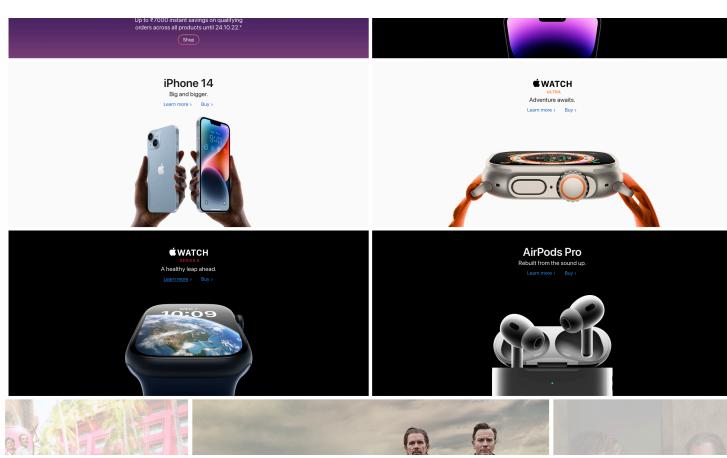


PSYCHOLOGY OF COLOURS

Often When we start designing products, Websites, Mobile applications, we face a choice which seems pretty easy at that time, the choice of the colours to be used. We often chose a particular colour scheme, based on our individual perception or group suggestion from peers, etcetera and move ahead with it. Have you ever thought, What is the significance of that choice? Why is it that the majority of the people agreed to a particular colour scheme? Why did the other people disagree with the colour scheme? Why is it that often when we visit sites, such as that of Apple, we feel a class or sophistication? And many more such questions popping in your exceptional mind. All of these questions may have multiple aspects to consider while answering them, but one of the biggest is the colours present in these cases!

My attempt would be to make you understand a brief of colours and their effects on the human mind, different colours and their psychological effects, and how some companies utilise colours in effective manner to increase their efficacy in marketing. The goal is not to tell you which colours should be used, it is rather to understand your intuitive approach to colours in a rational form, and attempting to be conscious next time while using colours as to what meaning they might imply, and the best way to use them for a better User Experience!

1)



2)



When you watch the above two sites (1 and 2) you feel a certain mixture of feelings! What I felt watching the first site was a feeling of 'Class' and 'Sophistication' which made the products seem reliable and supreme. Whereas watching the second site I felt a bit of a retro-ish vibe, seemed like fun, but did not feel very much reliable in terms of its usability. Some of the reasons for these two sets of feelings can be the Design of the sites, the colours used, etcetera. But keeping the discussion aligned with the topic of this write up: Psychology of Colours, we will focus on the same. If we try to break down why we felt the way we did we find that the smoothness of the site, its appearance based on colours played a humungous role in dictating what you felt watching the two sites. However, there are not just two types of feelings which we can encounter when we see colours, there are many more! Knowing about some of them we can strategically plan how we wish to chose the colour scheme of the next product we build, providing a curated and more 'User specific' User experience!

Some ways colours can affect you:

- 1) **Colours can be stimulating or calming** - When colours are used their effects can vary based on whether they are considered warm or cool. Warm colours or bright colours like yellow, orange, etcetera can help in stimulation, but are sufficient in small amounts only. Their over usage can be irritating or annoying for people. Sometimes when you feel dull, you can use reasonable warm colours to brighten your mood up sub consciously. For cool colours, they are useful when someone is looking for a peaceful and calming effect in their life. Shades of Blue and green are considered to be calming and relaxing. The colour blue represents the sky and the sea, and these are the things that naturally make us calm. Research has shown that there is less effort required to see the colour green, thus the muscles in the eyes don't have to work that hard to watch it. Purple on the other hand is a cool colour which is used to represent energy and change.
- 2) **Colour can mean different things** - Take Black for example, a lot of people associate it with death, emptiness, and other negative things. But it is also a symbol of elegance, and class, as can be seen in advertisements by companies! Take red as an example, Some people think of it as representations of Power, Aggression, Strength or Danger. But some individuals may see red and immediately think of Love, Lust, Passion and desire.
- 3) **Colours can determine being choices** - Research has shown that products of packaging with red labels grab the attention faster. Red is an inviting colour to look at, and works with impulsive shoppers! The colour orange is usually associated with fairness and affordability. Green is used to attract individuals who are more eco-friendly. While white is the colour which implies Purity, which is why white is often used for skin care products. Purple portrays Royalty or Luxury, which is why it is often used in the beauty industry, specially in the case of anti-aging products. A purple box persuades people into paying higher for the same. Black is a colour that is used often due to its portrayal of sophistication and quality, and makes cheaper items seem high quality stuff as well.
- 4) **Colours make you more confident and attractive** - Black and red have been found to be the staple colours of beauty and attraction all over the globe. They have been also voted as the colours which inspire the most confidence. Men and Women both prefer wearing black to interviews and gatherings of importance, as black gives them boost of confidence. On a first date usually women prefer wearing something red, and men prefer wearing something black or blue.

- 5) **Colour can make you eat less or more** - Research has shown the individuals who eat off of red plates are found to eat less. White plates on the other end seem bigger than they really are and thus encourage you to eat more. The colours yellow and orange are also thought to affect our appetite by increasing your hunger.
- 6) **Colours can encourage the feelings of happiness** - Blue is at the top of this list. Green is the 2nd most favourite colour among men and 3rd among women. Yellow is good too, but is best used in small amounts. Purple is the 2nd most favourite colour among women, and the 2nd most hated colour among men
- 7) **Colours can incite unhappiness** - Brown represents laziness and filth. Orange represents uniqueness etcetera, but still both of them are some of the most hated among people.

We maybe now understand why we felt the way we did when we watched the two sites 1 and 2 above. Even if we weren't able to understand that exactly, we stepped at least one step towards its in depth understanding. This topic is not small and its actual discussion would be extremely out of scope of this article, as one can not discuss so much in just a small article as this one. But, reading the few psychological effects above, we get the gist of how colours can affect the users, and how one can strategically plan their next product's colour scheme to increase its usability among the users.

Thank you for reading the article!

