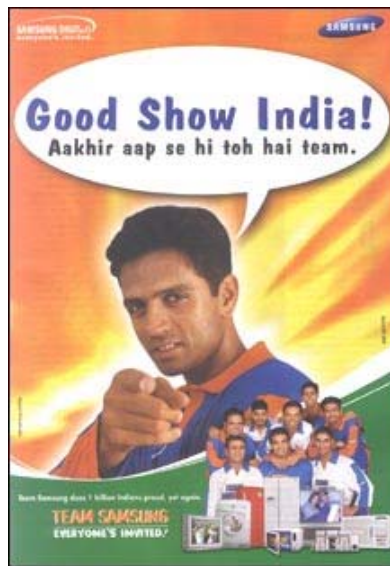


CHAPTER 5: Understanding Message Strategy

Lesson 18: Visualization & Layout**Learning Objectives**

- You will understand via this lesson the importance visualization.
- You will also understand the layout strategy and the elements involved in it.



In developing an ad, the most important activity is visualization. It is a process, which starts the design of the advertisement and results into the development of a finished ad layout in print.

When we talk of visualization, we talk about the art in advertising. In terms of print ad, it is the process of designing the ad. The ultimate outcome of the process of visualization is the layout.

A visualiser decides about the inclusion of different elements at the beginning of his work. His questions are:

- **Whether my advertisement will have headline?**

- **Whether there will be a sub-headline?**
- **Whether there would be a body copy? Whether to have illustration or a photograph?**
- **Whether to include slogan? Etc.**

At the second step, he foresees how all these elements will be appearing in the copy. The basic elements with which a visualizer works are:

- 1. Headline, sub-heads**
- 2. The body copy**
- 3. The illustration**
- 4. Logo signature**

There may be elements like:

- 1. Slogans**
- 2. Coupon**
- 3. Price**
- 4. Package**
- 5. Seal of approval**
- 6. Border**
- 7. Quality marks etc.**

At the commencement of his work he becomes intimate with the copy. Really' speaking, the visualisation process is shared by the copywriter and the creative director of visualization. They decide:

Whether the product should be featured?

Whether people should be featured; what they would be doing; will there be a background? Which type?

Should photos be used?

Or line illustrations and sketches?

How large the headline should be?

What components should make the final copy: the product?

The address and the name of the company? The picture?

Once he becomes clear about the components or elements he will include, he foresees their relevance to each other, to one another. How they would be placed in the copy? How the final product (advertisement copy) will look like?

Essentially it is a mental process of creating mental images of a well balanced whole made up of different elements. On paper, he makes '*thumbnails*' which are rough sketches of the various alternatives. This paper work is the starting point of the process of layout.

Visualizer operates under certain constraints: the space available, the type of paper on advertisement will be printed, whether it is black and white or color advertisement, the p technology employed etc.

Transformation from Visualisation to Layout

Once a visualiser exercises himself mentally and puts his pencil to paper, the shape of layout begins to emerge. It is very difficult to say where the process of visualisation ends and where the shape of layout begins. It is a smooth transition however, and we are moving from abstract ideas to concrete shapes. Each element is assigned a weight, depending upon its overall significance. Look any ad in print and see the basic percentage of space allotted to the headline, body copy and the visual, e.g., 30 p.c. for the headline, 50 p.c. for the visual and 20 p.c. for the copy. Each element is positioned. There is visual evidence on paper. The various possibilities are drawn separately- we call them *thumbnail sketches* or *first roughs*. They indicate the elements and their positions. Many thumbnails when made, give us an idea which one or more will best suit us, so that they can be made into larger sizes called *roughs* or *visuals*. These are made in actual ad sizes. All elements here are scribbled. As copy matter, only rough lines are put. Roughs are forerunners of comprehensiveCl.1i Roughs give an exact idea about the proportions and placement of elements.

Comprehensives or comps are more finished form of roughs. The body copy is pasted.

Headline lettering is done carefully. Photos and illustrations (actuals) are used.

Comprehensive comes very close to final *artwork*, which gives a finished advertisement complete with printer's instructions from which the plates, the stereotypes or electrotypes are made. I

In copy comping, first *greeking* is done in which copy is pasted into position. Secondly, there is *copyfitting in* which typed copy is converted into typography.

For idea visualisations for radio and TV, we have to create first a script with a series of TV screens (frames) that can accommodate thumbnail visuals, which vary from rough stick figures to photographs and comprehensive drawings suitable for client's approval. This topic is further elaborated in the chapter on copywriting.

Visualization and Creativity

In the visualization process, we require a flow of ideas - those ideas are obtained from many sources and using many techniques. We can pin down the problem and develop the advertisement copy accordingly. We can have a good database or briefing before visualization. There -can be some brain waves from the copywriter. We can employ Osborn's Brainstorming technique. We do meditation from analysis and synthesis of ideas.

The steps in the visualization process are those involved in any creative process.

Creative Process in Visualization

The following are the five principal stages in creative process:

- (i) **Saturation:** The manager becomes very intimate with the problem and its environment.
- (ii) **Deliberation:** A perfect knowledge of the environment and attendant data is

essential for creativity.

(iii) **Incubation:** The subconscious activity precedes a fresh approach. The creative mind forms a pattern of the problem by combining the scattered data. Then the conscious mind should be switched off from the problem and the subconscious mind is allowed to take over. The conscious mind is the seat of logic and the subconscious mind directs itself to problems, which are of interest to the conscious mind. When the conscious mind is relaxed the subconscious mind works to give some of the best ideas.

(iv) **Illumination:** Here an idea actually flashes across the mind of the decision-maker. Very often this happens while sitting in a cafeteria, driving a vehicle, strolling in a leisurely fashion or in some such state of relaxation.

(v) **Accommodation:** The original idea is modified, reframed or polished and made to practical use.

Creative process demands free exchange of ideas, application of imagination to problems, group understanding and lack of conditioned thinking.

Creative persons are gifted or can be trained. They have ideational fluency, high I.Q., open mindedness, uninhibited personality with a sensitivity and flexibility. He sets problems for himself and seeks their solutions. He is independent in thought and action.

Walter Mendes, Creative Director, Clarion says: "I visualise an advertisement first before I write it. The test of all good advertising is that you should be able to see the end product."

Once the final copies are made, a presentation is made before the client. These presentations should be structured, keeping the objective of the communication and the audience in view.

We shall present a brief discussion of the sizes and shapes here. The copy writing forms the material of a subsequent chapter. The rest of the elements have been discussed in the chapters of layout. These elements should contribute to the basic objective of the

communication.

Size and Shape

Different ad sizes in the print media are possible, the budget being the major constraint. Within the given size~ we get allotted certain space which can take many steps, each shape being a device of non-verbal communication. A square shape shows a staid or static image. It also shows a formal image. Against this, a rectangular with longer side placed vertically shows dynamism, and with longer side placed horizontally, shows tranquility. The shape should be consistent with the message.

Let us consider how lines are interpreted. Horizontal lines show stability and a state of restfulness, Vertical lines show speed, growth and movement. Several vertical lines act as barriers, and to some extent express strength and power.

Combined together, vertical and horizontal lines express a state of equilibrium and a sense of satisfaction.

Diagonal lines are thought to be challenging, and denote utmost speed. Diagonals also direct our eye movement.

Curves show elegance and beauty. Triangles have a combination of both dynamic and static and can also communicate caution against danger. Circles are likened to planets. They show continuity, eternity and peace. What they enclose command our attention immediately. There is a movement around the circumference.

Visual Thinking

As children, we took the first opportunity to express our internal illusions with the help of 'pencils and crayons. In kindergarten classes, children love to feel the shapes and see the things in order to learn. Kids invent their own shapes on paper or in clay. The thought process in childhood is based on perception. As we grow older, we put inhibitions on our

freedom of visual perception. The child in us who started scribbling at the slightest suggestion disappears.

What is visual thinking? It is a language whose effectiveness depends upon its flexibility and willingness to experiment. Winters and Milton suggest vizthink method as the first step in visual thinking. Vizthinking is essentially idea visualization. The copy should be conducive to vizthinking. There should be collaboration between the copywriter and the art director. Copywriters need not be artists, but they can think visually. They can do a little drawing, sketching, doodling or thumb nailing. In other words, we are recording mind's perceptions by doing so.

The central selling message and the copy appeal governs visualization. Marketing research also provides the basis for visualization.

The ad should try to connect the idea with a proper visual. A single idea can be visually expressed in a number of ways. For example, an embrace, can express love by a look, by caressing or by a kiss. We also have to choose between a description and a visual. Should a tandoori chicken dipped in butter be described in words? Can we instead give a picture - either an illustration or a photograph of the chicken? The answers are not simple. But we can evoke greater response by combining a picture with carefully crafted copy. In isolation, both the picture and the words are not so effective. We should always try to express an idea in pictures in a number of ways. Later, the product is taken into account. The target audience is considered. Mother's love for a baby is shown by a picture of mummy gently applying Johnson's Baby Oil on the tender skin of the baby. The visualizer must have enough background information to visualize properly. The ultimate aim is to evoke response from the target audience.

The left side of the human brain is seat of reasoning and verbal skills. It is responsible for processing the information step-by-step. The right side of the human brain provides with intuition. It processes the information simultaneously. While we dream, the right hemisphere of the brain works over-time, suppressing the left. Instinctive products, which are brought on a whim or a fancy like a perfume, would be steeped into sensual

appeals to the right hemisphere. A complex product like computer must be sold on the basis of reasoning that appeals to the left hemisphere of the brain. In emotional ads, the artist carries the larger burden of the appeal, with less emphasis on words. In rational ads, the copywriters are allowed full play of words, while the artist just gives definite and distinct pictures, may be outlines. It is, however, important not to over-emphasize the separation of the functions of either side. Music appeals\ to both the hemispheres..

Use of Similies and Metaphors

Thought process is transformed by figures of speech like similies and metaphors into more articulate information. These tools help us to organize our complex' thoughts into a definite message. Abstraction becomes clearer. Similies are comparisons with the use of words of comparison, e.g., 'You are *as brave as* a lion.' Metaphors are comparisons, which drop the comparative words, e.g., 'You are a lion.' Similies and metaphors are used to 'fit an idea.' In idea visualization, they are a part of word-picture association.

Visualization Tips

1. Use an illustration of a product alone, either a line drawing or a photograph against simple background, e.g., Bentex watch is shown alone with the headline 'when was the last time you made a woman's hand tremble?'
2. Use an illustration of a product in a setting, e.g., Mont Blanc pens are shown on a dial or a sofa- set is shown in a living room.
3. Use an illustration of a -product in use, e.g., a woman in is using cellular phone a restaurant to talk to her beloved. Similarly, model Anupama Verma uses Braun Silk Epil to get silky smooth legs.
4. Use an illustration of the benefit resulting from the use of the product, e.g., a woman's hair with a bounce and shine with the implication that this is due to the use of a shampoo with a conditioner.
5. Use an illustration of the loss or disadvantage from not using the advertised product, e.g., Cease Fire, a fire extinguisher's ad. A devastating fire shatters the woman's happy

home, of course in her fantasy.

6. Dramatize the headline. This is a strong visualization. In a well-conceived dramatization it is difficult to say whether the concept of the headline came first or the concept of illustration, e.g., BPL's TEIO Large Screen TV ad has the head-line 'Live Thunder dramatized as a TV set with four wheels attached giving a look of a sports-car.
7. Dramatize the evidence, e.g., Whisper sanitary napkins absorb ink on them, and yet give dry feel.
8. Dramatize a detail. The illustration may emphasize a small area of the product or may enlarge a detail, e.g., Raymond's trousers magnify special stitches at the pockets.
9. Use a comparison, e.g., Luxol Silk Paint of Berger is compared with a flowing satin saree of a woman.
10. Use contrast, e.g., before and after pictures as in a Bullworker ad - first a skinny chap who later becomes a muscular he-man.
11. Use cartoons. Cartoons are used in print ads as well as in TV commercials. Recently Rasna TV commercial used animation of a dinosaur.
12. Use trade-characters like Gattu for Asian Paints, tiger for Goodlass Paints, MRF man for MRF tyres and Maharaja for Air India.
13. Use charts and diagrams while making rational appeals in scientific copy. In consumer goods advertising, along with these, a less technical picture should also be used as a warmer.
14. Use cross-section diagram, e.g., inside of a car
15. Use symbolism, e.g., Merrill Lynch uses a bull to show their bullish investment sentiment.
16. Use abstraction, e.g., Wool-mark to show pure quality of wool.
17. Use continuity strip. A series of photographs set like a filmstrip are used.
18. Use mood-setting illustration. Here the product is romanticized. It may be set against a romantic landscape. Cosmetics use this approach.
19. Use a product illustration in its package.
20. Use illustration of components or raw materials of a product, e.g., Cadbury milk chocolate that combines cocoa and milk.

USP or Unique Selling Proposition

USP makes the consumer identify the brand with a particular benefit. Brand stimulates an association of the benefit. But this very association is the benefit. Marlboro gave a cowboy image via USP. It is a focused identity, a narrow identity. The company was the first to do it. Perhaps, brand image gives a rather diffuse identity, open textured identity. It established itself via the rational and logical appeal way.

You should remember that the competitors can copy the USP, hence the key lies in the differentiating the offer.

So I ask you what is this USP?

According to Rosser Reeves, a USP is:

- **The creation of a distinct Brand position in the mind**
- **The product differentiator becomes the Brand differentiator**
- **Each ad must make a proposition to the customer. The benefit to the consumer should be said in the message. Dove soap, for example, contains $\frac{1}{4}$ moisturizer. Hence the benefit offered is that the skin will not dry up.**
- **The competitors should not have made that promise or proposition.**

Since we have discussed copy, visualization, headline and message, I need to tell you as to how we should integrate the above in the advertisement. This is done through **layout**. Which is basically arranging the various elements of an advertisement to give it an essence. The following are the ingredients of a good layout.

- ❖ **Background:** Could have picture, tiles, blocks, and graphics but should not overshadow the foreground.
- ❖ **Border:** Is the frame of the advertisement. Could be,
 - Heavy
 - Light

- Obvious
- Unobtrusive
- Plain
- Fanciful
- Useful
- Useless

The practice you must know is the elimination of border in today's context. Except when you have to present a key point, or a sales pitch then it could be used.

- ❖ **Heading:** This is the title of the ad. Should be short, but could be four, five or even six decked. Words in the heading should be short and verbs should be used to attract attention.
- ❖ **Illustration:** It is the dominating picture in the ad. It could be the product itself or a model. Large pictures are preferred than small ones but it is not a hard and fast rule. Small pictures are to make the copy comfortable. The main picture tries to position the picture. It can attract the right target audience by showing the right picture. People showing the product could be a better picture than the product itself. The illustration should show the benefit offered by the product.
- ❖ **Caption:** Used to describe the sub-title. It tells the story quickly, clearly and decisively. Sometimes difficult to locate. But it is an important part of the layout.
- ❖ **Coupon:** This is a part of the advertisement that enables a consumer to get in touch with the advertiser. The name and postal address is an integral part of any coupon. The offer or the request must follow in close heel. The obligation of the customer is given by their signature space. No hard and fast rule is there regarding the position of the coupon in the layout. Although in most of the advertisements it normally lies at the end. Both rectangular and triangular ones are in popular use. It is normally on the right hand side keeping in mind that most people are right handed.
- ❖ **Decoration:** Greater interest for the applicability of decoration is in the fact that it should supplement or emphasize the message of the advertisement as a whole. Heavy or light would be at the discretion of the layout person.

- ❖ **Mascot:** It is also known as the ‘Trade Character’ or ‘Trade Figure’. It may be defined as an illustration of either real or an imaginary figure or personality introduced into the advertisement to personalize the sales message or the name of the product or service. Maharaja of the Air India is a suitable example.
- ❖ **Logo or Name Plate:** This is the signature of the advertisement. The inclusion of the company’s name and address is not always important hence the logo or a specially designed image of the brand or the company can replace that. The popular logos of Tata, Mercedes Benz, Toyota, Star TV network, etc are a good example. The logo goes on to make the **Corporate Identity i.e. what does the company or the brand stands for?**

A Corporate Identity is important because:

- **Gives an image to the company and the brand in question.**
- **Gives a sense of pride to the employees.**
- **Attracts the talented people to the company.**
- **Positive influence on the ‘publics’ of the company.**
- **Audiences think of the company as per the desired image.**
- **Reduces the cost of communication by standardizing the system.**

Few examples of logos are as below:

- **Wipro:** Sunflower with five colors of rainbow. Wipro name is beneath it, followed by a phrase, ‘Applying Thought.’
- **Tata:** It is solidity. The image is that of the letter ‘T’ and seems to engulfing the entire world.
- **Coca Cola:** It is the complete name with a wave like image. Care free white surf across the bottle with red background.
- The logo of **Rai Foundation** is something **you** should tell me what it stands for.

A logo is the image your business portrays. It sets the potential clients position and interpretation of your company. With that in mind, look around you right now, and

count how many logos you see. Look at your computer screen, mouse, radio, bath towels, T-shirt, shoes, clothing tags, even your toothbrush and hairbrush. Every distinct image reminds you of a product or service. Next time your driving home from work, or are in a bus, notice how our world is painted with logos and images of existing entities which remind us of their products or services. **Distinct Identity** The good logos are the ones you remember because they've made an impression. They stand out in a crowd infested with products, such as a supermarket, where there can be up to 40,000 different logos and packages. The impact of a logo can be so powerful, it often means the difference between the success of your business or that of your competitor. **Small Business Challenge** Small businesses today face the ultimate challenge to create a long lasting solid first impression. Key issues in establishing corporate identity for a starting or small business rest in establishing goals, business plans and image. But most tend to sway away or forget that the first realization of your business is brought upon by the company logo. This important consideration in creating a corporate identity will enable the small business birth an existence in its field of choice and will show others that the company cares about its image.

You should remember what the logo does for the company.

- ✓ **The difference and distinction aid recognition.**
- ✓ **Ownership logically follows.**
- ✓ **There is pride in ownership.**
- ✓ **Corporate signature reinforces the pride of the company.**
- ✓ **It represents the personality of the company and its products.**

The **other issues in the layout** that you must look upon are:

- ❖ **Price:** Price is seldom the dominating feature in a layout, except when a discount or sale is mentioned. It is more or less associated with the cheapness of the product when a price is shown in the advertisement. The consumer should look at other features in the layout that will make it desirable for him to look at the price

naturally and would not associate negatively with it. The usage of price should be as minimal as possible.

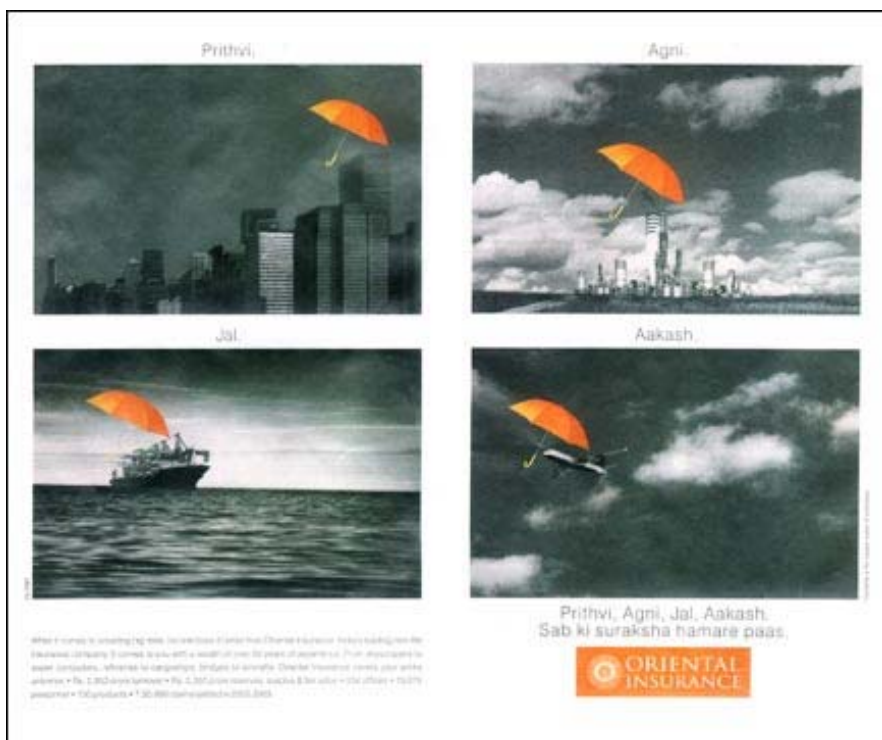
- ❖ **Product:** It refers to the representation of the product for sale. It could be featured in isolation, thrown up against heavy or futuristic background or by decoration. A number of photographs could be so put so as to form a well laid out composition. But it is advised to show it in practice.
- ❖ **Slogan:** As described earlier it is a 'Tabloid' sales argument. It is especially important in outdoor advertising. Its importance is in relation to the advertiser's message.
- ❖ **Space:** It goes on to describe the entire space that the advertiser has bought for sale. Whether it is half a page or it is 30-second spot on television.
- ❖ **Sub-heading:** It is a secondary heading. It may be employed to either supplement and support the heading or to 'pick out' the various selling points contained in the text. 2 guidelines should be followed for the inclusion of sub-heading. Firstly, to use them sparingly and secondly, to use them to pick out the selling points in the text only when the text is too 'heavy' to invite attention otherwise.
- ❖ **Text:** The copy or the reading matter is termed as text. It should not be too wide neither should it be too narrow. The consumer should be able to read the copy with ease. Lower case letters are better than capitals, expanded letters better than condensed and roman letters better read than italic. Spacing is very critical.
- ❖ **Trademark:** It is the word or design by which the commodity is defined. A registered trademark should always be included in the layout. It may form the background or be embodied in the border; it may dominate the heading or the nameplate.

You must understand that a particular balance must be brought out in the layout so that there is a flow in the sequence of the various elements of the layout.

So in a nutshell let me say that you must focus on the following 4 aspects of a layout:

1. **Heading**
2. **Illustration**
3. **Copy**
4. **Logo**

It is advised that you all look at ads in a different light from now on.



Please note the layout of the above ad, especially the beautiful integration of the foreground and background (umbrella & the 4 elements of nature). The logo, the headline, the illustration and the copy are a good example of how the 4 elements of layout are used.

Layout in a nutshell.

You could of course change it according to the aesthetics that you may seem good.

