

Audience Analysis

This poster was conceived to reach out to the general public. It is intended to be used as an advertisement to raise customer awareness of the Qwest Home Bundle service. I specifically targeted what I call the "busy pedestrian" audience subgroup. These are potential Qwest customers traveling through relatively high traffic zones (such as bus stops, subway stations, or urban streets) on foot. While the bundle service may address a need the audience currently has, it's important to recognize that this audience group is not actively seeking information on the Home Bundle service. Members of the audience are busy going about their business and cannot be expected to spend much time engaged with the poster. The poster needs to present them with the solution, so that they realize it addresses their needs. Therefore, selling the audience on the service is a two-step process. First, the poster must draw their attention towards the most critical pieces of information. Second, it must perform a quick "information dump," to provoke future action. For a type of advertisement as passive as a poster, a certain degree of proactivity must be assumed in the audience. The poster cannot "make the sale." It can only spur sufficient interest in the service so that the audience pursues further information and, ideally, subscribes to the service.

Content Selection

Because this poster must generate interest in the Home Bundle service without time to convey a high volume of specific information, I had to be fairly conservative in my selection of content to include. Based on my above audience analysis, I decided that three "tiers" of information regarding the bundle would be included. Tier one would include the most basic and vital information: the name of the bundle, the two services included in it, and the price. The second tier would consist of higher-level information about the bundle as well as secondary benefits. Finally, the third tier would be a semiquantitative graph to visually depict the savings of choosing the bundle over the individual services included in it. Miscellaneous other information was also included, such as a toll-free number and the Qwest URL for those wanting to learn more about the service.

Design Approach

Realistically, a busy pedestrian would not walk out of their way to inspect a poster close-up without wanting to know more specific information about its high-level subject; that is, the most visible elements of its design. Therefore, I had to make design choices that would achieve the two goals mentioned above. The poster needed to attract attention in areas of high foot traffic and quickly deliver the most vital information to the viewer at a fair distance.

I first decided to imbue the poster with a high degree of Qwest stylization. By including the Qwest "header," using predominantly blues and black for text and other images, and using a blue-to-white gradient backdrop, the poster is very clearly representative of the Qwest design standard. These are colors fairly calm and neutral. They not only help the poster to stand apart from the other, often excessively flashy, posters that will be around it, but also serve to create a neutral overtone which makes differently-colored elements stand out exceptionally well.

My next design decision was choosing a color set with good contrast against the blues and white to differentiate the key details from the rest of the poster's text. After trying out a couple of different options, I chose to go with light red with a darker outline. This allows an observer to

glance at the poster from a distance and have the most important information (like the price, included services, and savings) clearly stand out.

Once I had implemented all of the content except for the graph, I realized that the balance between background and text was not working optimally. Depending on how I sized the text, everything was either too large or there was too much neutral space. I decided to try to balance out the text with an additional image. The photograph of a happy, iconic family watching TV seemed appropriate. I shifted the image three dimensionally, not only to add depth to the image, but also to cause the illusion that the family is smiling and looking directly at the price. This sort of effect, while it may not seem like much, can have a subtle impact on the audience by causing a subconscious connection between the emotions invoked by the image and the offer they appear to be looking at.

The last key decision involved the bar graph. I knew that I wanted to illustrate the savings of subscribing to the bundle service, and it was important that the chart or graph I use act on two levels: it needed to show the savings in a fairly qualitative manner for those observing the poster from a distance, but it also needed to include the actual prices for those who chose to study the poster more closely. The first graph I created was a simple bar graph, with three differently color bars representing the two individual services as well as the bundle. However, to the casual observer this could be interpreted as three similar options of which the bundle was not in the best financial choice. Based on this, I elected to convert the bar representing the bundle into a stack chart, with the two segments color-matched to the individual service bars. This allows an observer to see that the bundle is composed of both internet service and DIRECTV service, and the smaller relative sizes within the stack represent the savings offered by the bundle. One final design element of this graph was using slightly larger font sizes for the price and name above the bundle stack. This acts as a subtle emphasis to separate the bundle from the other two bars.

Ultimately, I feel that my design choices serve to optimize the presentation of the subject matter to an audience with very specific design needs. The combined effect of poster's usage of colors and fonts to emphasize key points and suggest the Qwest style, the iconic imagery, and the different depictions of data allows the poster to perfectly address its audience.