

## Article: Simplicity

We are living in an age of ubiquitous media, which brands are taking full advantage of. The result: dozens of TV adverts vying for consumers' attention every night. On one such TV night, only a few brands will succeed in attracting consumers' attention, and one or two adverts will actually get through to consumers. The provisional end result of this race is an uninterested and irritated consumer who prefers not to watch TV adverts at all.

In order to reach and get through to consumers a concept has been devised: simplicity. Simplicity means standing out through unpretentiousness, clarity and focus, both in advertising and with the actual products. A number of brands have already embraced simplicity: brands such as Philips, Apple and Google. Rob Wallace of design firm Wallace Church singles out Google as a fine example of how the simplicity concept can best be brought to life. In technical terms, Google is a highly advanced system, and at the same time it has a very user-friendly setup. A lack of simplicity has, according to Wallace, led to search engines like Alta Vista and Lycos biting Google's dust.

Wallace furthermore claims that in the current jumble of advertising messages consumers increasingly pick out those messages that somehow appeal to them in a certain meaningful and emotional manner. These tend to be visual messages offering consumers a kind of 'freedom of interpretation'.

Wallace wraps up his article with a three-step plan to successful branding:

- Reduce positioning to the most recognizable element: 'The unique reason for being there' (in fewer than 5 words).
- Visualize the positioning by first laying down strategic components: colours, shapes, styles and graphics that should enable a brand experience.
- Resist the temptation to fill all empty spaces (such as on product packaging). The sides can be filled, but the front certainly should not be. If the front is not overly busy it will be more inviting, and automatically direct consumers towards reading the sides, according to Wallace.

### *Reference(s)*

Wallace, R. (2006) Be smart, be simple. Design Management Review, vol.17, no.2, p.19-24. \*

\* : available in the EURIB library.