

Insights from the visit to Goplan Mall, Bangalore.

On-site was a field visit to look at how typography and signage is offered in the context of public spaces especially in a shopping mall and to look at how such information is interpreted by the people or customers respectively.

On a personal note something that I found interesting like never before was the way I have started observing the way text was written in various contexts ranging from the vehicle number plates to hoarding on small shops to huge hoarding abutting the road, movie posters so on so forth...

The movement we entered the mall something that struck us was the way "way to parking " was written in green on a white background and positioned at a level where it would be difficult to spot it. I personally couldn't somehow relate to the colours and the information it was offering in this context. Then we started heading towards the entrance and had confusion about the mall's real name since there were two sign boards carrying two different names. Namely, Gopalan mall and Total. There was confusion since they were huge to say that this is the name of the mall compared to the other hoardings on the building but had no relation between them since they were posed away from each other. Grouping them or juxtapositioning would have been a better option to relate them as text of same nature or serving the same purpose. A very interesting discussion about the position of the sign board of the mall with respect to the entrance was held.

When we entered the mall it was quite surprising to notice the security guards guiding us to the baggage storage counter. There should have been a signage showing the anticipated customer action from the retailer point of view. Then we headed to explore the mall and it was observed that signage carrying the various sections in the space were written in violet colour with a white background. The text was sans serif and italic. The signage was obscure considering the font and its size.

There is one area which we have been seeing for a long time but never paid attention to and had some good insights. It was quite interesting to observe how typography can influence a customer in making his purchasing decisions. It was observed that text like discounts and indications relating to reduction of prices were highlighted in different ways by increasing the relative font size, creating contrast by colour, strategic positioning of the key text etc.

The second floor majorly housed FMCG and Electronic goods. The signage in this floor was colour coded and it was much simpler compared to the other floors to make out the different sections.

There were difficulties in finding searching for few spaces like the way to the escalator & staircase either because the absence of the signage or because of the size of the signage and even because of misleading colour coding like in the case of exit signage which was written in the same colour as the store section sign boards. There was also difficulty in finding the wash-rooms as there was no sign of the signage referring to the wash-rooms.