Working with color

Whether you are producing color reports, memos, graphs, charts, overhead transparencies for presentations, color handouts, or design comps, there are a few things to keep in mind when using color.

- A large area of color looks more saturated (brighter) than a small area of the same color.

- A color looks brighter against a dark background than it does against a white background.

- Colors look different due to the background color or to the surrounding colors.

- The appearance of a color varies with the type and amount of light, for example fluorescent lighting versus sunlight.

General guidelines

- Keep a document or design simple and consistent.

- Select colors that look good together and that reinforce your message.

- Check your application for standard palettes to get you started.

- Use a color scheme of five or six shades, and in a series of images, use the colors in a consistent manner throughout the series.

- Use color to highlight the most important information, such as a bar or pie segment in a chart or graph.

- Use color to show relationships between objects, such as a range of values. Objects with a similar meaning or value should be in similar colors.

- Use color as graphic elements in the design of newsletters, logos, and brochures.

- Avoid red and green combinations; these colors are hard for people with red/green color blindness to distinguish.

Source: 070-9682-00 C4