

February 2017

COLORS SET THE TONE FOR BRANDS



What do the colors of a brand, logo and business say? What kind of messaging do brand colors convey to current customers, future customers and would-be customers? And what do they say about what a company stands for?

The good news is that there are no inherently “good” or “bad” colors, according to experts. Rather it's all about choosing the colors that says what companies want to say and then making them effective.

An [infographic on colors](#) published by Column Five Media, shares some interesting statistics. For example, 95 percent of brands use only one or two colors. Almost one-third use blue, while 29 percent use red and 28 percent use some shade of black or grayscale.

Furthermore, the infographic looks at specific uses for logos paired with different media and assets, in regard to the brands' industries. For firms in the clothing and apparel space, darker and earthier shades such as brown and black work well with their logos and brand marks. Meanwhile, yellow and red seem most effective for restaurants and businesses in the food sector — think McDonald's, Applebee's and most pizza chains. Blue, purple and green, on the other hand, are a good fit for technology and energy-related companies.

In a post titled “[How to Choose the Right Logo for Your Business](#)”, *Forbes* wrote about all of the important elements of logos, including the fonts or typefaces and shapes. But *Forbes* stressed that the colors chosen for logos ultimately fuse everything together to influence the messaging to customers, while letting the entities' personalities shine.

Colors in and of themselves have personality. In fact, according to a *Fast Company* infographic, [80 percent of consumers say that color increases brand recognition](#).

QUICK NEWSLETTER SURVEY

Would you recommend this newsletter?

Nope ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 For sure

UPCOMING EVENTS

PPAI Expo East / ISS

Atlantic City, NJ

March 23-25

Attending

ASI Show!

Chicago, IL

July 12-13

Exhibiting: Booth #1137

Embroidery Mart

Nashville, TN

August 4-5

Attending

NOTABLE QUOTES



“I believe people are in our lives for a reason. [We're here to learn from each other.](#)”

— Gillian Anderson

Forbes also talked about evoking emotions. Based on another study cited, it laid out what a color can mean when processed by the minds of prospective customers:

- **Red** stands out as exciting, bold and youthful.
- **Orange** communicates friendly, cheerful and confident.
- **Yellow** brings optimism, clarity and warmth.
- **Green** represents peace, health and growth.
- **Blue** evokes trust, dependability and strength.
- **Purple** says creative, imaginative and wise.
- **Black and white** together emits balance and calm

Even the shades of colors, meaning specifically their darkness and saturation, can affect the nuances of brand marks, *Forbes* also wrote. It mentioned the use of blue as an example.

"The Gap blue is a classic navy, Google's is a fun, bright blue and my company uses a pastel sky blue." *Forbes* noted that, "women prefer soft colors while men prefer bright colors. Similarly, women prefer shades (colors mixed with white) while men prefer tints (colors mixed with black)."

Taking the discussion a step further, *Creative Bloq* makes a bolder claim.

"Successfully 'owning' a colour is a big deal," and that **making colors synonymous with brands**, versus just choosing colors, is "how a succession of top brands have staked their claim."

In the post, Nick Carson, the editor of *Computer Arts* magazine, points out that some iconic brands are fused with colors as much as with unique names. For example, when you think Coca-Cola, even if you tend to call it "Coke", you think red. Likewise, Starbucks makes you think green and UPS equals brown, from packages to trucks to UPS employees' uniforms.

While the typical small business couldn't imagine competing dollar-wise with what these mega-corporations spend on marketing, that doesn't mean that small or medium-sized businesses (SMBs) can't have stand-out logos that make a splash!

When designing new company logos or re-branding, it makes sense to consult pros to achieve the best results. According to *U.S. News & World Report*, **it's best to enlist experts**.

Every year **Idea Custom Solutions** helps SMBs **harness the power of color and creativity to re-brand or launch new logos**. Rather than do-it-yourself, templates or software driven outputs, we offer an agency-quality service, from a dedicated professional team, at a price any company can afford!

GIFT BAGS GRAB NEW BUSINESS

It's that time of year again when the nominations are announced for the next Academy Awards. Along with all the great films of 2016, one topic that gets almost as much buzz as the celebrities and their fashions is the party atmosphere at The Oscars. Another perk at celebrated events like this and the Golden Globe Awards is what is given away to attendees — the gift bags.



"Actions are the seed of fate
deeds grow into destiny."

— Harry S. Truman



"You make your mistakes
to **learn how to get to the
good stuff**."

— Quincy Jones



"I think **self-awareness
is probably the most
important thing towards
being a champion**."

— Billie Jean King



"Life is not a solo act. It's a
huge collaboration, and
**we all need to assemble
around us the people who
care about us and support
us in times of strife**."

— Tim Gunn

Certainly "swag bags" and **packages of promotional products** are one of many things those who cover the entertainment industry and gossip latch onto. But the larger American business community and the press have also taken note. This could be because of the multitude of marketing opportunities for entrepreneurs who are promoting products.

Take the **Golden Globes gift bags**. As *InStyle* reported, these bags don't come with Rolexes or keys to Ferraris, but rather useful sample sizes of cosmetic products including sunscreens, mascaras and cleansers. But in typical promotional products fashion, the Globes gift bags also come with drinkware, in this case canteens, as well as Insipio brand earbuds, portable picnic boxes and wearables in the form of socks. But it wasn't just major brands like L'Oreal that chipped in. One Michigan lawyer and **owner of a small company that makes body scrubs** was also showcased in the Golden Globes gift bag last year.

The sports world also seems to have an appetite for gift bags. During March Madness, participants in the NCAA Men's Basketball championship and **the regional conference championships tournaments get a variety of cool stuff** ranging from Under Armor wearables and other sports apparel brands to high-quality earphones from Beats By Dre. Not to be outdone, more and more of **the NCAA college bowl game events have giveaways too**.

Now, it's not just celebrity galas or televised sports events that offer swag bags. Lots of businesses in a myriad of sectors use them in different forums.

Last summer, Sears celebrated the opening of a few new revamped retail stores and included "**Sears swag bags**" to attract shoppers. **Microsoft uses them for promotions** related to their phone products in niche consumer markets. **Video game companies include gift bags with branded promotional products** to cater to the thousands of gamers that pack their conventions and social gatherings. **Even major media concerns like Time Inc. provide gift bags** at their media and political coverage events, featuring some of the same sort of useful samples and gadgets found in Golden Globes bags.

When working for clients, it's important to remember that gift bags can serve different purposes and work effectively for them.

- **Hospitality.** Whether they are hosting **shareholders' meetings**, powwows for partners or even **welcome meetings for new employees**, many times companies offer gift bags for the sake of hospitality and comfort. Including items such as snacks, skin care and toiletries (think lip balm, for example) or even quirky mementos are great ice-breakers and leave positive lasting impressions.
- **Samples.** Companies in the beauty sector, like salons, retail chains or manufacturers of cosmetics, rely heavily on customers building affinity for hair and skin products. In addition to trade shows and related events, **handy promotional products bags** can put in customers' hands samples of products they might want to buy later, in addition to items that act as reminder advertising.
- **Branding.** One way for businesses to reach their ideal customers and make their brands visible to them every day is to offer giveaways they can't pass without picking up. **At events such as trade shows, giveaways for attendees are practically required.** For SMBs, gift bags containing items people want — whether that



"When you **stop learning, stop listening, stop looking and asking questions, always new questions**, then it is time to die."

— Lillian Smith



"I hire people brighter than me and then I get out of their way."

— Lee Iacocca



"It takes a lot of courage to **show your dreams to someone else.**"

— Erma Bombeck

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Pravin Owai

Unit Production Specialist, Order Entry

Pravin says he is happy to report he has completed four and a half years with Idea Custom Solutions! He first joined the company as a production associate for a supplier client's dedicated order entry team.

means drinkware, fancy pens, golf balls, fun desk toys or useful outdoor items like barbecue grill spatulas or Frisbees — will be hits.

Be sure to talk to your SMB customers about what trade shows, awards, events, or customer hospitality efforts they are preparing for in 2017. And look to an expert partner that can provide [the production-ready vector artwork and embroidery digitizing designs](#) for their logos and other artwork that will appear on gift items so they get the best ROI.

HELPING SMBS REBOOT THEIR TRADE SHOW STRATEGIES

As 2017 rolls out, both big companies and SMBs are looking for ways to increase their visibility, strengthen their reputations and engage customers. Trade shows are one tactic that businesses in almost every sector rely on.

Promotional products distributors can most effectively help their customers by talking to them about the trade shows and events in which they participate. More importantly, firms that serve SMBs and even larger companies shouldn't focus on simply adding logos to the latest and greatest products. Instead, they should talk to business customers about how they can truly make an impact on trade show guests and stay on their minds well after tear-down.

What Makes Good Giveaways

Business 2 Community asked the question outright: “[What makes a good trade show giveaway?](#)” The online business news and opinion resource came up with a few qualifiers:

- **Make it budget-friendly.** Certainly any part of business promotion must make sense financially. When exhibiting at trade shows, businesses should focus on activities to attract more attendees to their booths or tables. Giveaways accomplish that goal but SMBs should still spend wisely.
- **Go beyond free to provide value.** Perhaps the smartest investments are promotional products that are both useful and have value. SMBs should think about their trade show audiences and try to put themselves in their prospects' shoes.
- **Brand thoroughly.** All promotional products, whether they are trusty office items or fun and quirky toys, must have the businesses' logos on them. Furthermore, phone numbers, websites, social media handles and other contact details enhance effectiveness. While this seems like common sense, B2C writes that “even the coolest giveaways will fall flat if the attendee cannot remember where they got it.”

Would you pick up a branded quality pen? If not, [what would catch your attention and interest](#) — golf balls or cute stuffed animals for your kids? The correct answer comes from knowing audiences and who the end customers are.

As we also discovered last year, certain promo products including [fleece vests](#), [matchbooks](#) and [plush toys](#), become sought-after collectibles once they were embellished with logos.

Covering the same subject, *Trade Show News Network (TSNN)* had more

Since then, he has since been promoted. “I am one of the process experts and my function involves handling production floor questions and increasing the knowledge of team members.”

His days typically start with scrum meetings conducted by his supervisors to get the necessary directions and updates. Then he spends time guiding and checking the work done by the team and new trainees.

So far, he is most proud of the positive changes in himself during his tenure. “I have become professional and improved my communication skills quite a bit. I now have patience and am a very calm person. Plus, I have become a good team player.” In fact, he would like to be known by others as a good mentor and hard-worker.

Outside the office, Pravin spends my time with his friends visiting nearby places, watching movies and going shopping. He currently lives with his parents and enjoys spending time and playing with his nephew. In terms of sports, Pravin plays cricket and football (soccer to us).

Someday, he would like to complete his post-graduate studies and visit Pattaya City in Thailand.

Since we serve so many SMBs, we asked Pravin if he had a favorite small business. He told us that he likes a famous, snack center near his house, where he usually likes to eat, “because the taste is consistently awesome!”

What Pravin thinks everyone should know about Idea Custom Solutions is: “This is a very good organization for graphic design. We get a chance to learn so many things because the supervisors help us to improve. The working environment of the company is very good.”

TWEET THAT!

What were the top 20 [#PromoProducts](#) of 2016? Categories in this

[Tweet That!](#)

advice, particularly when it comes to **SMBs picking products that relate directly to the products or services they offer**. Some examples they mention:

- Dry cleaning businesses that distribute pocket packs of lint sheets, lint brushes or other clothing-related maintenance products, with logo and contact info printed on each pack. “The relationship between the dry cleaner and the promotional item is apparent to event attendees, establishing proper context for the business.”
- Technology firms that give away protection sleeves, device cases or other tech-related products. Firms that resell software, provide desktop and office support, or offer specialty services like security, can score points with these products. When an “item is relevant to the company’s services, it targets an audience of people who are concerned with data security, and it is very useful.”

TSNN also wrote in October about another key part of the trade show experience: for businesses to give potential customers at events ideas of who they are and, ultimately, **for SMBs to tell their brand stories**.

“Telling your story effectively is all about creating a lasting emotional connection to your brand that attendees will remember even after the trade show is over. In order to cultivate that authentic reaction, spend your customization investment wisely.”

The post’s author Lauren Melnick hints that lower-cost stock items like t-shirts and snacks are something that most attendees consistently grab. But she advises businesses and promotional products distributors that serve them work together to come up with something can establish longer lasting impressions with future customers.

“Seek out impactful products that are branded, beautifully designed and useful long after the initial gifting is over.”

Idea Custom Solutions wishes you a successful 2017. We look forward to serving your needs for production-ready files — **vector artwork, embroidery digitizing, logo design and more** — to decorate the items your customers choose to set themselves apart at this year’s events!

CLIENTS ARE RAVING

“My team and I were floored! The design was fabulous. I even showed the president of the company, who was equally impressed. Great job. Thanks for the great work and terrific instructions. I’d like the digitizer to only handle our designs.”

Operations contact for major cap supplier

“Great price. Great work. And never any problems.”

Joseph Kellum
Kellum Imprints

“Great service that delivered a product that stitched out well and like the customer service!”

Decorator customer

graphic may surprise you.

<https://goo.gl/bSAUf6>

Make a lasting impression at **#TradeShows**. USBs, phone wallets and non-tech items like water bottles attract traffic.
<https://goo.gl/pvSJJR>

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[That!](#)

\$62.8 billion was spent on pets last year. **@ASlcentral** writes pet products are underutilized way to reach customers.
#PromoProducts
<https://goo.gl/GbNDkE>

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[That!](#)

Matches are one of the most collected **#PromoProducts** — Bars, restaurants, hotels know this. Perhaps they’re an art form too.
<https://goo.gl/cZd8B3>

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More matchboxes with fancy designs and eclectic style that call back 20th century savoir faire.
<https://goo.gl/7UXdDs>

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Key chains, rings are underused staple **#PromoProducts**. Now coveted fashion accessories too.
<https://goo.gl/UvGyoo>

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Nissan, Tesla and Mazda use digital **#MarketingCollateral** today to sell cars, yet the auto **#brochure** has a long history. **#TBT**
<https://goo.gl/sRk01H>

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#TradeShow tips for **#PromoProducts** pros. Plus ideas for breaking the ice if you’re an introvert.
<https://goo.gl/voihZw>

[Tweet](#)
[That!](#)

#SMBs are a special breed. There’s a difference between **#branding** and branding for small business.
<https://goo.gl/UU7IFi>

[Tweet](#)
[That!](#)

Regional energy provider Georgia Power unveiled a new **#brand** mark and **#logo** to start off 2017.
<https://goo.gl/reL7tr>

[Tweet](#)
[That!](#)



DESIGN SHOWCASE

Embroidery Digitizing



Vector Artwork



Brands like Dollar Shave Club, VICE are a hit with millennials. What if their [#logos](#) were “more corporate”?

[#FunnyFriday](#)
<https://goo.gl/wnlc8v>

[Tweet That!](#)

Philly? People think soft pretzels and cheesesteaks. Local org seeks to [#rebrand](#) Philadelphia an American beer capital.
<https://goo.gl/8sglOP>

[Tweet That!](#)

Mega conglomerate Conagra Foods “turned a new leaf” on its [#logo](#) and is now Conagra Brands.

<https://goo.gl/UOe21z>

[Tweet That!](#)

When it comes to [#logos](#) and brands, fonts and typography must fit. Less is more.

[#TeachMeTuesdays](#)
<https://goo.gl/PTPqmo>

[Tweet That!](#)

If you have any designs created by our team that you would like to share in this newsletter, send them to us at marketing@ideacustom.com

