THE
COLOUR
HANDBOOK

How to use colour
in commerce and industry

E P DANGER

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Preface

This book provides a guide to colour principles, colour selection techniques, colour usage and the characteristics of basic hues analysed under about a hundred different headings. It provides a convenient source of reference for all those who are concerned with the selection of hues, whether for the decoration of environments such as offices and factories; for the decoration of selling environments such as shops and catering establishments; for graphical applications such as packaging and print; for consumer products generally; for industrial products such as plant and paper; and for any other application which falls within these broad limits. It will be of help to all those who need to find a practical basis for the selection of colour, a basis which will stand up to argument, to the vagaries of committees and to the prejudices of individuals. In any commercial application colour should never be chosen without good reason, and personal preferences should be eschewed.

The book is concerned primarily with the use of colour in achieving maximum sales and optimum working conditions and therefore with the marketing, selling and productivity aspects of colour. It includes a summary of the principles of light and colour, including an explanation of trends; notes on colour usage and how to select colour; detailed lists of the characteristics of colour that are especially useful in marketing and environmental contexts; and an exhaustive colour catalogue which details the characteristics and uses of each basic hue and each type of colour. Terms commonly used when working with colour are defined, and there is an index to light and colour characteristics.

The overall aim has been to provide an answer to questions that arise in the course of everyday work, not about the technicalities of pigments or process colour, which are well served by other sources of information, but about the likes and dislikes of ordinary people. So far as is known, there is no other source of information which covers the same breadth of field or which contains so much information in a succinct form. A good deal of published information, supported by well-conducted research, is available, but it cannot easily be consulted or applied to everyday problems. This book tries to summarise available data in a form which facilitates easy reference. It is not anticipated that it will become out of date very quickly, and it will therefore constitute a permanent source of reference. However, no claim is made that it will provide the answer to any, and every, question. Many questions require individual investigation.

The material is intended for management generally and particularly for marketing management, but it will be of interest and help to all those who are concerned with choice of colour and with the likes and dislikes of customers, including advertising agents, architects, designers, interior decorators, decoration contractors and retailers; above all, it will be of maximum assistance to all those responsible for the use and selection of colour in selling applications.

Colour recommendations for individual products or situations are not provided, because each case needs to be studied in its own context, but it does provide a starting point by formulating guidelines and an explanation of the methods to be adopted together with an index to the various uses and characteristics of each individual hue.

Some duplication of material has been inevitable in the interests of more convenient reference but it is hoped that this has been kept to an acceptable minimum. The contents are based on my own studies, researches, files and practical experience and reflect knowledge acquired in my practice as a colour research consultant over nearly thirty years and in making colour recommendations to many well-known companies. They also include the results of an extensive study of published information dealing with colour and associated subjects and extending over many years. In addition, I have had the inestimable advantage of access to the files and experience of Faber Birren, the world's leading authority on colour, whom I have been privileged to call a friend and associate for many years. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Mr Birren for permission to use his material in this work.

The plan of the book

The book falls naturally into three parts:

I   The Principles of Light and Colour
II   The Principles of Colour Selection
III   Colour Catalogue.

The first part includes the basic information about light and colour which must be applied to a specific situation in order to achieve the objective of selecting colours which have practical benefit.

The second part explains the method of applying the basic information to five broad categories and how colour can be used to maximum effect in each category; it outlines the principles involved in finding the right hues and provides guidelines for the selection process. The five categories are:

- productive environments such as offices and factories
- selling environments such as shops and restaurants
- graphical applications such as packaging and print
- consumer products, particularly those used in the home
- industrial products such as equipment and semi raw materials.

The third part is a comprehensive guide to the use of colour, subdivided by hue. Each hue heading includes the uses of the hue in some twenty-five separate applications, the characteristics of the hue analysed under nearly sixty

headings and some general notes on the character of the hue also analysed under a number of headings.

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