



CAMPUS
The bold, kinetic graphics in this instant ticket (far left), aimed at the student crowd, conjure up action cartoons and video games.

MUSIC
This iconic music image (near left) appealed to both young and old buyers alike, who found it fun to scratch lively letters spelling out something they love.

DISCIPLINES

LOTTERY DESIGN: A BIG WINNER

Israel-based Mergui Lottery Design is a sure bet for lottery ticket sales. Get to know the firm's founder, who offers a peek at this growing segment of the design industry.

On your way home from work, you hit the convenience store for a six-pack, and behind the counter there they are: locked plastic dispensers brimming with shiny red, yellow, blue and green instant lottery tickets, like penny candy, beckoning your dollar bills. What's a few more bucks for the chance to change your life? So you slap down the cash and scratch at your luck.

Billions of people worldwide buy instant lottery tickets every day, drawn by dreams of how they'd spend the jackpot. For anyone hooked on hope, the very sight of the tickets has them shelling out the dough. Many

lottery lovers probably don't even notice the design of these small paper shapes, most of them as mundane as the money in their wallets. Unless they're designed by Mergui Lottery Design.

Instead of garish hues overpopulated with type and clichéd slot-machine icons, Mergui's designs surprise the eye with their large, cartoon-like renderings of things you'd never expect from any lottery. Combine these images with warm and inviting colors, playful and exaggerated fonts, die-cut shapes, reflective background patterns and value-added features, and



BACKGAMMON

This ticket puts a new spin on a game that nearly every Israeli learns to play as a child.

TUTTI FRUTTI

Named after the 1955 Little Richard hit, this classic arcade-style ticket brings cheerful fruit faces to life with bright colors.



MORE FOR THE MONEY

People who romp in risk and reward deserve a little extra with their instant lottery tickets. That's why Mergui Lottery Design has pumped up the payoff with extra value.

To charm younger customers, Mergui's popular Music ticket, in collaboration with Tower Records, gave them a further chance to win concert tickets and music CDs.

Mergui created the holiday-card ticket in response to the Israeli National Lottery's desire to reach a wider audience. Since so many players of lottery tickets buy them as gifts, why not combine the two? Not only that, but each recipient won something, if just a dollar. A congratulations card, birthday cards and other cards soon followed.

The ticket can also serve a larger cause. That's what happened when the Israeli National Lottery partnered with a leading climate change and sustainability organization. Ticket-buyers knew that a portion of the sales would contribute to improving the environment. Any carbon emitted from the tickets' printing was offset by the planting of trees in Mozambique. Other nonprofit organizations are getting in on the game. Says Peddy Mergui, "We believe that instant tickets are an excellent source of media through which lotteries can both promote their social responsibility and improve their corporate identity."

just looking at the tickets is almost as much fun as the fantasy (let alone the reality) of making a fortune.

Award-winning Mergui Lottery Design specializes in instant ticket designs for lotteries and related companies all over the world, from Asia and Africa to the Ukraine and the U.S. The five-person, Tel Aviv, Israel-based firm, founded by executive creative director Peddy Mergui in 2008, is the sole designer of instant tickets for the Israeli National Lottery, Mifal Hapais, creating about 25 tickets per year. (He also heads Peddy Mergui Design Group, www.peddington.com, a separate, full-service corporate image and design company that he founded in 1999.) Along with designing instant lottery tickets, Mergui serves as a consultant for lotteries aspiring to up the ante on their existing ticket designs. He also crusades for advancing a design niche that has been slow to grow, but is beginning to catch on.

BETTING ON DESIGN

Most government-run instant lottery companies buy all their services from the world's few one-stop-shop print houses, which are experts at printing (the most expensive part) but not inventive design. With no precedent or competition for the latter, lotteries have lived without it. Budgets or contracts may limit some printers who otherwise recognize the importance of investing in enticing designs as crucial to the long-term success of instant tickets sales.

For one, "the standard of design throughout all types of industries continues to improve," Mergui says. Instant lottery companies must keep up to stay ahead. While continuing to reach aging ticket buyers, they need to appeal to younger ones so they don't lose them to video and internet gambling rivals.

Whatever the market, Mergui says, "when faced with a wide variety of options, the customer will choose based mostly, if not fully, on the design of the ticket," especially if it's fun and entertaining. Hence, his company's tagline: "The lottery is a game of chance. Ticket design is not." Sure, people also are buying the odds, but they wouldn't exist without fantasies, dreams and luck.

As important as the "instant" in lottery tickets, all of Mergui's designs immediately attract attention with their unconventional colors, illustrations, unique shapes and shimmering security patterns. The company's signature style is consistently clean, clear and uncluttered. When appropriate, the instant tickets offer generous scratch space. "The more people scratch, the better they feel," Mergui says. "Maybe participating like that gives them a sense of control over their fate; or more room to release their excitement at the prospect of winning." Whatever the reason, he says, "people feel that they're getting more for their money."

But all that scratch space isn't worth the coin that scrapes at it if people can't relate to the design. "The most important element in creating new instant ticket designs is relevance," Mergui says. "[It] serves as a small reflection and insight into the environment and culture of the consumer." With Mergui's designs, there's something for everyone. "The key is under-



standing what factors and components appeal to the targeted audience,” he says.

Designs that haven’t evolved beyond the traditional tickets’ dated themes, stale color combinations and noisy graphics may still win over older customers, but the younger ones will pass right by them. When targeting the latter, Mergui says, “We don’t use any gambling images because they find those boring.”

But Mergui’s Tattoo ticket? You bet. Who wouldn’t go for its goth-punk, black-flamed heart? Then there’s the Music one. The Elvis-inspired illustration is very identifiable and relevant in Israel. While the rock idol echoes an earlier era, the design’s punchy, big-block font beats the tempo of youth.

Mergui’s extensive design background and years of visual communications study inform his fresh ideas. He researches the lottery industry via magazine articles and conferences. As a professor and head of the Visual Communications Department at Tel Aviv’s Holon Institute of Technology, he keeps in touch with the younger generation’s interests and preferences. “We seek inspiration from all aspects of culture and innovation,” he says.

The design process at Mergui Lottery Design begins with a staff- or client-generated theme and details about the target audience. The staff then brainstorms and sketches ideas that lead to color illustrations combining text, logo and layout. “We work closely with our clients to make sure that the goals of any particular instant ticket are achieved through its design,” Mergui says. Once the client approves the creative direction, the staff creates the different ticket-design layers—security background décor, themed graphics, lettering and position of the latex scratch coating—in preparation for printing.

Instant ticket manufacturing and printing is a complex process. Similar to currency, instant tickets impose precise requirements to ensure security and avert counterfeiting. Special paper prevents the devious use of X-ray scanning, candling (shining a bright light on the ticket), delamination (separating the ticket layers) and wicking (using solvents) to get an illegal

peek. Other regulations aim to avoid any overlapping of the ticket’s various layers of information.

TAKING A CHANCE ON A CAREER

Mergui knows all of this, having worked with the Israeli National Lottery since 1999. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in design from Tel Aviv University in 1996, followed by an MBA from the Polytechnic University of New York, known for its entrepreneur program, in 2005, which prepared him for the business side of running a design company. While in school in the mid-to-late ’90s, he worked for several Tel Aviv design studios, then continued on as art director for a couple of the country’s major advertising agencies.

In 1998, the Israeli National Lottery held a national design competition. Mergui’s novel, conceptual instant ticket designs geared toward college students—the monetary prizes were labeled as scholarly degrees—were chosen from among thousands of entries and won both first- and second-place prizes. Using the \$12,000 in winnings, he founded Peddy Mergui Design Group that same year, with Mifal Hapais as his first client. A year later, the lottery company hired him as its sole designer of instant lottery tickets.

Since Mergui started with Mifal Hapais, instant ticket sales have increased by 10% each year to become the company’s largest division, thanks to his designs. As the instant lottery ticket industry grows, and turns to more graphic designers, Mergui welcomes the competition. Along with reflecting lottery companies’ quests for quality design, competition is “the best way to advance the industry and standards of instant ticket design,” he says. **HOW**

Claire Sykes is a freelance writer in Portland, OR. She covers graphic design, photography, visual fine art, music, performance, health and wellness, the environment, business and general interest topics for magazines in the U.S., Canada and England. www.sykeswrites.com

PEDDY MERGUI TEL AVIV, ISRAEL www.lotterydesign.com

BABOUSHKA

Tel Aviv’s large Russian population couldn’t resist the Baboushka (above left). Here, twin Russian dolls hold a bouquet of flowers and beam from one of the Israeli National Lottery’s best-selling instant tickets.

EVIL EYE

A Middle Eastern symbol of good luck, the die-cut stylized hamsa hand (above right) was aimed at the general public, who scratched the “evil eye” center in hopes of winning.