

Robyn Blakeman, **Advertising Design by Medium: A Visual and Verbal Approach**, New York, NY: Routledge, 2022, 256 pp, \$67.35 (eBook).

Reviewed by
Meimei Xiang
Chengdu University of Technology

and

Renhua Zheng
Chengdu University of Technology

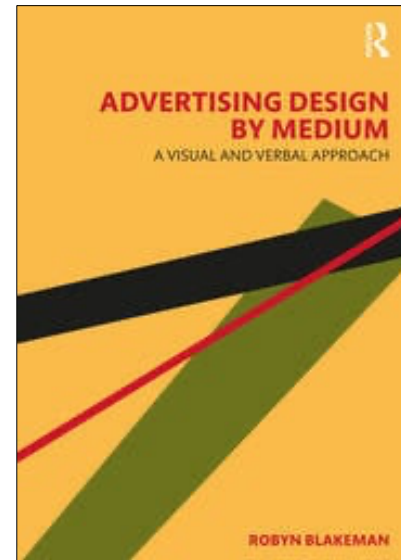
Advertising design as a medium has come of age. Billboards, newspapers, and magazines are not enough. The digital revolution has exposed advertising's capacity to reach target audiences faster and more cost effectively through new media channels. Recent advertising design textbooks focus on one medium or another, rather than giving an integrated strategy. **Advertising Design by Medium: A Visual and Verbal Approach**, by Robyn Blakeman, integrates all of the verbal and visual advertising designs.

In the author's view, there should be a balance between the verbal and visual elements of the message, since each reinforces the other. Throughout 19 chapters, the author covers it all: from advertising design by medium, principles, and techniques, to branding, logo design, and packaging design. She analyzes how the visual and linguistic parts of design work together to achieve a business purpose. The book goes step by step through marketing ideas, graphic design, integrated marketing communications, strategic marketing, and other aspects of the advertising business.

In chapter 1, titled "Where Does the Creative Process Fit in Advertising? The Business Behind Advertising Creative," the author explains how marketing plans and creative briefs affect creative development and how research affects visual/verbal messages. She finds that creative teams are often bound by budget and marketing constraints when working on their projects. You do not design for yourself; you design for your target audience. Business procedures must be followed before the creative team puts pen to paper, or fingers to keyboard, to ensure they have enough information on different aspects, including: (1) research; (2) the formulation of a marketing plan; and (3) the construction of a creative brief.

Understanding the client's goals is the key to creating an innovative solution. Quantitative and qualitative methods differ based on brand, lifecycle, and audience. Targeting the right audience, defining the brand and competitors, and delivering a unique and reliable product are the keys to boosting sales, profitability, and brand equity. The more you know about your target audience, the more your visual and verbal solutions will fit their wants and lifestyles. Understanding how the brand can meet the urgent needs of the audience helps to create the proper message. In short, customized, consumer-focused messaging is the key to success.

Copyright © 2022 (Meimei Xiang, xiangmei197515@163.com, and Renhua Zheng, zouljun19751115@163.com). Licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution Non-commercial No Derivatives (by-nc-nd). Available at <http://ijoc.org>.



The second chapter explains conceptual development, visual and linguistic solutions, and brand aging. Brainstorming involves developing as many interesting, inventive, and distinctive ideas as possible in a restricted period. Only the consumer benefit is absolute. All creative efforts must focus on consumer value and aesthetics, must speak directly to the target audience visually and vocally, and must use cross-media. Creative problem-solving treatment requires business understanding; it must have a selling point. Research, a marketing plan, a creative brief, and a media plan precede concept generation and implementation. Each brainstorming session begins with dialogue. The design team must ask who the brand is targeting, after understanding the goal. Undefined briefings hinder teamwork by dividing ideas.

Chapter 3 explores the significance of attention-grabbing, message-deliverable ad designs, incorporating principles, elements of ad design, and the rational placement of ads. It also highlights different aspects of color, texture, and contrast patterns in advertising, and how different combinations of these features could evoke emotions among audiences toward different brands.

Chapter 4 discusses advertising images and other visual adverts, showing how literal versus metaphorical imagery can promote a company. Visuals are more memorable, convincing, and credible than words and allow the art director to convey ideas dynamically and emotionally. They must grab attention, represent quality and utility, and fit the audience's lifestyle. Complex visuals might situate the target in relevant or aspired-to circumstances, building a link to the firm. Getting recognized implies uniquely highlighting a brand's benefits. Visual identification might be elegant or comical, ensuring the brand's visual voice (1) reaches the audience; (2) relates brand image to the target lifestyle; (3) reflects the brand's life-cycle stage; (4) highlights the brand's current positioning; (5) reflects the appropriate strategy and tone; (6) is attention-grabbing; (7) is meaningful; (8) stimulates curiosity; (9) demonstrates specific features and benefits; (10) gives any text a visual context; (11) reflects the headline; and (12) creates a powerful and memorable brand identity.

Chapter 5 focuses on different types of print and online advertisements. It emphasizes brands' psychological use of typefaces, which includes logos, advertising, and packages. Appealing typography is important for branding. It is another nonverbal message about the brand. It ties together all of a brand's communications, from a website to a logo, making the brand consistent and memorable. Like a color, headline, layout style, or spokesperson, a typeface will represent the brand for years or decades. Chapter 6, aimed at developing a strong understanding of color theory terms and how color tells a brand's visual and verbal story locally and globally, provides a better understanding of the theory and psychology behind the use of ad color.

In chapter 7, titled "The Stages of Advertising Design," the author emphasizes that visual and verbal elements should be storytellers. Maintaining ad flow requires a visual and verbal freeway. A creative team must identify the visual or verbal elements to captivate the target audience. Images have foregrounds and backgrounds, and using different types can help position the brand environment and connect the images to linguistic and emotional elements. Credible visuals and linguistics represent images, sensations, or uses. Logos and brand coloring have natural eye flow and draw attention. As we have seen, color conveys numerous emotions and is another way to attract attention. Chapter 8 examines 15 common layout themes, including huge font, circus, grid, copy image window, multiplane, heavy, frame, rebus, symmetry, asymmetry, repetition, anomaly, and silhouette concentration.

Chapter 10, "Graphic Design, Logo and Package Development" focuses on logo design rules and visual/verbal brand voice. Here, the reader learns about package complexity. Multiple-medium management is an emphasis in marketing design. Design, imagery, color, and text were used to tell a relatable story about a brand. Graphic design includes visual media, highway signs, CD covers, publications, alternative media, posters, greeting cards, direct response pieces, digital devices, etc. Logos establish brand consistency. A symbol signifies a firm, brand, name, image, or service. It determines a brand's image, use, personality, or reputation. A brand must be noticeable—its packaging, logo, and design all need to be great.

Chapter 16 emphasizes concepts including the visual and verbal voices of individual media vehicles. The author argues that there is no one way to convey an idea visually or vocally. Having a diverse creative team is the best thing in the advertising industry. Chapter 18 further explores the role a campaign plays in delivering a comprehensive brand message, explaining how to develop a continuously uniform visual and verbal message across mediums. The author also explores how media choice affects both target choice and design decisions. The final chapter explains the pitch approval procedure and why timelines are important for media and design decisions. Visual communication, advertising design, graphic arts, public relations, marketing communications, and advertising media professionals will find this book helpful in this regard.

This book might serve as a better basic text than *A Dictionary of Marketing* by Charles Doyle (2016). *A Dictionary of Marketing* is a comprehensive resource with over 2,500 entries on traditional marketing tactics (including strategy, positioning, segmentation, and branding) and prominent marketing ideas and concepts. But before reading this text, one must read a text that can enhance brainstorming and inspiration to dig deeper into the topic. Robyn Blakeman's contribution is important, as this text explains the basic concepts of every angle associated with the advertising and marketing industry. However, after developing some understanding of these angles through *Advertising Design by Medium: A Visual and Verbal Approach*, Doyle (2016) would serve as a good companion text, as it explores timeline illustrations, the evolution of marketing as a discipline, and the events that influenced it. Its primary appendix includes case studies on worldwide advertising and brands, which are organized by theme, such as the car industry, food and drink, or luxury products, and focuses on renowned 20th-century companies, marketing campaigns, or slogans.

This book is vital for everyone in the advertising industry because it covers practically every facet of the job. Each chapter reveals something new and crucial about the sector under headings and subheadings, broadening the book's appeal. Despite covering almost all facets of advertising, reading another book will be necessary to fully comprehend the business.

Reference

Doyle, C. (2016). *A dictionary of marketing*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.