

## The Role of Creative Concept and Speech Organization in the Creation of Modern Advertising Posters

Vekovtseva T.A<sup>1</sup> & Plotnikova O.A<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

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The role of poster-design forms of modern mass communications visual design, which include advertising posters, is ever increasing. This article aims to study the features of building a creative concept for an advertising poster: advertising message structure, forms of presenting the visual and verbal artistic image, and positioning advertising poster. The leading method of studying this problem is artistic and communicative analysis which makes it possible to evaluate the artistic image of posters and the verbal component, and consumer profile. The article analyzes important aspects of creating an advertising poster, which include the creative concept, advertising appeal, visual image, slogan and consumer profile. The results of our study can be useful for the practical development of models of modern advertising and entertainment posters for theatrical productions, exhibitions, museum expositions, and other events.

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**Keywords:** advertising poster, artistic image of advertising and entertainment posters, creative concept, consumer profile.

### Introduction

As the role of visual images in modern communication increases, study of modern advertising posters becomes more important. Promotion and advertising of theater performances, exhibitions, and other entertainment events today is both a tribute to fashion and a thoughtful system for creating advertising images and promotion. Visual advertising images, most often reflected in announcement posters, play a huge role in promotion. Thanks to artistic image, color score, and verbal elements, modern advertising posters promote specific performances (exhibition or concert) and create a certain mood among consumers while forming a loyal attitude and desire to attend and to see the performance being offered.

Over the last few decades, no one among advertising and marketing researchers has analyzed the artistic side of visual advertising samples from the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Economic efficiency of different mediums and the methods of achieving it have been research trends for marketers and advertisers in recent years. However, visual elements in the modern system of marketing communications have occupied the leading positions. Today, the effectiveness of perceiving advertisements largely depends on these visual elements. Modern artistic visual images in advertising make it possible to deliver the necessary information to the modern consumer as quickly as possible and without losses. The role of visual images today is enormous, but there is no significant research in this area. Therefore, an appeal to the artistic graphic language of the modern poster is a relevant and novel topic. We studied Russian advertising theater, exhibition, and entertainment posters from 2000 – 2017 and analyzed the features of building a creative concept for this purpose.

Our main goals were to study the features of building artistic images in modern posters and the basic formal elements of artistic image in advertising posters in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century - structure of the advertising message, forms of presenting the visual material, composition, color combinations, typography, and lettering.

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<sup>1</sup> Candidate of Arts, Associate Professor, Department of Marketing, South Ural State University (NRU), Russia, Chelyabinsk

<sup>2</sup> Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor, Department of Marketing, South Ural State University (NRU), Russia, Chelyabinsk

As the most common type of outdoor advertising, advertising posters have their own specific features. They belong to a category of poster design forms and are defined as cultural and entertainment posters used in the practice of promoting theatrical, museum and concert projects. According to this definition, advertising posters meet the general requirements imposed on the broader poster genre. E.M. Kurmanaevskaya, N.M. Baburina, K.V. Lapina, and other researchers in the field of art and advertising note different characteristics of the poster:

- "The poster is an intellectual, witty, intriguing art" [1];
- "The poster requires maximum sharpness and richness of the image, clarity, and a precise form" [2];
- "The poster is an exact and unexpected fiction, and irreproachable style" [3];
- "The poster does not know whisper, it must always scream, its ideal is brightness, its artistic principle is: hit it on the head!" [4];
- "The poster skillfully conveys an idea, it contains a degree of persuasiveness" [5].

To constantly attract the involuntary attention of the audience, the poster should be unusual. This kind of art stimulates the creator to constantly develop their creative imagination and compositional thinking to increase the level of influence on the viewer. To make this vision a reality, the creator can choose any technique, such as painting, graphics, drawing, lithography, collage.

Practical researchers believe that "an expressive and colorful poster that reflects the essence of the art of your team and is also tempting enough to convince people to attend your performance will help the sponsor to sell more tickets" [6].

### **Methodological Framework**

The leading method for the proposed research was artistic analysis of advertising posters. The main types of artistic analysis used were comparative-historical and formal analysis. The comparative-historical analysis made it possible to:

- identify the features of advertising posters in the 21st century and compare them to the characteristics posters in the 20th century;
- present posters as a phenomenon of modern culture and see the uniqueness and peculiarity of advertising posters, as well as their commonness with culture as a whole;

Formal analysis made it possible to discover the basic methods of creating a poster, to understand the metaphorical language of advertising posters, and to evaluate their structure. The system of formal analysis of the visual imagery of modern advertising posters includes such parameters as material, format, size, proportions, texture, color, rhythmic and compositional organization, interaction with the environment, and features of consumer perception. Analysis of the recognizability or the complexity of realities in artistic image of the modern poster and its meaningfulness create a certain semantic message, an image corresponding to the advertised artistic work and understandable to the consumer.

The most important characteristic of advertising posters is the creative concept focused on a particular consumer. This is realized through artistic image and text (slogans). To implement creative concept, it is necessary to address the semantic essence of the poster - the advertising message, which always has a specific form (textual, symbolic, visual) and comes to the addressee through a certain communication channel. The structure of the advertising message contains both common and hidden meaning. The common meaning expressed in plain text contains a rational discussion element, while the hidden meaning involves subconscious perception of the information transmitted through signs and symbols. They contribute to the formation of semantic images and associations that are directly related to the advertised artistic product. Advertising posters can make information about creative projects attractive for the widest possible audience through their advertising message, creating an aura of sensation which ensures interest in the event, and thus, financial profit [7].

Advertising message structures do not have a precise interpretation. Therefore, the creator does not individually decide on conclusions in neither an advertising message nor the priority of convincing arguments. The essence of an advertising message is determined both at the lexical and syntactical levels. Suggestion can be achieved through increased emotionality and persuasive reasoning of the advertising message. Creators of advertising texts are focused on directly imperative- and pragmatically-directed communication with the mass addressee. The advertising consumer is considered as a potential buyer of the advertised product, as an object of "advertising persuasions".

In advertising posters, emotional state and emotional image are delivered through artistic images of different forms and essence. Artistic image is a complex concept reflecting the image of an object through the prism of its author's view and the features of the artistic and historical styles of a certain time. K. Yu. Akinshina notes that, on the one hand, artistic image in art and advertising, is an expression of the author's emotions and feelings and, on the other hand, it recreates the image of the era and artistic style of a certain time [8]. According to art critics, advertisers, and designers, artistic image is:

- A method of reflecting reality through artistic means;
- An actual historical reality, which, when perceived, is always more than material;
- A means of semantic communication within the framework of a cultural epoch.

Artistic image in art and advertising has significant differences both in terms of functional orientation and internal content.

Artistic image in art is not rigidly connected to the viewer and is an expression of the artist's thoughts and feelings. It can be viewed not when created, but significantly later, and still comprehended, which is completely unacceptable in advertising work focused on a particular consumer.

An important feature of artistic image is that the subject perceives and interprets the work of art in their own way. The viewer acts as a co-author, supplementing and changing the meaning of the image laid down by the artist. Thus, artistic image in a work has a certain code, which can be deciphered only by the person who owns it and knows it. The encoding of artistic image in advertising should be minimal, so that the potential consumer is able to decipher the message.

Artistic image in art is focused only on the viewer's emotion – obtaining aesthetic and emotional satisfaction from viewing (listening, reading) a work of art. In advertising, the goal of artistic image is not only to create a unique and memorable emotion, but also to stimulate the consumer to certain actions or feelings in relation to the advertised product or service - purchase, comparison, loyalty, etc. It conveys a certain meaning to influence consumer behavior [9, p. 99].

The objective of artistic image in advertising is commercial and utilitarian. Therefore, the meaning of the advertising image and the format of its visual expression are focused either on the advertised product or on its consumer [10, p. 534]. However, at the same time, artistic image in advertising uses all the categories of art to create an aesthetically attractive look. It increases its influence on the target audience. This is why designers, artists, and advertisers actively use various techniques and means of artistic expressiveness: color, form, illustration, font, and more. Using artistic image in advertising increases the power of the emotional influence on the audience. As a result, advertising becomes economically profitable, increasing the chances of a return on investment.

Artistic image in theatrical posters is a historical phenomenon with its own traditions and techniques. Theater posters, which originated as a form of advertisement in the era of Ancient Greece and have gone through a long development period, absorbed the historical artistic styles, emotional mood of artists, imagery of actors, and font style of the time. It is the bright and unique artistic image of the theater poster that makes it a work of art. Emotional image on posters does not only express advertising information, but also creates an image of the whole theatrical performance or museum exposition and forms a lasting emotional reaction among viewers (advertising consumer).

Artistic image in theater posters is closely connected to the artistic style of the epoch in which the poster is made. As a cultural and social phenomenon, advertising always reflects a certain ideology, culture, and artistic style typical for a given period of time. It is through artistic image that the essential characteristics of the time and the style are reflected in the advertising work. This image acts as an ideological unifying principle for any advertising products (including theater posters) and makes it possible to consider it as a component of corporate style [11, p. 224]. Thus, in a broad sense, style implies commonness of a figurative system, means of artistic expressiveness, and creative methods preconditioned by the unity of the ideological content.

Artistic image in theater posters is formed using various techniques: metaphors, comparisons, metonymy, etc. These techniques are expressed through verbal and visual elements in advertising. Visual elements of design are: symbolic images, color combinations, compositional forms, typographics, and font. Verbal elements are the text stylistics: vocabulary, phonetics, and metaphoricity [12]. All of these contribute to a holistic artistic advertising image and ensure a high degree of memorability for the consumer.

## Results

Analysis of modern samples of advertising posters allowed us to identify two groups of posters with common features of the construction of artistic image, compositional structure, and font.

Posters for theatrical productions, museum and exhibition expositions, considered cultural and entertainment posters for artistic events, were chosen for the analysis of modern theater posters. Analysis of 100 modern Russian theater posters (2000-2017) showed that they can be divided into two groups according to their artistic image-bearing content:

- Information and advertising posters with minimal artwork - "Mass-market" type (60%);
- Designer theater posters with an interesting visual image - "Creative" type (40%).

The first group of cultural and entertainment posters is focused on the mass target audience and created in standard formats using photographic images. Most often, such posters serve as announcements. Their simple and precise composition and a clear illustration enables quick reading by an unsophisticated viewer. The main objective of these posters to notify viewers of an upcoming event: tour or theatrical performance, festival, concert, museum exhibition, or performances by singers or artists. The main information on such posters meets the basic advertising requirements: what, where, and when will the event be held. The simplicity of reading the information leads minimal artistic coding of the image. This is why very little attention is paid to the artistic and image-bearing side (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. Example of informational and advertising posters with minimal artwork

The second group of posters is theater posters constructed with a complex artistic and visual solution (Fig. 2). Their main objective is not simply informing the viewer about the upcoming event, but creating an emotional image of a play or a festival. The consumer of this category of advertising poster is an experienced viewer, involved in the communicative process and informed on the event in advance. The target consumer is waiting for this event, and the poster only forms a lasting, positive setting for the forthcoming event. The coding of visual and verbal information for such viewer can be more complicated and use artistic and graphic techniques of the modern visual culture (Table 1).



Figure 2. Example of designed advertising posters

The plot (decorative) side of artistic image in modern theater posters is usually based on a direct analogy or on complex synonymous links. *In case of a direct analogy*, theater posters use images from performances, decoration elements and theatrical decor, or portraits of actors. For museum exposition and exhibitions, images include elements of the exposition or historical reconstruction, or of exhibits or their elements. *In case of a figurative solution*, the plot can be more complex and constructed using metaphor, comparison, and metonymy. Most often, images in such theater posters are not recognizable illustrations, but fragments and elements of a common visual system. In addition, *the methods (forms) of presenting the graphic material* are an important characteristic of building artistic image in theater posters. It is the unconventional presentation of visual and image-bearing material that makes the poster attractive and memorable, and the performance (exhibition or spectacle) itself - bright and vivid.

| Poster type   | Consumer type                                 | Visual image (illustration)   | Typographics and font   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>"Mass-market" posters</b> - information and advertising posters with the minimal artwork | Mass target audience (unsophisticated viewer) | Minimum stylization of the artistic image. Illustration based on a direct analogy - a photo of the actors, an image from the play, decoration elements, or theatrical décor.                | Clearly marked title and subtitle, easy-to-read body text (information block).<br>Fonts: antique or sans-serif  |
| <b>"Creative" posters</b> – designer theater posters with an interesting visual solution    | Narrow target audience (sophisticated viewer) | Artistic image is coded and stylized using metaphor, comparison, metonymy. Illustration based on graphically complex techniques – collage, overlay, drawings, watercolor, blur, focus, etc. | Playing with the text. Absence of a clear title and body text.<br>Fonts: non-serif or upper-case custom font. Filling the entire poster with text, or minimum amount of text. |

Table 1. Types of posters by the artistic and image-bearing content

We are currently in the postmodernist period. The absence of one global unified artistic style has led to the leveraging and interpretation of all style trends of past epochs in modern art. The modern viewer is used to mixing and re-interpreting the artistic lines of the 20th century, entwining them in the modern fabric of the common information space of mass media. This is why modern theater posters use stylistic design techniques to create a visual image drawing from the heritage of pop art, constructivism, abstractionism, socialist realism, avant-garde, and Art Nouveau. The new resonance of such techniques leads to new interpretations and vivid stylistic solutions, including:

- font overlay on the image;
- the use of various graphic techniques to process photo images;
- the use of collage (pictures, photos, translucent planes, local fill);
- use of a font image and abstract graphics (no photographic images);
- use of font as the dominant element;

–placing images inside the font.

All these techniques make the poster unconventional, vivid, and memorable. Visual images in such posters appeal to emotional motives, attract the attention of the viewer, and make them consider what is depicted in the poster. This method of involving the viewer in the communication process is most effective in modern advertising. Among the compositional techniques of creating artistic image of the poster, the most frequently used are:

- dynamics of basic forms;
- minimal text use with asymmetric spacing;
- use of a large dominant in the composition;
- simple local forms as the main background.

Apart from composition, one of the main tools of creating an image is color. Every color has an emotional, physical and behavioral meaning [13]. The color influencing our subconsciousness forms a certain attitude to the advertising object and creates a “program” of the consumer’s further actions (Figure 3).

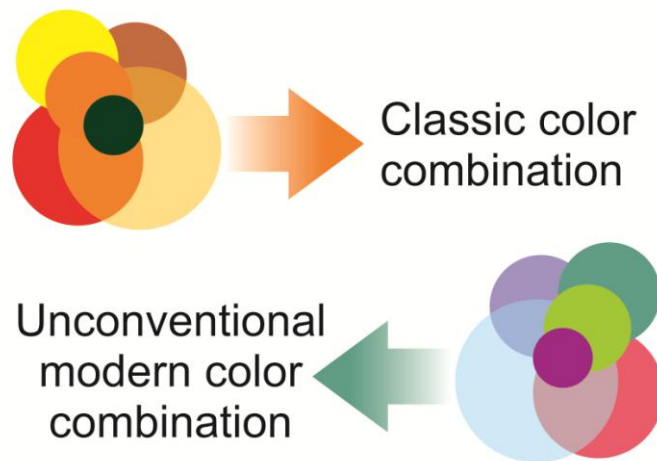
In modern advertising posters, both complementary and contrasting color combinations are used. Contrasting, unconventional color combinations pull the posters out from the surroundings of modern outdoor advertising. Yellow and violet shades, complex green and emerald colors, blue and orange-terracotta - these combinations suggest novelty and an unconventional image. On the contrary, the use of traditional warm beige, earthy, and ombre shades combined with dark maroon creates the image of a classical theatrical performance (Fig. 4).

|               | <u>Emotional</u>                                 | <u>Physical</u>  | <u>Behavioral</u>                           |
|---------------|--|--|---|
| <i>Red</i>    | Passion<br>Love<br>Strength<br>Anger             | Raises Blood<br>Pressure<br>Raises Heart Rate<br>Stimulates Appetite | Hot<br>Aggressive<br>Danger<br>Stop         |
| <i>Orange</i> | Happy<br>Energetic<br>Pleasant<br>Social         | Encourages<br>Movement<br>Provides energy<br>Vigor                   | Movement<br>Fast Food                       |
| <i>Yellow</i> | Warm<br>Cheerful<br>Solitary<br>Irritable        | Poor skin<br>reflection<br>Bright<br>Reflective                      | Lively<br>Secure<br>Caution<br>Slow         |
| <i>Green</i>  | Friendly<br>Calming<br>Neutral<br>Balanced       | Concentration<br>Focus<br>Attention                                  | Jealously<br>Envy<br>Money<br>Avarice       |
| <i>Blue</i>   | Isolated<br>Peaceful<br>Cool<br>Distant          | Lowers Blood<br>Pressure<br>Decreases appetite                       | Calm<br>Conservative<br>Loyal<br>Trusting   |
| <i>Purple</i> | Spiritual<br>Enlightened<br>Creative<br>Artistic | Calming<br>Relaxing<br>Helps<br>insomnia                             | Surprise<br>Magic<br>Regal<br>Royal<br>Rare |

**Figure 3. Psychological meanings of different color combinations**

New printing techniques and saving money in advertising budgets lead to new color solutions. For example, printing in two or three colors can lead to the appearance of one mixed color based on two paints with black graphics on top. Paints can be translucent, creating gleam, transparency, and color complexity. Another technique taken from pop art is the use of halftone. This creates an image of modernity and gives the poster the impression of a topical and fashionable piece of art.





**Figure 4. Types of color combinations**

An additional tool for creating artistic image in posters is a font. Font culture is an integral part of the general artistic culture of the people, era, time, and style. In addition to the verbal information (meaning), font also carries visual information reflecting the characteristic features of the time. For example, in the constructivist non-serif, the flat letter is simplified, serifs are dropped out, and a new visual system of letters is built, similar to the historical upheavals occurring in this period of time in the society. Font lives and develops together with the art and culture of its era [14, P.8]. The fashion for certain fonts changes every few years and is clearly visible in printed promotional products. The alphabet itself is always unchanged, but font, as a material embodiment of this system of signs, is constantly changing and evolving. Due to its diverse form, font can convey a variety of associations and emotional states. For example, the classic Antique font brings our consciousness to the era of the ancient world, classical traditions, and logical connections. It is a font of tranquility, complex content, and immutability. On the other hand, sans-serif is excitingly active, dynamic and conflict. It creates an image of an active modern era, rapid reading, and simple logical connections; it is simple and logical. Modern theater posters are based on the image of one idea or another. To create a classic image, advertisers and designers frequently use fonts similar to Antique. And for a modern image, there are simple fonts like Tahoma or custom fonts.

The culture of modern typography in 21<sup>st</sup> century posters has changed dramatically. In addition to the standard writing of headings and subtitles, many modern posters use asymmetric alignment, contrasting font, all uppercase or all lowercase, or mix uppercase and lowercase letters in one word. This often reduces the reading speed, but creates an ultramodern image of a fashionable work designed for the young, modern consumer. In addition, this technique allows you to highlight the main element in a word or in a phrase.

Thus, artistic image in theater posters built on vivid images, complex illustrations, asymmetrical composition, and original font solution solves a number of problems:

- generates positive emotions;
- matches the basic creative idea and discloses the concept;
- forms communication with the consumer;
- increases the efficiency of the advertising message;
- increases recognizability and significance.

All this ensures the economic effectiveness of the advertised performance or theatrical production.

Advertising posters, as one of the specific forms of promotion of art projects, should contain a creative concept. Creative concept is defined as an original thought making it possible to dramatize the benefit gained by possession of the product. A work of art, or an event associated with it, primarily attracts a person by an aesthetic satisfaction he/she will gain consuming the art product. So, if “real world” advertising is only tied to universal values, these aesthetic values are key in the advertising of art events. It stands to reason that advertising of art projects can be defined as "a kind of an advertising creative work, the leading principle of which is the aestheticism principle" [15].

However, a creative concept based on an advertising strategy will never become effective if it does not meet the set objective and is not focused on the right target audience. Therefore, when preparing an advertising message, it is necessary to consider the socio-demographic and behavioral characteristics of the target consumer groups. The mobile infrastructure of such groups is predetermined by traditions, fashion, dynamics of taste, and value preferences.

The main idea of the messages embodied in vivid images should demonstrate the advantages of the advertised product and promise to immerse the viewer in the world of unusual emotions and excitement they will experience, obtaining the advertised benefit. [16] The information consumer could decipher the encoded message unambiguously, understanding the meaning conceived by the creators when they encoded the information. The creative concept of the poster can be presented through special tricks or techniques to create an original presentation of the benefits embodied in the advertised product. It can be a "hint" to something important that can be learned and experienced only by delving in to high art. Or, it can be a promise to share the world of artists, creators, directors, or musicians. These peoples' direct contact with the audience is always attractive to the consumer. One original technique could be the use of a hidden motive of prestige in advertising increasing the consumer's personal status in the eyes of a particular social group.

Defining and understanding the composition of the target audience for cultural and entertainment events is the key to ensuring that the poster has effective influence on the consumer. In scientific literature, when segmenting the end-user market, the following groups of factors are identified: demographic (sex, age, income, employment, education, etc.); geographical (size and type of terrain, number of inhabitants, etc.); psychographic (social layer of the consumer, lifestyle, character traits); and behavioral (status, desired benefits, intensity of consumption, degree of commitment, attitude to cultural and entertainment events).

Analysis of consumers of cultural and entertainment products has established that the structure of consumer needs is homotypic. The most important classification factors are the psychographic and behavioral characteristics of the target audience. All consumers are conventionally divided into the following groups by the criterion of participation in a cultural and entertainment event: event participant (a viewer aware of oneself as part of this action, perceiving themselves as a co-author and a direct participant of the show); accomplice (a viewer who emotionally perceives the action as one close to any contact social group (relatives, friends, colleagues, etc.)); or observer (a viewer who does not emotionally accept the show, does not consider themselves a part of it, and is satisfied with the role of an outside observer).

The next most important criterion for defining consumer profile is perception of the cultural and entertainment event. According to this criterion, all consumers can be divided into 5 groups: fans of cultural and entertainment events, amateurs, passive consumers, occasional visitors, and indifferent. Among consumers, it is also possible to single out viewers of a difficult-to-obtain offer, viewers of a common offer, and viewers of a balanced offer.

One of the most important components of creating cultural and entertainment posters is the development of a slogan for theater, museum, and concert projects. Slogans bear the main message and have the greatest emotional and communicative orientation. The main objective of a slogan is to attract the attention of the target audience, to create the main platform for building communication links with the audience, and to create an emotional mood [17]. Slogans are used in posters to complement, rather than display contradictions between, image and text. As a rule, short and laconic slogans should be used in posters, reflecting the attractiveness of the proposed cultural and entertainment event for the consumer. The content component of the slogan directly depends on the target group and the distribution channels of the poster. When creating slogans, such techniques as hyperbole, metaphor, allegory, comparison, etc. are helpful.

## Conclusion

Modern theater posters are a unique phenomenon of mass culture. They involve an advertising message and an artistic image, reflecting the advertised object (theatrical production, museum, or exhibition). Modern advertising and entertainment posters bring an obligatory *creative message*, designed for a precise target audience (consumer), expressed through *a visual artistic image and a verbal component* (advertising text). *The main idea of the creative message* embodied in vivid images should demonstrate the advantages of the advertised product, promising to a world of unusual emotions and excitement which the consumer will experience in taking advantage of the advertised event.



Artistic image in theater posters greatly enhances their positive recognizability and significance, increasing the economic efficiency of the event being advertised. This image can be built using graphic variety and a color and font solution aimed at creating a certain advertising image. Advertising text in posters is focused on the directly imperative perception and pragmatically directed to communicate with the mass addressee.

### Recommendations

We analyzed the structure and features of building artistic image for modern advertising and entertainment posters. The results presented can be useful to practicing advertisers, designers, and marketers. The conclusions and the results of our research on compositional arrangement and structure of advertising posters, color solution, and typography can be used for subsequent analysis and systematization of an illustrative variety of other visual advertising carriers (leaflets, booklets, etc.); to create modern models of advertising posters. The information may be useful in modern typography or in searching for new ways of designing social advertising posters.

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