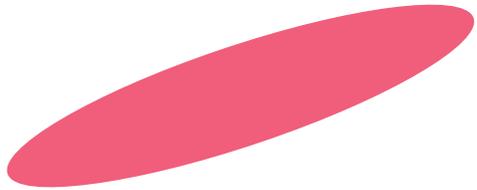




**show  
your  
true  
colours**



**5**

STEP GUIDE TO  
**UNDERSTANDING COLOUR**



**Blackwood**

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*In this 5 step guide we explore how colour influences how your business is perceived in the wider marketplace. Following these simple steps will help you to understand how colour conveys key messages to your audience.*

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# 1

## THE ROLE COLOUR PLAYS IN BUSINESS

Think EasyJet and you see Orange, Vodafone red and HP blue. Colour choice is a key element in establishing a brand's identity.

The best company identities use their colours across multiple channels: online, in print and through social media. The colour you choose for your organisation is all-important, as certain colours can alter a person's mood and trigger different emotions.

Before you decide on your main colour, think about how and where it will be used. Which other colours will complement it? Start to develop a set of colours, otherwise known as a colour palette or brand palette.

### STEP 1

## Do your research

INVEST SIGNIFICANT R&D TIME INTO UNDERSTANDING HOW YOUR  
COMPETITORS USE COLOUR IN THEIR COMPANY IDENTITY.  
[CLICK HERE TO READ DESIGN WEEK'S TAKE ON THE SUBJECT.](#)

# 2

## DEVELOP THE RIGHT COLOUR SYSTEM

Whether building a new visual identity, or developing an existing one to enhance a client's business success, Blackwood creates a series of building blocks. One of the first blocks we produce is the core (or primary) colour palette.

The colour choices and combinations we opt for are formed through in-depth market analysis and user-centred research. We also aim to develop these choices in partnership with the client. It's the best way to ensure that a consistent approach is maintained across all marketing collateral. Your organisation's brand colours will form an integral part of your brand guidelines.

### STEP 2

## Develop your colour palette

**YOUR COLOUR CHOICE IS A KEY ELEMENT IN ESTABLISHING YOUR BRAND'S IDENTITY.  
BUT HOW DO YOU MAKE SURE YOU MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE?**

[CLICK HERE TO READ OUR BLOG](#)

[SHOW YOUR TRUE COLOURS](#)

# 3

## A BUILDING BLOCK TO SUCCESS

The most effective brand colours are used consistently across multiple channels. If you are a small business, just a few colours used well may be all you need. If you're a large organisation with multiple sub-brands or regions you're likely to need secondary palettes. These are informed by the primary colour palette but are developed to be appropriate for where they will be seen.

You can also experiment with hero colours from the Pantone Colour System. For example, one client asked us to create a distinct set of colours for use on complex data charts. Another needed special sets of tints and shades to add levels of versatility to a wide ranging identity.

### STEP 3

## Test your colours options

PANTONE HAS DISTILLED ITS MUCH-LOVED BUT EXTREMELY CUMBERSOME COLOUR GUIDE INTO AN APP, ENABLING DESIGNERS TO CAPTURE, CREATE AND SHARE COLOUR PALETTES WHEREVER THEY ARE. NO MORE TRYING TO MEMORISE AN EXACT COLOUR...

[DOWNLOAD THE APP HERE](#)

# 4

## ESSENTIAL READING

Before commissioning an agency to do the thinking for you why not read up on the theory behind using colour effectively. There are a wealth of excellent books and online articles dedicated to colour, its origins, uses and applications.

Colour theory can be very intriguing. Knowing why people are drawn to a colour within a piece of marketing, what it says about a business and whether that campaign will communicate effectively to an audience are key factors if you're in the business of design.

There are a wealth of first class books and online articles dedicated to colour, its origins, uses and applications.

### STEP 4

## Read a good book

JOSEF ALBERS WAS ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL ARTIST-EDUCATORS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. HIS 'INTERACTION OF COLOR' IS A MASTERCLASS IN COLOUR THEORY AND IS AS POWERFUL TODAY AS IT WAS WHEN IT WAS PUBLISHED IN 1971.

# 5

## BE INSPIRED BY OTHERS

At Blackwood, our heads are always turned by a good piece of design, and colour plays a core part in our response. It always pays to keep your eyes open and aware of what peers and competitors are doing with colour, and how you can stand out from the crowd.

If you're developing a new or existing colour palette, we can help with insight and guidance on theory and practical implementation. We work with an impressive range of clients across sectors, cultures and geographies for whom colour is a vital part of their identity and success.

### STEP 5

## Be inspired by others

[CLICK HERE TO SEE AN EXAMPLE OF BOLD COLOUR USE IN ACTION](#)

5

STEPS

READ THEM IN BLACKMAIL  
OUR MONTHLY ONLINE NEWSLETTER



**Blackmail**

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