

If you watch television, chances are you have witnessed the marketing attempts of various pharmaceutical companies and their efforts to persuade your choices. These marketing ploys are designed to get your attention, but what you may not be aware of is the strategic use of color in both packaging to develop a subconscious association with their product. Pharmaceutical packaging color and drug expectancy have been directly linked to consumer perception. With an increase in direct-to-consumer advertising, new studies on how color influences consumer expectations and choices are getting more attention than ever. Evidence shows that color recognition greatly influences drug expectancy and perception, affecting consumer choice in both prescription and over the counter (OTC) medications.



The growing use of blister packaging shows that visual identification and color perception are paramount in this industry for both safety and consumer recognition.

Image Source: Flickr user Canned Muffins

With pharmaceutical and OTC sales on the rise, there has been an increased need for quality packaging that serves as both a visual communication tool in addition to ensuring the safety of these products. Research has determined that color significantly impacts consumer expectancy of a drug and this data has led to studies on [color-coding](#) and categorization. The results indicate that perceived potency, as well as gender affiliation, are both linked to color and/or the lightness or darkness of a medication.¹

With the use of color technology, [optimizing color can be an influential tool in the marketability of these products](#) and a powerful tool in brand name recognition.² Both packaging and product color work together to influence the consumer, so understanding the importance of color technology and analysis within this industry is quickly becoming an essential skill in order to stay competitive within this market.

The Power of Color

Understanding how color affects the human mind has been a hot topic in the business world for some time. Since the effects of color can vary between cultures, definitive visual packaging choices are nearly as important as the development of the product itself. Looking at the data, we can see that color choices and design elements are often adapted to instill a desired response from the consumer.³ [Color psychology is often used to associate a desired effect with the preconceived visual recognition](#), making color analysis the cutting edge technology in this field. Since direct-to-consumer advertising is now leading the way in pharmaceutical sales, visual recognition is often the main tool used to associate product name with brand recognition. Developing both product and packaging with color in mind has become one of the top marketing tools in this industry.



Studies show that the color of medication can evoke an emotional reaction and greatly influence consumer perception and expectancy of drug response.

Image Source: Flickr user List_84

Color Analysis of Both Packaging and Product

Color analysis of pharmaceutical packaging has been shown to increase brand name marketability. However, an increase in blister packaging is drawing more attention to actual pill, capsule, and/or tablet color. This has made product color equally as important as external packaging when it comes to consumer influence. The transparency of blister packaging allows for clear recognition of color for easier identification and accurate dosage. More attention is placed on ensuring that both packaging and product color coincide and maintain consistency throughout. The ability to accurately match packaging color and develop a consistent product is where the real challenges begin. Advanced

spectrophotometry takes the guesswork out of color matching and repeatability, and developing a pharmaceutical color-coding system and marketing strategy relies on precise color measurement to obtain desired results.

Color Analysis and Spectrophotometry in the Pharmaceutical Industry

To communicate color effectively and develop a marketable strategy, it is important to start with specific color design. Once the color design element has been established, spectrophotometric technology can then quantify each specific color and assign numerical data for accurate representation. This data can be stored to develop a system for repeatability and color matching that corresponds with both packaging and product development. By integrating both of these elements, pharmaceutical packaging and drug expectancy coincide with one another to increase the marketability of the product.



Both pharmaceutical product color and packaging play an important role in consumer perception and safety.

Image Source: Flickr user Evan Blaser

Spectral technology plays a predominant role throughout the pharmaceutical industry. From [drug development and safety protocol](#) to monitoring packaging and stability, spectrophotometers provide the versatility needed to address all areas of manufacturing. Instrumentation has evolved to address the needs of both large-scale production facilities as well as small-scale laboratories, with options that vary depending on the need.

HunterLab specializes in pharmaceutical color technology at all levels of production and works with industry leaders to address the needs and challenges associated with product development. Our team of experts can help you evaluate color and develop an instrumental analysis system that will effectively monitor both product and packaging requirements. For more information on spectral technologies in the pharmaceutical industry, please [contact us](#) today.

1. "Pharmaceutical Packaging Color and Drug Expectancy," 1995-2016,

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2. "Package Color: The Ultimate Consumer Persuader,"

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