

**A Comparison of the Elements and Principles of Feng Shui
and its Beneficial Application to Tradeshow Design**

Thesis

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Section 1.0 Introduction

When creating a booth for a tradeshow, it is the designer's role to produce a space that communicates the client's brand and message. They also must design this space to be inviting, business-efficient and logically-flowing. The art of feng shui has been utilizing the concept of creating organized and logically flowing spaces since around 2600 BC (Sang, 1). It can be traced to the early Chinese observing environments that produced abundant crops and comfortable living conditions that they consequently associated with the topography and position of their surroundings.

Feng shui is a complex art of placement. Because of its ancient roots and practices, it has branched out into every aspect of life, but understanding and utilizing the basic elements and principles of feng shui can create a space that is harmonious, effective and logical.

Tradeshow booths use the elements and principles of design to create a space for a company that effectively communicates their brand and draws their target audience in while at the same time being both functional for business relations and aesthetically pleasing. More incorporation of the elements and principles of design in a booth will enforce the company's message, which will draw in the correct target audience to conduct business.

Comparing feng shui elements and principles to how they would benefit a tradeshow booth would create a set of design criteria. These criteria used on an actual booth and comparing it to one using the traditional design methods would show how different they are. The result of combining feng shui into a booth design would create a space that has proper placement and orientation along with functionality and aesthetics.

Section 1.1 History

Feng Shui, literally meaning “wind-water” in Chinese, is the art of placement (Rossbach, Yun, 18). The term “feng shui,” was coined in *Zhangshu* (Book of Burial) by Guo Pu of the first Jin Dynasty (265-420 AD) (Lin, 2). The originator of the art of feng shui is accredited to Qin Niao Tse (Sang, 1), helping Huang-ti, often called Yellow Emperor (Rossbach, Yun, 34), to plan out the expanding city on the Yellow River valley. Tse observed south facing homes in the mountains, with access to flowing water (Rossbach, 9). South-facing homes provide a warmer sun year-round, fertile soil for farming, a source for drinking water and flushing waste, along with the elevation to observe oncoming threats. These elements played a crucial role for the Chinese culture to flourish.

Section 1.2 Formative Period

There are five stages that shape the history of feng shui, with origins in mysticism that gradually shift toward modern logical placement and westward culture. The first stage, the Formative period, involved Guo Pu and his “Book of Burial” (Lin, 3). His book was on the placement of gravesites, believing that their position could cause fortune or misfortune for the surviving generations.

Section 1.3 Heyday Period

The second stage, coined the Heyday period (618-1179 AD) (Lin, 4), was the time during which feng shui spread and developed more, while taking on two directions of thought: the positional and astrological. The positional reasoning of feng shui can be attributed to placement of a physical location and objects, whereas astrological feng shui pertains to the shaping of fate based on a person’s birth year and environmental

surroundings. To carry out feng shui completely, both directions of thought would be pursued. This takes years of training and practice, but by utilizing the basic elements and principles for positional purposes, feng shui can still be a positive and effective method for creating an ideal setting.

Section 1.4 Follow-Up Period

The third stage of history is described as the Follow-Up period, dating from 1270-1911 AD (Lin, 9). This era included various texts written to explore new theories on feng shui and to clarify and illustrate previous works from preceding masters. One major theory developed during this time involving astrological feng shui was from Mu Jiangzen, taking precedent from Shao Yong; he conceived that the fate of an environmental surrounding may shift and change with time (Lin, 9). This theory can be derived based on the constant movement of objects and constellations throughout space and time.

Section 1.5 Declining Period

After these seemingly flourishing and developmental stages arose the fourth stage, called the Declining period. Lasting from around the early 1800's until the 1970's, civic rebellion, war and destruction led to the deteriorated practice of feng shui. Westerners built railroads and constructed buildings as they saw fit, upsetting the Chinese, for these structures violated their land and, more importantly, feng shui ("Boxer Rebellion," 442). These constant uprisings, wars and disasters left little time or desire to practice feng shui (Lin, 11). With the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, feng shui was regarded as an old world practice and therefore banned (Connors, 1). To ensure their own prosperous futures, Chinese dignitaries replaced the absences of

theoretical concepts with extensive recreational practice. After President Nixon visited China in 1972, Western interest in feng shui was finally stimulated (Rossbach, Yun, 101).

Section 1.6 Resurgent Period

With China opening trade relations, the Resurgent Period or present stage into contemporary feng shui started in the 1980's (Lin, 15). Academic and speech freedoms were relaxed in China and a Western fascination in Chinese culture reached a peak. Since then, many corporations and businesses have used feng shui for placement of buildings and consultation for exterior and interior design. These businesses range from London's Marks & Spencer's executive offices to Donald Trump's International Tower and Hotel (Rossbach, Yun, 18).

Section 2.0 Elements of Feng Shui

All of the buildings and interiors that use feng shui follow the basic elements and principles. The five elements of feng shui are: Qi, color, placement, I-Ching and Ba-gua. These elements are what formulate the whole concept of feng shui, and when utilized within the seven principles, they become a logical practicing theory and art.

Section 2.1 Qi

Qi (pronounced *chi*) is the first element of feng shui (Lin, 41). It is the basis from which feng shui is developed. Qi is the energy by which all things interact (Rossbach, Yun, 13) and can be scientifically classified as electromagnetic waves (Lin, 48, Bramble, 2). The ultimate goal of feng shui is to have a good flow of Qi. A good flow means Qi (energy) should be able to enter a space consistently, move throughout the space in a

(energy) should be able to enter a space consistently, move throughout the space in a logical manner and be at a slow enough rate to interact with its surroundings. Too much Qi is disruptive and too little Qi makes an environment stagnant, so a balance must be obtained. When prospecting a site to build, an area with too much Qi would be preferred over an area lacking Qi because other elements can be added into the space to redirect or neutralize the excess energy, whereas an inadequate amount of Qi cannot be sufficiently supplemented.

Straight, long corridors create a space that produce too quickly flowing Qi, whereas placing a harmonious balance of the principle of the five elements (which will be elaborated on later) in that space would slow it down. These elements also absorb some of the Qi; therefore, they promote the natural and harmonious balance.

Qi in a tradeshow booth should be business-efficient and logical. This means that it should be open enough near the aisles to allow visitors to freely enter, be helped by booth staff and be able to leave at their own leisure. The floor and counters in the booth should be clutter-free with plenty of space for demonstrations if they are needed. These parameters will give proficient flow of traffic throughout the booth, making any visitors feel at ease along with making the booth staff appear professional.

Section 2.2 Color

The second element in feng shui is color. Color is fundamental in all design and symbolic in all cultures. It is subjective and psychological, generating a range of emotions from individual people and different cultures. In feng shui, colors are linked to the principle of the five elements and therefore can be used as a replacement or for

manipulation of certain feelings or emotions. The five feng shui colors are yellow for earth, white for metal, black for water, green for wood, and red for fire.

An example of this in a tradeshow booth would be electricity. Electricity would be categorized under the element of fire, whose corresponding color is red. If an area were lacking the fire element, adding lights, electrical components or the color red would succeed in balancing out the absent element.

Section 2.3 Placement and Orientation

Placement and orientation is the third element in feng shui (Lin, 48). Placement and orientation are essential when trying to direct Qi and create an optimum environment. They are related to Qi in the fact that the earth's electromagnetic waves produced by the poles flow south to north (Lin, 48).

Going back to the ancient observations of the Chinese, a south-facing structure obtained the most favorable living conditions. Southern winds were the mildest and the sun shone the brightest in the winter from the south. A south-facing orientation also meant the hot summer sun rose and set farther to the north, so the facing side of the structure received the most shade, making it cooler. South-facing orientation is optimum, but not a necessity for feng shui. Controlling the flow of Qi has a greater importance, so reorientation may be required along with the objects and colors that will be used.

In dealing with tradeshow booths, the location on the show floor is ideally towards the main entrance to capture attention and the most traffic. Traffic generates the most Qi. Areas for business matters should be towards the center or rear of the booth in a more secluded area.

The way something is placed in a tradeshow booth can cause visitors to see it from different perspectives, depending on their own position. When placing objects or furniture in a booth, all vantage points should be considered. If someone was approaching the booth from behind or the side, they should still feel as though they are able to enter comfortably and identify the company's brand. This means that visual hierarchy and three-dimensional thinking become important factors for the client's branding and product identity.

Section 2.4 I-Ching and Luo-pan

The fourth element in feng shui is the I-Ching, also known as The Book of Changes, that dates back to the origins of feng shui (Rolnick, 11). The ancients used animal bones as dice to cast readings, linking their fate to nature (Rossbach, Yun, 32). Later on, yarrow sticks and most recently coins replaced the animal bones. The I-Ching is a collection of the linear symbols to be used for guidance in the astrological aspect of feng shui.

The Book of Changes codified the resulting readings (called trigrams or *guas*, based on the three lines on each die) that the dice provided and were linked to the natural forces and formations: heaven, earth, thunder, mountain, fire, wind, lake and water (Rossbach, Yun, 32). The analogies of the trigrams were expanded upon to incorporate other aspects of life, such as personal attributes, cardinal directions, numbers, colors and family. These are known universally as the eight trigrams. These symbols are believed to be in a state of continual transition, one changing into another and constantly shifting, just as human fortunes and life are in nature.

When casting the I-Ching, two dice are used, creating sixty-four readings (called hexagrams) which represent all the possible outcomes of the forces interacting with each other. The sixty-four hexagrams that can be produced make up the complete I-Ching. King Wen completed the Book of Changes in the last generation of the Shang Dynasty (1766-1121 BC) (Ni, 1) with it being first published in 1122 (Rolnick, 21).









Symbol	Name	Attribute	Image	Family Relationship
 Ch'ien	the Creative	strong	heaven	father
 K'un	the Receptive	devoted, yielding	earth	mother
 Chên	the Arousing	inciting, movement	thunder	first son
 K'an	the Abysmal	dangerous	water	second son
 Kên	Keeping Still	resting	mountain	third son
 Sun	the Gentle	penetrating	wind, wood	first daughter
 Li	the Clinging	light-giving	fire	second daughter
 Tui	the Joyous	joyful	lake	third daughter

Figure 1: The Eight Trigram Chart
Source: (Wilhelm, 2)

Originating out of the I-Ching is the Luo-pan, a large guiding compass. It has a south-orientated directional compass in the center surrounded by ten concentric circles pertaining to all aspects of life (Sang, 64). These rings contain elements of astrology, the zodiac and their corresponding elements, along with all the hexagrams of the I-Ching (Rossbach, Yun, 34). Being as the Luo-pan deals with the astrological, it is not the choice tool for utilizing feng shui for the positional method in booth design.

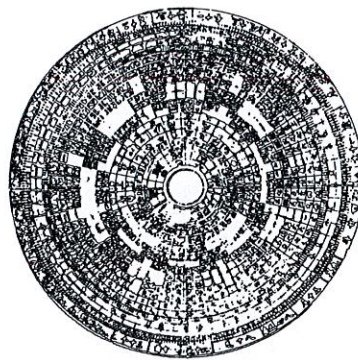


Figure 2: Illustrated Luo-pan
Source: (Sang, 63)

Section 2.5 Ba-gua

The Ba-gua (pronounced *bah-gwah*) is the fifth element in feng shui (Lin, 96). The Ba-Gua is formed from the eight trigrams of the I-Ching and is a tool used to analyze an environment for incorporation of feng shui (Rossbach, Yun, 33). The Ba-gua can be arranged either in a circular fashion or square and is used as a map for placement of the elements in a harmonious fashion. The Ba-gua is located in the first ring of the Luo-pan, so the Luo-pan could be used for positional feng shui, but because it contains all the astrological readings, it would be distracting if not unnecessary for practicing the basic feng shui placement in booth design.

When using the Ba-gua, a compass is needed to get a directional reading of the space. The circular Ba-gua is preferred, for it more accurately aligns with the compass sectors. The basic utilization of the Ba-gua is to analyze the space with a compass to find a cardinal direction and then align the Ba-gua to that corresponding direction. From there, one can chart the placement of the related objects and furniture to their respective positions on the diagram.

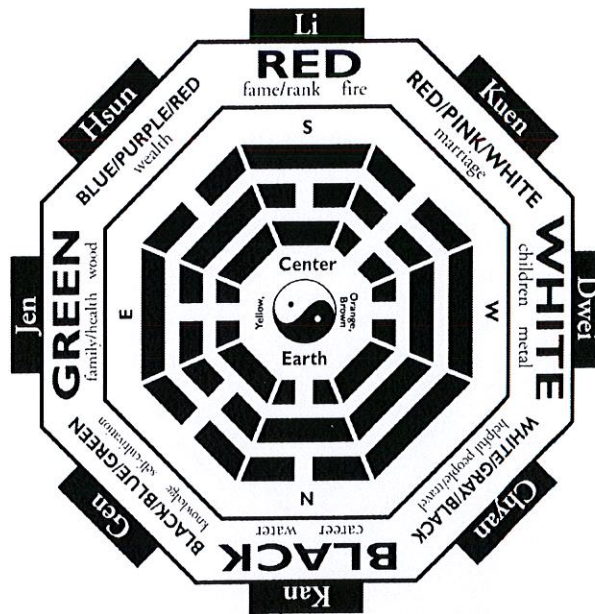


Figure 3: Circular Ba-gua
Source: (Rossbach, Yun, 44)

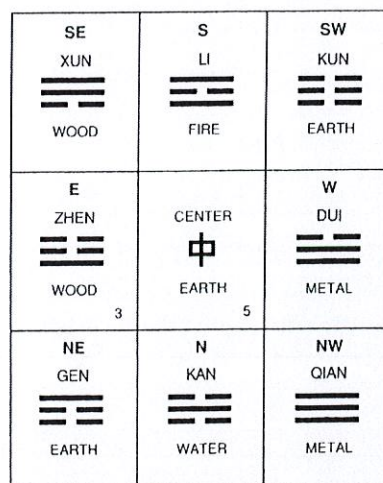


Figure 4: Square Ba-gua
Source: (Sang, 41)

Section 3.0 Principles of Feng Shui

The five elements of feng shui create a general knowledge of how the art of placement came to be, and utilizing these elements together can create a very basic understanding. However, without developing and incorporating the elements of feng shui into the principles, they are incomplete. Utilizing and expanding these sets of guidelines are what make feng shui into a practicing theory and art.

Section 3.1 Yin/Yang

There are seven principles of feng shui, the first being Yin and Yang. This principle is based on two opposing forces but applies to everything in Chinese culture. This concept has been around even before the symbol was developed, incorporating it with the I-Ching, with one symbol meaning yin and one symbol meaning yang.



Figure 5: Ying/Yang Symbol
Source: (Sang, 32)

The symbol is a circle with two bent teardrop shapes filling the space. Its top half is filled with white and bottom with black. The bent teardrop shapes have the opposing colored dot placed inside each half on top of each other. This symbol classifies everything as either Yin or Yang. Yin is the black that signifies dark, cold, femininity, interior and gentleness. Yang is the white that signifies light, hot, masculinity, exterior and violence (Lin, 20). Yang is always shown on top because it is lighter than the

opposing Yin. The interactions between these shapes illustrate changes and reactions that occur in life and nature and show that nothing is absolute. The dots on each side demonstrate that along with a perfect balance, Yin is always in Yang and Yang always within Yin. Each of these forces are distinct and individual, but cannot exist without each other (Sang, 10).

Section 3.2 The Five Elements

The next principle of feng shui is the five elements: earth, metal, water, wood and fire (Rolnick, 37). These elements are also associated with colors and directions and have three different cycles in which they exist: productive, destructive and reductive (Sang, 21). The productive cycle generates each preceding element: earth is the source of metal; metal can be a liquid like water and is found in water; water nourishes trees, trees nourish fire and fire produces earth. The destructive cycle follows the same direction, but creates a cycle of imbalance: earth blocks water, water extinguishes fire, fire melts metal, metal penetrates wood and wood absorbs nutrients from the earth. The third cycle is the opposite of the productive cycle and is key in feng shui to help balance an area that has too much of one element. The reductive cycle is that earth smolders fire, fire burns wood, wood soaks up water, water corrodes metal and metal is extracted from earth.

Going back to the example of electricity in a tradeshow booth, having too much would require a remedy. Being as electricity is under the element of fire, whose corresponding color is red, using the destructive cycle to eliminate fire would require the use of the water element. This could be done with either placing actual water in the booth where the excess fire element was located or using the color black. If the excess element

of fire needed balance instead of elimination, the reductive cycle would be used; placing earth or the color yellow in the problematic area of the booth.

Section 3.3 Heaven-Man-Earth Trinity

The third principle of feng shui is man and how he is the key in making the elements affect each other. Man is the one who is prospecting a location to build, using the elements to execute it and manipulating the elements to affect his own life (Lin, 26). The art of feng shui is intensely studying a site and the elements that surround it and harmonizing them to produce an inviting space for which either he or other people will thrive. The principle of man has variables that affect every person visiting a location. The reason is because each person's experiences are based on both internal and external changes. The variables are orientation, color, individual impressions and perceptions of an environment and what make an experience unique. What may be a thriving location for one individual might be just the opposite for the next.

As for designing a booth for a tradeshow utilizing feng shui, close attention must be paid to the target audience's demographics and message that the client wants to portray. These criteria will be part of the design standards for which to build the booth.

Section 3.4 Balance and Harmony

Balance and harmony is the fourth principle in feng shui (Lin, 27). Balancing and harmonizing the five elements, Yin and Yang, the size and quantity of other objects and all of these principles together is crucial for creating a booth with good feng shui. A large booth with few people in it will be unbalanced, just like a space with too much of one element will be unharmonious. Just like in the principle of Yin and Yang, it is a challenge to bring about balance with opposing forces.

Section 3.5 Timing

The fifth principle of feng shui is timing (Lin, 28). The relationship between timing and feng shui is essential when placing a person in a booth. Land changes over time and so do people, so to create a space that is harmonious with both is significant.

Two factors that can affect feng shui and timing are the age of the booth and the time when a person visits that space. Depending on how long a booth has been in use in relation to when a guest is in that booth can affect a person's experience in it. A booth used in long circulation will be viewed as out-of-date. In the exhibit industry, certain colors and materials are fashionable for a short period of time. To have a booth that is dated will not spark as much interest with visitors. Timing is also important in regard to how long the visitor has been on the show floor. If the visitor has been walking all day, they may be tired and not as accepting or aware of the design elements in the booth.

Section 3.6 Topography Flow

Topography flow is the sixth principle in feng shui (Lin, 30). Because Qi doesn't just flow on an X and Y plane, Z (or height) considerations are also a factor. Topographical variances generate Qi and are auspicious places to build. The ancient Chinese associated topographical changes only to the mountains, but modern structural components bear the same effects (Rossbach, Yun, 63).

In relation to tradeshow design, varying structures throughout the booth create visual interest and a place for branding hierarchy. These structures can range from slightly elevated portions of the booth that utilize steps to double deck structures, which are elevated platforms in a booth that require staircases to ascend. Topography flow can also be created with isolated structures that range from simple towers to artistic

sculptures. All of these structures can promote the brand from a distance and offer additional storage or create aesthetic recognition among the masses of other booths surrounding it.

Section 3.7 Normality and Abnormality

The seventh principle of feng shui is normality and abnormality. This principle states that abnormality is actually more auspicious in feng shui than normality (Lin, 33). It is customary in designing a booth to want it to stand out. In utilizing this with feng shui, creating a dynamic booth that has other design elements to balance it out is ideal. This creates a harmony and attracts more visitors and leaves a lasting impression in their mind, which reinforces the client's brand and marketing statement.

Section 4.0 Elements of Design

These elements and principles of feng shui used together can create a well-organized space, but without the knowledge of the principles and elements of design, they are ineffective for a booth. Understanding how design principles and elements work together to create effective communication is the ultimate goal for any designer (Evans, Thomas, ix), especially for a tradeshow. The importance of a good booth design is to have effective communication because the audience is bombarded with stimuli from every other booth in the tradeshow. The time to get a potential customer to understand what a booth design represents and stop to enter is literally a matter of seconds. With the use of the design principles and elements, a booth can become an aesthetic and communicative tool for marketing and customer expansion.

Section 4.1 Shape and Space

The first element of design is shape and space (Evans, Thomas, 20). In a tradeshow booth, two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional spaces make up this element. The two-dimensional shapes are graphics and the three-dimensional spaces are the furniture and structural components. Two-dimensional shapes have length and width, whereas a three-dimensional space has mass with volume. These shapes and spaces are critical in design because they are what make up communication. They can either be implied, abstract, overt or literal. With these options, a design can be subtle, outspoken or a combination of the two.

Section 4.2 Line

Line, the second element in design, is defined as “the moving path of a point,” (Evans, Thomas, 22). It can direct, circumnavigate and create shape. A line can have different qualities, depending on what tool is used to make it (i.e. paintbrush or computer). A line can also be implied with the usage of other shapes and elements that can make it a very engaging design.

In a booth, line can serve many purposes. It can direct traffic, lead the visitor's eye and communicate a concept. Lines can be navigational tools or create aesthetic curves that flow throughout a booth. They can generate borders and patterns and provide a unique contrast against large bulky shapes. Just like in two-dimensional design, lines in a tradeshow booth can have different qualities, depending on what material they are made out of. A metal line or bar can have a very different effect than one being made out of fabric or plastic.

Section 4.3 Size

Size, the third element in design, is the physical dimensions of an element or format and creates the context for scale and proportion (Evans, Thomas, 24). Size can be based on function or used creatively to produce a unique experience.

In a tradeshow booth, size has important factors; first being the overall size of the booth. Larger booths make a bigger impact on a visitor and have a more predominant presence on the show floor, but booth space is expensive and there are usually select amounts and formats for the sizes of booths.

Secondly, size becomes a considerable issue in dealing with function. One function of a booth is to generate business leads. It takes one person for every 100 square feet to properly staff a booth and gather qualifying leads. Each staff member can acquire around eight leads an hour. Depending on the company's needs, this function should determine the size of the booth, but due to budgeting, this is usually not the case. It then becomes the designer's role to creatively find an effective way to use size to their advantage to create a booth that operates efficiently and makes a statement.

Section 4.4 Color

The fourth element in design is color (Evans, Thomas, 26). As stated before with feng shui, color is fundamental in all design and symbolic in all cultures. The most significant aspect of color is that it can communicate without words or pictures. It is subjective and psychological, generating a range of emotions from individual people. It can create a mood or attitude and work with the other design elements to effectively send a message. Color is significant in a tradeshow booth because it gives the design the power

to subliminally control what the visitors are feeling. It can attract their attention and communicate instantaneously what purpose their business serves.

Section 4.5 Texture

Texture, the tactile and visual characteristic of a surface, is the fifth element in design. It enhances the other design elements and relies on shape and space to exist (Evans, Thomas, 28). Texture is unique in the fact that it can be created both two- and three-dimensionally. Patterns and applications of media onto a surface are some ways to create texture. Texture is beneficial in design because it can combine senses to interact with it.

In a booth, texture is valuable for the experience it can create. Tradeshow booths make more of an impact and generate better business if the visitors have a positive memory of their booth. With combining the senses in experiencing texture, a booth can become much more memorable, which is one of the ultimate goals in a tradeshow.

Section 4.6 Typography

The sixth element in design is typography, which serves two roles in design (Evans, Thomas, 31). Typography naturally creates shapes, lines, points and textures, but it also has verbal meaning. It's already been established that creating effective communication is key for a designer, and typography is no exception. Anyone can place text onto a surface, but when type is manipulated to enforce its message, it makes an even greater impact. This can also make typography universal in the fact that it may be in a different language, but the way it is portrayed may be substantial enough to communicate the message.

Typography in a tradeshow booth is vital because of the fact that visitors are not going to stand and read large quantities of text. Typography is a supplement to the rest of the booth design, and usually only a few key words or phrases are used, besides the branding or slogan. This means that the typography that is used communicates on a dual level, visually supporting what is being said.

The orientation of typography is another consideration. Whether to place words horizontally or vertically can dramatically change the effectiveness. An example of this would be with reading. In Western cultures, reading is done from left to right, but that is not the case in other cultures (Evans, Thomas, 7). Chinese characters, for example are read top to bottom. Knowing the target audience and proper message will dictate how to orientate the typography.

Section 5.0 Principles of Design

These six elements provide a good foundation for design, but combining them into the principles is what makes them a true composition. The principles of design affect the relationships between the elements, which create order and organize one's visual interest.

Section 5.1 Unity and Variety

The first principle of design is unity and variety (Evans, Thomas, 5). This can be best described by the Gestalt principle that: "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts" (Evans, Thomas, 38). The most important aspect of any design is the comprehension of what is being seen. Using contrast and different design aspects throughout a piece make it easier to visually navigate, which aides in comprehension. It is

a designer's purpose to create a sense of unity through the organization of the individual parts.

A tradeshow booth must effectively have unity and variety in various levels. Any graphics in the booth must follow this principle, along with tying into the rest of the design. The furniture and structural components must also create their own sense of visual interest, yet unify the whole booth into one cohesive design.

Section 5.2 Hierarchy

Hierarchy, meaning dominance and arranged order, is the second principle of design (Evans, Thomas, 7). Hierarchy is something a designer specifically strives for to communicate effectively. The goal is to capture the viewer's attention and lead them on a particular visual path so they view the message as it was intended. This can be done with any or all of the elements of design.

Effective booth design has a hierarchy both graphically and structurally. It does so with its pictures, branding, banners and structural components. The goal of a booth design is to be seen from a distance to draw visitors in and constantly remind them of the intended message while they are in the booth. This means that the hierarchy must be continually practiced at various physical heights.

Section 5.3 Proportion and Scale

Proportion and scale, referring to size relationships in a design, is the third principle (Evans, Thomas, 7). The overall shape of a format that a design will be on ultimately determines what scale and proportions will be used. This shape is commonly determined by the function of the piece.

Ratios can also be used as proportional systems. The golden ratio, 1:1.618, dates back to the Greeks and is commonly used by designers to produce aesthetic results (Evans, Thomas, 8). Proportion is also closely related to hierarchy, being as the predominant message might be proportionally larger than the other elements.

For a tradeshow booth, a careful balance must be acquired to create a space that all visitors will feel comfortable in. Anthropometric data (average men and women's scales and proportions) is considered when creating a booth for an ergonomic function with furniture, physical area and visual hierarchy. Rarely used is the opposite approach, which creates a unique booth. Making a person feel incredibly small or large can have a dramatic impact and leave a lasting impression on the visitor.

Section 5.4 Balance

Balance and the distribution of elements, both symmetrical and asymmetrical, is the fourth principle in design (Evans, Thomas, 12). Symmetrical balance is the arrangement of either alike or comparable objects or elements on the same or similar side of a central axis. They appear to be mirrored or close to it. Radial symmetry is the arrangement of objects or elements that radiate out from a central axis. Asymmetrical balance is the arrangement of an odd number of elements that produce a relationship between positive and negative space, form and counterform. This relationship creates a dynamic visual balance.

Throughout a booth, balance is an underlying aspect. Varying hierarchy and dynamic structures create a visual impact, but still must be balanced with other forms. A symmetrical booth is not uncommon, due to the fact that there are multiples of the same kinds of structures. For instance, a booth larger than 10' x 10' will usually have multiple

lead counters, where visitors will exchange information. These counters are usually placed on opposing ends for optimum control of traffic.

Physical balance is a primary factor when dealing with three-dimensional items; without it, they would fall over or not support other objects. As a tradeshow booth designer, finding structural balance is key to creating a safe and logically engineered space.

Section 5.5 Rhythm and Repetition

Rhythm and repetition, which are a pattern of related or juxtaposed elements is the fifth principle in design (Evans, Thomas, 14). These elements can either be configured in a sequential texture or create a lively visual that is the optical equivalent to music. Just like in music, these rhythms and repetitions can create a harmony or discord. Rhythm and repetition create movement and arrangement and, when placed specifically, they can give a sense of depth and balance.

In a booth, rhythm and repetition can direct a visitor both visually and physically. Structures or graphics placed in a booth can create a natural flow that guides the visitor in a hierarchy. An unnatural rhythm or repetition in a booth can produce a distinct experience that, as mentioned before, would stay memorable.

Section 5.6 Proximity

The position given to elements in a space is the definition of proximity, the sixth principle in design (Evans, Thomas, 15). Having objects too close together can jumble a design and not create enough variety for the viewer to differentiate each element. Placing objects too far apart does just the opposite and separates the elements, making the design

seem disjointed. Controlling where an element will go and creating a dynamic tension between elements in a space is the fundamental objective of proximity.

Creating a space that can contain walkways, display areas, meeting rooms, seating areas and other structural components in a tradeshow booth is the practice of proximity. Crowding these elements would make visitors uncomfortable and placing them too far apart would make them feel isolated. Finding a balance between the two using these elements and other principles of design is the only solution.

Section 6.0 Element Skateboards

After a detailed analysis of the elements and principles of both feng shui and design, it becomes apparent how similar they are. By comparing the similar elements and principles it will become evident how feng shui can be positively utilized in design and, more distinctively, a tradeshow booth.

The company, Element Skateboards will be used to outline the following two case studies of tradeshow booths: one using traditional design elements and principles and the other using feng shui elements and principles. The company's logo, philosophy and ethics make it an ideal candidate for utilizing feng shui in a tradeshow booth.

Section 6.1 Element's History

Element Skateboards was founded in 1992 under the collaborative name Underground Element, which shortly after became exclusively owned by Johnny Schillereff (Element Skateboards). The company produces skateboards, clothing and shoes; sponsors its own skateboarding team; and features a women's clothing line entitled Element Eden (Element Skateboards).

Section 6.2 Element's Philosophy

Schillereff's idea after becoming the exclusive owner was to transition the company into a universally appealing brand, by turning the negative elements from the old company into positive ones (Element Skateboards). Element is known today as a leader in the skateboarding industry and for giving back to the community, with a non-profit organization called Elemental Awareness. This organization has its own camp programs to teach youth about the environment through education, skateboarding and leadership (Element Skateboards).

Section 6.3 Element's Branding

The Element logo symbolizes their tie to nature. Their logo and branding seem correlated to feng shui, but they do not associate themselves with it. The elements used in their logo do not entirely match with the principle of the five elements of feng shui either. The difference is that Element uses wind versus feng shui's use of metal.

The Element logo features a tree, representing wood, with two circles around it; the outermost circle has four hash lines, each correlating to four elements: wind, water, fire and earth. The logo is usually placed on a red background, or is red itself.



Figure 6: Element Skateboards Logo
Source: (www.brandsoftheworld.com)

Element's brand is known for being trendy, edgy and fun. They take advantage of the multiple elements that their logo contains and commonly develop series of products that individually represent one corresponding element. Many of Element's board and clothing designs incorporate flashy patterns and shapes. They tend to use their symmetrical logo within asymmetrical design principles, and use extremely different color schemes independently on their items. This is because their products are designed by over thirty advocates of varying professions and styles (Element Skateboards).

Along with displaying their products in a suitable manner, designing a tradeshow booth for Element would need to reflect this creative and hip style. The three tradeshows that Element Skateboards primarily attends are the Action Sports Retailer Trade Expo, BRIGHT, and Bread & Butter ("Exhibitor List," "Brands," "Past Exhibitors,"). These tradeshows are made for suppliers and retailers to network and distribute products; therefore, the booth would require at least one casual meeting area and lead counter.

Being that Element is one of the leading brands in the industry and two of the three shows are international, budget would not be an issue. With these criteria in mind, two booths will be constructed, one utilizing the elements of feng shui and the other without, to compare and contrast the functionality and flow that both have to offer.

Section 7.0 Exhibit A

Case Study

The first tradeshow booth was designed using traditional principles and elements.

The booth occupies a 20' x 20' space, with a maximum height of 15'. The overall structure is constructed out of a truss system that holds lighting and supports a canopy.

The concept behind this structure is that it is lightweight and modular, so it can be broken down to reconfigure into a smaller booth space if needed.



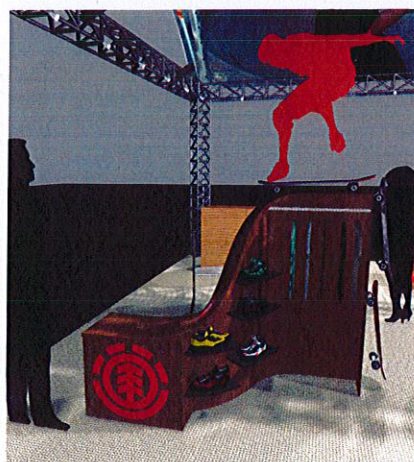
**Figure 7: Element Skateboards
Exhibit A**

The idea behind the canopy is to create hierarchal branding and distance recognition on the outside using the Element logo while producing an immersing and fun environment once the visitor steps inside the booth. The canopy is used for projecting images of skateboarders. The reasoning behind having the skateboarders being projected on the canopy is that using real skateboarders would physically take up a great deal of space and structure, whereas projecting video of them on the ceiling creates an added

dimension inside the booth. It also creates a demonstration of the product while producing a wow factor.

A neutral beige, low pile carpet was used for flooring to give the space a more intimate feel as opposed to hard flooring. Carpet absorbs sound and isn't distracting when people are walking across it. The neutral beige color was used to contrast with the red logos throughout the booth while still complementing all the other colors.

Two custom display structures inspired by skateboard runs are featured inside the booth to hold Element's different products. They were placed in the same direction facing towards the outside of the booth so that visitors walking through the aisles can see both sides and all the products. Their curvature creates a visual line that leads the eye around the space with the bottom portion serving as bench seating with storage underneath. Beneath the curvature on one side is an area for hanging clothing and shelving for shoes. The other side contains shelving for displaying the boards. The displays make a textural contrast to the overall smooth surface of the structure. To create an added dynamic and visual hierarchy, the displays have red mannequin skateboarders that appear to be riding down the curvature wearing Element products. They are red to tie into the Element logo.



**Figure 8: Element Skateboards
Exhibit A**

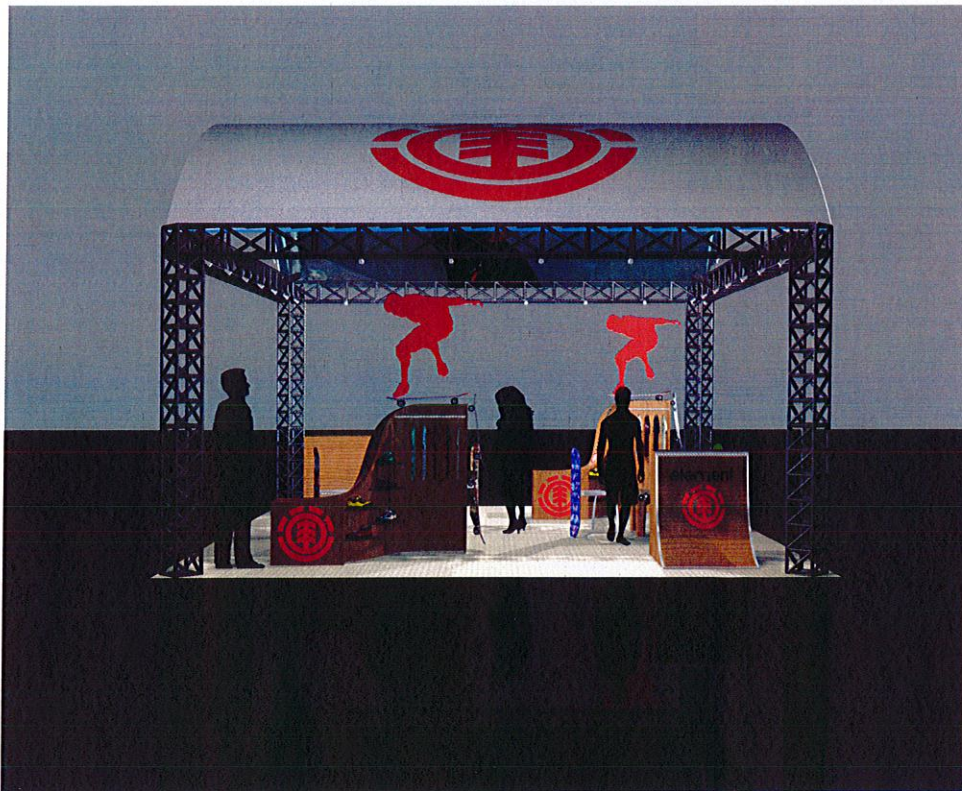
Two seating areas inspired by skateboards are also in the space. They were placed in the middle of the booth without any partitions to hide them and with easy access to the show floor to give the clients a more casual atmosphere, but still intimate enough to be able to conduct business. The custom chairs feature one of Element's boards as the back of the chair and recycled industrial metal for the seat and front legs. The chairs have a unique spatial contrast, using metal tubing for the legs and a solid board for the back. The legs utilize the form of line; curving under to attach to the seat. The chair backs use a distinctive shape and are graphically filled with patterns that give the boards texture, giving the feel of upholstery. The tables in each seating area utilize many shapes. They have blocky legs with thick, round skateboard wheels to hold up the thin circular glass top. The legs radiate out from the center to stabilize it. They are wooden to match the display cases and lead counters while providing contrast to the chairs. The glass top ties into the chairs with its smooth and reflective surface, which makes both pieces cohesive.



**Figure 8: Element Skateboards
Exhibit A**

Two lead counters were used inside the booth to accommodate traffic from two directions. They were placed near the outside of the booth to attract visitors for leads, while being able to quickly gather information and walk away easily. They were inspired by skateboarding ramps. Made of wood with metal trim, they are a miniature replica of a real ramp and are a great way to display the Element brand at a lower level.

This booth could effectively be used to display Element's products at the same time as producing a space creative enough to reflect their brand. The seating areas allow for more personal conversation and business relations while the lead counters serve as stations for effectively generating leads and smaller business.



**Figure 9: Element Skateboards
Exhibit A**

Section 8.0 Exhibit B

Case Study

The second tradeshow booth was designed using the principles and elements of feng shui. The booth occupies the same 20' x 20' space, with a maximum height of 10'. The booth was designed to be facing the south, with all the corresponding elements aligned to their proper placement.

The overall structure is constructed out of a truss system which holds lighting. This structure is made of metal; and to create a balance, the productive cycle of earth using the beige carpet was applied. The canopy was removed because the projected movies would create too much electricity or fire element throughout the booth.



Figure 10: Element Skateboards
Exhibit B

the west side of the booth were changed to white and the table's legs were made into metal. The metal components of the furniture in the northeast side of the booth were turned black to correspond to the feng shui colors of black, blue and green. The colors of the skateboards match the feng shui colors as well.

The lead counters were used again, with the northwest counter changed to black and white. The southeast counter contains the red logo; therefore it didn't need to be changed. This counter is constructed out of wood and metal and, since the element metal pierces wood in the destructive cycle, they balanced each other out.

In the center of the booth, a life size stone sculpture was created to fulfill the earth element. It makes for a great textural and shapely design, encapsulating the spirit of skateboarding in an art form.



**Figure 12: Element Skateboards
Exhibit B**

A waterfall was placed in the north sector of the booth to complete the element of water. This feature has the Element logo inside to reiterate branding along with creating a light, ambient noise which would relax the visitors and cover up other external noises.



**Figure 13: Element Skateboards
Exhibit B**

The feng shui booth creates a unique and diverse design that complements all of the elements. The range and flow of the colors throughout the booth draw attention individually, but work together as one harmonious unit. Because most of the structural components were utilized again, the seating areas and business relations can still be carried on efficiently.

Section 9.0 Conclusion

The full spectrum of feng shui expands into every aspect of life, taking years of intense study and practice to master. Researching feng shui and understanding the complexity of its ancient roots and practices leads to comprehension of its basic elements

and principles for placement. Utilizing these elements and principles can create a space that is harmonious, effective and logical.

Tradeshow booths use the elements and principles of design to create a space that is functional and aesthetically pleasing. Incorporating as many of the elements and principles of design as possible into a booth yields better results.

Exhibit A demonstrated how utilizing as many of the elements and principles of design as possible created a space that communicated the client's brand, message and product. The space was also designed to be inviting, business-efficient and logically-flowing.

After studying feng shui and its relation to tradeshow design, it becomes apparent how the elements and principles work together to create a cohesive and efficient booth. Developing each area to interact with each other, yet having them represent individual elements is truly an art of balance and proportion. To have a complete feng shui design would require the study and practice of both the astrological and placement methods, but utilizing the basic elements and principles still generates a positive and effective method for creating an ideal setting.

A set of design criteria were created and used after comparing the feng shui elements and principles to how they would benefit a tradeshow booth. These criteria used and applied to Exhibit B demonstrated how different they are than Exhibit A. The results of combining feng shui into the booth design created a space that has proper placement and orientation along with functionality and aesthetics.

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