The relationship between emotion, type of company and color combination

PH3 - Group 3

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Abstract

Different colors can be used for evoking different emotions and associations and is an important factor when creating a product or service. In this study we research which emotions are related to which color combinations, as well as what types of companies are associated with those colors, using five website with the same design but with different color schemes. In the end, each page had at least one emotion that had been chosen by at least half of the participants. Also, majority of the participants perceived the color schemes with one color with different hues as harmonic, while the color schemes with contrasting colors mostly were perceived as chaotic.

Background

Harmonic colors are a combination of colors that are aesthetically pleasing for the human eye, while chaotic colors are a combination of colors that are not aesthetically pleasing for the human eye. A hypothesis for this study is that a combination of contrasting colors should be seen as chaotic. Many studies have previously been conducted on the relation between color and emotion, for example, Kaya and Epps have shown that an emotion experienced with a specific color is highly connected to what previous relation one has to that color [2]. It has also been found that when making up one's mind during the initial interaction with other people or products 62-90% of the judgement is based solely on colors [6]. Robert Plutchik's theory of emotion proposes that there are eight primary emotions: anger, fear, sadness, disgust, surprise, anticipation, trust and joy and it has been shown that these eight emotions have been useful when designing customer experiences [5]. Labrecque et al have shown that color can influence the likability and familiarity of a brand and companies should therefore be aware of this when choosing colors [3]. Color gives an image and impressions to the customers that can be different between cultures [4].

Goals

The aim of this work is to study the relationship between emotions, type of companies and color combination. This study investigates what emotions are felt with different color combinations as well as which type of companies are associated with the different color schemes. Another goal is to see if color combinations with different hues of the same color are perceived as harmonic or chaotic. The same is studied for color combinations with contrasting colors.

Method

The study was done on 14 Media Technology students from KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm between the ages of 21 and 26 years old. All participants were, individually, shown webpage 1 and were told to explore it as long as they wanted. When they were done, they got to answer several questions about how they perceived the page, as well as choose emotions and different types of companies from lists. When they had finished answering the questions the steps were repeated for webpages 2 to 5.

Results

The exact result of the top felt emotion and top associated type of companies for each webpage, is shown under the pictures of the webpages.

For the orange webpage the emotions were described as screamy and taking much attention, but also as warm and relaxing. Entertainment and education were associated type of companies for this webpage because it feels happy and fits to the attention seeking aura.

Trust is felt from the blue webpage. Financial services and health care are associated with this webpage as blue is cool and trusting, the subjects also associate it because of banks already using blue color.

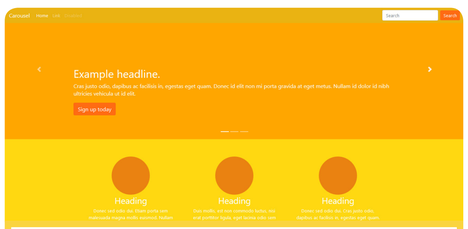
The green webpage was felt as calming but also as fun and joyful. It is associated with food industry because green is associated with ecology and health care beacuse green is calm.

The orange, blue, green webpage gives the feeling of disgust, anger and joy. It is felt as playful but also a combination that feels like they are too much. Education and entertainment is associated to this webpage, as this color combination was seen as a webpage for younger kids.

The cerise, cyan, yellow webpage was associated to joy, this color combination was associated to a party or an icecream which the participants feel joy from. This webpage suits entertainment companies because this color combination doesn't feel so serious.

The majority of the subjects found the webpages 1-3, with similar colours, harmonic and the webpages 4-5, with contrasting colors, chaotic.

Webpage 1

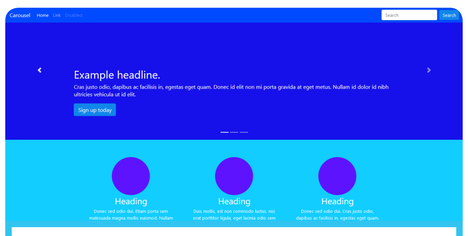


Top emotion (qty)
Trust (7)
Joy (6)
Surprise (3)

Top company (qty)
Education (5)
Entertainment (5)
Food industry (4)

Mostly perceived as Harmonic (10)

Webpage 2

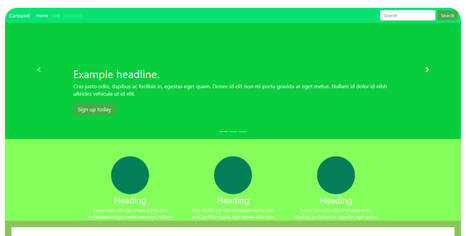


Top emotion (qty)
Trust (10)
Disgust (3)
Anticipation (3)

Top company (qty)
Financial services (10)
Health care (6)
Entertainment (3)

Mostly perceived as Harmonic (8)

Webpage 3



Top emotion (qty)
Joy (7)
Surprise (6)
Disgust (5)

Top company (qty)
Food industry (6)
Education (5)
Health care (3)

Mostly perceived as Harmonic (8)

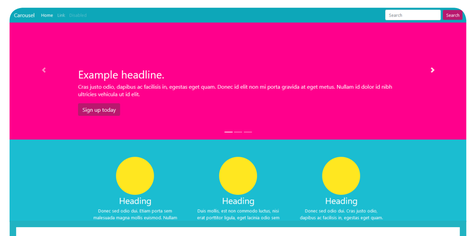
Webpage 4

Top emotion (qty)
Disgust (8)
Anger (5)
Joy (5)

Top company (qty)
Education (5)
Entertainment (4)
Construction/ Retail (2)

Mostly perceived as Chaotic (14)

Webpage 5



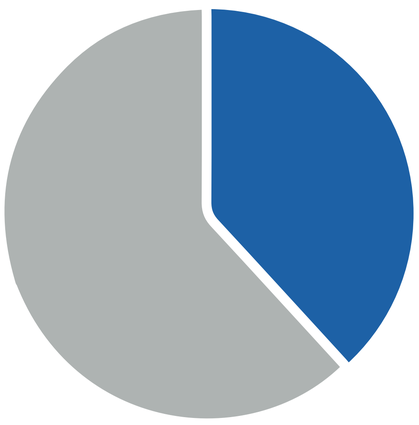
Top emotion (qty)
Joy (8)
Surprise (6)
Trust (5)

Top company (qty)
Entertainment (10)
Education (6)
Financial services/Health care (2)

Mostly perceived as Chaotic (8)

Webpages 1-3

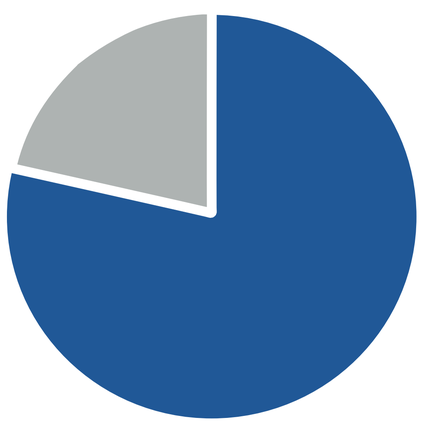
Same color with different hues



Harmonic 61.9 %
Chaotic 38.1 %

Webpages 4-5

Contrasting colors



Harmonic 21.4%
Chaotic 78.6 %

Conclusions

This study has shown that color schemes with different hues of the same color are overall perceived as harmonic, while color schemes with different contrasting colors are overall perceived as chaotic. This study also shows that colors and color combination give a consistent emotion to people. The associated type of company with the color combination is connected to people's previous experience.

References

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