



The Visual Effects of Store's Signage Displays in Urban Landscape

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Abstract

Most conducted studies about urban development in architecture, urbanism and environmental graphics areas indicate that urban furnishing is one the effective factors of urban landscape, Graphic and environmental signs and structures have an effective role in inducing identifying and strengthening the sense of place, and man can realize the identity and existence of space unconsciously. If the environment has the right design, it will make us calm and cause prosperous creativity and positive moves that ultimately lead to progress. Providing the clarity, readability, and clear image of the environment gives the person a sense of security. The aim to have a clear picture of the environment is that one can easily recognize the components of the environment and connect them in their minds in an interconnected form. The irregularity of a series of elements that lacks aesthetic values has created visual distortion for the citizens. One of these cases is the store's signage, which leads to overcrowding due to irregularities, and completely violates the main purpose of the urban design which is creating visual comfort. The study conducted on paying attention to the importance of urban furnishing and designing store's signage and its role in urban landscape. It was a practical study with laboratory and survey method. The findings indicated that along with abundant issues of urban furnishing, paying attention to designing store signs has an important role in improving urban landscape.

Keywords: Urban Space; Environmental Graphics; Urban Furniture; Designing Store Signs; Visual Elements.

1. Introduction

The subject of urban designing is creating public spaces with high quality in the city, where people's general life is in the streets, squares, and parks, and people are in direct contact with their desirable and undesirable characteristics and qualities. Since, in today's conditions of cities, public spaces represent the identity and personality and the prosperity and attractiveness of a city, competition in different cities in terms of attracting funds, human resources, and tourism, promoting the visual qualities of the environment is one of the most important issues. The routing system is part of a public urban organization. Graphic designers and architects with a comprehensive approach in this regard, consider the effects and interaction of physical and psychological actions between designing and architecture.

Every day, some people enter into urban space due to do some compulsory activity and to pursue their goals usually do not have enough time. These people do not really look at objects, they only see a certain amount of it, to the extent that they identify which objects belong to which groups and then pass through [1]. Therefore, the dynamics and space, readability is especially important for these people. In fact, it is the feeling of distinguishing an organization with another one, a store with another or environment that, in the eyes of the audience, eliminates the possibility of merging and confusion, and allows each element to function in its own space in the view of the viewer. Thus, designing a store sign is one of the effective factor to reach this purpose.

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This study is conducted to consider the role of designing store signs and the role that can play in improving the visual quality and urban landscape. Undoubtedly, the formation of visual elements that create the city image will be kept as a memory for each viewer. Therefore, it will be the task of designers who, along with the proper design and layout of these signs, will meet the citizens' needs and give the city a beautiful view, in a way that the citizen has a sense of calmness, coherent understanding and comfort, dealing with them. The direct relationship between the urban landscape and the citizens need and neglecting its constituent elements can create visual disturbances.

Now to see how other art method can be used in urban design cycles?

How we can define the position of some majors such as graphics and visual arts in urban design and architecture?

Can we improve the urban landscape by properly designing and positioning, considering the position of store signs?

And its inclusive coverage throughout the city?

1.1. Background of the Research

Numerous studies and researches have been carried out in the field of environmental graphics or environmental advertisements, especially urban furniture, some of which have referred to the design of store signs as part of environmental graphics.

The “Signage and Wayfinding” book in Chapter 1 “What Is Environmental Graphic Design?” by Chris Calori David Vanden - Eynden in 2015, explains the contemporary incarnation of EGD (Environmental Graphic Design). EGD is a relatively new, cross - disciplinary field that has gained recognition and importance over the past forty years. Activity involves the development of a systematic, informational cohesive, and visually unified graphic communication system for a given site within the built environment [2].

Robert Harland in his book (Graphic Design in Urban Environments) explained how graphic and communication design in the urban environment have been underrepresented or even ignored in graphic design historiography and in academic and educational definitions of the field, particularly in UK. He also effectively demonstrated the difficulties faced by urban theorists who try to describe the presence and relevance of graphic design artifacts in the public sphere, and the gaps and shortcomings of their approach. The careful descriptions and analysis presented in the book offer a framework for thinking about urban graphic interventions in multiple scales and settings. The result is a relevant contribution to design research, and should stimulate further and welcome debates on the interface between graphic design, communication, and urban design [3].

The book “public spaces, urban spaces” by Tim Heath, Tanner Oc, Steve Tiesdell, recognizes public places components and states six aspects of components to environmental quality in urban life [4].

In paper “Re-theorizing contemporary public space: a new narrative and a new normative”, Matthew Carmona concluded that a more balanced view of public space is required, one that recognizes the multiple complex types, roles and audiences for public spaces in cities today [5].

An article, named as “A Study on the Characteristics of Visual Elements for Space Graphic Design” in Integrated Design Research Journal, is tried to study and investigate the characteristic of space graphic design through the analysis of its visual elements. By analyzing cases of actual usage, it enables to provide a basic visual system for space graphic design. In graphic within space, typography, colors, and light can be applied in complex form, in addition to basic modeling elements like the shape which forms the image. The expressive elements of graphic are displayed in the space form correlation and synthesize details to convey the identity. In terms of the characteristics displayed through the analysis of design elements of space graphic, it includes a variety of expressions through artistic intervention, information communicability of typography, and expansion through optical illusion. Through this, artistic experience is provided for the subject of experience and sensible relations can be established. Successful space graphic design can form identify about place and community, and it can bring qualitative improvement in the urban environment through the acquisition of practical value [6].

They all mentioned store signs as a branch of environmental graphics, but none of the above-mentioned works were to investigate the store signs in order to improve the quality of urban landscape. In some studies related to environmental graphic they pointed out the topic of this study but they did not particularly study determining a conceptual model and the role of store signs and their role in urban landscape.

2. Urban Space

Tibeldes considered sidewalks as somewhere more than a collection of shops. In his points of view, these places provide cultural, recreational, leisure, tourism, civilian life and the exchange of views, opinions and views of the community [7]. Liveliness and dynamism are considered as one of the components of urban designing quality in the

creation and designing spaces with high quality. Several factors in a city environment turn it into a desirable place to stay, including:

- Protecting people and providing security and safety for the people.
- People enjoy physical and social comfort and relief.
- Enjoying the space and experience being with people.

Recognizing and changing the society approach to art has made a big change in art-related spaces. Exiting art from the closed environments of the galleries, and generalizing it to the everyday living environment and audience receptiveness, has now become of special significance. The present age has gone away from elitism and specialization, and brought art to the people and their place of life, so that examples of art and urban graphics of this era are illustrations to guide and have influence on more easy lives of people. To reach a suitable urban graphic these factors are needed:

- Facilitating social contacts of citizens
- Enhancing the economic activities
- Improving the safety and flow of traffic.
- Informing people of the opportunities that the city provides them.
- Reducing the crimes caused by stress pressure
- Helping to meet the social needs of people through communication with the environment through guidance and information.
- Helping the mental health of citizens by creating beautiful scenery in the environment [8].

2. Environmental Graphics

The term environment refers to all external factors affecting the development of a person in the literature and culture of psychology. Urban Design is very close to the concept of environmental graphics, even in some cases it is used interchangeably, and sometimes these two terms cover a common concept.

The environmental graphics are a social phenomenon that applies various sciences such as sociology, communication and psychology, and links its achievements in the arts of architecture, urbanization, visualization, and the foundations of aesthetics. Furniture available in urban space can transmit social messages with its types, setting and arrangement. Furniture actually announces its support from the urban community by establishing facilities for social communication and collective trainings, and by providing a beautiful visual environment, favorable living environment coordination, relaxation of citizens, and reducing the mental concerns of people in society. In fact, the set of visual factors used in the environment or rejected from it, in order to provide an environment that is favorable and appropriate to affect the audience, and create the behavior that we are looking for. Several points have been made in this definition:

- A set of effective visual factors
- Removing visually impaired factors to intensify the desirable visual factor
- The subject of the environment and the proportions that visual factors must have with that environment.
- Effectiveness in a way that it is so effective in the audience mindset and can be seen in their behavioral pattern

Based on the international division that Walter Herdeg referred to the graphic diagrams of the environment are divided into six categories, which are as follows:

- Pictograms
- Traffic Signs and store signs in cities
- Visual guidance systems
- Graphic design of letters on signs of building and store
- A large-scale mural graphic design of the vehicle body [9].

3. Designing a Sign

Long before the invention of paper, humans made marks on objects. The intent of making these marks was to communicate information visually. This communication imbued these marks with meaning, and they became a shared language among the people who made and understood them. Environmental graphic design, or EGD, which can be

defined as the graphic communication of information in the built environment, is one of the world's oldest professions. [2].

Signs and boards are two important elements in urban spaces. An effective sign will help aesthetics of a space and provide a series of information to eliminate confusion and facilitate the understanding of a situation in an environment, while allowing individuals to have a more efficient move in one place. Designers understand the environments and recognize that graphics and markup systems for usefulness should be attractive, complemented, and communicated visually to the user.

One of the most important tasks of the businessmen is to create, maintain, and strengthen a merchandise. A trade sign is a name, phrase or design, or a combination of both, to identify and distinguish a store or company from another. A distinctive sign actually introduces the supplier of the goods. Thus, the following points should be considered in its design:

Considering natural and artistic perspectives; Graphic elements will obtain their proper appearance and function with the environment, so that the quantity and overall size of them will be taken into account in relation to the audience's environment and position. Dimensions and sizes should be considered in a way that does not disturb the space of the area and emphasizes on the beauty and effective communication function (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Dimensions and sizes

Considering the sign function in the selection and design of proper letters; express the concepts and functional ideas of the store, in addition to the aspect of the readability of letters and writing, so that the characteristics and features of each set and place acquire its independent and exclusive expression (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Store function

Considering the simplicity and correct choice of words and expressions; literary and writing values should be taken into account in a way that both text and the words can be easily understood (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Easily understood

Choosing the correct size of the letters relative to the dimensions of the sign, not so large that it occupies all the space of the signs, not so small, that it is possible to eliminate the readability and in general it should be in harmony and fit. (Figure 4)



Figure 4. Not correct size of the letters

Frequent use and unnecessary application avoidance; although the continuity of the subject is due to repetition of important graphic principles to emphasize, the graphic designer should not insist on using this element (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Unnecessary elements

Not using a picture; the photo has less capability to get away from the conventional basis of visual reality. Therefore, illustration always has the advantage of having more tension and visual power [10]. When we compare a photo of a hand with the same cartoon, we know the picture more realistic. But most people recognize the cartoon of a hand more than its photo. Therefore, the use of illustration in the design of the sign is more tangible and quicker for the viewer (Figure 6).



Figure 6. use of illustration

Moving element; as the viewer is walking or is in a car, he must be able to quickly and easily receive the important information (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Receive the important information

Color is another dominant factor in humans; colors can create a sense of health, discomfort, inactivity in humans. Therefore, the role of color and including that in sign design is one of the important factors. The way colors are used affects the responsiveness of the audience, the more the color chosen matches the mental and emotional needs of the individual and the audience's memoirs and messages, the more the message is transmitted and, therefore, gets better. It is necessary to pay attention to the color element to accelerate the image message. For example, in a vegetable shop using green color and the harmony of this color, will point directly to the subject, or in the fast food, using red and other colors that are associated with it attract attention and stimulate appetite (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Role of color

Proper lighting has a good effect on the colors used and the inappropriate light causes the colors not to be seen real. Therefore, it should be noted that the element of daylight and artificial light used at night on the sign. (Figure 9)



Figure 9. Appropriate light

Considering the geographic and cultural territory of the region and determining the type of materials and their usage, both in terms of aesthetics and visual effects, as well as in terms of the physical nature of the implementation in relation to the environment, and it must address the factors, climate, and geography (Figure 10).



Figure 10. Geography and culture

The quality of materials is very important in designing and implementing and guarantees the possibility of remaining the effect for many years and avoiding the rebuilding expenditures. The informing method and how to design a sign in a suitable ground and structure is considered to be a key factor in the coherence and final operation of the informing sign design. Lack of material availability and the use of rare and special materials that can be disposed and degraded, and on the other hand it is difficult to reuse, and it takes a long time to prepare, construct and install, and to show incompletely unpleasant faces and loses its notification functionality (Figure 11).



Figure 11. Quality of materials

Considering the human scale and the viewing angle in all details and design. In some places that are wide and there is an empty space around a store or a public place, the designer has the chance to change the normal proportions, for example, the sign of a public place or store can be placed higher than usual, because of the openness of the environment, the viewer is dominant over the place and can easily see and recognize the sign (Figure 12).



Figure 12. UN-moral proportion

We can emphasize by color and context. The same components can also weaken the emphasis of the sign. Clear and distinct shapes have more visibility than vague shapes and strange objects. The way components are categorized also adds to the emphasis of a collection. The principle of emphasis can be used both to unify and to create diversity (Figure 13).



Figure 13. Texture

In order to focus on the observer's attention easily, the visual features of the environmental elements are taken into account in the environment and space. The emphasis on one of the elements has a direct effect of drawing the audience attention (Figure 14).



Figure 14. Emphasis

Considering urban design standards and norms is desirable to design a sign. In designing the sign of adjacent stores, the coordination is required in terms of the dimensions of the panels so that they do not harmonize with the size and alignment with each other to create confusion and inconsistency (Figure 15).



Figure 15. Confusion and inconsistency

3. Conclusion

Urban design is a very important and sensitive part of the identity of citizens in a city. It shows their thinking styles, available facilities, and what the experts have offered their talent to the city in which we live. When we combine these factors together to make a combination of a city, the urban landscape reflects the culture and attitude of that society. Cultural criteria, personal taste, the thinking and facilities of social institutions in a country determine the urban landscape and the urban design.

We must admit that architecture and urbanism have the same graphics subset that are important, the store signs design is one of these subcategories that is installed on the body of or other parts the building and its importance is not less than a metal structure or facility. It is possible to design panels that represent the character of the building, the builders, and even represent the culture of that city with the help of architects and graphic designers, considering the function of the building, the materials used and the area in question,. Unfortunately, a simple look at the urban landscape shows a high percentage of signs that are subject to severe maladjustment. The signs on public passages occupy a very big volume, and it is important to pay more attention to carefulness in designing and arranging them.

It should also be noted that there is more possible to compensate for the disadvantages of urban graphics at a shorter time compared to the ugliness and disproportionate effects of the architectural context of the town. In fact, it can be said that urban graphics are capable of compensating some defects and anomalies of other infrastructures of the city, which require more time and expenses. The following factors should be prevented by coordinating with the relevant urban authorities and obtaining official, precise and clear permission; the proportion of the signs with the surroundings, the authorized and unauthorized places of installing signs, the type of the font and its fitting in the text of the signs, considering the maintenance of the safety and security of citizens, the efforts to preserve the ancient identity and the city's texture, the issues related to maintain a clean landscape, nature and environment, appropriate cultural and visual influences and any visual pollution.

4. Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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