

Wondering what color the background of our next roto should be? The Wagner Institute for Color Research in Santa Barbara, CA, recently wrote a book on how people respond to different tones. Here is what they say about the use of color:

- **Red** is an emotionally charged color that gets the adrenaline pumping. It's the first color that infants respond to. Women respond to blue-based red while men prefer yellow-based red. Beware of using it as it takes the human eye longer to process red than any other color.

- **Blue** is often an American favorite, used in the right measure. The reason: blue has a calming effect that causes the brain to secrete about 11 tranquilizing hormones. On the other hand, blue encourages fantasy, making it great for promotions that relate to travel and entertainment.

- **Green** makes people feel comfortable in unfamiliar surroundings, making it useful if you want to acquaint people with a new product or service. Institutional green, however, should be avoided since many of us have learned prejudice against that shade.

- **Yellow** is "read" by the eye faster than any other color, which makes it the number one choice to draw attention to product display. But beware: yellow is processed on the same side of the brain that makes people angry and irritated. Children tend to cry more often when placed in yellow rooms.

- **Orange** is a "declassifier" because it helps people adapt to a variety of other colors. For example, orange and blue are a good combination to sell laundry detergent because the two tones give the impression of greater strength.

- **Gray** gives a stamp of exclusivity to products and services. It's also the color "around which creative people are most creative."

- **White** indicates sophistication, refinement and delicacy--exactly the attributes you're looking for to attract an upscale crowd.

- **Black** is the ultimate power color in terms of wearing apparel, but it has obvious limitations in making marketing material appealing to the eye.

SOURCE: October 1989 issue of *Promotion Marketing*



TAKE A CUE FROM 'K' MART

For some reason, "K" is the first letter of a greater portion of brand names than the number of words it begins in the dictionary, according to Bruce Vanden Bergh, chairman of the advertising department of Michigan State University. In "The Rekurring Kase of the Special K," an article to appear in the *Journal of Advertising Research*, Vanden Bergh offers several reasons why:

- **Positive sound symbolism.** People like the way "K" sounds, according to psychological research.

- **Versatility.** Not only does "K" find its way into parts of many words, it even works well alongside a variety of different letters--even such pesky consonants as "L" and "R."

- **Uniqueness.** The fact that "K" appears infrequently as a first letter in many English words makes it more attractive as the first letter in a brand name.

- **Memorability.** Words that begin with "K" tend to be easier to remember, according to a study Vanden Bergh conducted about five years ago.

But Vanden Bergh ends his treatise with a plea: "Please do not run out and change all of your brand names so that they begin with the letter 'K,'" he writes. He would hate to see "K" become the victim of overuse.

SOURCE: Detroit Free Press article by Rick Ratliff

TRENDWATCH

FOCUS: HOME FASHIONS

K mart engaged Yale Forman Designs, Inc., a marketing/advertising company, to investigate the color/trend forecast for home fashions in the '90's. They uncovered some interesting data on the hottest market trends for home fashions; and also determined what sort of consumer our advertising and marketing approaches should appeal to for domestic products.

K mart must create its own target customer for home fashions in the '90's. After looking at fashion and demographic trends and at the actions of our competition, we have determined that our target should be a customer whom we shall call the "New Traditionalist."

Demographic profiles of this customer tell us that she represents a significant portion of all baby boomers--specifically those with incomes between \$15,000 and \$30,000. They are technically middle class, yet afraid of downward mobility. They are often unable and usually quite disinclined to pay high prices for fashion products. They are completely aware that good taste and quality do not have to be equated with excessive cost. They are traditional in their fashion sense, particularly in the home, but looking to express it in a manner reflective of today's vernacular.

The home fashions focus can be broken down into 3 categories: Conservative, New Traditional, Contemporary.