

IDEAS

Colour psychology in retail spaces

I don't want to take the mickey. I know colour is a trendy subject which can offer high value to retailers...

After all, colour in a retail space is imperative and crucial to its design, plus the overall success of the look and feel of that store.

However, it's a wild generalisation to say one colour means the same thing for everyone who walks into that store. Basically, if people are saying blue is calming and red means energy, you're making a wild assumption that we all have had exactly the same colour experiences in our lives.

Take a moment to consider what weddings mean to you. To me,

weddings are all about white, purity and transparency. However to you, weddings could mean bright, popping and saturated colours. See what I'm getting at here?

We love colour at Spaceworks and definitely don't think you should be stripping it out. What's important is the balance of colour and whether it should dominate or complement what you're selling. If you're wanting your product to be the hero, don't splash all your walls with a bright saturated red and always consider your brand colours and how this can be

weaved throughout to engage your shopper subliminally.

For retailers, shopping is the art of persuasion and there are many factors that influence how and what consumers buy and a great deal is decided by visual cues, one of which is colour.

Highlight rather than overpower your product. Be careful not to drown out what you're selling by immersing it in too much colour. Ideally you want the merchandise to pop and not the surroundings.

If you have a plethora of products in assorted packaging,

make sure the colours you choose doesn't make the store too overwhelming and confusing for the customer. Take for instance one of our favourite stores - Isabel Harris whereby, a muted colour was used throughout, making the array of product the star of the show.

Tell a story with color. Rather than simply select colours you like, it can be more effective to start with a theme and choose colors that represent that concept. For example, you could capture the essence of British street style with graffiti art, old-style phone box red and concrete grey, which were all used in the Clash Boutique in Newmarket. Or if you're wanting to invoke the beach, choose colours reminiscent of sand, water and sunshine. By doing this you can transport customers to an environment they associate your product with and subsequently making them far more engaged.

Colour build brand recognition. Colours can increase brand recognition, it's a proven fact so finding a way to work your logo colours into your retail design will help customers associate and connect with your store and brand. Think beyond just the paint on your walls, this can be weaved in surreptitiously to the design of your space.

Colour is not the enemy here but I am a big fan of using it in the best way for your product, brand and retail space - not about a specific colour coercing the customer into making a purchase. **R**

Lizzi Hines

New Zealand entrepreneur and the founder of design company Spaceworks.



ILLUSTRATION KERRYN SMITH

