

Blue For Forest, Red For Tree, How Color Temperature Changes What We See: The Impact
of Cold and Warm Colors on Construal Level

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Abstract

Research in marketing has proven that there is an effect of using predominantly warm colors versus cool colors in advertising. Warm colors, for example, evoke more affective processing than cool colors, whereas cool colors evoke more cognitive processing than warm colors. Research on self-regulatory focus theory (e.g., Lee, Keller & Sternthal, 2010) shows contradicting results regarding the impact of using warm versus cool colors on approach versus avoidance behavior. In this research we investigate if seeing cool versus warm colors impacts processing styles. According to Construal Level Theory, something perceived as nearby evokes more concrete (versus abstract) processing than something perceived as more far away. This paper shows that warm versus cold colors - perceived as, respectively, more nearby versus more distant – are able to induce a difference in processing style and can have further downstream effects.

Keywords: *Color temperature; Construal Level; Processing Style*

Track: Consumer Behaviour