

Entry (CUTOUT Magazine Issue 21)

The Concept of this Issue

CUTOUT's latest Naked issue is all about looking at different interpretations of the meaning Naked in the design sense of it, and how it is being applied as an art form or a theme to a design. The end product of the issue itself comes across as unpretentious, almost barren of all colours and yet it shines through exceptionally well in its plain coloured beige cover with die-cuts of odd-looking shapes in the middle, showing just a little bit of words coming from the inner page. The first part of the thinking process which shapes the CUTOUT magazine cover at any one time is the theme – whether it's a single word or a short line, the idea of the theme stems from what is thought by the CUTOUT team to be current and “hot in the design dialogue right now”. It is noteworthy that Naked as a word can trigger different kinds of imagination in people's heads. We speak freely of the language that binds us, and therefore we interpret it the way we think is appropriate or correct. Often, designers and artists have a different take on the subject matter as opposed to thinking or seeing just “a body without clothes on”, and their masterpieces occur to be explorative and sometimes beyond visuals, away from predisposed judgmental thoughts about what naked should represent. As you – the reader – will eventually realise upon reading the Naked issue of CUTOUT, there is a lot more to talk about being exposed to a design process, stripped bare without any inclinations of what to expect from a client, or what's good about approaching a project like a blank sheet of paper.

Short Description – Main usage & Features

CUTOUT is the leading independent graphic design magazine in Malaysia since 2010, covering scopes as wide as South East Asia. CUTOUT derives contents from current issues with contributions from designers, which

ultimately open many doors for dialogues about design. CUTOUT is favoured by art and design students because the magazine serves as a good reference for their studies.

Overall Excellence

Having been around for eight years, CUTOUT has often been the chief publication in the design community. Other than fulfilling its responsibilities as a media, CUTOUT uplifts the local design community by encouraging exchange of thoughts and ideas amongst designers, and supporting their talents by showcasing their works in the publication.

We are engaged in the development of the creative direction of each issue of CUTOUT, maximizing the full potential of design as a creative tool that makes CUTOUT not just for good reading, but as a collectable, too.

CUTOUT's scope crosses a wide spectrum within three fields – graphic design, pop culture and everything in between. The contents are mostly infographics-based and delivered in English, being the preferred language for communication. Presumably, this is due to the unique characteristic that defines what is Malaysian: the cultural mix – varied and colourful, yet essentially adaptive to change in the environment.

The team behind CUTOUT has high regards to design and the local cultures of Malaysia. It is one of those rare projects that we took upon that has become a major lifelong contribution on our end to see this publication make an impact in the design community in Malaysia.

Use of Technology

Using publications to reach out to a wide audience has been practiced by publishers in Malaysia for many years, even today. With the Internet, writers have much more to write but magazines as a media channel are losing out on readers because information can now be retrieved easily online, for less or for free. In the design community in our country, however, this is not a hindrance at all.

Even with the advent of technology, designers still hold dear to books because they come from the generation that grew up around books – not mobile phones or the Internet. What makes CUTOUT special is that we have developed special recipes to make reading pleasant and interesting by visual. We experiment on paper and printing techniques, too. We know that designers will gradually get turned off by wordy articles, so we have implemented infographics and an out-of-grid layout system. Size is a concern because most mailboxes in the country are not really magazine-friendly. So, we have designed CUTOUT in a smaller and compact size, which fits nicely into the mailboxes and without damage.

Commercial Success

CUTOUT has been a great source of inspiration to many designers who are looking for industry advice and goals in life. On an international scale, CUTOUT has helped broadened the views of many people in regards to graphic design. At present, there are more than 29,000 followers of CUTOUT. This means that CUTOUT is gradually becoming a brand known to people in the creative industry. With all the activities, events and competitions organised previously, CUTOUT has definitely created an increased public interest toward art and design. It is this that motivates the team to do more for the design community.

With its existence, CUTOUT has helped improved the image of the graphic design industry in Malaysia which was once seen as unimportant, or lacked respect.