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COLOR AND ITS UTILIZATION IN E-MARKETING

– The application in Finnish environment from the consumer perspective

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COLOR AND ITS UTILIZATION IN E-MARKETING

In our daily life, there are plenty of things that we have taken for granted in the sense that we do not notice, acknowledge, enjoy them fully or sometimes even complain about. Among those precious gifts existing in our life there are the ability to see things in colors and the color itself.

The objective of this thesis research is to examine whether color is worth to consider during marketing activities, and if it is, then why it is significant and how to utilize it into companies' marketing strategy and operation, especially within the e-commerce sector.

The focus for this thesis research is onto people living in Finland due to the distinctions in gender, culture, climate and educational background would influence greatly on consumer behavior and perceptions on color. Therefore, the outcomes of the research would be able to deliver more meaningful benefits to companies operating in Finland.

Theoretical framework was built around sequential effects of response to marketing, e-marketing and online consumer behavior, insights about color, and several e-marketing tools employing color and visual elements. The research data was collected through an electronic survey that aimed to reveal Finnish inhabitants' perspective on e-marketing elements, more importantly visual and color components as online consumers.

Based on the research results data, it can be assured that the majority of respondents pay attention to and acknowledge the importance of visual marketing elements and color in daily life in general and when shopping online in particular, whether consciously or subconsciously. In order to be effectively utilized in e-marketing, the color must function properly from both technical and psychological aspects. Color choice need to be carefully considered to fit the brand image, convey the right marketing messaging, and address the desired target market, since people react differently to colors.

Further academic research could be conducted via other methods such as observation of consumer behavior to produce more precise results.

KEYWORDS:

Psychology of marketing, color, consumer behavior, e-commerce, e-marketing, attention, perception, sensory systems, vision, color of choice, purchasing decision, infographics, visual, e-marketing tools.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (OR) SYMBOLS

CSS	Cascading Style Sheets, a style sheet language used in computing technology to describe the presentation of websites
TUAS	Turku University of Applied Sciences

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research motivation

> "We often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude."
> ~Cynthia Ozick

In our daily life, there are plenty of things that we have taken for granted in the sense that we do not notice, acknowledge, enjoy them fully or sometimes even complain about. Among those precious gifts existing in our life there are the ability to see things in colors and the color itself. Color is everywhere. Color surrounds us. Can you imagine the world without any color?

These days, in this fast living world, people are being targeted with abundant amount of information about products and services supported by the advance in electronic technology. Every second, our brain is taking in about 11 million bits of information; most of it comes through our eyes together with the contribution of other senses. However, we can only process with our conscious brain at best about 40 bits of information per second. (A. K. 2010, 4.) Thus our attention and capacity of processing information are allocated to what attract us the most. Consequently, there is a challenge for marketers and product developers of how to get into those 40 bits of consciously considered information (A. K. 2010, 4).

The interest in this particular research topic was triggered from the author's internship period at a food service company operating via Internet. During her new product development project, the color of the whole product content and packaging was receiving different opinions from colleagues, some of which believed that whichever color to be chosen would not matter in attracting and influencing customers' buying decisions. This conflict was one of the reasons leading to the failure to launch the new product.

1.2 Research objectives

The objective of this thesis is to examine whether color is worth to consider during marketing activities, and if it is, then why it is significant. This thesis also aims to discover how to utilize color into companies' marketing strategy and operation, especially within the e-business sector.

Research questions:

Q1. What is the significance of colors in e-marketing?

Q2. How do Finnish inhabitants respond to visual and color elements when they shop online?

1.3 Research scope and limitations

With regard to the research objectives, conducting the research to gain information from the consumer perspective would be considered a suitable approach. Since the aim of this research is to help companies provide what their consumers want and like rather than getting lost in companies' assumptions, the author realizes that there is no reason why this research should not be organized to understand the emotions and rational choices of consumers.

The focus for this research will be onto people living in Finland due to the distinctions in culture, climate and educational background would influence greatly on consumer behavior in general and perceptions on color in particular. Therefore, the outcomes of the research will be able to deliver more meaningful benefits to companies operating in Finland.

1.4 Thesis structure

The first chapter introduces the research motivation, research objectives, and the scope and limitations of the thesis. In order to answer the first research question,

literature review is covered in three chapters. The first part of the literature review presents in Chapter two about the psychology of marketing. It discusses in detail sequential effects of response to marketing, focusing on the initial stages: exposure, attention, and perception, together with some explanation about learning and attitude stages. Additionally, within Chapter two, the understandings about motivations and emotions explain the reasons of consumer behavior. Afterwards, the significance of five senses of human in consumer behavior is illustrated with higher attention to the most important sense: sight/ vision. Chapter three presents some definitions about the terms e-commerce and e-marketing, together with their own advantages and disadvantages, and followed by the knowledge about online consumer behavior. The last part of theoretical background is about COLOR and e-marketing discussed in Chapter four, consisting of several definitions on color, the reasons behind our different color preferences, meanings of colors, the roles of color in consumer behavior and several online marketing tools that can employ color and visual elements for better performance.

With the purpose of answering research question two, the researcher collects her empirical data from consumer perspective of people who live in Finland, particularly in Turku region. As for the empirical part, the research methodology and reasons of choosing such particular approach as well as the data collection process are explained in details in Chapter five. The results and findings from the collected data are analyzed in Chapter six in correlating to the discussed theories. Finally, suggestions and recommendations for companies in Finland together with some possibilities for further research conclude the thesis in Chapter seven.

2 PSYCHOLOGY OF MARKETING

2.1 Consumer behavior

Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2006) define consumer behavior as “activities people undertake when obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products and services” (Blackwell ym. 2006, 4). During the long history of marketing, consumer behavior has always been an attractive field for marketers who are market-oriented rather than product-oriented, since it is the study of *why people buy.* With the insights gained about the reasons people buy specific products/ services or brands, marketers can then develop strategies to influence purchasing behavior of consumers.

2.2 Sequential effects of response to marketing

Marketing activities are no longer acting in a one-way road from marketers to audience. It is vital for marketers to truly understand how their audience in general and consumers in particular respond to their marketing effort. Evans, Jamal and Foxall (2006) introduce a model called the *hierarchy (or sequence) of communication effects* which consists of seven stages: *exposure, attention, perception, learning, attitude, action,* and *post-purchase* (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Sequential effects of response to marketing (adopted from Evans ym. 2006, 29)

However, like other economics and business models, it is not necessary that consumers follow this sequence in all purchasing situations; this model rather provides marketers a logical framework to integrate psychological concepts with the purpose of interpreting: why and how people respond to marketing activity. In the scope of this thesis, the author will focus on three initial stages of the

sequence: ***exposure***, ***attention*** and ***perception*** since the main aim of this research is to find ways of attracting customers at the beginning of the purchase decision making process, but the stages of ***learning*** and ***attitude*** will be explored as well for deeper insights.

2.3 Exposure

With the aim of being successful and effective, the most basic requirement for marketers is ensuring that the target customers or audience are exposed to their marketing activities. In other words, the marketing offering or message must be in the right place using the right medium/ media so that at least the target audience has access to it. However, people do not voluntarily watch or read all every advertisement either on television, in store, in print media or on the Internet. Indeed people would many times "channel hop" while watching TV or use ads-block programmes when surfing the Internet to avoid advertisements. Consequently, consumers' exposure to marketing activities is selective; only when an advertising message gets into contact with a target consumer's senses, the consumer is being exposed to the marketing message. Afterwards, the message has a chance of being noticed by the consumer with the future of being further processed in the purchase decision making process. Obviously, without being exposed, it is impossible for a consumer to notice and then respond to any marketing material. (Evans ym. 2006, 29-30.)

2.4 Attention

Although the marketing message might be put in the right place via the right medium, there is no guarantee that it will be seen or even paid attention to by the target market. "*Attention* refers to the contents of short-term memory, which can be drawn from both internally and externally presented stimuli" (Kahneman 1973 cited by Jansson-Boyd 2010, 46).

Whenever and wherever we turn, we are bombarded by a symphony of colors, sounds, and odors; this flood of environmental impulses is continuously stimulating our sense organs. Consumers are all the time surrounded by

advertisements, product packages, radio and television commercials, and the growing number of Internet advertisements as well as promotional mailing filling the mailboxes. Due to the limited cognitive source of our human brain, even if we consumers would like to, it is impossible for us to pay attention to all the products/ services and companies waving their hands at us and wanting our attention. Therefore, each of us copes with this bombardment by paying attention to some stimuli that interest us and ignoring others. (Blackwell ym. 2006, 587; Solomon ym. 2010, 118.)

From a marketer's standpoint, it is crucial to manage to capture the consumers' full attention and then hold that attention stay upon the desired focal point, as otherwise consumers may refocus their attention towards competitors' marketing stimuli (Jansson-Boyd 2010, 46). Nonetheless, it is a fierce battle to fight for consumers' attention; because in the information era nowadays, marketers in the market are like going fishing in a lake cluttered with fishermen while the fish – consumers - are not hungry, they are fed with abundant supply of offers and excessive amount of information. Although this is one of the most difficult challenges that businesses are facing today, despite obstacles, it is still possible to catch something. (Blackwell ym. 2006, 587.)

A message is afforded a very brief window of time to gain the brain's notice; exceeding the limit then it will be either overlooked or erased. Thus, it is essential that messaging to be extremely well shaped to impress the attention of the subconscious, the part that processes most of our brain functional activities without being noticed by ourselves. (A. K. 2010, 228.)

There are several techniques that marketers can employ in order to grab and hold consumers' attention towards their marketing stimuli; for instance: connecting the marketing messaging with consumers' needs, permission marketing – asking permissions from consumers to send them marketing materials, or even paying consumers to pay attention. Concerning the presentation of the marketing messaging, marketers could attract target audience by utilizing colors, movement, isolation, size and location of messaging components as well as the message itself, increasing stimulus intensity, using entertainment factor - humor,

novelty – distinctiveness, and surprise factor. (Blackwell ym. 2006, 587-597; Evans ym. 2006, 33-38.)

2.5 Perception

If consumers do not notice some products, there is no chance that they will be able to purchase those products. Within our environment only a very small number of stimuli are ever detected; of these, an even lesser amount is being attended to. Everything that humans pay attention to will eventually be affected by the process involved in perception; and the stimuli that do enter our consciousness are not processed objectively but subjectively (Jansson-Boyd 2010, 38; Raab ym. 2010, 167; Solomon ym. 2010, 118). *Perception* is defined as the process "by which people select, organize, and interpret information from the outside world" (Solomon ym. 2008, 147). In addition, *perception* is also understood in the meaning of "the process whereby stimuli are received and interpreted by the individual and translated into a response" (Engel ym. 1986, cited by Evans ym. 2006, 38). Thus, *perception* is "concerned with how individuals see and make sense of their environment" (Fill 2011, 59).

"We are however as a rule able to purposefully influence what we want to perceive" (Felser 1997, 76). The human information system perceives selectively due to the fact that the limitation of the brain capacity is unable to process all intake stimuli consciously; therefore attention and perception are very strongly linked together. Consequently, only intense enough stimuli which can evoke our sense organs are selected (Raab ym. 2010, 168). The selected stimuli will then be organized in particular order to make them comprehensible (Fill 2011, 60) for example regulating patterns like 'similarity', or 'figure-ground' (Raab ym. 2010, 171-173). After getting organized, the stimuli need to be interpreted to attribute their meaning accordingly (Fill 2011, 60) and then translated into responses. When human do make a purchasing decision, we are responding not only to the influences of marketing stimuli from marketers, but also to and more importantly based on our own interpretations of them (Solomon ym. 2010, 118). Realizing this high value of perception, marketers are trying to utilize insights about

perception to alter attitude thus behavior of consumers through communication mediums (Raab ym. 2010, 178). The ultimate goal of marketers is to get into 40 bits of conscious consumer brain (A.K. 2010, 4), to awaken attentiveness in customers in a targeted manner and to be perceived differently from competitors (Raab ym. 2010, 176; Fill 2011, 61). A product which can be perceived and grasped without difficulty given the essential condition that the consumers are exposed and attracted to it effortlessly has more probability to be purchased. This can be facilitated by presenting the product in an relevantly expected yet demanding differentiation frame of consumption situation which can naturally be recognized by a buyer (Fill 2011, 60) like sales areas arrangement with store layout, decoration, choice of colors and environmental design (Raab ym. 2010, 174).

2.6 Learning

People learn continuously the whole life. We learn as we act. "*Learning* describes changes in an individual's behavior arising from experience" (Kotler & Armstrong 2006, 152). Based on how we perceive past experiences, we evaluate whether they were good or bad, afterwards determine possible future actions and attitude.

2.7 Attitude

Attitude is the result of perception and learning. *Attitude* can be defined as "a person's consistently favorable or unfavorable evaluations, feelings, and tendencies toward an object or idea" (Kotler & Armstrong 2006, 153). In our life, many things can change, like our motivations to do certain things or emotions toward certain moments or objects, but our attitude is very difficult to change. It requires gradual influences and adjustments throughout the time. When a positive attitude is shaped toward a product or brand, the likelihood to purchase the same product or from the same brand is truly high, and vice versa.

2.8 Motivation

Motivation is one of the very basic concepts in human behavior and thus also in consumer behavior. "*Motivation* can be described as the driving force within individuals that moves them to take a particular action" (Evans ym. 2006, 4). Solomon ym. (2010, 177) state that "from a psychological perspective *motivation* occurs when a need is aroused that the consumer wishes to satisfy". Similarly, *motivation* is defined as "an internal state that drives us to satisfy needs by activating goal-oriented behavior" (Solomon ym. 2008, 149).

The same behavior, especially consumer behavior, can be derived from various causes. Behind the reasons why people purchase specific products there are possibly "real need(s)" hidden in the background expecting to be fulfilled, for instance: ambition, sexuality, authority, trust, warmth, protection from fear/danger, or prestige. Therefore marketers should keep in mind and emphasize via the marketing mix as close relationship as possible to the real needs. (Raab ym. 2010, 214-215.)

2.9 Emotions

The human brain is emotional at its very core (A. K. 2010, 20). Traditionally, consumers are sometimes being described as being rational in their decision making process in general and in decision to purchase in particular; and some researchers argue that emotions do not really fill any function and can be controlled or even disregarded so that humans are capable of acting in a rational manner. On the contrary, more and more researchers debate that emotions do indeed play an important role in human functioning, and this is a popular researching trend nowadays. (Jansson-Boyd 2010, 69.)

Euler and Mandl (1983, 7-8) based on Kleinginna and Kleinginna (1981, 355) present the definition of *emotion* as "a complex interactive structure of subjective and objective factors facilitated by the neuronal/hormonal system, which can produce (a) affective experiences like feelings of arousal or desire/aversion; (b) which can evoke cognitive processes like emotionally relevant perceptual effects,

assessments, classification processes; (c) can set in motion extensive physiological adjustments to arousal triggering conditions; can lead to behavior that is often expressive, goal oriented, and adaptive". In a simpler manner, Carlson and Hatfield (1992) define an *emotion* as "a feeling that comprises physiological, behavioral and cognitive reactions to internal and external events".

Emotions impact upon people's cognitive processes, as they can affect the ability to encode, store and retrieve information (Blaney 1986) and one example illustrating the impact of emotions is the selective attention as we pay attention to what interest us. Consequently emotions are able to influence the decision making. As soon as being encountered with products/services from which consumers can select, it appears that initially they start to search among their feelings in an attempt to establish how they feel about the stimuli that they are exposed to (Jansson-Boyd 2010, 73) before processing those stimuli further consciously to make any decision. While women are universally acknowledged to have stronger emotional brain function and they process messaging with more emotions than men, both genders must be engaged emotionally in support of a message to be remembered and acted upon (A. K. 2010, 20).

Although there have been no concrete scientific results from researches in impacts of emotion towards consumer behavior, the significance of emotion is undeniable in marketing application. Overall research in marketing communication has shown that positive emotions should be of primary relevance for marketing, including interest, enjoyment and surprise; in contrast, negatively assessed emotions such as anxiety, fear and hesitation are unfavorable and harmful to product acceptance (Raab ym. 2010, 223 & 228). It is possible to persuade the consumers' purchase decision making by utilizing emotions. There are several recommendations, for example, for advertisers to reveal and pinpoint the key emotional triggers that their product inspires into their marketing messaging, for package designers to carefully saturate their designs with palatable, even intuitive, emotive imagery and shapes, and for retailers to establish an emotionally engaging and self-satisfying shopping experience when seeking returned customers (A. K. 2010, 20).

2.10 Sensory systems

> "All of our knowledge and insight is gathered through our senses; and our emotions and feelings are expressed using them. Our senses make sense of everything we encounter." (A. K. 2010, 42)

For human race, external stimuli also known as sensory inputs can be received via a number of channels (Solomon ym. 2010, 121). Our senses individually cannot compare to the excellence of other animals; but they all work together in harmony helping us perceive the world from all possible aspects (A. K. 2010, 41). Therefore, if marketers can activate multiple senses that are synergistic together rather than just one single sense, for instance the taste of a delicious cake accompanied by the attractive decoration, the freshly baked smell and the warm touch, the degree of engagement with the consumers will be enriched.

2.10.1 Smell/ olfactory

There is a fact that merely about one percent of our human brain is devoted to smell, our olfactory sense perhaps the least necessary of our senses. On the other hand, smell is the only sense in the most direct route into our centers for emotion and memory storage, in the deepest, most primitive part of our brains. Thus, scents possess the ability to immediately evoke deep and powerful memories and emotions, especially the scents associated with our childhood. (A. K. 2010, 45-47.) Different types of odors are capable of leading people to perceive the environments and products in distinctive ways, either in a positive or negative manner (Jansson-Boyd 2010, 43). There are possibilities of utilizing scents in olfactory brand marketing, product marketing, and environment marketing as being linked with a pleasant iconic smell can significantly improve a brand or product's success in the marketplace (A. K. 2010, 53). However, smell can be considered the most difficult sense that can be applied into the e-commerce sector, particularly to perfume industry; consumers rarely buy new fragrance from unfamiliar brands via the Internet merely based on how it looks without testing its smell in advance.

2.10.2 Taste

Although different with separate receptor organs, **smell** and **taste** share a common goal and often operate in synchrony with each other; we tend to smell something before we taste it; and the loss of the sense of smell can cause a serious reduction in overall taste experience. Tasting is one of the brain's great pleasures and it is the most easily stimulated by the Mirror Neuron system meaning that there will be a desire arousing when consumer see an appetizingly looking product being enjoyed by another. (A. K. 2010, 49-50.) People are able to use visual appearance of a product to imagine and predict how it would taste regarding their past experiences; however, sometimes looks can lead to misjudgments by consumers because the cuisine that looks gorgeous might taste plainly while the one that seems not so attractive could taste amazingly. This fact may be used by e-marketers to trick consumers into buying their products; or the truly great taste of the product needs to be illustrated more attractively.

2.10.3 Hearing

The most primitive role of hearing since very ancient history is that it alerts us with vital information for survival. Deep and nostalgic memories connected with highly emotional moments can easily be generated and recalled with the help of hearing sense when those moments are accompanied by sounds. (A. K. 2010, 50-51.) As part of the exposure, attention and perception process, hearing sense also possesses the selective and subjective characteristics; thus what we hear is specified and tuned to what interests us (A. K. 2010, 53). It is rather common that marketers often use sounds of different types to communicate with consumers. Sounds and noises have the capacity to capture consumers' attention along with the ability to alter many different aspects of consumer perception, for example they can create a favorable mood, increase the likeability of a product and affect perception of time. (Jansson-Boyd 2010, 43.) The buyers' brains will certainly ignore distracting or disturbing noises, together with any message that they convey or accompany (A. K. 2010, 53) despite the contents of the messages.

2.10.4 Touch

Touch has the honor of being the oldest human sense. Our skin is the largest sensory organ in our bodies, of which some parts are highly sensitive like our fingertips and lips, while other parts such as our backs have much less sense receptors. We human are naturally sensual beings, and we love to be touched as well as touch to express the love. Therefore, any product or experience that has a tactile aim must be able to excite and invite the sense of touch. (A. K. 2010, 52-53.) Touch is another obstacle for e-marketers to demonstrate to their consumers, in particular the textile industry. When shopping online for clothes for instance, the consumers most of the times would wonder: the clothes look great but how they would feel when I wear them, whether they would be comfortable, they fit the models in the advertisements but whether they would fit me, and so on. It is a vital factor determining level of satisfaction from consumers and possibility of returns or exchanges.

2.10.5 Sight/ vision

About 70 percent of the body's sense receptors are in our eyes, and about one-fourth of the human brain is involved in visual processing, much greater amount of resource than is devoted to any other sense. Therefore, to a large extent, it is agreeable to state that we understand our world mainly by looking at it. (A. K. 2010, 42.) Previous researchers have found that the first thing typical consumers do in consumption environments and situations is to conduct a visual search in order to locate a target they can then focus upon. Consequently, of all the sense used, vision is the one that is most commonly researched and discussed in the history of marketing. (Jansson-Boyd 2010, 42.) During the evolution of human race, we have developed our visual sense to be at the top of our sensory hierarchies (A. K. 2010, 42); thus, visual components tend to excel all others in the process of acquiring external information and it does account for approximately 80 percent of human perception (Jansson-Boyd 2010, 42). All of our senses share the role in obtaining information from the environment, however our brain will omit any information that is not cohesive with the visual stimuli it

receives (A. K. 2010, 53). Interestingly, unlike many people might believe, vision does not happen in the eyes but inside the brain. The eyes merely have the function of gathering light from environments and enhancing focus; while the brain actually makes sense of for instance the colors, shapes, facial expressions, and landscapes seen through the eyes. (A. K. 2010, 42.)

With all the proven significances of vision in our life and the fact that the easiest way to capture consumers' attention is through great visuals can also be found from researches, marketers rely heavily on visual elements in advertising, store design and packaging. They also deploy meanings being communicated on the visual channel through a product's size, styling, brightness and distinctiveness compared with competitors with the purpose of inspiring consumers' perception about their brand and product. (Solomon ym. 2010, 122.)

There is no surprise that visual factors are broadly employed in e-commerce sector, especially in marketing activities thanks to the ease and straightforwardness of visualization via Internet technologies to display on screens, in which vision enjoys the most facilitation than other senses.

3 E-MARKETING

3.1 E-commerce

Since the introduction of the Internet technologies, the term *e-commerce* has been increasingly widely used in the global scale in correspond with its importance.

3.1.1 Definitions

There has been countless number of researches concerning the field of e-commerce from many different approaches, such as from marketing perspective, or from management point of view, or from technological standpoint. As a result, numerous *e-commerce* also known as *electronic commerce* definitions are available to us nowadays.

The United Kingdom Cabinet Office (1999) defines *e-commerce* as "the exchange of information across electronic networks, at any stage in the supply chain, whether within an organization, between businesses, between businesses and consumers, or between the public and private sector, whether paid or unpaid" (Performance and Innovation Unit 1999, 10). Similarly, e-commerce is explained as "technology-mediated exchanges between parties (individuals or organizations) as well as the electronically based intra- or inter-organizational activities that facilitate such exchanges" (Rayport and Jaworski 2001, 4). In other word, Laudon and Traver (2012, 49) simply term e-commerce as "the use of the Internet and the Web to transact business" or in a more formal style, e-commerce consists of "digitally enabled commercial transactions between and among organizations and individuals".

Sharing the same perspective of technological method employed in e-commerce as above mentioned and other definitions, Mohapatra (2013, 73) expresses the e-commerce process in more specific manner from engine till objectives: "E-commerce is the use of electronic communications and digital information processing technology in business transactions to create, transform, and redefine

relationships for value creation between or among organizations, and between organizations and individuals".

Nonetheless whichever definition is used, they are all about application of Internet technologies to facilitate commercial transactions; but the definition by Mohapatra is in used in this research.

3.1.2 Pros and cons of e-commerce

The existence of Internet in general and e-commerce in particular have provided benefits for all parties acting in it, from consumers to marketers, manufacturers and retailers alike. For consumers, they are capable of conducting extensive research on products and services at much less effort than previously together with simplified price comparison. Marketers also can exploit advantages from the simple price comparison to track competitors' activities and benchmark their own actions. Moreover, both marketers and manufacturers enjoy the opportunity to reach a wider range of consumers. Additionally, retailers can collect purchase data and follow the movements of consumers as well as visitors of their websites at ease. (Jansson-Boyd 2010, 147-148.)

However, the Internet is not all beneficial; the growth of online commerce presents a 'double-edged sword' to marketers. It is true that they can reach consumers around the world, even from the most bizarre location; the same fact happens to their competitors. In fact, they now face not only competition from the shops just across the street but also from thousands of other Websites spanning the globe. (Solomon ym. 2010, 74.) Besides, e-commerce is not utterly tender and compassionate to existing brands. Among the enormous pool of brands that consumers can choose from, a brand which is already acknowledged by a consumer will more likely be trusted and selected; but the loyalty towards that brand is no longer completely devoted since the Internet encourages consumers to trial other brands as well. (Chaffey 2011, 437) From the consumer perspective, the electronic commerce also provides them both advantages and disadvantages as demonstrating in Figure 2.

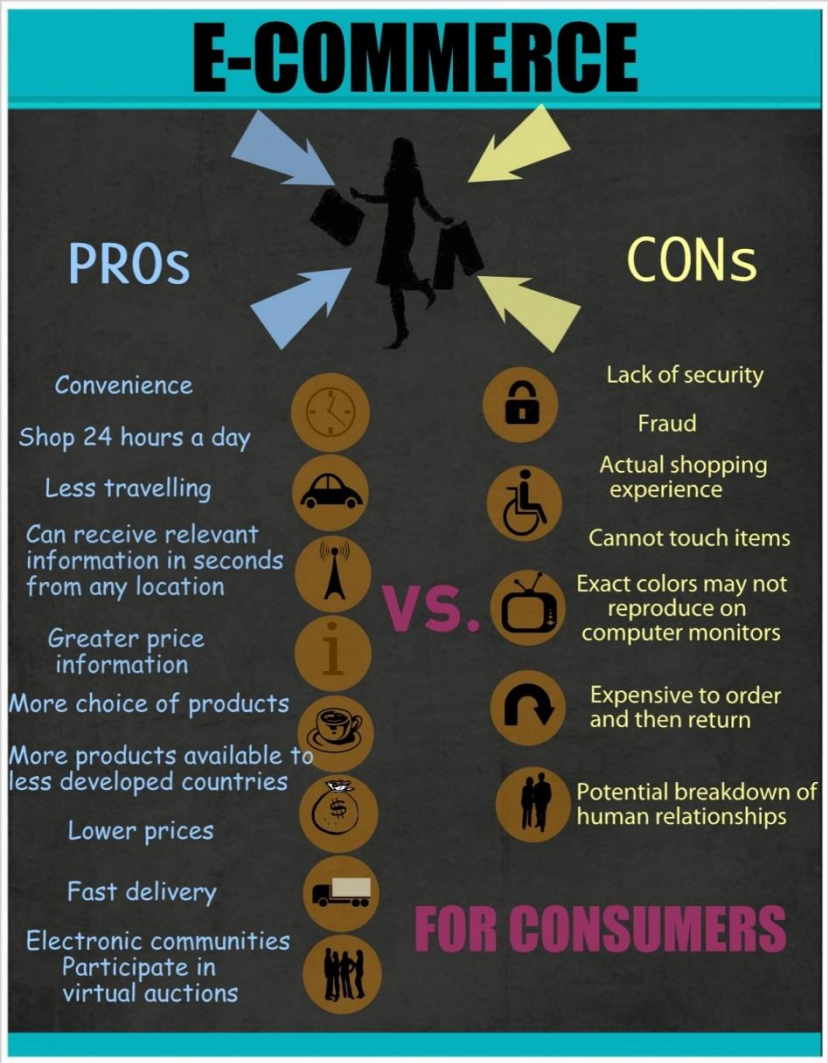


Figure 2: E-commerce - Pros and cons for consumers (content adopted from Solomon ym. 2010, 78)

3.2 E-marketing

The concept of e-marketing, which stands for electronic marketing, is considerably equal to Internet marketing or digital marketing.

3.2.1 Definitions

"*E-marketing* refers broadly to any marketing through electronic media, especially digital media such as the Internet, mobile devices and digital television" (Hackle 2011, 286). Comparably and more specifically, Chaffey (2011, 17) demonstrates

his definition about *digital marketing* or *electronic marketing* as “the management and execution of marketing using electronic media such as the web, email, interactive TV and wireless media in conjunction with digital data about customers’ characteristics and behavior”.

Other authors instead highlight the characteristics of e-marketing concerning relationships with customers based on the market-orientation. For example, Molenaar (2012, xvii) expresses that “what characterizes *e-marketing* is the identifiable relationship with customers, the outside-in approach, whereby the needs and wishes of customers determine the supply”. With not so much difference, Mohammed ym (2001, 4) classify Internet marketing as “the process of building and maintaining customer relationships through online activities to facilitate the exchange of ideas, products and services that satisfy the goals of both parties”.

Not restricting only to the implication of and operating via Internet technologies, Laudon and Traver (2012, 405) develop a rather more complete definition that e-marketing is "using the Web- as well as traditional channels – to develop a positive, long-term relationship with customers, thereby creating a competitive advantage for the firm by allowing it to charge a higher price for products or services than its competitors can charge" (Laudon & Traver 2012, 405). This definition of e-marketing is employed here in this thesis.

3.2.2 Advantages of e-marketing communication

Figure 3: E-marketing communication advantages (content adopted from Hackley 2011, 287-288)

3.2.3 Disadvantages of e-marketing

In this age of information technology, e-marketing is not the almighty tool with all advantages compared to other marketing methods; it obviously has its own disadvantages that marketers need to consider before jumping in. Some of e-marketing drawbacks are presented in Figure 4 below:

Figure 4: Disadvantages of e-marketing (content adopted from http://blog.i2k2.com & http://www.wewanttraffic.com [consulted 07.10.2013])

3.3 Online consumer behavior

The behavior of consumers when going online can be categorized into two key types: explicit and implicit behavior. Explicit behavior is based on data provided by the user for instance when they register for membership or user profile. On the contrary, implicit behavior is based on data derived and gathered from observations of a user's actions while they interact with the site. (Gay ym. 2007, 176.) Both of these two types of online behavior need to be considered simultaneously in order to provide the most properly targeted and personalized messages and offers to each individual user.

The marketing messages from traditional 'push' media such as television or billboards are at times being ignored by audience, especially when they are forced to receive them against their needs and interests. In contrast, the web and other online media are 'pull' media, which means to marketers is the fact that

audience now has even more power to choose which marketing messages they want to see. (Gay ym. 2007, 174.) The bombardment of information via the Internet is again much greater than before; so people are putting more efforts in filtering out what seem irrelevant to them. Thus it is much greater significant for e-marketing messages to expose to and gain attention from target customers.

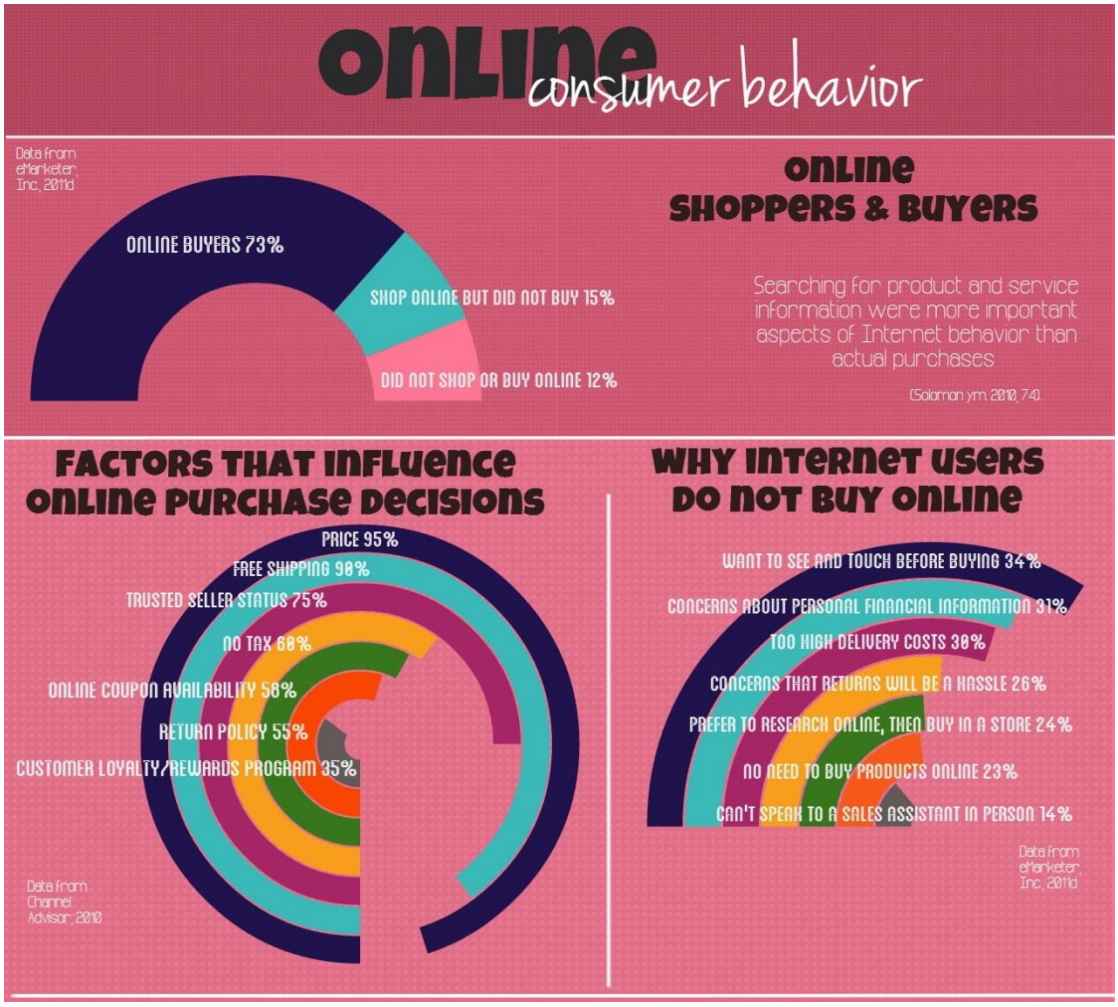


Figure 5: Online consumer behavior (content adopted from Laudon & Traver 2012, 397-404)

4 COLOR AND E-MARKETING

In human nature, we make assessment and judgment about things and people we encounter within approximately 90 seconds from initial interactions subconsciously (CCICOLOR – Institute for Color Research cited in Blackwell ym. 2006, 625; & Singh 2006, 783). These exposure, attention, and perception processes occur by the continuous contribution from all of our senses. Each of the senses has its own strength in attention grabbing ability. In previous consumer behavior researches about attention as well as perception, most of them investigated vision. On the one hand, this fact does not mean that stimuli geared towards other senses are not equally efficient as visual stimuli; they actually at specific times and in particular conditions can create even greater efficiency (Jansson-Boyd 2010, 49). On the other hand, in the context of e-commerce and e-marketing, with all their limitations, visual stimuli would be the most applicable and effective. The reason is not due to visual stimuli are the only possible tool but it is also proved that about 62-90 percent of the assessment is based on colors alone (CCICOLOR – Institute for Color Research cited in Blackwell ym. 2006, 626; & Singh 2006, 783). So what is COLOR?

4.1 Color definitions

Color (or ***color***) is “the property possessed by an object of producing different sensations on the eye as a result of the way the object reflects or emits light” (Oxford Dictionaries, n.d.). In another way of defining, *color* is ”simply light of different wavelengths and frequencies and light is just one form of energy that we can actually see that is made up from photons” (Color Therapy Healing 2013). Similarly to vision that does not happen in the eyes, color does not actually occur in the world, but the brain is truly the almighty creator of color after all. Our brains assign the visible spectrum of light bouncing off objects around us that we receive by the vision sensory into specific *colors*. (A. K. 2010, 43.)

4.2 Basis of color preferences

The colors that we see in this world are not exactly the same, they are different due to the dependence on lighting condition, observing position as well as surrounding environment, particularly other adjacent colors, can affect the manner the brain perceives a specific color. Furthermore, even when we can see the same color, how we perceive it, what it means to us and which emotions it can trigger from us vary largely from each individual to another. The reason for this ununiformed and varied color perception and preference is that they are "colored by our gender, our age, our education, the culture we grew up in, preconceived color beliefs of the societies we live in, our childhood associations with certain colors, and our life experiences, whether those associations are negative or positive" (Scott-Kemmis 2013). Females tend to have broader range of color preferences and these preferences are typically different from those of males. In addition, it is not rare that a number of Western males are red/green color blind. However, there are also unisex colors such as blue, red, black, white, silver or gold which can be used in marketing materials targeting both males and females. The more mature we become, we switch from bright and primary colors in solid blocks to more subdued and sophisticated colors with patterns. Reaching the adulthood, people seem to be less open for experimenting new colors; instead they rather stick with their safer favorites. In a similar manner with age, the more educated people get the more complex their color choices seem to be, with relatively unusual names given. Moreover, climate and the nature of the living environment have huge impacts on people's color perception and preferences. People have a tendency to duplicate the colors that they are familiar with and become part of their lives. Thus, it is to believe that people from tropical climate respond more positive to bright and warm colors, while who live in colder regions prefer cooler and more toned down colors. (Scott-Kemmis 2013)

No matter whom you are aiming to sell your products or services to, it is crucial to understand what attract your target customers and what can drive them away, including colors. Moreover, taking these above mentioned distinctions into consideration when segmenting and targeting specific markets, especially before

implementing any large and expensive marketing campaign in either global scale or into new geographical region, would be highly essential to marketers. However, color psychology is like marketing in the way that it is not an exact science, there is no concrete right or wrong choice of colors, but there are colors which would generate better responses from majority of the target market.

4.3 Meanings of colors

In order to utilize color in marketing activities, marketers ought to understand which emotions and also the needs behind that each color can trigger from the target customers. The meanings associated with colors vary from culture to culture; there are no absolutely universal meanings applied for any color. Nowadays, the most widely known researches about what feelings that colors represent and trigger are from North America. With the global spread of North American culture, the interpretation of color meanings by people around the world has been alternated and gradually shares some common points. The North American set of color meanings presented below is also rather similar to the Western world and it is the most closely applicable to the Finnish culture.

Color	Represent	Effects
Red	Energy; Action; Desire; Love; Passion	Stimulating; Exciting and Motivating; Attention-getting; Assertive and Aggressive
Orange	Adventure and risk taking; Social communication and interaction; Friendship; Divorce;	Enthusiasm; Rejuvenation; Stimulation; Courage; Vitality; Fun; Playful
Yellow	Mind and intellect; Happiness and fun; Communication of new ideas	Creative; Quick decisions; Anxiety producing; Critical; Non-emotional; Light; Warmth; Motivation
Green	Harmony and balance; Growth; Hope; Wealth; Health; Prestige; Serenity	Rejuvenation; Nurturing; Dependable, agreeable and diplomatic; Possessiveness; Envy
Blue	Communication; Peace and calm; Honesty; Authority; Religion; Wisdom	Conservative; Predictable; Orderly; Rigid; Trustworthy; Dependable; Secure; Responsible

Purple/ Violet	Inspiration; Imagination; Individuality; Spirituality; Royalty; Sophistication; Nostalgia; Mystery; Spirituality	Empathy; Controlled emotion; Respectable and distinguished; Impractical; Immature; Dignity; Cynical
Pink	Unconditional love; Compassion; Nurturing; Hope; Girlish	Calming; Non-threatening; Affectionate; Caring; Immature
Brown	Stability; Structure; Security; Natural and wholesome; Earthlike	Comforting; Protective; Materialistic; Simplistic; Durable
Grey/ Gray	Neutrality; Compromise; Control	Indecision; Detached; Depression; Unemotional
White	Innocence and purity; New beginning; Equality and unity; Fairness	Impartial; Rescuer; Futuristic; Efficient; Clean; Soft; Noble
Black	Mystery; Power and control; Prestige; Value; Timelessness; Sophistication	Formal, dignified and sophisticated; Depressing; Pessimistic

Table 1: Meanings of colors (content adopted from Scott-Kemmis 2013)

4.4 Roles of color in consumer behavior

It is undeniable that color can help attracting consumers' *attention* since by nature we humans can quickly spot colorful items and on general level, color tends to grab the attention more than monochrome. The reason is that our pre-attentive system of the brain has been designed and evolved to easily detect color from the external environment, and more importantly this system has the immediate function of selecting items for subsequent attentional processing. However, in the world, color never stays alone and it is impossible to be perceived on its own but in the symphony with other adjacent colors; thus using color to capture consumers' attention can face some obstacles of depending largely on the surroundings in which the item with target color(s) is placed and indeed different colors possess unique attention values. (Evans ym. 2006, 33; Jansson-Boyd 2010, 50.)

Employing color is advantageous for marketers as it is able to reduce search time for consumers particularly in the initial visual search, leading to the increased

likelihood of getting attention to the products from target consumers, followed by possibly favorable product attitudes (Jansson-Boyd 2010, 50). As an example, a clever use of color in packaging design can draw attention to the brand via symbolizing values and sending a powerful emotional signal to consumers, and furthermore can break through the competitive clutter (Evans ym. 2006, 33).

In addition to gaining attention, color also plays a crucial role in inspiring the consumers' *perception* towards brands and products. Different colors can convey a diverse range of meanings and emotions. The meanings associated with colors are culture-specific and comprehended differently by people from dissimilar cultures and backgrounds to the same color. Colors also have the power to evoke positive and negative feelings from audience. As a result, the rich in symbolic values and cultural meanings makes color a central aspect of consideration in many marketing strategies. (Evans ym. 2006, 46-47; Solomon ym. 2010, 122.)

The ability of colors to paint our expectations is frequently exploited by marketers; however, the choice of colors used to be made casually, sometimes based on just personal preference of decision makers. Nowadays they have realized that color is a serious business, and companies frequently employ consultants to assist in these decisions. (Solomon ym. 2010, 123.)

Additionally, along the timeline, people's choice of color is similar to fashion trend, it changes. Besides those, since colors are born within the brain, not everyone sees the same colors; some of us are color-blind while the rest are color-gifted (A. K. 2010, 43). Marketers also need to take into account the needs of those consumers who have color-deficient vision concerning some colors that they cannot perceive like normal color vision people do (Evans ym. 2006, 48).

4.5 E-marketing tools to employ color and visual elements

Various online marketing tools, which can be divided into categories such as Project management/collaboration, Search Engine Optimization, File management, Social media management, Visual content tools, Organizational tools and Google, can support e-marketing activities and boost productivity

(McCatty 2013). Since one of the hot trends for Internet marketing in 2013 is communication through visual (Shapiro 2012) and within the scope of this thesis, the Visual content tools will be focused. Because people generally process and respond better to visual information compared with plain text, visual marketing would be utterly valuable for marketers to tell their stories, especially when the audience has less and less time to read long plain text posts. Some online marketing tools involving visual content such as infographics, Prezi presentations and Pinterest are demonstrated below. These tools also facilitate other online marketing for example Search Engine Optimization (SEO) by increasing page view rates.

4.5.1 Infographics

Very recently, since just a couple of years ago, the explosion of infographics has been all over the Internet. The stories are designed in a new and interesting visual format with mapping relevant data into clearly expressed visual imagery. They have been attracting lots of traffic by getting shared to numerous websites, blogs and social networks. The reasons for this popularity are the facts that infographics are in image format, they can easily be shared by just a click; people are more attracted to visual elements; also visual stories or elements can communicate a complex idea in an effective and easy to understand manner in order to help people digest a large amount of data.

To optimize infographics into marketing activities, the content of the stories must be the primary component which serves specific purposes and gives audience particular values. After making sure that the content is valuable to certain audience, the visual elements need to bring the stories to new level of attractiveness. An infographic typically consists of short texts, pictures, graphs, charts, tables, symbols, background color and/or picture, and fonts, colors and sizes of text. All these components must be consistent with the overall theme of the infographic which can convey and express the story messages as well as create a visual harmony to the eyes. The great design, effective use of color and

consistent branding can help the stories to appeal attractive to emotions of audience in general and consumers in particular.

4.5.2 Prezi presentations

Presentation has never lost its significance in marketing activities. When the marketing campaigns are used to introduce or promote a product to the consumers, a brand or company to the market, or a pitch that sells your ideas to a company, presentation is always an effective tool. A presentation with catchy short texts, eye-catching images, symphony of text colors that stand out from the background and emphasize on important points, and combination of different text fonts and size collaborating in a purposefully meaningful theme has ability to convey easily digestible messages to audience. However, nowadays, traditional presentations creating by Power Point have lost the powerful "wow-factor", the attractiveness as before. Prezi has introduced a new way to visualize the presentations instead of simply slide after slide. Prezi provides users with flexibility, the ability to exploit capability of human visual imagination facilitating by technologies aiming at creating out-of-the-box designs. The zooming effect of the transitions in Prezi helps presenters to show details sometimes in unexpected manners to audience while being able to illustrate the big picture of the stories. This is also one tool to create videos about products or brands in order to extend users' time spending on the sites embedding videos. Prezi has become popular the days in the Internet since it utilizes the cloud storage technology enabling the sharing speed and convenience to Internet users.

4.5.3 Pinterest

Pinterest has been an increasingly popular social network among Internet users from recent years. For businesses, it has the ability to increase referral traffic to websites holding the second most powerful social media player after Facebook but dominating over Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, Youtube, StumbleUpon or Reddit, and it keeps growing at incredible speed of 66,52% from September 2012 to September 2013 (Shareaholic 2013). People use Pinterest with the purposes

of searching for ideas and inspirations among the network, collecting, and sharing them with other users. Pinterest works in the way that users “pin” the images of websites or image links that they are interested in to their virtual boards to share with other users by simply one click on the embedded Pinterest button in the Internet browsers. These pins of links get shared among users even faster as other users can click like button or “repin” them onto their own boards spreading them further and wider. Since what people “pin” are images, what attract people check out the websites and share them are also images, it is utterly essential for marketers to pay great attention to polish the “pinnable” images in their websites. Although people are busy, they love to see and share images; therefore it is wise to exploit this habit into profitable business and brand acknowledgement.

5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 Study strategy

According to the research questions above mentioned, the general aims of this thesis research are to discover the significances of color in e-marketing and the responses of e-commerce consumers toward color and visual marketing elements, as well as to explain why they behave in such manners. Therefore, this research in question here is the combination of exploratory and descriptive studies. Saunders and Lewis (2012, 110-111) define *exploratory study* as "research that aims to seek new insights, ask new questions and to assess topics in a new light" while *descriptive study* is "research designed to produce an accurate representation of persons, events or situations". Consequently, the chosen research strategy for this particular thesis is the survey method which suits and is very effective for exploratory and descriptive studies (Saunders and Lewis 2012, 116). Saunders and Lewis (2012, 115) also term *survey* as "a research strategy which involves the structured collection of data from a sizeable population. Data collection may take the form of questionnaires, structured observation and structured interviews." Survey strategy is very popular in business and management research since it allows the collection of data about the same things from a large number of people in a cost-effective manner (Saunders and Lewis 2012, 115-116). However, the data collected from the survey strategy tends to be not as deep as from other research strategies.

5.2 Research method

The chosen method and reasons of selecting such particular method are explained in details in this section.

5.2.1 Cross-sectional study

The researcher intends to collect data from multiple groups of participants at only one specific time period rather than during different milestones with the change

in time. Consequently, the *cross-sectional research design* is chosen over the *longitudinal study*. (Saunders and Lewis 2012, 123-124).

5.2.2 Quantitative data

Since this research is aiming at gaining insights from consumer perspective, it is rather appropriate for the researcher to acquire as many opinions from the largest feasible amount of respondents as possible to achieve more accurate results. Thus the type of data that the researcher seeks to obtain is *quantitative data* which are "numerical or whose values had been measured in some way" (Saunders and Lewis 2012, 198). The anonymous quantitative data reduce greatly the problems with confidentiality in data collection (Saunders and Lewis 2012, 77). The quantitative data are acquired via the form of questionnaire and analyzed with the assistance of statistics and visual graphs.

5.2.3 Questionnaire

This thesis consists of many limitations, in which the most significant are short time frame allowed and low financial support provided. Therefore, the best feasible data collecting method is required to be cost-effective while it can collect opinions and responses from large amount of respondents in a widespread geographical area. The method to be chosen is questionnaire, a term which "refers to all methods of data collection in which each potential respondent is asked to answer the same set of questions in the same order". This method is used to collect the data about the same things from large numbers of respondents by asking the same set of standardized questions to all participants. (Saunders and Lewis 2012, 141)

5.2.4 Sampling

This research attempts to explore the behavior of e-commerce consumers in Finland, hence the target population would be all consumers inhabiting in Finland regardless of age or nationality. However, it is impossible to research the whole population in this case; there is an absolute need for selecting a sample which

can provide acceptably accurate findings. Since the complete list of the population is unknown, the *non-probability sampling techniques* are employed (Saunders and Lewis 2012, 134). Among various techniques, the researcher applies the *self-selection sampling* technique in which "possible sample members are asked to identify themselves as willing to take part in the research" (Saunders and Lewis 2012, 140). The drawback for this sampling technique is that those who self-select to be participants of the research tend to have strong feelings and interests in the particular topic in comparison to those who do not offer to be involved; thus the outcomes might not represent the whole population (Saunders and Lewis 2012, 140). On the other hand, despite the downside, this technique seems to be the most feasible to employ in this particular research.

5.3 Questionnaire implementation

The primary data was collected via the questionnaire to get the widest perspective from consumers. The questionnaire was implemented with the help of previous theories and researches.

5.3.1 Questionnaire tool and host

The researcher selected SurveyGizmo as the web-based tool for her questionnaire among a pool of many similar sites. The reasons for choosing web-based questionnaire were the fact that it is low-cost, effective, easy to access and conduct, convenient for both researcher and respondents, flexible in time and location for participants to answer, more interactive than traditional questionnaire form in paper. Moreover, SurveyGizmo was chosen to build the questionnaire since it offers additional feature of question types using pictures as answer options, which was utterly essential for this specific questionnaire to provide the visual aids to respondents.

5.3.2 Structure of the questionnaire

The survey called "How do Finnish inhabitants respond to colors and visual elements when shopping online" (see Appendix 1) was structured in 5 parts.

The first part was “General online buying behavior” which was used to filter the participants who have shopped online to continue with the survey and explore their buying behavior in general.

Subsequently, the second part looked into “Responses of consumers toward visual marketing factors” which consisted of seven questions. Questions number 6 and 7 were created by editing the CSS files of two website templates, the credit belongs to the researcher’s husband who is an IT (Information Technology) student at Turku University of Applied Sciences (TUAS).

The next part was to study about respondents’ “color preferences”. The participants were asked which their most and least favorite colors in general are, or they could choose for the specific case of buying clothes, in order to find out the major preferences of Finnish inhabitants rather than many existing results from the United States. Within this part, there was also an experiment consisting of two subsets of questions that each respondent would only see and needed to answer one set. This experiment used the colors of towels that the respondents would prefer to buy with the given name. The key to trigger which set of questions each respondent would get was their answer to the previous question about whether they prefer group of shades – colors with black added or tints – colors with white added. If the respondent chose shades, he/she would then be directed to three questions in the following order: question 1, darker shade of blue given the name “Blue” and lighter shade of blue given the name “Ocean”; question 2, darker shade of brown given the name “Mocha” while lighter shade given the name “Brown”; and question 3, darker shade of green given the name “Green” whereas lighter shade of green given the name “Sage”. Vice versa, the names of the colors in the question set for respondent who chose tints were in opposite manner. The purpose of this experiment was to test whether the fancy names given to the colors would affect their choices over their preferred color shades with generic names. The experimenting method employed here was adapted from the research by Skorinko, Kemmer, Helb and Lane (2006).

“Meanings of color” part consisted of question number 17, the one that was created with the purpose of finding out possible color codes for several target

customer groups of the grocery bag products, which is the motivation for the researcher to conduct this thesis research.

The questionnaire ended with questions about personal background of respondents, which were the most sensitive questions, so that if they did not want to answer, the researcher could still obtain valuable data of main questions in previous parts (Saunders and Lewis 2012, 146).

5.3.3 Pilot test

The questionnaire was reviewed and tested several times by the researcher herself. Afterwards, she sent it to her group of close friends with different study majors and her supervisor for pilot testing to examine if the questionnaire runs smoothly, whether there are mistakes in questioning logic or wording, and all other possible problems. The researcher altered the questionnaire several times with the appreciation of useful feedbacks from the pilot testers.

5.3.4 Research group

The target of this research is consumers of the e-commerce in Finland, regardless of their nationalities, ages, educational levels, jobs, cities of resident, or any other factors. The only required factor is that they are at least acquainted with the world of online commerce. Due to the lack of financial resources, the researcher decided to reach her nearest possible target groups which are her teachers, friends, colleagues and students in her university department, who have been currently living in Finland.

5.3.5 Invitation sending method

The invitation for survey participation was sent to all potential respondents via TUAS electronic mailing systems together with private messages via Facebook network. All invitation mails consisted of cover letter (see Appendix 2) explaining the purposes of the research and the Internet link to the survey website so that respondents can answer without any obstacles.

5.3.6 Launching time frame

Starting from 24th October 2013, all the invitation mails and messages were sent to potential respondents. The reminder mails were sent on 29th October 2013. At mid-night 3rd November 2013, the survey stopped collecting answers and was ready for analysis.

6 DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 Received results

The questionnaire received in total 77 responses. There were two answers filtered as disqualified, since the participants stated that they neither search for products nor buy them via the Internet; thus they were not eligible target of this research. Among the rest, 55 respondents completed the whole questionnaire which accounted for 71,43% of total respondents and 73,33% of total qualified respondents. Nonetheless, the questionnaire was analyzed based on all collected data, including partial and complete respondents.

6.2 General online buying behavior

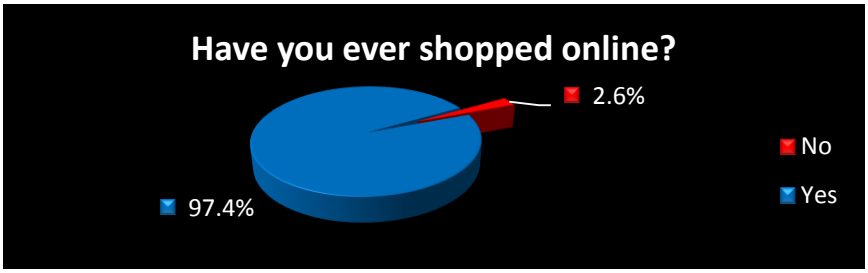


Figure 6: Have you ever shopped online?

The first question which used to filter participants asked whether they have ever shopped online. Shopping online was explained as searching for product/service information via the Internet and/or making the actual purchase. As shown in Figure 6 and as a surprise result to the researcher, there were two respondents – who are young consumers in the era of e-commerce - claimed that they have never either bought products via the Internet or searched for products online, respectively with the reasons that online shopping is “inconvenient and untrustable [not trustable]” and “I don’t know exactly my size”.

After respondents chose “Yes” to the filter question (Question 1), they were asked about their actual online purchase frequency whenever they search for product/service information via the Internet. The most popular trend among

respondents is the fact that they occasionally buy products after searching for information online and comparing prices between different sites, which accounts for 61% (see Figure 7). Subsequently, respondents who stated that they rarely or never made actual purchase via the Internet were asked for the reasons. 19% of the respondents state that they rarely buy products online with the complaint of too high delivery costs – which sometimes are higher than the actual price of the product (92,9%), the wish to see and touch the tangible products before making purchase decision (78,6%), and other reasons. There are 14,3% participants said that they have no need to buy products online (see Figure 8).

Figure 7: Actual online purchase frequency

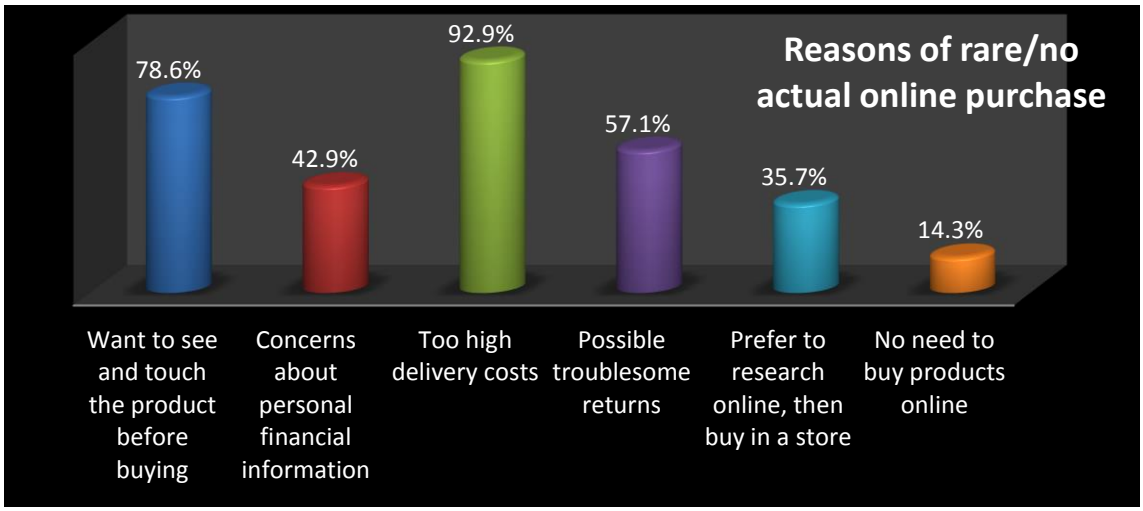


Figure 8: Reasons of rare/no actual online purchase

6.3 Responses of consumers toward visual marketing factors

	In conventional stores		Via the Internet	
Sense/factor	**Total weighted score**	**Overall rank**	**Total weighted score**	**Overall rank**
Taste	201	1	82	3
Look	194	2	221	1
Smell	150	3	35	4
Feel	140	4	94	2
Sound	29	5	24	5

Table 2: Roles of senses in buying food product in stores and online

Question number 2 and 3 requested participants to rate the importance of the factors contributing to five senses when they buy food products in the conventional stores and through online shops respectively. According to the survey results, taste and look are the most important elements of food products that influence consumer decision in conventional stores; however when it comes to online shopping of food products, look has the most powerful affect (see Table 2).

Question 4 asked participants to select the one factor in e-commerce websites that they generally get attracted to or look for first. In any typical e-commerce website, there are many diverse elements of the website design which have different audience attention grabbing ability and also get dissimilar resource allocation from marketers. It is difficult for marketers to fully nurturing all elements of a website equally; thus you should cherish with more resources the ones that can provide you the most benefits. Based on the survey results, the layout/overall theme of the website catches the first impression of audience the most (35,6%) and pictures come in second place with 25,4% among other elements (see Figure 9). Color does grab the first impression of 8,5% of total respondents, coming in third place.

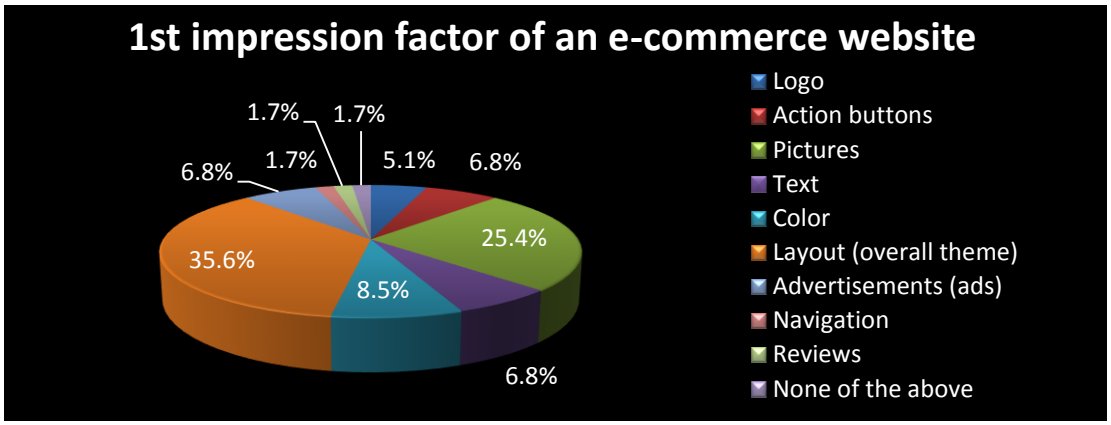


Figure 9: 1st impression factor of an e-commerce website

The participants were asked to give score to elements of an advertisement based on their respective ability to capture attention from the respondents, as 0 is not important at all to 5 is absolutely important. Besides the elements of website design, each factor of an advertisement has its unique competence of capturing attention from audience, among which distinctiveness/novelty is leading with average score of 3,12 over 5, following by humor (2,83) and color (2,60) (see Figure 10).

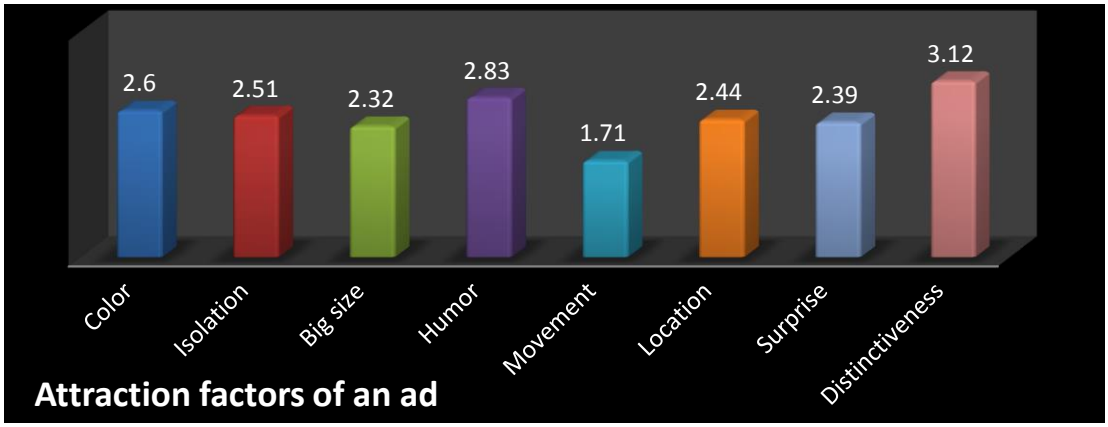


Figure 10: Attraction factors of an ad

Result from question number 6, which asked participants to find the BUY NOW button either in blue or red within a blue website, shows that the red BUY NOW button catches more attention than the blue one (see Figure 11). However, it either means that red color has more attention power than blue; or in fact, the contrast between the color of BUY NOW button and other buttons, also the overall theme color of the website – which is blue – holds the true power.

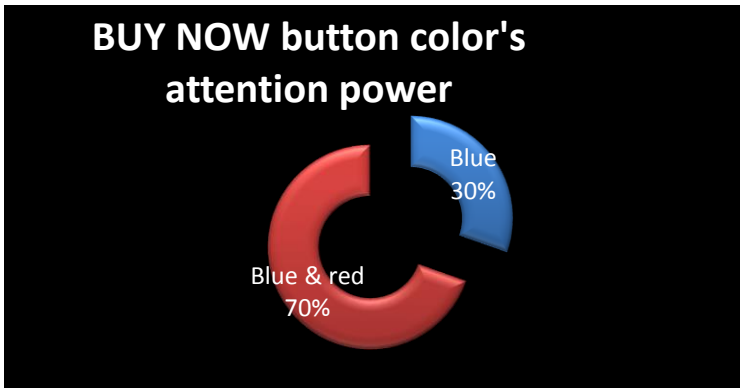


Figure 11: BUY NOW button color's attention power

Participants were given choices of 8 websites for the same sale event with the only difference is the color of BUY NOW button and they were asked to select the one that made them want to click the most. From the experiment of question number 7, the red BUY NOW button clearly has the strongest capability to impulse 41,1% of the audience clicking it in a sale event, given that the overall theme color of the website is blue (see Figure 12).

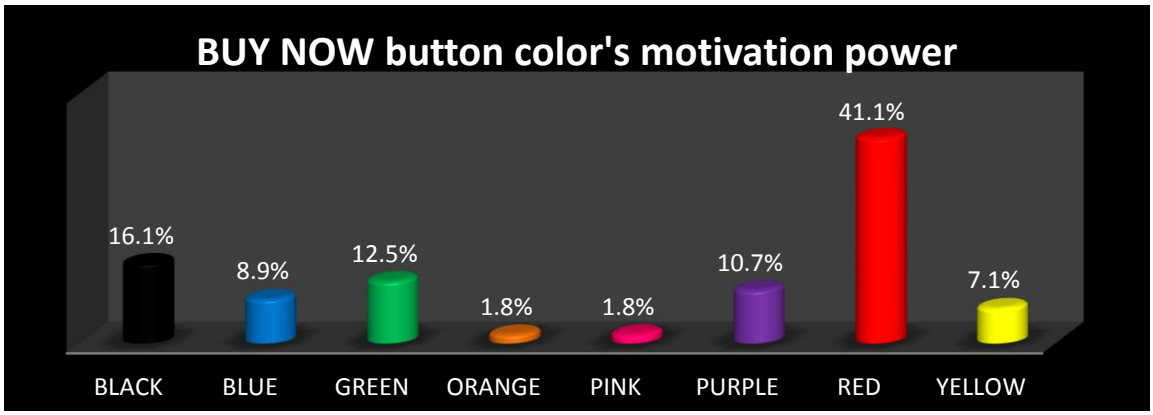
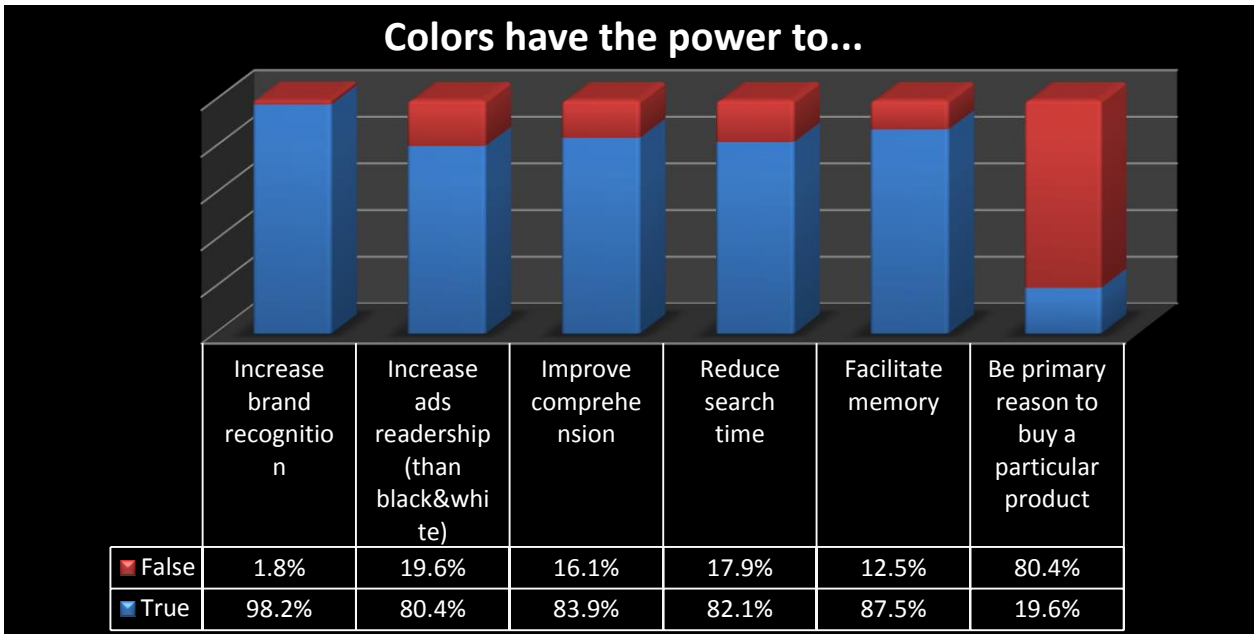


Figure 12: BUY NOW button color's motivation power

Almost all respondents agree that colors can increase brand recognition, increase ads readership, improve comprehension, reduce their search time as well as help them remember more easily for longer time. However, only one fifth of the total participants say that color is the primary reason to buy a particular product (see Figure 13). Almost all well-known brands use some specific and consistent colors in their logos representing their brand images, for example McDonald as red and yellow, Facebook with blue and white, Google with rainbow color, or Apple using white (grey), which makes customers easily recognize them

even when the brand names are not visible and also associate them with unique emotions. People naturally prefer colorful items than mere black and white, it is especially true regarding advertisements since most audience prefers to read or watch ads in color. Since each color conveys different meanings associating with varied emotions, the tone of voice of the written messages can be expressed so that the true messaging can be comprehended accurately as marketers intend to. As the target color stands out from the crowd of surrounding adjacent colors, based on the theory about figure-ground (Raab ym. 2010, 171-173), it can be spotted easily to attract audience and help customers to find it rapidly for instance in a store shelf. The color can embed vivid images into memory storage of our brain with the facilitation of large brain resource involving visual processing (A. K. 2010, 42), making us remember faster and longer. Color is in most of the times not the primary reason of purchase decision, however it is still an important factor in the whole purchase decision making process.



	Increase brand recognition	Increase ads readership (than black&white)	Improve comprehension	Reduce search time	Facilitate memory	Be primary reason to buy a particular product
False	1.8%	19.6%	16.1%	17.9%	12.5%	80.4%
True	98.2%	80.4%	83.9%	82.1%	87.5%	19.6%

Figure 13: Power of color

6.4 Color preferences

Question 9 asked participants to select their most and least favorite colors in general or they could use the case of colors for buying clothes.

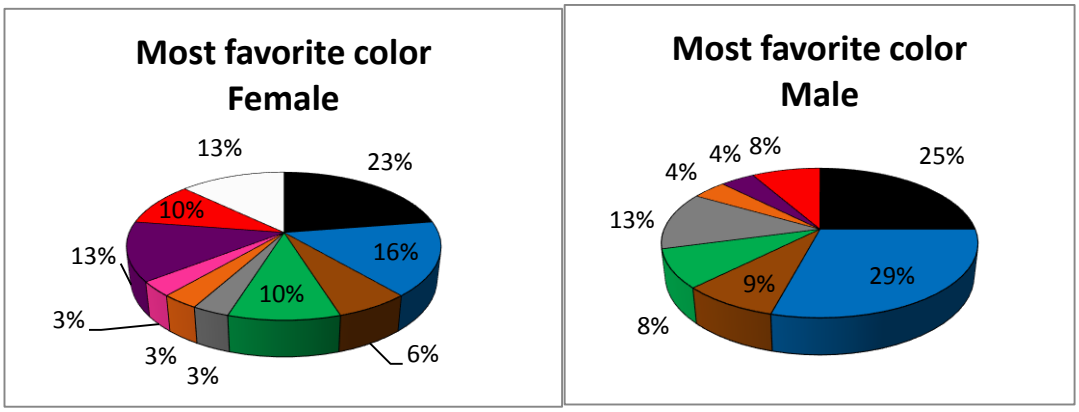


Figure 14: Most favorite color of Female and Male

Black is the most favorite color of about 25% of both female and male Finnish inhabitants; while men also prefer blue color (29%), a little less percentage of female prefer blue (16%) (see Figure 14). Pink clearly is the least favorite color to most men (38%). To 26% of female respondents, orange is their least favorite color. However, it is quite surprising that also 26% of female living in Finland say that their least favorite color is pink (see Figure 15) – which is generally perceived as a girly color (Scott-Kemmis 2013). Since the late Twentieth Century, pink has been widely used to dress baby girls in most Western countries in order to differentiate with baby boys in blue (Maglaty 2011). The research by Hubert and Ling (2007) discovered that women tend to prefer the colors that move away from the blue spectrum and toward the red spectrum, where the shades of lilac and pink are found.

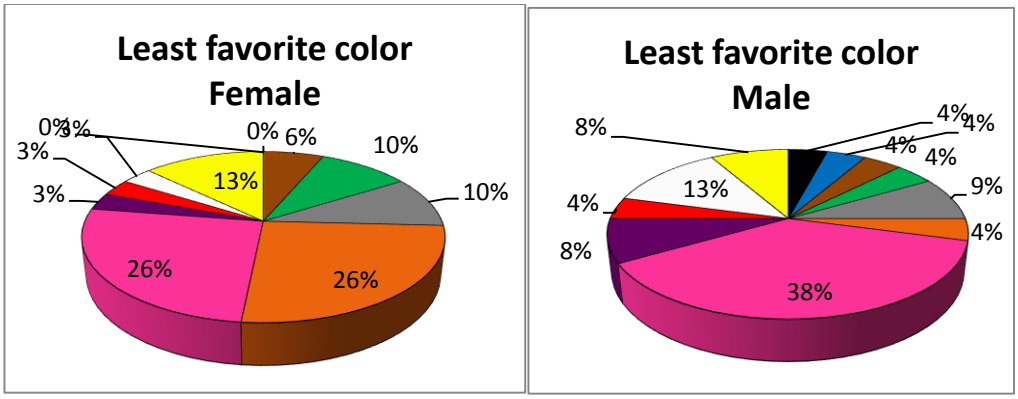


Figure 15: Least favorite color of Female and Male

The towel colors experiment was illustrated in Chapter 5 consisting of 2 different sets of questions, each respondent could see and answer to only one set of questions, in which participants were requested to select their preferred lighter or darker shades of blue, brown and green given either generic or fancy names. It received the following results which are presented in the Table 3 below.

	Blue vs. Ocean		**Brown vs. Mocha**		**Green vs. Sage**	
	tint = fancy shade = generic	tint = generic shade = fancy	tint = generic shade = fancy	tint = fancy shade = generic	tint = fancy shade = generic	tint = generic shade = fancy
Fancy name	**9**	**13**	**17**	**14**	**19**	**5**
Generic name	**24**	**10**	**16**	**9**	**14**	**18**
Fancy name	22		31		24	
Generic name	34		25		32	
Shades	37		26		19	
Tints	19		30		37	

Table 3: Towel colors experiment - Fancy names vs. Generic names

According to the experiment results, there is no clear evidence showing that the fancy names have real power over the generic names of colors to motivate consumer purchase decision. On the contrary, respondents mainly select the colors of the towels based on the preferences as well as emotions toward each color itself, not the names of the colors.

6.5 Meanings of colors

Question number 17 used colors for paper grocery bags to ask participant which color they would feel representing each target customer group the most.

	Black	Blue	Brown	Green	Grey	Light purple	Orange	Pink	Purple	Red	White	Yellow
Single household	**21.8%**	14.5%	9.1%	**20.0%**	7.3%	1.8%	3.6%	3.6%	0.0%	1.8%	12.7%	3.6%
Love birds	0.0%	16.4%	3.6%	10.9%	3.6%	7.3%	0.0%	9.1%	1.8%	**32.7%**	3.6%	10.9%
Family with kids	1.8%	10.9%	12.7%	**23.6%**	1.8%	5.5%	14.5%	5.5%	0.0%	7.3%	3.6%	12.7%
Weekend party	10.9%	5.5%	9.1%	12.7%	5.5%	3.6%	**12.7%**	3.6%	5.5%	**14.5%**	7.3%	9.1%
High class, luxury	**29.1%**	5.5%	5.5%	7.3%	0.0%	9.1%	1.8%	0.0%	10.9%	1.8%	**29.1%**	0.0%

Table 4: Color code for target customer groups of grocery bag products

Each color can convey different meanings and trigger unique emotions. Since different groups of customers have diverse characteristics, they can be color coded based on what they mean to us. From the opinions of the survey respondents, single household customer group can be associated with either black (21,8%) or green (20%). However, red – the color of love is preferred by 32,7% respondents that it represents love birds group – young couples without kids. Families with kids are perceived to suit the color green by 23,6% of participants. The fun, energetic, relaxing, enjoyable and lively characteristics of the weekend parties are very related to the color red (14,5%) or orange (12,7%). Additionally, neutral colors like black and white express the level of high class and luxury to 29,1% of total respondents respectively to each color. (See Table 4)

6.6 Personal background

The researcher can collect personal information from the respondents who complete the whole survey, due to the fact that the most sensitive questions about gender and living time in Finland of participants stay in the end of the questionnaire. Thus, only 55 respondents reveal their personal background. Among those, 56% are female and 44% are male (see Figure 16).

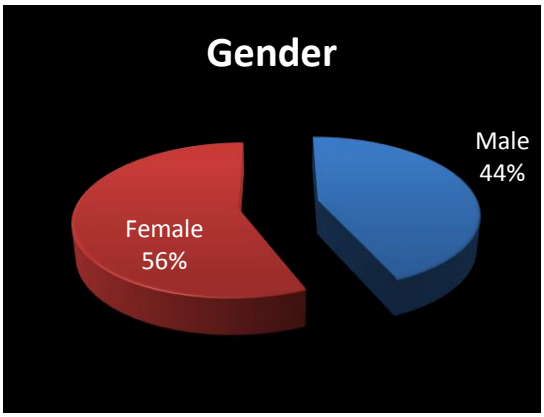


Figure 16: Gender

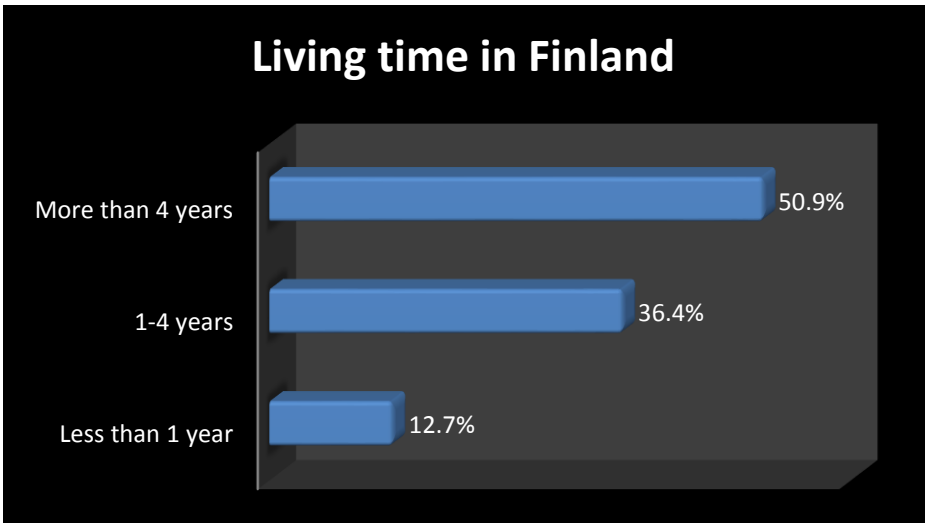


Figure 17: Living time in Finland

The culture and climate of where people live can have great impacts on their color perceptions and preferences (Scott-Kemmis 2013). The majority (50,9%) of the respondents have lived in Finland for more than 4 years, they are either Finnish or qualified to receive Finnish citizenship (Finnish Immigration); thus their opinions to some extend can represent the Finnish perceptions and preferences. The other great part (36,4%) of the participants have resided in Finland from 1 to 4 years, which means they have been familiar with and to some extend influenced by Finnish culture. On the other hand, there is a minority of about 12,7% respondents who have just lived in Finland for less than 1 year, they are fairly new or merely acquainted to the Finnish culture and environment; their preferences are less likely to be influenced by Finnish culture and environment.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 Suggestions to e-commerce companies operating in Finland

It is undeniable that looks and visual stimuli play essential roles in human's life in general and in consumer behavior in particular. Whether consumers make purchase decision in traditional stores or they do so via Internet sites, for instance with food products, most people put visual elements as the most important factors influencing their decision. If consumers do not like how the products look, they might not ever give the taste or feel a try, they will be more likely to ignore it and move on to other products of our competitors. Moreover, in many cases, especially buying products online, the elements of taste, smell or feel are nearly unreachable for consumers to try before making the purchase decision. Hence, the value of visual elements in e-marketing becomes much greater. Additionally, building an excellent product is no longer enough to make it successful in the market; the looks of the product must represent its quality to attract customers.

Looks do matter. Among numerous visual factors, color can be considered the most important component. However, most people do not realize the huge impacts color has upon them, upon their daily life; they simply take color for granted. Colorful items such as products or advertisements or other marketing materials could get more attention than the ones in mere black and white. On the other hand, any one particular color would not have the almighty power of attention grabbing; it is the complementation and contrast with other surrounding colors to make that target color stand out from the crowd. This fact is also true in a bigger picture of marketing materials. In this fast pace world where people are bombarded with information every second, they strongly demand novelty, distinctiveness, and uniqueness, something that is genuinely outstanding to be noticed. Besides, color can also affect human's perception on certain things or even perception on the world. Each color conveys different set of meanings, which triggers a diversity of emotions in different individuals. Furthermore, human are just emotional creatures. Consumers make most purchase decisions emotionally then justify them by logic. Thus, there is no good reasons that

marketers should not utilize emotions to motivate and impulse their target customers. Color would be a cheap – cost effective yet very useful means to do so. Imagine a shopping environment where everything is in shades of white, grey and black, it is highly probable that you would not be emotionally, sensually or physically inspired enough to motivate yourself to buy any beautiful clothes or delicious deserts.

Making the choice of color requires careful considerations, particularly about the effects the color(s) can create toward brand image, marketing messaging and target markets. Each color is associated with dissimilar meanings; choosing the color(s) is aiming at a desired image of a company or product/service that marketers would like consumers to picture them in such a manner. However, branding is never what the marketers say about their company or product; it is all about how customers perceive them. Therefore, the customers can easily tell if the color(s) of a brand would fit its true image. In addition, color can affect how target audience perceive particular marketing materials, especially electronic marketing materials, because color can be compared as tone of voice which helps expressing emotions. Likewise, marketers need to carefully choose color(s) which can convey their messaging correctly to each target market. The reason is that people from different background like gender, culture, living environment, or education perceive the meanings of color differently. One example is that the marketers are targeting the market of female living in Finland to launch a new smartphone or a new line of clothes; from the survey result, it is advisable that the marketers act cautiously with the color pink, either not choosing it or conducting further research of variation shades of pink and the responds from the target audience toward each shade.

For marketers, particularly e-marketers who wish to employ color into your marketing strategy and operation; it is recommended that you ensure that the selected colors properly function both technically and psychologically. The chosen colors must be accurately uniform with the actual product, and accurately displayed within the allowed technologies to date. It is vital to put precise colors into for example an online shopping website since if the consumers receive the

products with color different from what they expect, their level of satisfaction and trust will be damaged, it is doubtful that they would even return. Moreover, colors must generate a sense of visual harmony to the whole marketing material or e-commerce website in order to sustain and enhance customers' interest in a pleasant shopping experience.

Within various e-marketing tools, the group of visual content tools should receive adequate attention and resources to achieve the most attractive story tellers to widely reach Internet audience, catch their attention, get talked about and referred to others.

7.2 Possibilities of further academic research

Concerning the credibility of this research, since the sample of the survey was relatively small in the total population of Finnish inhabitants, it would be more accurate and more reliable if the research can be conducted in wider and deeper scope which requires more financial and time resources.

On the other hand, the procedures of attention, perception, emotion and motivation in human are mainly processed by the subconscious brain; therefore people generally do not have the capability to tell exactly what they like or dislike and why into words. For example, in the towel colors experiment, people who in group "shades" previously said that they prefer darker colors – the colors with black added, but there is no guarantee that they consistently select darker shades of towel colors. Due to this reason, in further research, different research methods other than questionnaire should be employed, for instance observation of consumer behavior. Additionally, the research results would be more accurate and useful if they are aiming at specific cases to get deeper and more concentrate view.

For companies and marketers, whenever you are planning for perhaps rebranding, launching a new product/product line, or introducing a new website, color utilization would be a relevant and effective factor to consider.

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How do Finnish inhabitants respond to colors and visual elements when shopping online questionnaire

LOGIC Show/hide trigger exists.

1. Have you ever shopped online? *

'Shopping online' means both researching for product/service information and/or making the actual purchase via the Internet

- No
- Yes

LOGIC Hidden by default Dynamically shown if "Have you ever shopped online?" = No or "Have you ever shopped online?" = No

Please tell me briefly the reasons why you have never shopped online

Page exit logic: Stop survey
IF: Question #1 contains any ("No") **THEN:** Jump to page8-ThankYou! Flag response as complete

LOGIC Hidden by defaultShow/hide trigger exists. Dynamically shown if "Have you ever shopped online?" = Yes or "Have you ever shopped online?" = Yes

After searching for product online, how often do you make the **actual purchase** also ***via the Internet***? *

- Every time
- Most of the times
- Occasionally, after making price comparison among different sites
- Rarely
- Never
- I buy online but I never search for product information from the Internet, I do that offline from stores

LOGIC Hidden by default Dynamically shown if "After searching for product online, how often do you make the **actual purchase** also ***via the Internet***?" = Rarely or "After searching for product online, how often do you make the **actual purchase** also ***via the Internet***?" = Never or "After searching for product online, how often do you make the **actual purchase** also ***via the Internet***?" = Rarely or "After searching for product online, how often do you make the **actual purchase** also ***via the Internet***?" = Never

Please select all the applicable reasons why you do not buy online *

- ☐ Want to see and touch the product before buying
- ☐ Concerns about personal financial information (possible fraud, leak, etc.)
- ☐ Delivery costs are too high (sometimes higher than the price of the product)
- ☐ Concerns that returns will be troublesome
- ☐ Prefer to research online, then buy in a store
- ☐ No need to buy products online
- ☐ Cannot speak to a sales assistant in person
- ☐ Other _____

Responses of consumers toward visual marketing factors

2. When buying *food products* **in conventional stores**, which features of the products would be more ***important*** to you in *making purchase decision*?

Please **sort** by importance from the most to the last. You can **leave** the irrelevant ones (if there are any) out.

Drag items from the left-hand list into the right-hand list to order them.

- Smell
- Sound
- Look
- Feel
- Taste

3. When buying *food products* **via the Internet**, which features of the products would be more ***important*** to you in *making purchase decision*?

Please **sort** by importance from the most to the least. You can **leave** the irrelevant ones (if there are any) out.

Drag items from the left-hand list into the right-hand list to order them.

- Sound
- Feel
- Taste
- Smell
- Look

4. What is the first thing that you normally notice or look for in an e-commerce website? *

- Logo
- Layout (overall theme)
- Advertisements (ads)
- Pictures
- Text
- Action buttons (BUY NOW, ORDER, ADD TO BASKET etc.)
- Color
- None of the above

5. Please give the score to the factors that can attract and keep you read the ads and promotional emails *
5 is the best. 0 is for the irrelevant factors to you.

	Least important 0	1	2	3	4	Most important 5
Color						
Isolation (object stands out from the background)						
Big size						
Humor						
Movement						
Location (of the ads and components of the ads)						
Surprise						
Distinctiveness						

Responses of consumers toward visual marketing factors (cont.)

6. In which website the "**BUY NOW**" button catches your attention the most and the fastest? *

Please select 1 from 2 options below

7. Which "**BUY NOW**" button would ***impulse*** you to click the most strongly and immediately in a clearance ***sale*** event? *

Please select 1 from 8 options below

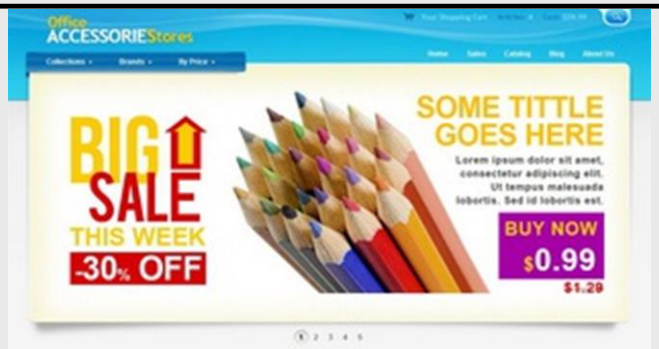
Pink

Orange

Blue

Red

Black



Purple

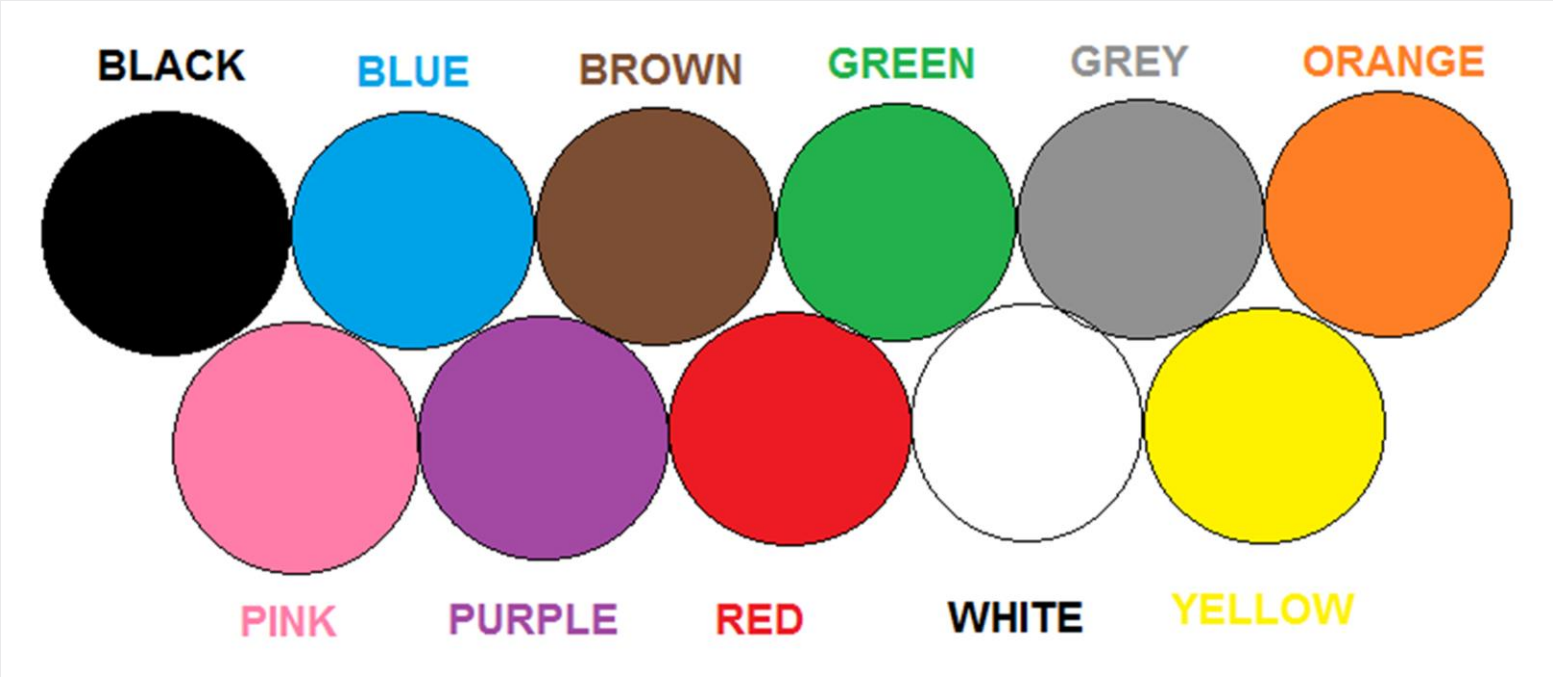
Green

Yellow

8. Do you agree that . *

	True	False
Color can increase your ability to recognize brands?	○	○
You tend to read more marketing materials (ads, promotional mails, etc.) in color than the ones in black and white?	○	○
Color can improve comprehension?	○	○
Color can reduce your search time for desired target among the environment?	○	○
Color can help you remember more easily for longer time?	○	○
Color is the primary reason why you buy a particular product?	○	○

Color preferences


BLACK
BLUE
BROWN
GREEN
GREY
ORANGE
PINK
PURPLE
RED
WHITE
YELLOW

9. What are your **most** and **least** favorite colors, for example when buying **clothes**? *

It is possible to base the answers from the selected shades of the colors from the chart above. Please leave comments if your shades of colors of your choice are different from those presented, for example: dark purple, dark red (burgundy, cherry, scarlet), etc.

Most favorite

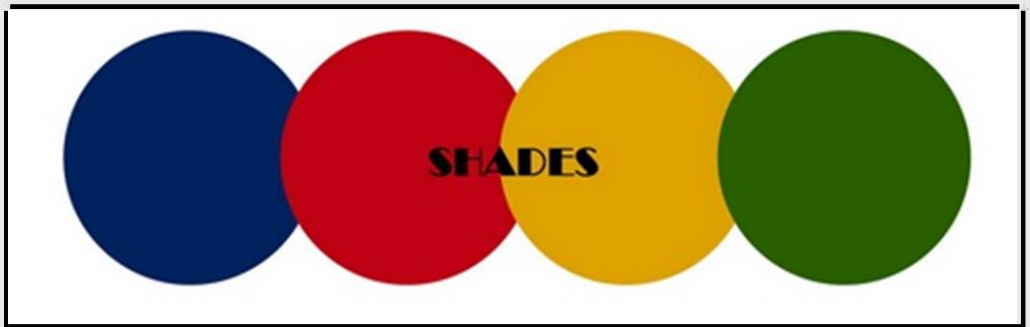
Black
Blue
Brown
Green
Grey
Orange
Pink
Purple
Red
White
Yellow

Least favorite

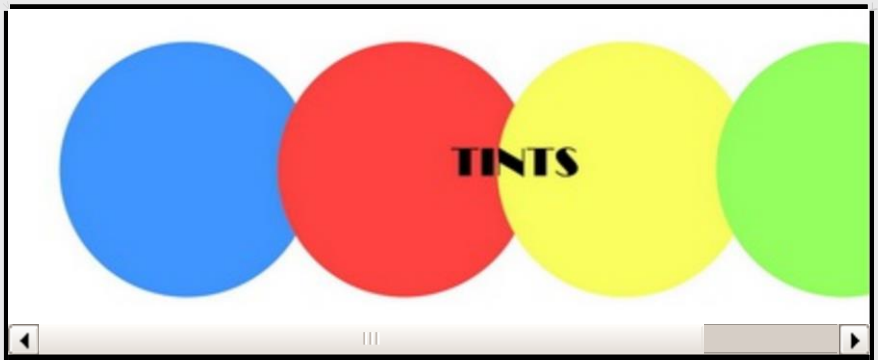
Black
Blue
Brown
Green
Grey
Orange
Pink
Purple
Red
White
Yellow

Comments

10. Which group of colors would you prefer? *



Shades



Tints

Color preferences (cont.)

LOGIC Hidden unless: Question #10 contains any ("Shades")

11. Which towel color would you prefer to buy (given that other features are the same)? *

Please leave brief comment why you choose this particular choice.

Comments

LOGIC Hidden unless: Question #10 contains any ("Tints")

12. Which towel color would you prefer to buy (given that other features are the same)? *

Please leave brief comment why you choose this particular choice.

Comments

LOGIC Hidden unless: Question #10 contains any ("Shades")

13. Which towel color would you prefer to buy (given that other features are the same)? *

Please leave brief comment why you choose this particular choice.

Comments

LOGIC Hidden unless: Question #10 contains any ("Tints")

14. Which towel color would you prefer to buy (given that other features are the same)? *

Please leave brief comment why you choose this particular choice.

Comments

LOGIC Hidden unless: Question #10 contains any ("Shades")

15. Which towel color would you prefer to buy (given that other features are the same)? *

Please leave brief comment why you choose this particular choice.

Comments

LOGIC Hidden unless: Question #10 contains any ("Tints")

16. Which towel color would you prefer to buy (given that other features are the same)? *

Please leave brief comment why you choose this particular choice.

Comments

Meanings of colors

Grocery bags

17. Which color of these paperbags for ***grocery bag*** product would you *associate* with the following ***target customers***? *

	Black	Blue	Brown	Green	Grey	Light purple	Orange	Pink	Purple	Red	White	Yellow
Single household	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Love bird - young couple without kids	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Family with kids	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Weekend party	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
High class, luxury	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Personal background

18. You are .? *

- Male
- Female
- Other

19. How long have you been living in Finland? *

- Less than 6 months
- 6-12 months
- 1-4 years
- 4-9 years
- More than 9 years

Thank You!

Thank you for your precious time and contribution to my study. Your response is voluntary, anonymous and confidential.

Appendix 1

thank you
danke
謝謝
ngiyabonga
teşekkür ederim
gracias
спасибо
рахмат
Баярлалаа
dank je
tapadh leat
mochchakkeran
go raibh maith agat
dziękuję
obrigado
sukriya
kop khun krap
grazie
arigatô
takk
dakujem
merci
Cảm ơn
мерси
terima kasih
감사합니다
ありがとう
ευχαριστώ
bedankt
hvala
mauruuru
köszönöm
sagolun
taiku
dankon
akun
enkosi
sobodi
dekuji
mèsi
najis tuke
kam sah hamnida
rahmat
tanemirt
rahmet
diolch
dhanyavadagalu
shukriya
mercé
djiere dieuf
tau
дякую
mamnun
trugar
mahalo
paldies
grazzi
misaotra
matondo
blagodaram
vinaka
спасибі
mersi
kia ora
barka
welalin
tack
spas
faafetai lava
kiitos
dankie
nanni
nandri
dhanyavad
bayarlalaa
gràcie
chnorakaloutioun
gratias ago
gràcies
sulpáy
xiexie
তোমাকে ধন্যবাদ

Survey cover letter

Dear all,

I am Trang Duong, a student of International Business (NINBOS09) from Turku University of Applied Sciences (Turun Ammattikorkeakoulu). At the moment I am writing my bachelor thesis about **COLOR AND ITS UTILIZATION IN E-MARKETING** – *the application in Finnish environment from the consumer perspective*.

Therefore, it is vital for me to receive your opinions – as a consumer living in Finland - about color and visual elements towards online shopping behavior.
The survey will only take approximately 5 minutes to answer, and your answers will have a hugely valuable contribution to my thesis writing.

Here is the link to the survey: http://edu.surveygizmo.com/s3/1424472/How-do-Finnish-inhabitants-respond-to-colors-and-visual-elements-when-shopping-online-copy-October-24-2013

The survey will be available for answers from Thursday 24.10.2013 to mid-night Sunday 03.11.2013.

I greatly appreciate that you take your precious time to fill out the survey. Your responses will help us understand more about the roles of color and visual components in online marketing as well as how marketers should attract consumers in your preferred manner in the Finnish context. Your responses are voluntary, anonymous and confidential. Responses will not be analyzed individually.

Best regards,

Trang Duong

P/s: the survey contains images; therefore it is recommended that you take it with your computer for better loading time.

References of survey questions

Question number	Question content	Theory	Author
1b	Actual online purchase frequency	Searching for product and service information were more important aspects of Internet behavior than actual purchases.	Solomon ym. 2010
1c	Reasons of rare/no actual online purchase	Why Internet users do not buy online	eMarketer Inc. 2011
2 + 3	Roles of 5 senses when shopping for food products in conventional stores and via the Internet	Roles of 5 senses in marketing and consumer behavior	Jansson-Boyd 2010; A. K. 2010; Solomon ym. 2010
4	First impression factor of an e-commerce website	Key elements of an e-commerce website	Daniel 2011
5	Score the attraction of factors of advertisements and promotional emails	Techniques to gain attention concerning presentation of marketing messaging	Blackwell ym. 2006; Evans ym. 2006
6	BUY NOW button color's attention power	Contrasting - Red beats green experiment	Porter, J. 2011
		Color's attracting attention ability depends on surrounding colors	Evans ym. 2006; Jansson-Boyd 2010
7	BUY NOW button color's motivation power	Color can evoke different emotions and motivate actions	Evans ym. 2006; Solomon ym. 2010
8	Power of color	Studies data	Embry 1984; Modern Office Technology 1989; Johnson 1992; Morton 2005 ; Jansson-Boyd 2010
11 -> 16	Towel colors experiment	Fancy names can have larger impacts than generic names in consumer decision	Skorinko ym. 2006
19	Living time in Finland	Color preferences are influenced by culture and living environment	Scott-Kemmis 2013
		Milestones are roughly based on Finnish citizenship application requirements	Finnish Immigration 2013

List of selecting reasons in towel colors experiment

ID	Group	Blue			Brown			Green		
		Color choice	Color name	Reason	Color choice	Color name	Reason	Color choice	Color name	Reason
9	shades	Light blue	Ocean = fancy	The blue one is too shiny I guess	Light brown	Brown = generic	Mocha isn't a color for towels.	Light green	Sage = fancy	The green one is a little too dark
17	shades	Dark blue	Blue = generic	The stronger color appeals to me as more likeable	Light brown	Brown = generic	The mocha is a bit too dark. The lighter color looks a bit softer in this case.	Light green	Sage = fancy	Oh what a lovely sage color :)
22	tints	Dark blue	Ocean = fancy	Brighter colors standout	Dark brown	Brown = generic	Strong color make a stronger statement	Light green	Green = generic	The brighter color stands out
28	shades	Dark blue	Blue = generic	The 1st one it's more intense and it attracts me more than the 2nd one, which seems like it's faded.	Dark brown	Mocha = fancy	Same reason as above, the 2nd color seems again a bit faded and I prefer stronger ones.	Light green	Sage = fancy	It's a hard choice. For a green tone, the second one is more pleasant to the eye for me, and it keeps the tone, but still the first one it's really pretty and I would have a hard time deciding.
31	tints	Dark blue	Ocean = fancy	just because those colors are more pleasant for my eyes	Light brown	Mocha = fancy	just because those colors are more pleasant for my eyes	Light green	Green = generic	just because those colors are more pleasant for my eyes
35	shades	Light blue	Ocean = fancy	Ocean looks more expensive - blue looks cheap	Light brown	Brown = generic	Brown looks high-class	Light green	Sage = fancy	Sage looks fresher
41	tints	Light blue	Blue = generic	The shade is closer to turquoise which is a color I like, but also a towel with a light color	Dark brown	Brown = generic	The mocha is too dull and lifeless and the brown seems warm	Dark green	Sage = fancy	The green is too bright and would potentially clash with decorative colors.

				wouldn't fade so quickly!			and cuddly like a teddy bear.			
48	shades	Dark blue	Blue = generic	I like darker colors compared to light ones	Dark brown	Mocha = fancy	I like darker colors compared to light ones	Dark green	Green = generic	I like darker colors compared to light ones
49	shades	Light blue	Ocean = fancy	It seems cleaner	Light brown	Brown = generic		Light green	Sage = fancy	
53	tints	Light blue	Blue = generic	Feel lighter	Dark brown	Brown = generic	Feel cleaner	Light green	Green = generic	Feel lighter
58	tints	Dark blue	Ocean = fancy	In this color, the quality of the product seems higher.	Dark brown	Brown = generic	Same reason: darker seems softer	Dark green	Sage = fancy	Darker is a more beautiful color, but it also looks softer
60	tints	Dark blue	Ocean = fancy	The blue one looks like hospital or something, Ocean has more style	Dark brown	Brown = generic	More feeling in darker one.	Light green	Green = generic	More lively
69	shades	Dark blue	Blue = generic	This blue is more decorative, the other one is baby-blue.	Light brown	Brown = generic	I think the one I chose would fit better in my bathroom; the other one is a bit masculine.	Light green	Sage = fancy	I didn't like either of them but the dark one is Christmas-green which is why I chose the other one.
72	shades	Dark blue	Blue = generic	It is a deeper color and looks more adult like	Light brown	Brown = generic	Looks cleaner	Light green	Sage = fancy	Brighter color
76	tints	Dark blue	Ocean = fancy	looks more expensive and I just like the color more	Light brown	Mocha = fancy	i like the color more and it fits better to my apartment	Light green	Green = generic	Happier color
77	tints	Dark blue	Ocean = fancy	I love the color	Light brown	Mocha = fancy	Mocha will be an appropriate color with the general structure with others stuffs in my house	Light green	Green = generic	This color seems to have more positive feelings