

# The Application of Minimalism in Advertising Design

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## Abstract:

Minimalism represents a form of artistic expression that returns to its original nature, advocating the pursuit of order and monotonous life concept. In today's era, advertising has become an important part of life. The more advertisements disturb the mood, the more complicated information it contains is more difficult to digest, which makes people call for a simple way of visual communication, with more concise and clear elements as the key and essence as the reason. Minimalism comes with the times and is used as an important way of expression in advertising design.

## Keywords:

Advertising Design, Minimalism, Visual Elements

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## 1. Minimalism in Advertising

Minimalism originated in the 1960s. It was born in the United States as an art school. Then it was widely known in the European continent for its wide application in the field of painting and sculpture. As the name suggests, it is extremely simple and concise. It strives to bring clear visual elements into people's vision. Its artistic ideas and design concepts are often expressed as nature, monotonous color block combination, etc. it is an independent concept condensed from miscellaneous and complicated useless information and pure and real life. In a word, minimalism is not "nothingness" or "monotony", but driving away complexity and returning to simplicity.

The focus is not on "simplicity", but on "return", and return to simplicity, just like lines that are completely out of their own heart without decoration. The strokes of famous painters after thousands of painting volumes are not the same as those of ordinary people's graffiti. The consciousness and process of "return" is complex. Minimalism has the thickness and significance of precipitating visual images and returning to "truth".

Modern advertising design often piles up information and graphic elements in the form of visual impact with complex information to achieve eye-catching effect. Although it has a strong sense of substitution and attraction, it is easy to cause aesthetic fatigue, and even produce resistance to the whole information torrent of advertising. Minimalism in advertising design is characterized by bright color

composition, enhanced symbolism and abstractness, and integrated into the whole process of advertising design in a concise and clean way, so that people can obtain advertising information in a more concise way and enjoy a better visual experience.

## 2. The Application of Minimalism in Advertising Design

With the diversified development of advertising design and the change and development of the new media era, minimalism is also presented in the public field of vision with a kind of “simplification and re simplification”. As a design method with strong visual impact, minimalism is widely used in the field of advertising design.

### 2.1. Selection of Graphics

Take Nintendo, a video game design company, as an example Nintendo Switch (Figure 1) advertising is to adopt the minimalist design concept. The graphics in the video are three groups of arc-shaped rectangular edges, showing the characteristics of streamline outline. With the evolution of animation, the combination of letters and graphics around the graphics is unfolded. With a light sound, the graphics are closed, showing the modern sense of the overall design.



*Figure 1. Nintendo Switch.*

Generally speaking, red and white, two colors with strong color contrast, are selected to create a strong comparative difference by using a large area of red, so as to make people pay more attention to the graphics outlined in the white part, and convey the design concept of this game device of Nintendo company with concise copywriting and crisp “click” sound. The design of advertising graphics and the overall shape of this game console, that is, the product image with the plate-shaped display screen as the main body and the left and right control handles as the auxiliary, are completely outlined, and the extremely simplified advertising design is presented in a deeper level, conveying Nintendo’s simple and design sense of product design concept, giving people a refreshing sense of novelty.

From this case, we can see that minimalism in advertising design often has two meanings. One is to retain the main features of the product visually. In order to extract the main graphics, retain the source of advertising sustenance, the authenticity of the product itself as the main graphics, through the “simplified, re simplified” graphic creation process, the main shape of the product, or the main idea of the product design, often with circle, fan, triangle, rectangle and other common graphics as the main elements, showing a simple way of graphic expression. Second, the use of high contrast color combination. In advertising design, the position of color is incomparable. The common color design ideas are close color system and strong contrast color. Minimalism advocates the latter as the main idea, choosing fewer colors and high-intensity contrast colors in the form of red and yellow, black and white, red and white, blue and white, etc., which are often used in logo and trademark design of product design. At the same time, advertising design also strives to retain

the original effect of monotonous color, awaken the simple ideological realm of advertisers, and achieve the requirements of relaxing emotions.

Minimalist graphic design does not deviate from the original function of advertising design. Minimalism advocates the “simplification” design concept, which contains the design idea of returning to the original simplicity. It advocates the “simplification” of the miscellaneous graphics in advertising design until there are no redundant decorations and decorative elements in the remaining graphics. It often takes the outline of advertising products as the main way of presentation, and strives to endow advertising design with a deeper ideological core, so that people can obtain advertising information by visual means. It not only focuses on the work itself, but also shows sympathy for the product concept and Philosophical Association behind the graphics, giving a higher life experience and viewing experience.

However, there are some misunderstandings in the application of minimalism in advertising design. Minimalism is a visual graphic impact in advertising design. It is often expressed in abstract graphics, which is different from other similar design ideas.

The first is the “crash” problem of graphic design, that is, the problem caused by the coincidence of graphic design elements and the approaching of color. How to arrange and combine the basic graphics is easy to get into the same situation of the overall modeling, so highly similar, especially the ads with similar advertising functions tend to use abstract graphic expression. For example, the graphic combination of blue background and white birds is mainly composed of charts. There are more than three kinds of advertising models. Twitter is often called “little Bluebird”, but the same graphic combination also includes rookie wrap (Alibaba’s app) and thunderbolt download (thunderbolt company's download program). This simple graphic composition makes the white bird shape similar to the blue background. Background colors have different application carriers in different people’s minds. It is not easy to find an application that needs to be used quickly. It is difficult to apply minimalism to advertising design.

The second is the problem of too much abstract graphics. In order to avoid a series of disputes caused by the coincidence of design ideas, the graphic design of advertising design is often separated from the monotonous graphic combination, and is completed by distorting graphics. This way can be distinguished from other graphic combinations, but it is also easy to get into the graphic form, which is too simplified, resulting in the loss of product concept served by advertising design, and the appearance of obscure and obscure, that is, the distortion phenomenon of advertising design.

It can be seen that the minimalist expression of advertising design can not stay in the ignorance of “simplification, and then simplification”, but requires advertising designers to find a balance between the product concept communication and the core visual elements, not to simplify everything, but to simplify the design of graphics on the basis of fixed visual elements, so as to achieve the situation of “simplicity rather than simplicity, simplicity is better than complexity”.

## ***2.2. The Choice of Information***

Minimalism in advertising design means to convey richer content with shorter text messages. When people see graphics, their eyes will also be attracted by the words written under them. The concept of “simplification” means that advertising designers need to refine characters from the core of products to the audience.

In fact, minimalism does not float on the surface, but with a short message, in exchange for communication and feedback with the audience. That is to say, “a thousand people have a thousand Hamlets in their hearts”. Whether the advertisement itself can reach the level of “Hamlet” is not to mention. The minimalist choice of words is closely related to the audience’s cultural quality, age and general feeling of things.

Taking Muji company (Figure 2) as an example, its philosophy of modern life is simple, natural and rich in texture. As a famous Japanese groceries brand, Muji company enters people’s life and consumption by selling daily necessities.



*Figure 2. Muji.*

The analysis of Muji’s advertising design concept also contains minimalism: in the context of Chinese and Japanese, the interpretation of Muji can be divided into two ways to get a design concept that is closer to one

There is no “brand” or “pattern”, which is also reflected in the product design of Muji. Except for the simple trademark that meets the listing requirements, Muji’s products are all presented with monotonous design concept. Take clothing accessories as an example, without any redundant knitwear, jacket and skirt, which fully reflects the MUJI’s lack of brand “Good product” can be interpreted as “high-quality goods”, where “high quality” not only means high quality, but also means better product experience. “MUJI liangpin” is composed of two words, which means “high quality product without complicated pattern”.

The success of Muji’s advertising design is obvious to all. When it comes to minimalism, we can’t avoid this unique advertising design. What’s more worth thinking is that Muji always puts minimalism at the head of style from product design, material design to advertising design.

When minimalism is used in the expression of advertising design, it will be limited by the personal quality of the advertising audience and other factors, so that the simple vocabulary combination in the advertising as a whole presents the situation of “a glimpse of the leopard, a glimpse”, which is by no means easy for the creation of advertising designers. How to condense the product concept with shorter words and express it with more vivid characters has become a major issue. At present, most of the advertising design in the market is based on simple catchy lines to achieve catchy characteristics, so as to spread among the advertising audience.

Mining the prototype of advertising products, simplifying it in the design process, simplifying it again, eliminating unnecessary details, refining the overall concept is the expression form of minimalism. Character selection is not limited to Chinese characters and English characters. At the same time, Roman characters and other common character elements should be implicated in advertising design. By simplifying the character language, simple characters and clear ideas can achieve strong visual impact, give full play to the openness of understanding brought by minimalism design, and form real advertising design works.

### ***2.3. Application Value***

Using minimalism in advertising design, we need to focus on maintaining the purity of advertising products. On this basis, we need to carry out simple expression. From the design of patterns and graphics to the choice of words, all of them are the key links in the design process. The bright composition and clear intention of the text expression make minimalism in modern advertising design can be widely valued. It is unique in the field of advertising design, and presents the characteristics and functions of advertising products.

This visual “simplification” is a highly efficient design method which is easy for people to accept. It seems nihilistic, but its thought transmission is extremely straightforward and clear. Minimalist advertising design, to a certain extent, is also a meme proposed by Richard Dawkins. It uses minimalist graphics and words as the carrier to “reproduce” in the form of reproduction, and even “invade” other people's minds at a very low cost and gradually walk into other people's minds. Because of its openness, the extremely simplified elements can be spread at a very low cost and show the characteristics of advertising products without losing the original intention, and then enter people's vision as a unique advertising design, and finally obtain advertising value.

Numerous successful cases show us the uniqueness of minimalism, which is composed of simple and bright visual elements and is closely related to its cultural gene. Minimalism is based on the idea of preserving the true nature of the design, extracting the essence of the design product, creating a higher quality and more aesthetic design expression in a concise and concise way.

### **3. Conclusions**

The study of the visual elements of minimalism in advertising design is of great significance to the study of minimalism. The information age needs minimalism, and the advertising audience in the information age calls for minimalism. Minimalism emphasizes the value contained in the information itself, rather than the impact caused by a huge pile of information. How to extract information from advertising products and process it, and then convey it to the public in a concise and clear way without changing the original intention, is an important factor that needs to be considered.

So far, minimalism has been widely used in advertising design, and it must have a significant advantage in information dissemination. The development of social informatization has promoted the spread of minimalism. Fast-paced social life requires minimalism to remove whitewashed decorative shells for modern design, revealing the authenticity, highlighting graphics and text expression, and then blooming in the field of advertising design.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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