

Week 4 Discussion: Share what branding colors you adore or detest.

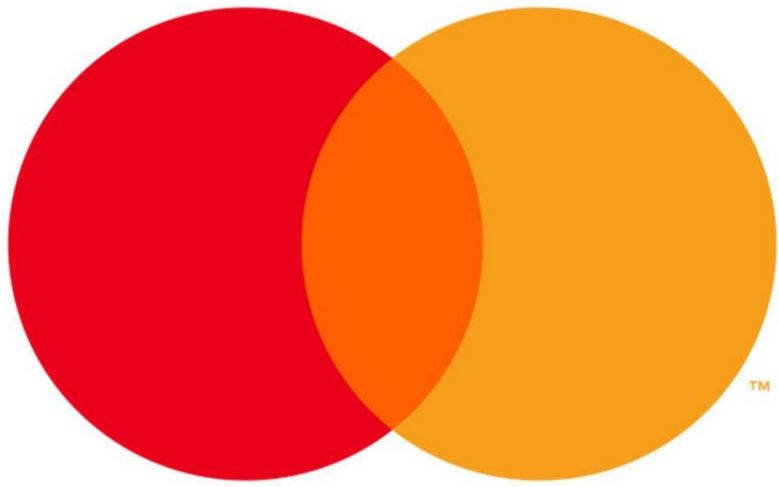
As the article [The Psychology of Color in Marketing and Branding](#), discussed, have you ever reacted very strongly, in the first 19 seconds, to a branding color?

Post your analysis of this week's reading, lesson activity, film or otherwise. Sharing your impressions for the class.

Please add an image or link to the brand you are discussing. Please reply to one other student's post as well.

I often think first about using complementary color combinations when trying to create contrast. But you can create a strong statement through value, vibrancy, temperature, texture, and shape as well. This point was really made clear to me in the video "What is Contrast?" with the dessert photo. Seeing the various treatments done to the image added dimension, made it more visually appealing and controlled the viewers' attention. But you must use these sparingly and create a hierarchy of contrast so things don't look overwhelming or confusing. Using too many treatments could blur the message and make it fall flat.

After reading "Re/Branding Missteps and Iconic Logos" I decided to do some research into additional logos not found in the presentation. I found that I gravitated towards logos that also had an image or icon in them and were more than just text. For example, logos like MasterCard and Target that can stand alone without any text, but still need their branded colors, and you know immediately what company it is (see below). I like clever logos like Amazon with the subtle smile, or Unilever, whose "U" is filled with icons that are the foundation of the company. Due to its attention-grabbing nature, I saw a lot of red. To warm up the red, a lot of companies also include yellow to make it less glaring and more inviting. All in all, I noticed a lot of primary colors included in many consumer packaged goods' logos. These saturated, bold colors are meant to pop off the shelf and make you notice them. The third image below is a collage of popular logos (some are not the most up-to-date logo) showing the common usage of primary colors.





I find it interesting that you first think of using complementary colors to create contrast. I have always thought first of values (dark vs light). Maybe this is because most of my photos are black and white so I focus on editing shadows and highlights.

I'm with you! I also love it when a brand becomes so synonymous with its logo + color that the name doesn't even have to be in it



How is an underground streetwear brand worth 1 billion dollars? Well, look at their logo. This little red box can make a white t-shirt worth hundreds of dollars plus many hours of wait. It is internationally popular in skating, hip hop, and rock circles across the world. And now it has huge popularity in fashion and social media as well. The Supreme logo features the name of the company in bold, futura, oblique font surrounded by a bright red box. It's a simple design, yet the aggressive combination of the font and color scheme is one that broadcasts a message of rebellion and anti-authority that resonates with Supreme's customers. Even I don't know anything about skateboard, I can feel the energy and coolness of this brand, not too weirdly I have an urge to own something that has its logo on it.

Brand is not meant to send too much information to customers. When everyone is talking about minimalism today, it has been the strategy behind branding for decades. The main reason like the lecture of this week said, you have very little time to leave an impression to people. Color plays a major role in a logo. Color helps to catch eyes to the important part. Using contrast colors is the key. But after we learned all these technics behind design, we really have to think as a customer or just a viewer as well. What's simple might work the best.

Hi Jie,

I entirely agree! Supreme is the perfect example of good branding, and creating value (a lot of it: 1 billion?!) just through the use of color. Very well said!

Yes! This color captures the personality of the brand very well. The red is so vibrant and so aggressive and immediately iconic. Great example

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Branding colors that I adore are the saffron and blue combination of the Louis Vuitton packaging. I find the complementary colors very elegant and I think they add great value to the brand. People want to walk around with the saffron bag and blue handles because it is highly recognizable and displays a high value purchase. The packaging becomes almost as important as the item being purchased. It is memorable and unique. The brand used to have brown and beige packaging which in my opinion, gave it an older feel. The new combination is very luxurious but in a modern, exciting and energizing way.

The highlight for me, from this week's reading, lesson and films were the facts that:

-in order to have a good image, values need to be different and two touching colors cannot have the same value, unless separated by black lines

-logos do not need to explain anything: they just need to be distinctive, memorable, and clear

-when working on a project: 1. define the main goal; 2. choose a color that fits accordingly; 3. use the color wheel to make a palette; 4. edit and scale down

Hi Yvann,

The saffron and blue is such a beautiful combination! Really does work well for the idea of luxury.

Branding and color is a topic that I find very interesting because of the strong effect it has one's initial reaction and associations.

I would say that when it comes to colors, I clearly have preferences – warm, soothing, calm. However, in branding, the brighter, high energy colors that I usually shy away from, do not bother me as they would had I walked into a room designed in that scheme.

Color in a brand logo is a visual message, not a color necessarily picked by popularity. Without knowing much about what a company is offering, the choice of color is telling the viewer loud and clear the type of experience the brand provides.

The most obvious examples of this are in fast food brands like McDonalds, Burger King, Wendys, Arbys etc. They almost all employ the use of red, yellow or orange to underline the fastness of their food experience.



Another example are toy brands. Children are more drawn to primary colors, and the major toy brands use lots of reds and blues.



The association a brand creates with color is a strong one. An aspect that is as important as the logo itself. This can make the process of re-branding very tricky. Altering the color of brand, can be like changing a company name. I went through this exercise once with a company I worked for and it was traumatic! The logo was changed from black to a dark brown – so nothing drastic or on the opposite side of the color wheel, but enough to shock the board of directors to pull the company's advertising until everyone felt more comfortable. In the end brown won – but reconditioning people with a brand's association takes time and care.

A color combination that I love in branding is black and gold (sometimes with the addition of white as well). It always look so sleek and luxurious. Both the

Guinness and Johnnie Walker logos stood out to me instantly because of this. Red is also such a bold color that is quite eye-catching and is really memorable. One of my favorite red logos is the Target bullseye, because of its simplicity and the vibrancy of the color. I also love how it works well in so many contexts (on the shopping bags, tv ads, print ads etc.)





GUINNESS®



TARGET

Begin's chapter this week really opened up a whole world of ideas about contrast. Before, I mostly considered it in terms of black and white but she really showed a wide variety of ways that contrast can be altered with color. I also found Krause's use of visual texture to be quite interesting, and a technique that I would love to try using at some point myself.

Hi Kayla - I also love this color combination of black and gold/white. This is always a color of branding that stands out to me, but only when the background is totally black and then gold/white really stands out.

This week's focus on logos opened my eyes to the variety of logo designs and the color choices that go with them. I noticed that red is one of the most popular colors in mainstream branding. Other popular colors are blue, yellow, and orange. The use of subliminal messaging in logos (such as Amazon's arrow which creates a smile and Fedex's use of negative space to create an arrow between e and x) is an intriguing concept that I would love to explore more. I think the colors in a logo help convey the feel and nature of a brand.

I found Begin's video titled "What is contrast?" insightful. She defined contrast as "the state of being different from something else, typically something in juxtaposition or close association." Before watching her video, I thought contrast applied only to the difference between dark and light. But contrast goes much farther than that. Contrast can refer to the difference in value, vibrancy, temperature, texture, and shape. After learning this, I started editing my photos differently. I began playing with vibrancy and texture in addition to my usual manipulation of shadows, highlights, etc.

My favorite branding colors are black and white. Most brands I purchase from use the brand's name (usually in black) with a clean white background as a logo. I also enjoy the use of neutrals, such as browns and various shades of beige. The use of neutrals adds depth and helps the brand stand out from the crowd of black and white branding. Furthermore, I think these colors add sophistication and elegance. Primary examples are Aesop and Le Labo (both are luxury perfume and skincare brands). Both companies use shades of beige, brown, and grey in addition to black and white.

One of my favorite color combinations in branding is Burberry's iconic check. Black, red, and white complement a background of beige.

I also love black/white, or shades of neutral in a brand. They feel more classic and sophisticated to me. That said, I'm a sucker for a pop of color, like with the Burberry plaid. All this talk is making me want to shop!

This makes an awesome point that iconic brand colors don't necessarily have to be vibrant and bright. Neutrals can make sophisticated and memorable brand identities -- they are not boring at all!

I'm also drawn to the simplicity of black and white branding colors. I've never bought anything from Aesop but the cleanness/simplicity of the packaging has always caught my eye.

I also agree that Burberry has done a fantastic job at branding their product! The neutral tones and pattern alerts the eye that it's a Burberry item and makes the consumer want to buy their product. It is both clean and sophisticated also showing that it is a luxury item.

The strongest reaction I've had to branding coloring has been to Coca-Cola. Most likely in part due to the fact that growing up in Spain, Coca-Cola would release great ads around the Christmas time – giving you a warm fuzzy feeling which you would later associate to the Coca-Cola bottle/can when seeing it at the supermarket. Even taking the picture below – the name of Coca-Cola is only noticeable (and barely) on the coke bottle, but without even seeing that I immediately know the company advertising is Coca-Cola, and at least for me, it does give me a Christmasy warm feeling.



It was very interesting for me to see in "the psychology of color in marketing and branding" article how a big percentage of brands use red as their color, but of course not all the same type of red! I was also surprised to read that the most color used in branding is blue – which when researching brands using blue they only stood out to me when the blue was combined with a different color. I usually like more pastel colors within my environment but in researching brands, I've noticed that this is the opposite in branding – I tend to focus more/like more vivid colors or high contrast in colors making the brand "pop".

This week's readings and films have been really interesting, from Jim Krause describing how to alter photos within photoshop (which I would like to learn myself how to apply such changes to my photos) to Begin's use of contrast. I found it quite interesting and informative how she showed in photoshop the different properties being applied/removed from a single image – usually, when I see an image which has a high degree of contrast and saturation I tend to dislike it, but after watching Begin's video I more fully understand the actual uses these two have on images and design.

Reading "re/branding missteps and iconic logos" was also very interesting! Reading about all the different brands who changed their branding – especially those company's which had a great branding (logo, coloring, typography) and still tried to change it. What's so interesting is how social media and the ability of consumers/non-consumers to directly comment (and even impact) on branding decisions really affects these companies branding strategies – which is both good (when they've totally botched it – like the GAP rebranding) and bad (like the Instagram logo – which I was also someone who disliked when they initially changed it, but due to the IOS changes I think it works perfectly now!).



I particularly liked the Yo Santosa, branding expert video and how they came up for the branding of pinkberry. I think the color combination and design used in their branding perfectly captures the company. I specially loved what she said about brand's having a personality (usually also reflecting the personality/characteristics of the Company) and how it tells a story!



I also disliked the new Instagram logo. I think the new design fits well with IOS but something about the colors bothers me. Perhaps if different colors were used or more colors were included.

The branding mis-steps discussion was really interesting to me. As someone who works in strategic communications, often associated with change, I know all too well that change is hard. I wonder if some of those re-branding efforts would have taken better with time, like with Instagram. In particular, the American Airlines re-brand actually resonated with me. I would find comfort in a sleeker, more modern brand for an industry that is perceived as behind the times.

Not surprisingly, my least favorite branding colors are also my least favorite interior design colors. The reds, oranges, and yellows may stand alone, but when they are used in combination, it feels dated to me. No matter how iconic the Mastercard brand is, it will always feel like the 1980s to me, as is. :) Some may relate to that, but I prefer a cooler palette.

I loooooove the CertaPro Painters infographic. While my home only aligns with two of those paint choices, I found it to be a very easy-to-understand way to show color significance. I hadn't thought about it, but maybe we chose a deeeeeeeep, almost purple shade of blue for the powder room to pay homage to the throne. ;)

As a person resistant to change, I agree that some designs probably would have become more acceptable and appreciated over time. I have often noticed for myself that when new trends come out in fashion, for instance, at first sight I react negatively but the new trend often grows on me over the next year or so (but not always).



One of my favorite brand and color combination is the blue and yellow of IKEA. When Krause discussed what makes a good choice for brand color, we talked about three areas 1) connects well with audience 2) doesn't look like competitors and 3) expresses what your client makes or does. I remember that even as a kid, IKEA's logo and colors were ones that were easy for me to recognize. Analyzing it now, it definitely hits all three.

Ikea's blue and yellow, as primary colors, feel fundamental and simple. This feels accessible to the audience and is in line with IKEA making furniture accessible and simple to the general public. It is also different than other furniture branding colors. While many of them aim to look sophisticated and expensive, IKEA's colors stand out because they counter that. Lastly, IKEA as a Swedish furniture company paid homage to its roots with the blue and yellow of the Swedish flag. That's clever and brilliant!

The logo and colors have become synonymous to its brand. Because of its easy recognizability and trademark look, the logo and colors have started its own fashion movement too. I found that remarkable!



Lastly, in terms of the readings this week, I was intrigued by the stories of rebranding efforts that initially were rejected and mocked by the general public, but ultimately ended up being integrated and accepted and even pushed the strategic direction of the company (instagram, airbnb, usa today). This led me to reflect how colors are not only a powerful tool for reflecting a company's brand and vision, it can also be a powerful strategic tool for shaping the direction the brand wants to go in.

Using the Swedish flag colors has also always struck me as so smart. Not only is it a nice homage, but it also subtly communicates Nordic-ness - possibly including Nordic design sensibilities (light wood, clean lines, etc) and an overall sense of thoughtful design that many Nordic countries are known for.

I find myself hopelessly falling for it when luxury brands use gold, black and white in their branding - it's such a foolproof way of communicating "This is expensive and if you like expensive things you'll like it!" I definitely associate these brands with quality, luxury, wealth, aspiration. As millennials and Gen Z get older and become more of a share of the consumer goods market—generations that self-report that they tend to care less about those things—I wonder if luxury brands will change course to other colors in their logos and other identities on a broader scale.



The idea behind color choices in marketing and branding is something that I have always found very interesting. It makes sense as to why McDonalds, Burger King, Wendy's, etc. all use the same color combinations - because the color red is said to trigger appetite. McDonalds has even taken that a step further by now having the general public have their appetite provoked when they see the "golden arches". They have truly succeeded as a global brand just by being aware of what colors can do for ones initial reaction of a brand.

Another brand that I think does this particularly well is Tiffany and Co. The light blue tones give a sense of openness and calmness. A girl knows that when she sees the small blue box with the white bow, she is opening one of the best gifts she'll ever receive.. because that is how well they have marketed their brand. As someone who doesn't enjoy wearing a lot of jewelry, I even sometimes find myself waiting to receive the little blue box, through their marketing and choices of color they have made their product seem like an item and experience you cannot get anywhere else. They have branded

themselves so well that they have shown people, if they want to do something special for their significant other - they go to Tiffany and Co. and get that iconic tiffany blue box.



That Tiffany blue is truly so iconic. It's made appearances all across pop culture throughout the ages and just by the color alone you already get the idea of a special and exclusive gift.

The ultimate goal of branding is to make a color named after her. Tiffany did it!

I thought all of the material this week was very interesting. I especially liked the reading 'Rebranding Missteps + Iconic Logos'. It was interesting to read about brands that have gone back to their original logo, like Gap. However, in the case of Instagram, I strongly disliked the rebranding at first but now, even though the color combination is not my favorite, it has definitely grown on me.

I had trouble thinking of branding colors that I had a strong, immediate reaction to. Generally, I think I react more positively to simple color schemes for branding, either because they are in black/white, or neutrals with black or

white. For example the packaging for these hair care products were something I was drawn to.

However, I realized I am also partial to pairs of bright branding colors. For instance, the brightly colored branding for these electrolyte tabs caught my eye in the store, even though I generally like black/white/neutral branding colors, I didn't find these branding colors to be overwhelming. Although I do prefer some of these over others (the green one, the warm purple, and the light blue).

Another example of a logo I have always liked is the Fed Ex logo (which was mentioned in the reading), the hidden arrow is very clever, and I probably would never have chosen those two colors for a logo myself, I find I like the combination in the Fed Ex logo.

After going through this and last week's materials, we now know that the color choice for a company's logo is equally important to the logo's overall design.

Without going too far off track, I do like the creativity that goes along with a subliminal or hidden message that some logos use. (Here's one for you, zoom in on the Wendy's logo. The collar spells MOM in cursive writing.) But in addition, the Wendy's color palette utilizes red, white and blue. While the red, white and blue have individual psychology associated with their individual colors, collectively the red, white and blue also represent wholesomeness and imbue Americana vibes. Score for the double win - collective color meaning and individual color meaning.

Until I started researching logos for the assignment, it hadn't occurred to me that a story could be told by both individual and collective color meaning.



Another logo that I responded somewhat positively to was the logo for MiracleVet. When I say somewhat positively, I wasn't drawn to the color palette. Without knowing what this organization supports, the blue, based on what we've read, indicates calmness, trust and dependability. All the qualities we would like in a vet. However, this isn't a veterinarian service. It's dog food, albeit vet-approved and endorsed specialty dog food.

I would have wanted to see more colors that enliven the logo and give it a bit of vitality and health. But that's my opinion. In addition, I do appreciate how the hands cup the dog's face. This gesture represents a bit of love to me.

That being said, blue for a dog food brand? In this scope, it doesn't resonate with me. We want our furry friends around a long time. Blue reminds me of being frozen, and a step further being sick or ill.

From an all over design, I really like it. I'm curious about what you think.



Everywhere we go (except maybe the park) we are being shouted at by millions upon millions of brands. And if you live in an urban environment we've got it all for the taking/buying so long as you got the cash. Brands are shouting at us louder than ever, in the markets, taxis, posters and even stencils sprayed on the concrete. Bus kiosks that can display about 3 ad's to you by the time you've passed it. Then we double that by being on the internet and we've got ourselves a branding competition of epic proportion.

Personally speaking, rare is the day that I leave the house and I don't make some kind of purchase wether I'm looking for something or not. I am lured like a hungry fish to the plethora of eye catching items in well done packaging/color schemes, how it's marketed or simply spot the item itself and the feeling it provokes in me. But I am also a woman who knows what she wants and likes, so I can be turned off by color and branding/fonts ect quite easily.

Here's a fine example...I need dish soap. Filling it with water isn't working anymore...just water comes out now. So, I'm at the market, or a Duane Reade,

not a Whole Foods where the choice of organic cleaning supplies are multitudinous. So, I need dish soap. I automatically go for the bottle of Meyer's dish soap, hand soap or if needed another of their products. They stand out in the cleaning aisle by being more relaxed, subdued and evoke the feeling of trust. Trust that I won't be breathing harsh chemicals, won't be poisoning people or the earth. I'll have an aroma therapy experience to boot! They tell me they are natural compared to other cleaning products. Have I ever looked at the ingredients? Not that I recall.

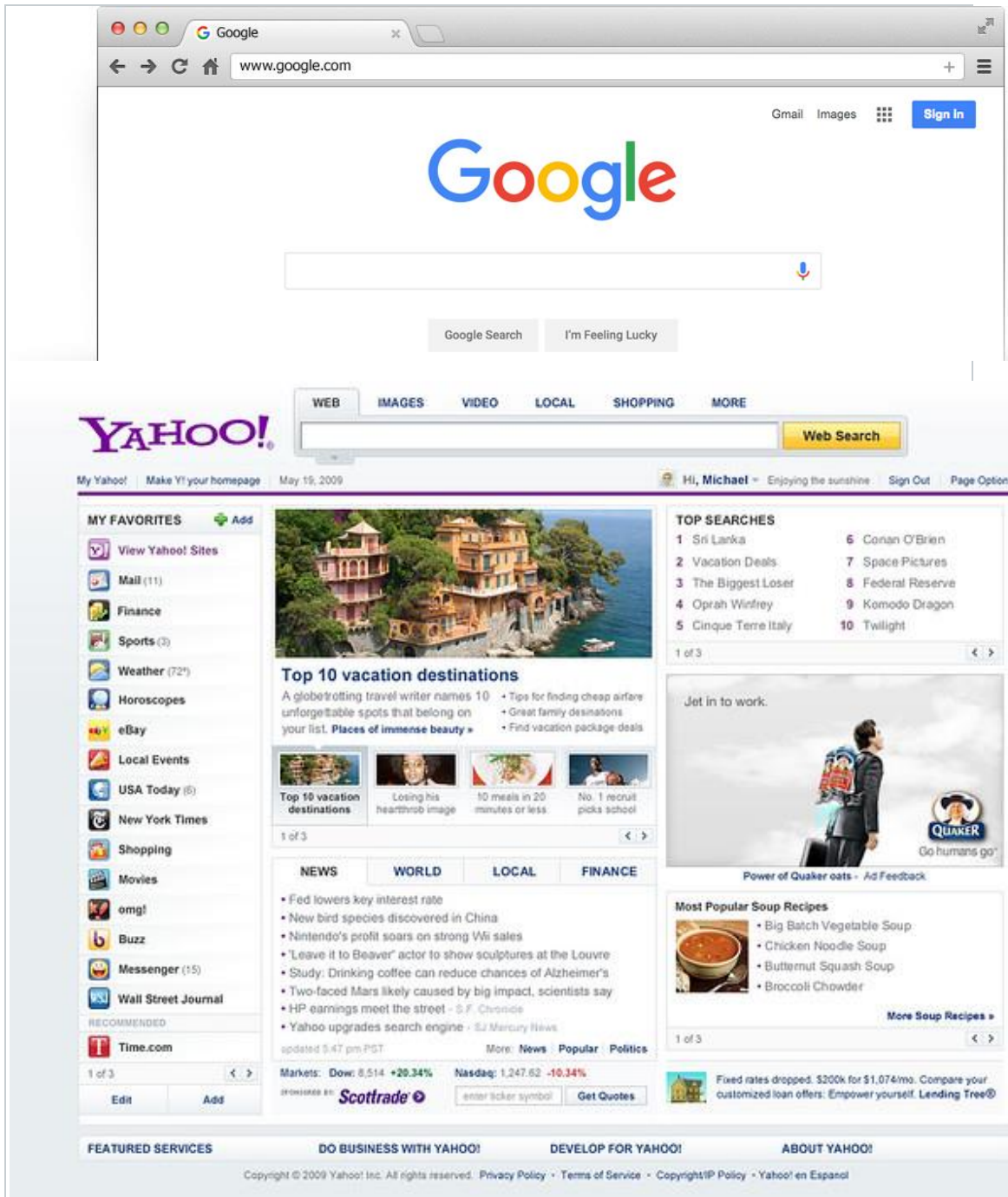
Their label colors are soothing amongst the loud brands like Tide, Palmolive and OxyClean. Yes, it's urgent that I get my house clean...but Meyer's brand tells me "Relax we'll get this done. And we'll be better for the environment while doing it." Also their choice of font says to me, "People have been cleaning for years and even though we're relatively new, we don't need to yell and stress you out about cleaning. Mom' we're the every person's trusted General Store soap." So this brand and I just had a conversation. Hook line and sinker. And amongst their colors/scents I have a few favorites, but sometimes I'm feeling light aqua basil scented and others I'm in a chill soothing light purple lavender scented mood. Could you imagine a Tide or Windex scented candle?? Meyer's knows they're that good they can also make candles of their cleaning products scents. That's pretty impressive.





I have a list of a dozen each of love/hate color in branding images and thoughts...This wasn't even on it but as I sat down, possibly glanced at my sink, it popped into my mind as a pretty interesting comparison and color example in branding.

Wow, this was a great articulation of how I feel about Mrs. Meyer's too! My whole family knows that I've tried other scents but I'm now a staunch supporter of all Mrs. Meyer's lemon verbena products :) I think at some point I looked at the ingredients but your comments and this week's readings really do make me question why I so easily put my trust in a company to deliver on the 'promise' of their image. I guess they bank on the laziness of the consumer not to research the actual company, its processes, its treatment of the environment, its employees etc.



I remember reacting strongly the first time I used Google's home page. As it loaded, I felt confused by the amount of white space and the lack of visual clutter and it took me a minute to realize that it had downloaded completely. I remember feeling the striking contrast between Yahoo's home page (the search engine I had been using at the time) and this one. Yahoo's was very

busy and crowded whereas Google's seemed empty to me. At first, it was a little odd but at the same time, I knew they were making a big statement and separating themselves from their competitors with the use of so much white space.

The readings and videos this week were eye-opening to me as to how effective certain branding has been on attracting me as a customer. I didn't realize how manipulated I've been into choosing products. I think it's interesting how quickly branding operates on a level that you're not aware of, speaking to a part of your personality or an image of yourself you may already identify with or aspire to. For instance, I love classic, traditional design, things made with the hands and with human artistry. I realize now that certain brands like coke and cadbury appeal to me for these reasons. The classic, vintage, old-timey design, the color palettes, and the cursive font give me that sense that a person has handcrafted the products. Logically, I know they are mass produced but I equate that style with handcrafted, higher quality goods and I would frequently select them over other alternatives. I realize now that I associate more modern feeling design with mass production, lack of time and quality going into the product and therefore an inferior product.

BP overhauling their image, changing their logo from the imperial looking shield to the bright flower with inobtrusive lowercase initials is another example of rebranding that I was taken in by. I have to say I never was aware of BP before a few years ago when I remember noticing their bright floral geometric logo at a gas station. I probably couldn't have articulated the way I felt at the time but after reading about their redesign, I agree that it feels forward thinking and environmentally friendly by the use of bright colors and how it evokes nature. It has a light, bright and, most importantly, clean feel that contradicts the actual history of the company that involved oil spills and damage to the environment. These articles have helped me to appreciate the power of branding.