Using Graphic Design to Create Packaging for Myers-Briggs Personality Candles

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Abstract

Throughout history, art has been used to communicate ideas, stimulate the imagination, and engage the senses. In recent times, with the advancement of graphic design in the art industry, creative boundaries have been pushed in the pursuit of innovative design approaches. Design is utilized not only to convey artistic meaning but also to engage the viewers' senses and influence buyers' decisions. Some consumers associate designs with different moods or feelings, and color and visual design can powerfully encapsulate personality. This paper and associated creative work show the versatility of graphic design to create candle packaging inspired by each of the 16 Myers-Briggs personality types.

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Introduction

Art is one of the most universal forms of communication. It surpasses language barriers and bridges cultural divides; it unifies humanity in a way that words often cannot. As such an integral part of the human experience, it also has a lot to say about an individual's personality. The visual arts are not only a form of communication, but they are also an expression of personality. They can be used to encapsulate the individual personality types of people through their aesthetic use of color, symmetry, patterns, and other aspects of design (Cao et al., 2018). Different personality types have different preferences and cognitive functions, and visual design is one of the primary ways of expression. Art itself takes on the individual's personality and reflects their traits through the colors and aesthetic qualities of various mediums such as graphic design (Cao et al., 2018). The visual arts can be used to represent the aesthetic qualities of different personality types (such as Myers-Briggs, Big Five, etc.) through specific design choices tailored to different personalities' preferences.

Candles are prime examples of products that connect the senses while also capturing the essence of personality. Through the design of the labels, fonts, and color scheme, the candle packaging communicates to the buyer both the personality and the mood of the product. The designs themselves take on personality and visually influence the buyers in their decision making. This intersection between personality types—specifically, the Myers-Briggs—the senses, and visual design can be most fully researched through the creative development of candle packaging.

Brief History of Design

Although art history has become a well-developed discipline, the history of graphic design is often relegated as a sidenote. However, there are many parallels between the development of traditional artforms and the more modern branch of graphic design. Before the development of written language, humanity has used art to communicate. The earliest precursors of visual communication stem back to early cave drawings, with the introduction of type through Sumerian cuneiform occurring somewhere around 3000 B.C (Meggs & Purvis, 2016). These early cave drawings incorporated the first uses of color and abstract shapes, both of which feature predominantly in the area of graphic design (Meggs & Purvis, 2016). The use of pictograms continued to develop through the Egyptians' complex system of hieroglyphics, which exhibited a strong sense of design in its ornamental aspects (Meggs & Purvis, 2016). Uniquely innovative and forward-thinking, the Egyptians were also responsible for the first illustrated manuscripts, beginning a tradition used often for holy books in Christianity, Islam, and other religions (Meggs & Purvis, 2016). Illuminated manuscripts were popular forms of visual communication throughout history which culminated perhaps most famously in the stunning vibrancy of the Limbourg brothers' painted books (Kleiner, 2017).

Popularly credited as the first designer, Leonardo da Vinci embodied the technical skill of designers (Bürdek, 2015). The introduction of the moveable type printing press by Gutenberg revolutionized the design world and led to the mass-production of art prints, books, and other forms of media to the general public. Printing became the catalyst for typography and other elements of design to gain traction and popularity throughout Europe, establishing the roots for graphic design (Meggs & Purvis, 2016). The dawning of the Renaissance brought with it the

further development of graphic design, particularly in Venice, where the work of Nicolas

Jenson—one of history's best typographers—developed Roman, Greek, and Gothic fonts that

were published in over 150 books during that time (Meggs & Purvis, 2016). The resurgence of

interest in Egyptian hieroglyphics occurring during this time led to the precursors to modern

graphic design as artists and designers began to incorporate symbols in their work (Meggs &

Purvis, 2016).

Type remained the central focus of graphic design for the next several centuries, with

such typefaces as Baskerville in England, Didot in France, and Bodoni in Italy emerging during

the 1700s (Meggs & Purvis, 2016). According to Meggs & Purvis (2016), Bewick's publication

of *General History of Quadrupeds* in 1790 "might be called the lyrical envoi of a three-and-a-

half century period of graphic design and printing that began with Gutenberg in Mainz" (pp. 143-

145). The Industrial Revolution led to increasingly mechanical-looking type as well as the

introduction of sans-serif fonts in the 1800s (Meggs & Purvis, 2016). The Arts & Crafts

Movement of the late 1800s signaled a return to more illustrative work, with William Morris as a

leading figure of design due to his detailed patterns, and Art Nouveau breathed new life into

graphic design (Meggs & Purvis, 2016). Art Nouveau branched out of the Arts & Crafts

movement with a distinct difference in style. Fluid forms morphed into the designs, rather than

simply adorning the page as mere decoration; this signaled a transition in graphic design to being

functional and organic, rather than a mere mechanical process or added decoration (Meggs &

Purvis, 2016).

The 20th century ushered in bolder, more modern design influenced by the contemporary

art movements of the day, such as Surrealism and Expressionism. Graphic design as it is known

today owes much of its existence to the Bauhaus movement, which successfully integrated

design with technology with the aim of producing products for consumers (Bürdek, 2015).

Modern-day graphic design is often incorporated into product design, and branding is a key

element of today's design world. Although it was relatively short-lived, "in dissolving fine- and

applied-art boundaries, the Bauhaus tried to bring art into a close relationship with life by way of

design, which was seen as a vehicle for social change and cultural revitalization" (Meggs &

Purvis, 2016, p. 353). Typography and design continued to morph rapidly over the remainder of

the 20th century as technology developed, and today's graphic design is an accumulation of

styles, typefaces, and colors from over the centuries. In recent decades, the artistic capabilities of

graphic design have become fully realized and embraced, and it is now a powerful form of visual

communication which can even be used to encapsulate personality.

Literature Review

Preferences of Different Personality Types

One of the factors influencing visual design is the preferences of different personality

types. A research study conducted by Terwogt & Hoeksma (1995) suggests that different colors

have different emotional connections amongst various age groups. In a study involving three age

groups (7-year-olds, 11-year-olds, and adults), the results suggested a partial connection between

color and emotion preferences and how the colors are combined with an emotion (i.e. red with

anger). Particularly in the youngest group, the results showed there to be at least a partial

connection between emotion and color preferences (Terwogt & Hoeksma, 1995). While it does

not specifically deal with personality types in the study, it does reveal an existing connection

between color and individual preferences, which varies with age and by person.

A study by Lange & Rentfrow (2007) suggests that color preference can be used to predict individual personality traits using such personality scorers as Strong's Basic Interest Inventory and Cattell's 16PF (Lange & Rentfrow, 2007). In fact, they propose that the reason people prefer different colors is because of their individual personalities. For instance, since introverted people spend a lot of time in their own heads, they possess a higher amount of internal arousal than extroverts. Since red is a color associated with arousal, introverts are more likely to prefer calming colors such as blue that counteract the arousal red would cause, while extroverts could gravitate towards bolder colors that boost their internal arousal (Lange & Rentfrow, 2007).

Research already indicates that personality has an impact on music tastes, and Gridley (2013) asserts that personality is also a valuable way of measuring individual aesthetic preferences when it comes to the visual arts. In Moss (2017) book on personality and design, she covers the results of various studies on different personalities' design preferences. One study explored the preferences of Myers-Briggs types regarding art and showed that extroverted and sensing types had a preference for realistic art, thinking and judging types for geometric art, and introverted and intuitive types for expressionistic art. Different MBTI types have different artistic tendencies, which is reflected in their attraction or aversion to the visual arts. A study by Gridley (2004) involving 27 art collectors who were administered a Myers-Briggs personality test concluded that 70% of the art collectors had intuitive traits. There exists a link between collecting art and possessing artistic qualities, and therefore, it can be reasonably deduced that intuitive personalities will be more likely to enjoy artistic designs.

As such an important element of visual design, color is one of the primary ways researchers have seen personality correlations. An original study by Rico (2015) investigated the relationship between color combination preferences and personality types, concluding that extroverts were fare more likely to choose red-orange and violet when given random color combinations than introverts or independent types, who gravitated towards less bold color schemes. While some studies showing the connection between individual colors and personalities exist, this is a new area of research, and as such, there are gaps that need to be filled. However, it can reasonably be inferred from the aforementioned studies that personality has a bearing on preferences in the visual arts and color choices.

Design as an Expression of Personality Aesthetics

An interesting study by Harrington and Loffredo (2001) explores the dynamic between personality type and life satisfaction in a group of 97 college students. The results from this show that intuitive Myers-Briggs types scored higher in personal growth due to their tendency to look for change and possibilities (Harrington & Loffredo, 2001). Additionally, feeling types are perceived as warmer and friendlier than thinking personalities; as such, they also scored higher on personal growth (Harrington & Loffredo, 2001). These findings help inform the design process as it applies to the Myers-Briggs. For instance, when creating a design that encapsulates aspects of a feeling personality, warmer colors or more organic textures could be used to emulate their agreeableness and empathy. This interesting dichotomy between personality and design translates to other areas as well. An article by Arango (2010) discusses how introversion and extroversion affect home décor preferences and styles. Thinking personalities preferred cooler tones and more modern décor, while feeling types gravitated towards warm colors and wood or

other natural textures (Arango, 2010). In this way, even the design of living spaces

communicates personality and acts as a visual representation of a personality's own aesthetic.

Conveying Mood and Personality

Though perhaps not the first association many would make with graphic design, it can be

used to convey personality. Using a personality scoring network, researchers qualitatively and

quantitatively determined that color, font weight, negative space, and symmetry all influence the

personalities attributed to graphic designs (Cao et al., 2018). For example, according to Cao, by

increasing the negative space, the design takes on a more modern personality while the use of a

green and orange color scheme suggests a fresh personality (Cao et al., 2018). Hence, aesthetic

design choices have the power to influence people's perceptions of designs and the personalities

that these designs convey. These findings impact the development of packaging (i.e. color

schemes, font choices, and logo design) for candles inspired by personality types.

There are many different methods of categorizing personality, including the Big Five,

which indexes personalities based on different traits (Hampson, 1999). However, the Myers-

Briggs remains one of the standard personality systems and will be the primary focus of this

paper. The most well-known characteristics of the Myers-Briggs types are probably *introverted*

and *extroverted*. Introverts require solitude and independence, as opposed to socially stimulated

extroverts who gain a sense of energy from interactions with people (Carlyn, 1977). According

to Carlyn (1977), sensing types have a much higher interest in tangible, hands-on careers and

experiences, while intuitive types enjoy the abstract and theoretical concepts. Feeling types

possess a strong sense of empathy and highly value relationships with others, and thinking types

tend to be much more organized and strategic in their decisions (Carlyn, 1977). Similarly,

judging personalities thrive on structure and are chronic planners, in contrast to the more spontaneous perceiving personalities (Carlyn, 1977).

Additionally, while graphic design is capable of conveying personality, it has also come to light that different personality types have color preferences and unique artistic inclinations. The results of an aforementioned study by Gridley (2004) regarding art collectors suggest that Intuitive types are more likely to have natural artistic tendencies. These findings correlate with the personality aspect of candle package design and help with the crafting of designs to match different Myers-Briggs (specifically, Intuitive versus Sensing) personality types. Another study revealed that color preference can also be used to accurately predict personality traits in Strong's Basic Interest Inventory (BSI) and Catell's 16PF (Lange & Rentrow, 2007).

Engaging an Audience

While it is capable of embodying personality traits, visual art also has a powerful impact on product design and engaging an audience. It is evident that design has a positive effect on consumers' response to products (Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2008). Though some products do not lend themselves well to the visual arts, luxury products in particular had a positive correlation between visual design and consumer response ((Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2008). When creating design packaging, it is important to keep in mind the mood the product will evoke in consumers, since emotions and moods are one of the most powerful forms of influence for the human mind (Soars, 2009).

Aesthetically pleasing candle packaging creates a heightened interest in the product and can improve the quality of the consumer's experience. The use of aesthetic visual design in

products can increase the value of the product itself (Bloch, 1995). Aesthetics are important

regardless of the type of product and can improve the customers' sensory experiences with the

product (Bloch, 1995). The aesthetics can influence the buyers' response, improve their overall

experience with the product, and increase the likelihood of the product's financial success

(Bloch, 1995). Though the functionality of a product is important, consumers are still more likely

to choose an aesthetically pleasing product when given the choice between two products of the

same cost and functionality (Bloch, 1995). By creating designs that are pleasing to the eye and

unique in form, the product is much more likely to appeal to the customers and succeed on the

market (Bloch, 1995).

The style of the visual design may also impact the consumers. A positive linear

correlation exists between typical designs and consumer response, but young educated

consumers, innovative consumers, and consumers who are well-experienced with the product are

more inclined to choose atypical designs (Celhay & Trinquecoste, 2015). In low-risk scenarios,

consumers are also more likely to choose atypically designed products; as a whole, however,

consumers are more comfortable with familiarity (Celhay & Trinquecoste, 2015). These findings

affirm that using at least some typical design elements in the candle packaging will increase the

likelihood of consumers' positive response to products.

As one of the key elements of graphic design, color plays a crucial role in the perception

of consumers. It is one of the most important elements of branding design as it "distinguishes a

product's personality, draws attention to its attributes, and enables it to stand apart from those of

its competitors within a chaotic retail environment" (Klimchik & Krasovec, 2013, p. 85). Warm

colors (red, orange, and yellow) generate arousal and are even shown to affect physiology

through elevated blood pressure, while cool colors (blues and greens) produce a calming effect

(Breitsohl et al., 2017). Colors have different associations for brand packaging, dependent on

cultural context and audience (Klimchuk & Krasovec, 2013). When attempting to grab attention,

warm colors like red and orange can simulate energy, excitement, and enthusiasm from

consumers (Klimchuk & Krasovec, 2013).

Creating a Unique Brand Identity

In addition to communicating elements of personality types, visual design is capable of

creating an identity unique to the brand. According to Davis (2009), creating loyalty in a brand is

the most important aspect of branding. This visual identity of a brand appeals to consumers and

gains their interest and trust. The layout, color scheme, and patterns of candle packaging can

reflect not only the product itself but also the entire identity of the company and the perceptions

of consumers interested in the products (Davis, 2009). By skillful use of different design

elements, identities can be created for individual brands and products. One design element

through which brand identities are constructed is symmetry. Based on the arrangement of

elements in a visual composition, a brand can take on an entirely different aesthetic perception.

While symmetrical designs often suggest a stable or calm brand identity, consumers associate

asymmetrical logo designs with exciting brand identities (Luffarelli et al., 2019). Further studies

indicate that logo designs with symmetry were perceived positively by consumers (Bajaj &

Bond, 2017). In one particular study conducted by Bajaj & Bond (2017), 147 college students

were presented with two sets of 25 logos which they were asked to rank them using Aaker's five

personality dimensions. Results indicate that "brands were perceived to be more sincere when

their logos were more representative, elaborate and parallel, and brands were perceived to be

more sophisticated when their logos were more symmetric and round" (Bajaj & Bond, 2017, p. 83).

Active white space (AWS) impacts the way that designs communicate the identity of a brand. Retaining the core, identifiable elements of a brand but utilizing AWS to revamp the logos keeps the product fresh for consumers (Sharma & Varki, 2018). AWS is best suited for sophisticated, exciting, and sincere brand identities—*sincere* in this case denoting an honest or credible reputation that is attributed to the brand. Though this study was conducted with black and white logos, there may be a positive correlation with color logos as well, which would translate to the development of the logos on candle packaging.

Creative Process

For the creative aspect of this project, I separated the sixteen personality types into groups of four with their own unique color palettes and typeface and created a pattern that would unite each group of designs. I designed a label for each personality type candle, maintaining a consistent minimalistic design style. I wanted to emphasize the similarities between the types through cohesive typefaces, layouts, and colors while also making each label uniquely suited to that particular personality. The four groups (Analysts, Diplomats, Sentinels, and Explorers) are divided based on their dominant cognitive functions.

For the Analysts (INTJ, INTP, ENTJ, and ENTP), I went with a predominantly cool-toned blue and green color palette. The icons for each type incorporate predominantly linear forms and strive to emulate the intellectual, rational minds of Analyst personalities. The chess piece for the INTJ—which symbolizes their strategy and determination—is the only non-abstract design in this collection. For example, the ENTP design is an abstracted version of a thought

bubble, representative of their affinity for debate, while the INTP's icon is a puzzle piece that reflects their unconventionality. The icon for the ENTJ label evokes the image of a crown (alluding to their commanding leadership), as well as a standard line graph.

Calming and welcoming, the Diplomats (INFJ, INFP, ENFJ, and ENFP) earned a soft, soothing color palette of golds, blues, and purples. Overall form and linework remain the prominent elements in these designs. This collection contains more literal icons than the abstract Analysts. I decided that recognizable symbols suited these personalities best. I chose a flower to represent the ENFJ's altruistic, life-giving tendencies. The olive branch for the INFJ ties into the lotus flower for the INFP, both of which are recognizable symbols of peace. Perhaps the most unconventional choice, the prism for the ENFP is well-suited to this free-spirited personality's multidimensionality. Though spontaneous and lively, they "see it [life] through a prism of emotion, compassion and mysticism, and are always looking for a deeper meaning" (NERIS Analytics Limited, *Personality types*).

The Sentinels (ISFJ, ISTJ, ESFJ, and ESTJ) are beacons of stability and calm, so for this group, I chose bold reds and teals which exude a regal and solid presence. The icons for these personalities are more illustrative with thin line-work and are once again recognizable forms. The icon for the ISTJ is meant to resemble a Rubik's cube, an object befitting the balance and logic of this personality. The dove shows the gentle and traditional aspects of the ISFJ, and the house with flowers sprouting from the chimney exhibits the ESFJ's tendency for hospitality. My choice of a compass design resonates strongly with the ESTJ and their internal compass which makes them such powerful leaders. More than any other collection, this one demonstrates the coexistence of structure with softness.

Finally, for my fun-loving Explorers (ISFP, ISTP, ESFP, and ESTP), I attempted to capture their thirst for excitement with bright yellows/oranges, eye-catching purple, and a pop of blue. The colors and imagery are loose and explosive, and I wanted to emphasize shapes and creative energy with the icons. The integration of recognizable objects (i.e. lightbulb and party popper) with abstract shapes encapsulates the down-to-earth yet spontaneous personalities of these types. The party popper truly embodies the ESFP's playfulness, while the dramatic action of the comet shows the speed and daring of the ESTP. The design for the ISFP is the most abstract one in this collection and shows the inability of the ISFP to be boxed in, as well as their creative self-expression. Abstract meets realism in the ISTP, with the lightbulb interacting directly with the shapes that inhabit the collection and showcasing this type's ingenuity and optimism.
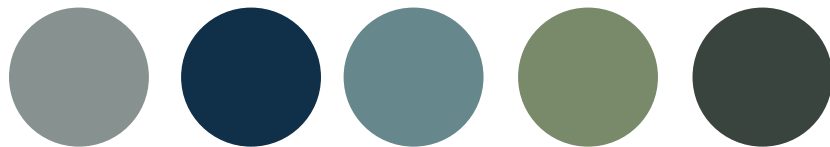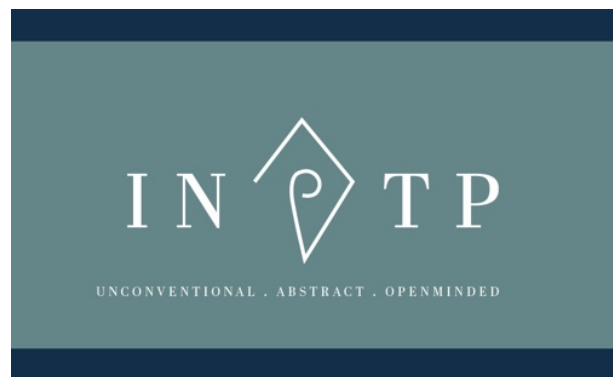
By keeping the same overall minimalistic layout for all sixteen personality types, I maintained unity through my creative designs. I wanted the culmination of my research to showcase the creative potential of graphic design elements (symmetry, spacing, typography, and color) to encapsulate personality. The visual arts can both appeal to different Myers-Briggs personality types and encapsulate the essence of some of their traits through aesthetic designs. As such an essential element of culture, the visual arts deserve to be studied in all their many forms. It is a valuable tool for understanding humanity better, and it is my hope that these designs fill a gap in research done surrounding graphic design.

Conclusion

In conclusion, graphic design can be used to create aesthetically pleasing logos and packaging for Myers-Briggs personality candles. By communicating mood and personality,
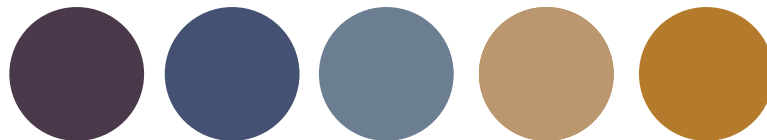
engaging an audience, and creating a brand identity, visual design can be leveraged to increase

the effectiveness of a product. Graphic design is a powerful tool for not only reaching an

audience but also representing different personalities. Through the creative designs of candle

packaging, graphic design can be used to evoke the aesthetic qualities that capture each of the

Myers-Briggs personality types. Although this is a relatively unexplored area of research with

room for continued growth, these candle label designs show the expansive capabilities of graphic

design to make innovative product packaging and appeal to different personality types.

The Analysts Designs

INITJ
DRIVEN . LOGICAL . HONEST

ENTJ
EFFICIENT . CHALLENGER . CONFIDENT

ENTP
DIRECT . INNOVATIVE . DEBATER

INTP
UNCONVENTIONAL . ABSTRACT . OPENMINDED

The Diplomats Designs

IN FJ
PEACEFUL . JUST . EMPATHETIC

EN FJ
ALTRUISTIC . PASSIONATE . SELFLESS

IN FP
WHIMSICAL . GENUINE . CARING

EN FP
ENTHUSIASTIC . FREE SPIRIT . SENSITIVE

The Sentinels Designs

The Explorers Designs

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