

9a First impressions last

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- 1 Think of two or three companies/products that you associate with each of the colours below. Then read the text and decide if the colour is appropriate for these companies/products. Say why/why not.

First impressions last. And in terms of corporate identity nothing creates a more powerful first impression than colour. But what do the different colours say to us? Read on and find out.

Red

Red means power and energy and suggests a bold, competitive, go-getting attitude. Red excites us. It is particularly prevalent on anything designed to appeal to men. In the Far East, the colour also symbolises good luck and is consequently used by many Asian companies such as Canon, Sharp and HSBC. It is no surprise that arguably the world's most recognisable logo, Coca-Cola, predominantly features red.

Blue

Blue is the world's favourite corporate colour and evokes coolness, calmness and authority. It also denotes intellect, trustworthiness and dependability, which is why it is a favourite with sectors such as banking and insurance. Over 60% of all company logos are blue. Well-known corporate blues include IBM, General Motors, Ford, Pepsi, Wal-Mart and Microsoft.

Purple

Purple has been the colour of leadership and luxury since the Roman Empire, when only the imperial family were allowed to wear it. Although Yahoo! and the telecommunications company NTL pair it with yellow and green, purple is rarely used on its own as a corporate colour. The big exception to this is the confectionery giant Cadbury, who originally chose purple in the late 19th century because it was said to be Queen Victoria's favourite colour.

Yellow

Yellow is a youthful and fun colour. For this reason, it is perhaps the perfect colour for the photographic company Kodak. Many countries' business telephone directories are yellow and the colour is also popular with construction companies.

Green

Green is the colour of money, nature and, in many cultures, jealousy. While its money connotations are exploited by companies such as Britain's biggest bank Lloyds TSB, the colour is also used by petroleum giant BP, for whom it represents an environmental stance. Green now generally stands for something quite specific and often very political.

Orange

Being bold, bright and lively, orange catches the eye. It's young, fresh, energetic and dynamic. The phone company previously known as Microtel was so dedicated to the colour that it simply renamed itself after it. Other notable oranges include budget airline easyJet and the drugs giant GlaxoSmithKline. Pentium and Reuters have both incorporated orange into their existing blue colour scheme.

Brown

Brown suggests solidity, neutrality and straightforwardness. Perhaps the most recognisable corporate brown is that of the United States delivery company UPS. However, the company actually started using the colour in 1917 for the simple common sense reason that brown vehicles didn't show the dirt picked up from dusty roads.

- 2 Choose some of the following businesses and discuss what corporate colour(s) would be most appropriate for them. You could also discuss other businesses.

- investment fund
- electronic goods
- fast food restaurant
- upmarket restaurant
- car hire
- courier service
- health food products
- estate agent
- fitness club
- music shop
- waste disposal
- clothing for teenagers
- energy supplier
- DIY company
- supermarket
- beauty salon
- toyshop
- airline
- advertising agency
- language school