

# “Space and calmness” – is that your market?

 By [Chris Brewer](#)

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I think it's a fair assumption to make that writers (rather like media planners) should know what their target market and/or readers is/are.

But I'm constantly amazed. No, totally bewildered by some writers' absolute failure to know for whom they are writing.

I've seen many of the examples which follow in publications all over the place. So I'm not deliberately picking on the lady who wrote in the “Home” section of the *Sunday Times* a few weeks ago, entitled “Shop the look – indulge in pale and neutral tones plus natural textures to create this calm, minimalist feel throughout your space.”

That's all she had to “write” (so, the feature didn't depend on entertaining copy so much – and relied on the pictorial content). This kind of “editorial feature” happens all over the world and in countless magazines and newspapers. In fact, it's hard to differentiate the source sometimes.



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But back to this example: what she had to do next was find the products that matched the “calm and minimalist space.”

And this is where the wheels completely came off.

We begin with an exotically named chair, which looks to me like a few bits of used 2x4 timber stuck together with two cushions on it. Not too bad I guess, if you like that sort of thing. But it costs R14,995. Now I know that there are some well-heeled readers of the *ST* but mainly they're mostly like you and me and many more not quite so fortunate. But really, a plain wooden chair for fifteen grand?

Next we have “a rechargeable lamp” – a snip at just R13,910 (or you could go to Cape Union Mart and get something – which I think looks more 'minimal' – for less than 10% of that price).

Then there's the clincher. A “Fire Pit” (which, granted, had a peculiar design which someone from the Pop Art era may find amusing – if there are any of those still around), which will set you back a mere R57,100. WHAT? I've seen better ones in the Builder's Warehouse brochures at less than a grand.

I think this writer was daydreaming a little when she compiled this silly list. Or maybe she was facing an urgent deadline?

Nevertheless, if you followed her advice and took the fire pit, put four wooden chairs around it and had the rechargeable lamp for some extra illumination you'd have spent R130,980 – but then you wouldn't have a table, of course.

I really believe the subs at the *Sunday Times* have to be more careful of filling their pages with totally incongruous stuff like that. Of course, that's just my opinion and maybe those items featured sold in vast quantities, but I doubt that very much.

One thing is for sure, if that had been a media planner making a similar mistake they'd be out of job, chop chop.

Then they'd have “space” but not so much “calm” as they looked for another job.

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## ABOUT CHRIS BREWER

Having joined the ad industry in London, Chris Brewer spent most of his career in media analysis and planning - but has performed just about every advertising task from Creative to Research. He's an honorary lifetime member of the Advertising Media Association and regularly advises agencies and clients regarding their media plan costs and strategies. He is also often asked to talk at industry functions. Email: [chris@brewers.co.za](mailto:chris@brewers.co.za). Twitter: [@brewersapps](https://twitter.com/brewersapps). Read his blog: [www.brewersdroop.co.za](http://www.brewersdroop.co.za)

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