VISUAL COMMUNICATION

a brief introduction
VISUAL COMMUNICATION DEFINED

Visual communication as the name suggests is communication through visual aid and is described as the conveyance of ideas and information in forms that can be read or looked upon.

Visual communication in part or whole relies on vision, and is primarily presented or expressed with two dimensional images, it includes: signs, typography, drawing, graphic design, illustration, colour and electronic resources.
It also explores the idea that a visual message accompanying text has a greater power to inform, educate, or persuade a person or audience.
The evaluation of a good visual communication design is mainly based on measuring comprehension by the **audience** (cultural context, time), not on personal aesthetic and/or artistic preference as there are no universally agreed-upon principles of beauty and ugliness.

Excluding two dimensional images, there are other ways to express information visually - **gestures** and **body language**, **animation** (digital or analogue), and **film**. **Visual communication** by e-mail, a textual medium, is commonly expressed with ASCII art, emoticons, and embedded digital images.
Visual communication contains image aspects. The interpretation of images is subjective and to understand the depth of meaning, or multiple meanings, communicated in an image requires analysis.
According to Communications expert, Paul Martin Lester, images can be analyzed through the following elements: **Personal, Historical, Technical, Ethical, and Critical**.

**Cultural perspective**: Symbolization is an important definition for this perspective. Cultural perspective involves identity of symbols. The uses of words that are related with the image, the use of heroes in the image, etc. are the symbolization of the image. The cultural perspective can also be seen as the *semiotic perspective*. 
Just as words have to be put into an order that we can recognize and interpret, media images and texts work by being put together, or constructed, in particular ways that allow for recognition and interpretation.

This process of putting together media texts and images, assembling them into more or less coherent and meaningful messages, has been referred to as **encoding**.
We live in a world of signs, and communication is possible only by means of signs and sign systems, whether they are letters on a page, sound or visual images.

We understand visual images because we learn to read them – to decode them – in the same way as we do the codes of language: by learning the rules and conventions which govern how the components go together to make up recognizable units of meaning.
DESIGNER: The Firm of Wolff Olins
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