

Advanced Marketing Series

Marketing and Design Management

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Preface

As long ago as 1984, Kotler and Rath advocated that marketing took account of design. This is succinctly expressed in their statement that design 'creates corporate distinctiveness in an otherwise product and image surfeited marketplace. It can create a personality . . . so it stands out . . . It communicates value to the customer, makes selection easier, informs and entertains (Kotler and Rath 1984: 17).' Design is a valuable marketing tool devoted to visual problem-solving. Design can differentiate products and services, can add value and create a unique selling proposition and stimulate desire and interest. Design can be used by manufacturing, retail and service organizations of all sizes, in all sectors, and by public and private entities. Design covers all aspects of corporate communications, such as branding, advertising, corporate identity, leaflets, packs, annual reports, product development and the retail environment.

Manchester City Council is a public organization that commissioned the design of a corporate identity for its Commonwealth Games bid of 1992. This had to appeal across the globe and the logo had to work across various media, including TV, posters, T-shirts and enamel badges. Levi jeans are a global brand that has a strong heritage, quality image and a youthful appeal. Kit-Kat has the largest market share for countline chocolate bars in the UK and has only once changed its distinctive red and silver packaging. This was in the Second World War when chocolate was extremely scarce and dark instead of milk chocolate coating was used, and the wrapper was blue, not red. Karrimor is a specialist supplier of sports clothes and rucksacks that exploits a hard-wearing fabric for its products. Considerable attention is paid to the detail of each product to ensure safety and comfort for the wearer, for example brightly coloured strips to enhance the visibility of the walker at dusk and nightfall.

Marketing often interfaces with design to ensure that the product

or service is appropriate for the target market. Frequently design and marketing share the same objectives, namely to develop the 'right product, for the right market, at the right price'. But they have different skills and ways of working to achieve these objectives. Indeed, managing design is increasingly becoming part of marketing's activities. Marketing strategies are implemented through myriad elements: products, packs, corporate identity, advertising and retail environments, all of which entail the use of design expertise. However, the scope of design in business, the different design disciplines and the skills entailed in managing design are not as well understood by marketing professionals as perhaps they could be. Design professionals can be resistant to management where they regard this as inhibiting their creativity. Designers are focused on 'doing' and 'visualizing' and so often do not record or reflect on their management practices or skills. As design has an increasingly important role to play in business – manufacturing, service and retail – it is timely to consider the processes of design management, and especially the interface between design and other disciplines. Marketing professionals utilize design skills, especially in service, retail and fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies on an everyday basis, and so managing design is a key element of marketing. This book is about the interface between marketing and design and is focused on how to optimize and direct the design effort to achieve marketing's goals. This book focuses on the role of design in manufacturing and service organizations and is concerned with the issues of how marketing professionals can manage design effectively. Design management practices that are covered include design audits, sourcing design expertise, preparing design briefs, project management and design evaluation.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I is split into three chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the nature and scope of design in business, the different types of design disciplines and the evidence for investment in design. A model of design management is presented at the end of Chapter 1 (Figure 1.9). The model is not a prescriptive model, but serves as a checklist of the activities entailed in design management that a marketing professional needs to be aware of. Chapter 2 explores the interface between design and marketing. In particular, issues concerned with the outsourcing of design expertise and the management of a 'virtual project team' are discussed here. The final chapter of Part I explains the design management model presented in Chapter 1 and demonstrates the 'do's' and 'don'ts' of design management by working through various 'real-life' examples. This chapter provides insights into

the problems that can arise at various phases of the design process, and the misunderstandings and conflicts that can exist between design and marketing.

Four cases are presented in Part II of the book, and these illustrate design management issues faced by different organizations. Irigo-Pic is about the development of a radical new product in the construction tools market. A new market opportunity arose with changes in European health and safety legislation and Ingersoll-Rand was one of the first manufacturers to take account of this. The small, multidisciplinary product development team had three in-house staff and one industrial designer who was a partner of design consultancy. The team produced the product under budget and in eighteen months, instead of the company norm of four years. Within a year of launch it had achieved its payback period, won a number of design awards and had opened up a new market for a range of construction tools. Royal Mail is a public-service organization that has a dedicated team of design managers to manage the company's corporate identity. This centralized organization of design management is unusual. The work of the design managers is described, together with their management practices. Stirling Cooper is a fashion retailer which underwent a repositioning and accompanying design change to communicate this change to the market. The case shows the importance of preparing a detailed design brief and shows the comprehensive range of information that a brief needs to cover, including indication of the target market, competitor analysis, costings, timescales and specific design details.

The final part of the book, Part III, reproduces a number of seminal papers that have influenced the area of design management. Design management is a discipline that is at an embryonic stage. Consequently, the seminal papers in the field, which are heavily quoted, are often promulgating a message of 'good design', or are putting forward exploratory ideas about design and its management. Kotler and Rath's (1984) paper is a classic and cogently expresses the importance of design for marketers. They note that consumers are influenced in their purchase behaviour by design factors and that these need to be carefully considered, rather than being left to chance. Gorb and Dumas (1987) argue that design is an activity that companies engage in but often in an unplanned and ad-hoc way. They suggest that design-competent firms have a clear sense of how design affects their business, so that design becomes infused into the norms and practices of the company. 'Silent design' is the phrase they use to describe this situation. The relationship and interface between marketing and

R & D in product development is the theme of Souder's (1989) paper. The kinds of problems that exist in the interaction between these two functions are similar to those that can occur between marketing and design. Souder produces a checklist of factors that it is particularly important to resolve. Sceptics of design suggest that design is an expensive 'fad' that is an 'add-on' luxury. This viewpoint is challenged by Roy and Potter (1993). Recently they have conducted an extensive survey of small and medium-sized UK enterprises and developed a methodology to evaluate the costs and benefits of design investment for a vast range of design projects. Their research findings demonstrate that investment in design is a sound investment which is relatively low cost and yet can yield substantial commercial benefit.

It is expected that after reading this book the marketing professional will be better equipped to:

- understand the role of design in business;
- appreciate the range of design disciplines and skills of design;
- gain insights into the nature of design to help to foster a creative and effective working relationship between marketing and design;
- be able to provide market information in a form that supports design;
- reflect on the design management skills and expertise that marketing professionals require.

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