

How companies communicate to consumers using the visual language of smartphone app design

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The popularity of smartphones has given rise to the frequent use of applications. More people are searching for and using apps that facilitate social functions, changing not only the way we communicate with each other but also how companies communicate with their customers. Companies utilise visual cues in product design to communicate figurative messages and evoke emotional responses about their product. Design research has focused on physical goods and foodstuffs; yet, it may also be instructive to investigate communicative design in the virtual environment of growing app markets. The study's data is two-fold: (a) a corpus of 250 apps that investigates the use of colour and shape in app design; and (b) a web-based experiment that determines participant perception, appreciation, and experience of apps. By combining these two datasets, I show how companies can communicate to consumers through the visual cues of virtual products in online marketplaces.