



Applying Multi-Dimensional Mixed Media in Advertisement

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Purpose:

This research was performed with the goal to: provide a tutorial for a unique artstyle that uses 2D and 3D components as well as to apply that method towards advertising to determine its consumer appeal.

MDMM Tutorial:

I began designing the example piece through a concept sketch – laying out the figures, scenery, and the intended message of the advertisement. Once I provided myself with a road map, I took the following steps to complete the piece:

1. Constructing a reusable platform comprised of numerous cardboard strips pressed together within a wooden frame to facilitate the placement of paper figures between the strips
2. Painting the platform black to allow for easier editing in post-production
3. Designing each figure that would be in the final advertisement image
4. Sketching, inking and water-coloring each figure using traditional methods
5. Retouching each figure in Photoshop until satisfied
6. Water-coloring the foreground and background
7. Printing each of the individual elements (three figures, foreground, background and tree) on medium-weight cardstock
8. Cutting out each of the above elements, leaving a ~1-inch tab at the base to enable the figure to stand upright in the platform
9. Assembling the piece according to the original concept design, making adjustments for camera angles as necessary
 - 9a. In this example, the printed elements were placed around the product, making it the centerpiece
10. Photographing the assembled piece on the platform using natural light or other light sources to the desired effect
 - 10a. I used a 55 mm camera lens to photograph my example piece
11. Adjusting any exposure elements in post-production until the desired effect is achieved



FIGURE 1: This is a behind the scenes shot of the platform, each of the 2D figures I made, the 3D product in the middle, and the makeshift light flag.

Application:

The advantage of MDMM in this product market is that it can show how D&D games can be brought to life around WizKids miniatures. The MDMM process has an imaginative, artistic quality about it, so it is best used for products that strike that same tone. Since Dungeons & Dragons is centered around telling a story with a group of friends, I felt that I could show the product enhancing the storytelling portion of the game.

Focus Group:

After designing the example piece, I printed it and a comparison advertisement: a product shot of another miniature by WizKids. I then showed the two pieces to three focus groups, each between five and nine people. Each person was given the two printed pieces – MDMM and the official product shot – and then was asked the following question: “Based on the quality of the ad, not the product itself, which image attracts you the most and why?” After everyone was given time to consider their decisions, I collected the results.



FIGURE 2: Image #1 This is an official product ad from WizKids for one of their Dungeons & Dragons products. It was my control piece.



FIGURE 3: Image #2 My example of Multi-Dimensional Mixed Media

	Official Shot (Image #1)	MDMM Shot (Image #2)	Group Analysis
Group 1 (green)	2 votes	6 votes	Individuals who knew the products they were viewing and had all played Dungeons & Dragons before.
Group 2 (orange)	4 votes	1 vote	Individuals who did not know and were not interested in the products. They had never played Dungeons & Dragons before.
Group 3 (pink)	6 votes	2 votes	Individuals unfamiliar with the subject matter, but some had interests that were adjacent to the product.

Analysis:

According to the results, MDMM does not create a stronger appeal in new consumers, and overall, performs worse than the existing method of advertisement for WizKids. However, Group 1 preferred MDMM substantially more than the comparison product shot. Several members cited the unique qualities of the product MDMM offers as the cause for this preference. Below are the most detailed majority responses from each focus group:

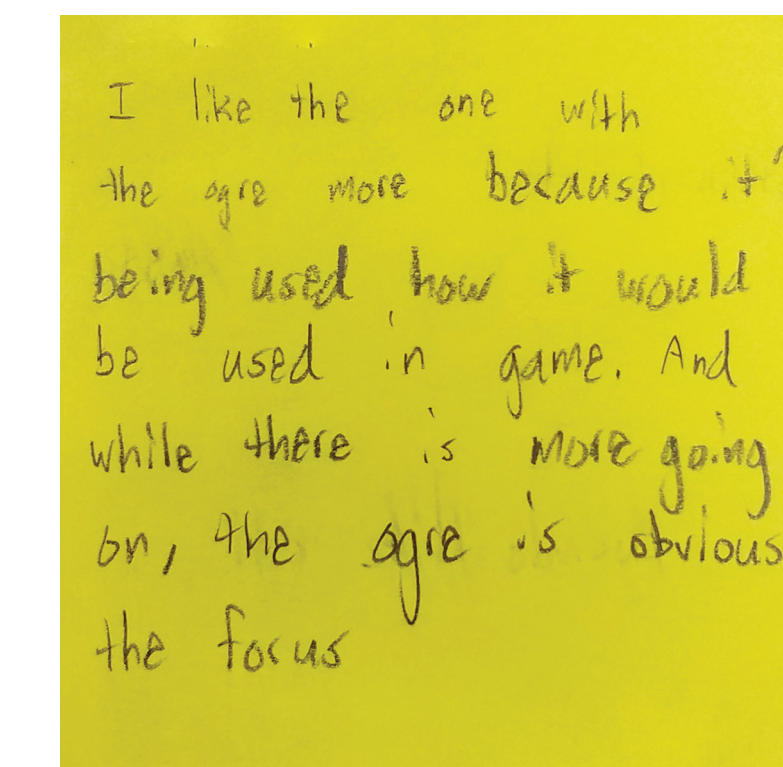


FIGURE 4: Group 1: Vote for MDMM (Image 2) "I like the one with the ogre more because it's being used how it would be used in game. And while there is more going on, the ogre is obviously the focus"

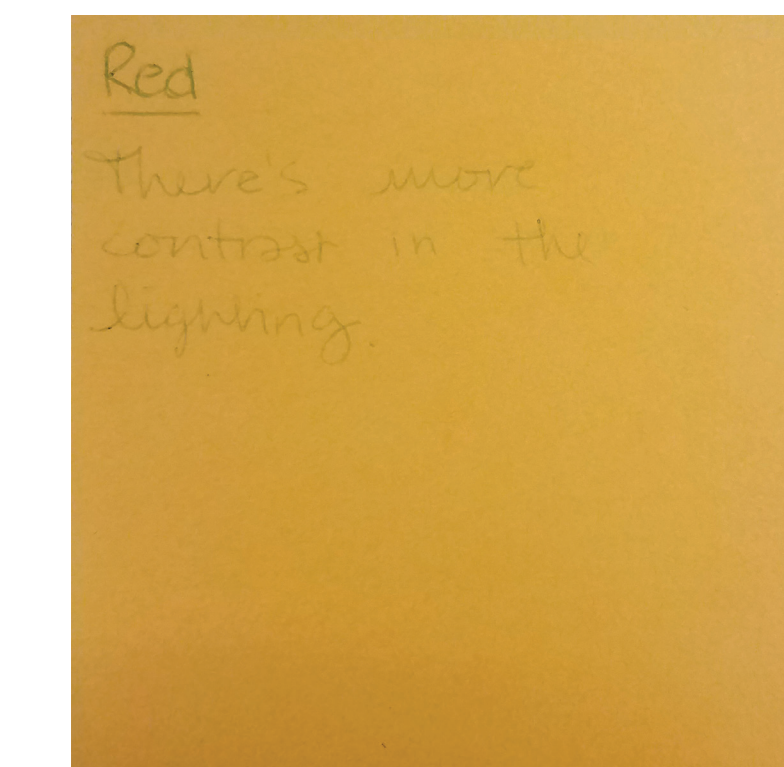


FIGURE 5: Group 2: Vote for Control (Image 1) "There's more contrast in the lighting"

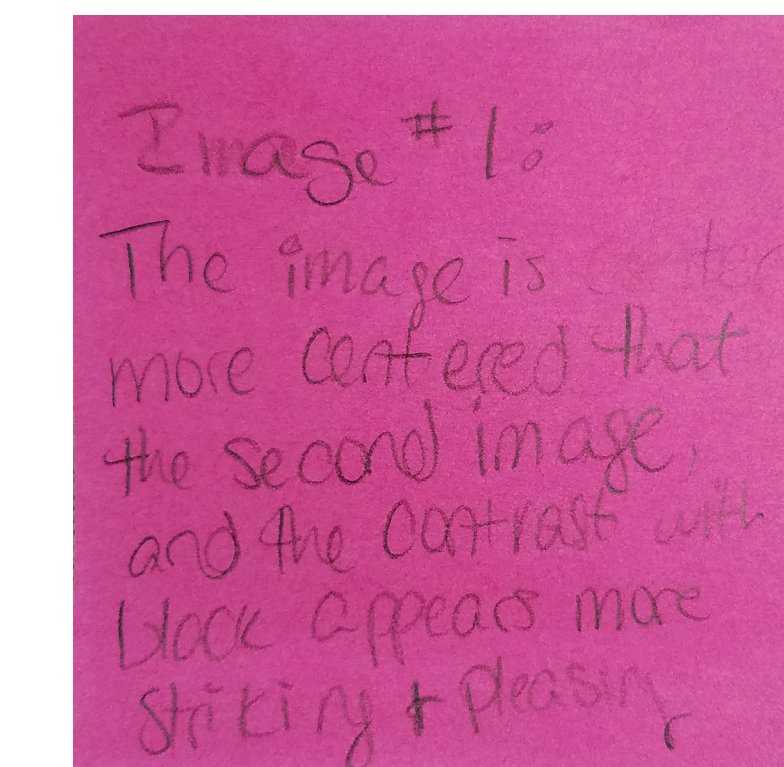


FIGURE 6: Group 3: Vote for Control (Image 1) "The image is more centered than the second image and the contrast with black appears more striking + pleasing"

While I performed this research to the best of my ability, there are a few potential issues in its design. First and foremost, I might not have created a piece that fully demonstrated the strengths of MDMM. This is my first example of the process, I freely admit that I am not the best artist, nor the best photographer. Secondly, individuals might have felt that my example piece was the “correct” choice because it looked homemade and was therefore the subject matter being tested. I also chose a niche market to test, which could mean that I tested poor focus groups, skewing the data. Finally, individuals might have selected which product they preferred, rather than which ad they preferred.

Challenges:

While working on this project I struggled the most with the practical aspects of it, constructing the platform, resizing images of the 2D figures to be the appropriate printed size, and taking the actual picture of the entire piece once it was arranged. I used three different lenses: a standard camera lens, a 50 mm lens, and a telephoto lens trying to get the appropriate depth of field and the perfect framing. I ended up also using a makeshift flag to block some of the natural light from reaching the right side of the final image. While I could have fixed all of these practical issues in post, I felt that doing so would undermine the point of MDMM.

Conclusion:

I researched comparable art processes and created my own tutorial for my method of photographing 3D objects in a 2D studio. I created a small-scale studio via the platform as a way to facilitate this process. I worked through concept design, sketching, inking, water-coloring, editing, and printing figures and background elements. I created an example of what this Multi-Dimensional Mixed Media can do and compared it to a standard product shot. In focus groups, only the people that were already familiar with the product preferred MDMM to the status quo. According to my research, applying MDMM to the marketplace of Dungeons & Dragons miniatures (i.e. Toys; Gaming) is only successful in attracting existing customers, and not successful in attracting new customers.