

DESIGN MANAGEMENT AS THE EFFECT OF EVOLUTION OF CONSUMERS' AESTHETICS

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Abstract

The aim of the article is to present the change in consumers' needs from the point of view of design management. As a result of aesthetic education of consumers, organizations saw the need to make products that would surprise and meet aesthetic requirements. Fulfilling these criteria will decide about the advantage on the competitive market. It is possible due to the usage of the design management concept in the functioning of an organization. The text was created on the basis of an interview conducted with a person who sells art pieces and who cooperated with artists for many years.

Keywords: design management, design, art, evolution of consumer's aesthetic, the consumer needs

Introduction

The problem presented in the hereby dissertation is the growth of the aesthetic awareness as one of the reasons for developing design management. The aim of the article is, first of all, to present the notion of design management, and second of all, to show how the aesthetic evolution influenced the increase in the significance of design management in the research conducted. The market where organizations function is a consumer's market. Apart from high quality and functionality, customers expect high aesthetic impressions. Using the concept of design management in an organization offers such possibilities. The observations included in the article are only illustrative and are the second attempt to interpret the research conducted in 2015, as well as a form of contribution into other research which will be conducted in this field.

1. What is design management?

According to Best (2006) the idea of "Design Management" was introduced in Great Britain by the Royal Society of Arts in 1965. In spite of the fact that the notion was created around 50 years ago and a lot of research has been made in the field (McBride, 2007, p. 17–22), the concept is still ambiguous (Veryzer, 2000, p. 64–73). The first scientific conference i.e. "Cambridge Design Management Conference" devoted to the issue was organized in 2011. The idea is generating more and more interest in the academic environment as well as among practitioners (Erichsen, Christensen, 2013, p. 107).

In connection with the above, it seems appropriate to explain how the idea will be understood in the article. In his publications Gorb (1990b, s. 68) defines design management as "efficient usage of the potential of design by a company's management in order to realize its main goals". Design management concerns the role of design in a company's development and the influence of design on solving management problems important for the company (Best, 2009, s. 12).

2. Effects of Evolution of Consumers' Aesthetics - case study

In order to illustrate the problem presented above i.e. the increase in the consumers' aesthetic awareness, the case study¹ (Pieter, 1967) method was used in the research. The analysis of the case was created on the basis of an interview² conducted by the author with a long-term employee of Desa³ in Łódź, and today the manager of the Strzemiński Academy of Arts Gallery in Łódź.

¹The case study method is treated as one of scientific research methods. It is a thorough and multilateral picture of the few cases of a given phenomenon which aims at achieving empirical conclusions. A deepened, complete and versatile analysis is supposed to substitute numerous data which can be the basis for statistical study. Sometimes, it can be used instead of the statistical or experimental method.

²The interview was conducted in Łódź on the 10th November 2015

³Art Gallery selling art. It offers commercial as well as cultural activity, preserves valuable pieces of art for museums, promotes modern art and its creators by presenting exhibitions in the country and abroad. It employs experienced and highly-qualified experts, as well as expert witnesses who perform assessments and evaluations of art pieces.

The choice of the respondent was intentional and stemmed from the assumption that design management is now expanding with the elements of art, artistry, original design – with which the respondent has been working with for years. The aim of the interview was to examine the level of consumer's aesthetics. The research focused on checking the needs of the consumers who use the services of an art gallery. The respondent was selling art pieces for 11 years in Desa in Łódź and she was also a middleman between consumers and artists who created paintings, graphics, sculptures, porcelain, and lamps.

Consumers are more and more sensitive to art. It is often the effect of the need to release the tension of the day, relax after work in corporations where people are dressed similarly and office space looks the same. Consumers are more and more experienced in terms of art and design. It is the result of an easy access to interior design magazines such as “Moje wnętrze” or “Cztery kąty”. Thanks to this, they have a wide spectrum of looking at interior decoration and impressions connected with design. They use the knowledge and notice how artistic objects can be used in their surroundings.

Visiting art galleries is becoming more trendy. On one hand, it is a way to show that you are unique, on the other, it is a form of education. This increases their artistic awareness.

Conclusion

The research conducted suggests that consumers have become more aware in terms of art, however, art itself is not enough nowadays. They look for applied arts or even everyday use products which are pieces of art. On one hand, it can be a big challenge and significant difficulty for organizations, on the other hand however, if an organization manages to achieve it and combine those features in products using design management, they can obtain competitive advantage.

Biography of each author

Katarzyna Caban-Piaskowska Ph.D., Doctor of Economics in the field of management. Assistant Professor at the Strzemiński Academy of Art in Łódź. Offers business consulting services for clothing and textile companies, participates in trainings, meetings and scientific conferences. She defended her Ph. D. thesis at the University of Łódź at the Department of Management. in 2012. Graduated from Marketing and Management at the Faculty of Organization and Management of the Łódź University of Technology in 2003. Interests and hobbies: design management, marketing and management in art, development of modern organizations with emphasis on network organizations, business consulting.

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As a result of the evolution of consumers' awareness in many organizations, design management has a chance to evolve and in some places it has already evolved. Organizations which will be aware of such trend will stand a chance to achieve competitive advantage. An important element of the development of such organizations will be strong cooperation between engineers, technologists, management and marketing specialists and artists in order to be able to create valuable things for consumers. That is why the author wants to make further attempts to examine the trend in management and plans to conduct more research in design management.

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