have some form of text wrapping in them. Line lengths are still being kept at in the medium range between 12 – 22 picas. Type sizes are between 9 – 11 point range and size 9 being the most commonly used. Wider leading are being used more often in special interest advertisements than general advertisements. Indentation is also the most preferred method used for paragraphing by most advertisements (Moriarty, 1982). Over the past 20 years, both the fashion and functional aspect have undergone great changes. At the same time, more problems have arisen for print advertisements. These problems include abstract typefaces and smaller type sizes which can disrupt message transmission to potential consumers.

In accordance to what Childers and Jass (2002) called "typeface semantics," the styles of lettering are specific as they can convey different message of their own. Researchers have shown that consumers go beyond what is being implied from the message when reading a product label. (Bartram, 1982, Brumberger, 2003; Morrison, 1986; Rowe, 1982; Wendt, 1986). Two empirical studies by Eva Brumberger (2003) showed that readers interact with the typefaces and consistently perceive certain meanings and moods associated with various typefaces. Using semantic differential approach, Brumberger presented undergraduate psychology majors with a series of pairs of opposite terms such as "masculine/feminine." 15 typefaces were selected to represent a range of physical characteristics and included common typefaces like Arial. Controls were put in place for differences among the research participants in gender, ethnicity, age and World Wide Web usage. Brumberger (2003) analyzed the rating scores with SPSS and used the mean rating scores to determine correlations among the typefaces. The resulting data revealed that participants consistently credit certain personalities to a given typeface,

Method

Using universal principle of consistency that postulates that elements that are similar are perceived to be more related than elements that are dissimilar, this paper attempts to show that various brands, through advertisement in the English-based newspaper called *The Straits Times* have consistently used similar typefaces that bear similarity to the brands themselves to create a cohesive look for their advertisements. In other words, if a company's logotype is designed in a sans serif type, other fonts used in their advertisement, whether in headline, sub-headline or body copy are likely to appear in sans serif fonts as well. A logotype is defined as a brand name that is set in a distinctive typeface but is devoid of secondary embellishments.

Whenever there is a joint-sponsorship with multiple logos, the advertisement will be excluded. Orbituary advertisements are not included as they are deemed irrelevant for the purpose of this research. If there is a multiple usage of font style with both sans and sans serif fonts, brush scripts or custom designed typefaces, the advertisement are excluded from data collection as well. This is to support the universal principle of consistency whereby elements that are similar can reduce complexity as they reinforce the relatedness of design elements within a composition (Lidwell, Holden, Butler, 2003). Used in a system, the principle of consistency creates a more usable and learnable system when similar parts are expressed in similar ways. As a result, people are able to efficiently transfer knowledge to new contexts, learn new things quickly, and focus attention the relevant aspects of a task.

The principle of consistency

There are four kinds of consistency: aesthetic, functional, internal and external (Lidwell, et al., p. 46). In aesthetic consistency, similarity in style and appearance, which in the context of this paper, refers to companies that use consistent font, color and graphics in the ads to enhance recognition as well as setting emotional expectations. For example, McDonald's restaurants are instantly recognizable because the chain consistently features their logos through typefaces and color schemes in menus, staff uniforms, interior and exterior designs across many locations. As a result, this form of consistency improves brand recognition, reduces costs, and it provides customers with the same experience as well as establishing a relationship with customers.

To be consistent in meaning and action is part and parcel of functional consistency. A good example is the universal usage of yellow to indicate readiness in traffic light before going to red. As a result, it improves usability and learnability whereby people are provided a leverage to understand how things work. Another apparent example is the play, rewind, forward, and pause used in recorders. They are now used on devices ranging from slides projects to MP3 music and video players. Because of such consistency, people know how to use the control functions which makes future devices easier to use and learn.

Internal consistency can cultivate trust with people because it is an indicator that a system is designed and not cobbled together. For example, the signs for indicating a parking system must be consistently designed so as not to create confusion in the drivers. Finally, external consistency refers to consistency with other elements in a designed environment. For example, emergency alarms that are consistent

across different systems in a control room. Ideally, within any logical grouping of elements within a composition, all four consistencies must be present. For the purpose of this paper, aesthetic and functional consistencies are referred to as they establish unique identities that can be easily recognized to simplify usability and ease of learning.

Newspaper advertisements were collected for four months from January to April of 2010. In quantifying the results, the author selects company that advertises at least half the size of a full page newspaper. Due to the flexibility of the column system stretching from one to ten columns across to the height of 21-inch, half the size is anything horizontally or vertically five columns x 10.5" and above. The advertisers' brand names must consist of a logo or a logotype derived from a typestyle and both are devoid of embellishments. Advertisements that did not fulfill these requirements were excluded from the survey. The medium of the newspaper is chosen because of its immediacy and with the lifespan of a day, data can be collected expediently. For the purpose of this research, type is divided into serif and sans serif. Although there are fundamental differences in the way the text is displayed as body copy or headlines, the typeface used must be continuous and in close proximity to provide an uninterrupted visual flow from left to right. This is to ensure that the body copy is not treated as an art form.

Results

A total of 115 advertisements reviewed in a four-month period from January to April of 2010 and the number of advertisement identified for each month were listed below:

MONTH	TOTAL OF ADVERTISEMENT
January 2010	16
February 2010	39
March 2010	19
April 2010	41
TOTAL	115

The data were extracted by following the principle of consistency that postulates that elements that are similar are perceived to be more related than elements that are dissimilar. The size of the advertisement logo, logotype or combination of, typestyle used for headline or body copy. They were divided into two opposing categories: sans and sans serif fonts. If there is logo and text congruency, whereby the logo/logotype/combination (hence referred to as logo, unless stated otherwise) and the headline/body

copy (hence referred to as text, unless stated otherwise) matches the result is listed as "C" (for Congruent). Likewise, if the logo and the text contradict each other, the advertisement will be marked as "I" (for Incongruent). The results are listed below:

MONTH	NUMBER OF ADVERTISEMENTS	CONGRUENT	PERCENTILE	INCONGRUENT	PERCENTILE
January	16	9	56.25%	7	43.75%
February	39	29	74.36%	10	25.64%
March	19	12	63.16%	7	36.84%
April	41	34	82.92%	7	17.07%

The month of April showed the highest percentile at almost 83% congruency due to the high number of advertisements. Refer to figure 6 for samples of logo-text congruent advertisement. Although at a significantly lower percentile, the month of January, with only 16 advertisements still saw about half advertisers choosing typefaces that match their logos. The author noticed that incongruent ads are used more for the purpose of contrasting as shown in figure 7. Recognition and similarity is often selected over unfamiliarity. This supports the argument that the principle of consistency is observed whereby the choice of text is matched in the layout in order to make brands memorable. The clarity of text is generally influenced by the typestyle chosen, text block, and size of the layout. Coupled with images or graphics, color, texture, placement of the ad, the effectiveness of an advertisement is dependent on many factors to realize its effectiveness.

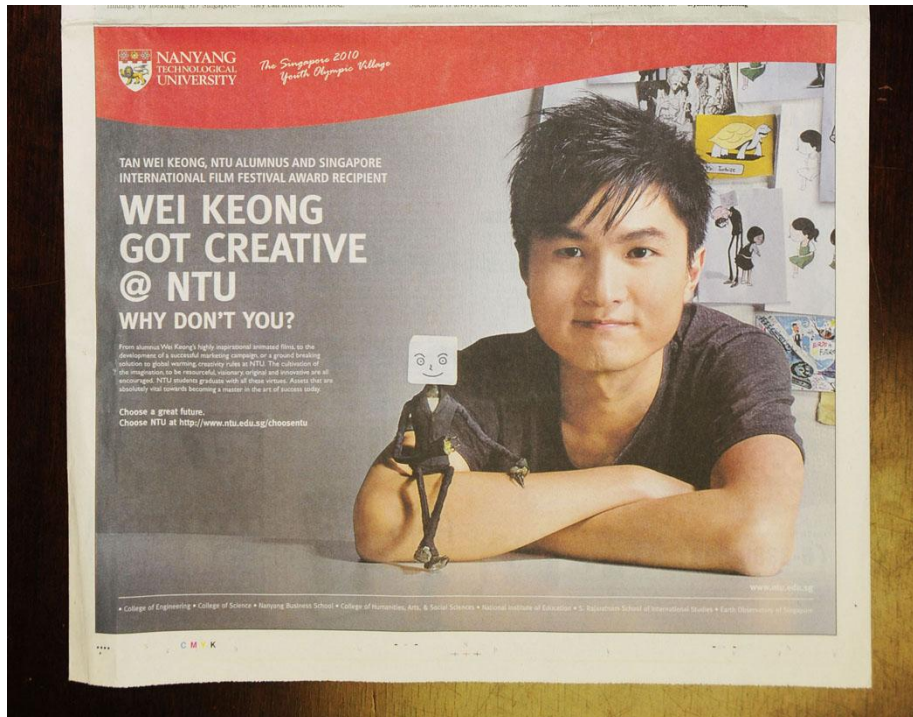Figure 6. Examples of congruent ad showing both sans serif typefaces in the logo and the text.

Figure 7. An example of an incongruent ad showing a serif logo with sans serif text in the layout.

Discussions

Type as an element of design

In visual communication, the visual composition of an artwork is an important aspect as the placement of text or image or the combination of both may affect the overall composition. Elements and principles of design are often stressed upon in visual design. In giving forms to the content and information, effective visualization requires that we first pay more attention to typography as there is a need to emphasize on the content using typography and imagery to aid the persuasiveness of the design. The traditional role of a designer is to bring an idea to life—from its initial conceptualization to the final execution of the design. Type is just an element within design and other design components that must be taken into consideration include color, scale and space. Color can aid organization as well as giving a brand an identifying characteristic. Scale is closely related to hierarchy whereby a change in scale means making an element noticeable in comparison with the rest. Space is more than mere background because when used to its fullest, a white space transforms into a foreground, mid-ground or background, depending on the placement of elements within the composition. Especially important in newspaper advertisement, space is defined by its perimeter which is the physical size in which an ad is realized through the combination of type, image and other design elements.

Legibility, readability and comprehension

Choosing the appropriate type style is important for advertisers because of three interconnected issues: legibility, readability and comprehension. Legibility is the capacity of type that affects one's capability to read or decipher the information presented while readability is the state or quality of the information being readable while comprehension is about the understanding and perceptibility of a word, line or paragraph of printed matter. While it has become easier in this day and age with abundant access to type, it has also become harder to decide because of the proliferation of choices. There are subtle differences between the constructions of the typefaces especially to an untrained eye, the typeface of Universe bears much similarity to Franklin. We have to gain greater exposure to the range of typefaces. The first step to take is to be aware of the choices we make as well as the text we see around us daily. This is important as one of the skills a designer should have is to be attuned to the appropriateness of type usage. Typefaces should be viewed as more than a design, but a major tool in communicating at all levels, from advertising, reports, business writing and legal writing or magazines. In selecting typefaces, we usually begin with a vague visual concept of the kind of typeface we want to use but it is

nonetheless, a journey of exploring what works and what does not. It is not an arbitrary choice but largely, the choice of typeface is determined by the purpose of the message, the medium of the message and the receptiveness of the message by its audience.

The issue of structure

Designers develops a structure for data in the layout where type and image co-exist. Due to the Western canon of linearly reading from left to right and top to bottom, an order is established in any layout before a typeface can be utilized in a compositional space. Secretaries to students to estate agents can deliver perfectly arranged type in their computer but certain protocols must be followed. Headlines and type size affect the viewer's perception levels of subordination. According to White (2007), hierarchical importance in both type and imagery can be expressed through contrasting size, weight, color or value, style or position. Bold text can be utilized to place emphasis or to create structure to direct the viewer's eye in a certain direction and it is a form of movement within a composition which makes the layout dynamic. This creates a hierarchical order which acts as a form of ranking, a successive order which facilitates clarity and easy of flow in deciphering a message. Out of these, size is the contrast that is used most frequently (p. 89). Most designers today approach design from the perspective that readers interact with typeface. The design process is incomplete without attention to the effectiveness of the typestyle, both verbally and visually in retrieving, organizing, displaying and transmitting information. The decisions that designers and copywriters make in choosing an appropriate typeface will impact the way readers interact with the communication. What this means for us is that we must consciously be cognizant and sensitive to the multiple levels of meaning within a design when typefaces are involved.

The issue of clarity

Psychological research has suggested that when visual features of the type were inconsistent with word meanings, viewers took a longer time to respond (Jass & Childers, 2002). However when typefaces were consistent with the meaning, there was a higher possibility of recall as the message is being reinforced. This suggests that the choice of typeface must complement the meaning of words itself in order to be effective and clear. Issues of clarity and function will always be "back burner" issues that while designing, these must be taken into considerations. The role of typography plays in design can seriously affect content delivery as our comprehension of something we read in front of us is predicated on how it is being presented. Text must make sense to the readers since ideas or message. Through the assembling and arrangement of fonts, letter spacing, word spacing, and line spacing, stories become

alive. Apart from visual elements that embody typefaces are not only perceivable in terms of their formal and technical properties but also in terms of their connotations they exude. Every typeface looks different and arguably, like people, they have their own personality and it evokes emotions in people. More importantly, the main purpose of type is to help to communicate an idea by giving it a shape for its readers to understand a story, visualize an idea and to add meaning to a polysemous picture which without any text becomes too open for interpretation, making the meaning elusive. Typography is there to set dispel any ambiguity in the meaning.

Technological competency in software and skills

These days, virtually during steps that lead to the final execution of design, everything is now conceived in the computer. Depending on the type of applications from word processing, page layout, graphics to image-editing, appropriate software are packaged with a selection of fonts for designers, artists or desktop publishers to use. Everyone with access to desktop publishing devices can create layout, write stories or compose multiple layout. Apart from the technological competency necessary in using the software, the choice of typefaces becomes part of the decision during the design process. The range of possible solutions to a typographic problem is seemingly infinite and may be difficult for junior graphic designers or copywriters to determine which typeface is appropriate. Moreover, the choice is arbitrary and subjective. Designer Tomas Detrie follows a three-stage design process starting with i) preliminary exploration, ii) message investigation and iii) visualization of solutions (Carter, Day & Meggs, 2007).

Detrie considered the content of the communication such as the title, subtitle, authors and even publisher of the title page of a book. Van Horn (2004) highlights that certain forms of communication such as wedding invitations are often done in highly stylized fonts that mimic scripts or calligraphy (Van Horn, 2004). When one writes a dissertation, the typeface should be more professional and easy on the eye such as old style typefaces like Garamond or Palatino. If we were to create a strong and dramatic sign, typefaces like Bodoni, which have geometric construction and flat, unbracketed serifs is a good choice as the Bodoni typeface of family is seen to exude masculinity with a touch of the dramatic presentations.

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts

In Gestalt's law which states that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, the choice of typeface alone is not enough to communicate the message as it requires the combination of other elements such

as space, color, texture, and equally if not more importantly, images. An experiment was conducted in which a copy of a car advertisement was presented in the practical typeface and in luxury type style (Childers and Jass, 2002). The results of the experiment indicated that participants perceived the information and product differently, depending on the physical appearance of the typeface. Hence, where branding is concerned, typeface plays an important role in creating the right intended perceptions of a company's products, especially where the brand is concerned.

In ensuring that a strong brand is created, consistent use of same typeface can help to build cohesiveness and to enhance the consumer's memorability of the message. In addition to its primary choice of the Frutiger font for "its legibility and distinct typographic style" and Times New Roman as a secondary typeface to complement Frutiger which is to be used for the text of letters, faxes, publications etc, (The NUS identity, n.d.), the corporate communication office of The National University of Singapore constantly features the color orange and blue from their university on virtually every form of promotion (refer to figures 8 and 9). However, relying on colors alone are insufficient as the authored discovered that a similar color scheme is also being used by Fedex (refer to figure 10). Advertisements are just part of the marketing scheme, designed to capturing our attention but when similar patterns in design and consistency in the message are repeated many times over, they can increase the memorability of a brand.

Figure 8. Orange and blue adopted from the NUS logo are being consistently repeated in their promotional campaigns.

Figure 9. A screen capture showing the consistent usage of orange and blue.

Figure 10. Similarly, Fedex also used orange and blue in a half page ad that appeared on April 20th 2010 in the *New Straits Times*.

Rules are made to be broken but cannot be ignored.

Van Horn (2004) notes that certain forms of communication like wedding invitations are often done in highly stylized fonts to mimic calligraphy. Seemingly, it has become a convention for wedding invitation to be done in script-like typefaces as most people have come to accept as natural but with such a wide selection of typefaces, why do all wedding invitations have to look the same? Perhaps, there is a reason behind the choice. In this day and age of mass production, with the abundance of choice, we are still being limited by the number of choices as personalization costs more money. As a result, while stylized text connotates elegance and grandeur and its frequent use in wedding invitations reiterates this meaning, going against the conventional interpretations of various typefaces is only challenged by a few who dare enough to break the rules or in this case, the wallet to pay for personalization. Indeed, rules can be broken but cannot be ignored.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the usage of correct font will reap benefits for the advertiser in the long run. In a world being overly cluttered with images, typography can indeed help an advertiser to "brand" itself or as a "niche", mostly as a way to stand out in comparison to the rest. Many of us take typography for granted and while many do not pay attention to the intricacies and protocols of typestyles, this research has shown successful examples of how brands that have capitalized on using typography as their distinctive signature which seeks to create relatedness in their branding effort. Assembling a composition to sell a service or a product is part art and part science which further incorporates elements of linguistics, sociology and psychology. In the final step of visualization, designers and copywriters need to explore many permutations by considering the placement of the text in relation to the whole composition. Some journals reported that serif fonts are much more legible than serif. Therefore, this could mean that if the priority is to please the reader, the choice of typeface should be sans serif but made larger and clearer to avoid issues of legibility. Designers, unlike artists, need to take into consideration that the choice of fonts is not based on aesthetic or personal reason but rather on fulfilling the goal of stakeholders where issues of legibility, readability and comprehension take precedence.

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