



SEE DESIGN

Sharing Experience
on Design Support
for SMEs

SEEdesign Bulletin

Sharing experience on design support

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Gavin Cawood and Gisele Raulik

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EDITORIAL

It is with great pleasure that we introduce the second issue of the SEEdesign Bulletin. Thank you for all of the e-mails of support received after the publication of Bulletin 1. This positive response has provided us with much encouragement during the preparation of the second issue of the Bulletin, the only publication dedicated to the dissemination of information about design support and design promotion worldwide.

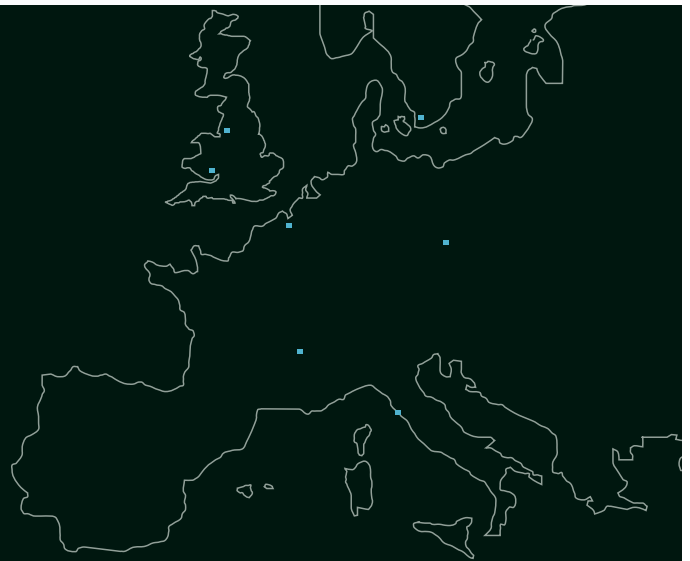
As before, we have endeavoured to include a wide selection of viewpoints, approaches and examples of good practice in our articles. This issue's Research section features an important contribution from Dr Terence Love (Australia), who presents his studies about the structure of national design infrastructures as multi-service centres, while the Interviews describe two very interesting approaches to design support/promotion. Michelle Berryman and Professor M. P. Ranjan explain how this activity has been developed in the USA and India respectively.

Design support programmes can be structured in many ways, depending on a country's cultural, social, political and economic situation, and the level of creativity and opportunity this provides. From workshops to individual mentoring; from short-term programmes to long-term policies . . . the SEEdesign Bulletin will continue to be an inspiring source of information about this diversity. The "Design support in practice" section highlights two such case studies: an Italian eco-design project and a series of management workshops for Belgium companies. This information is also available on the SEEdesign Library, together with four other case studies from different nations (visit www.seedesign.org).

The News section summarises recent events of importance in the world of design support, such as the publication of new guidelines for the development of design in Britain, compiled in the Cox Review of Creativity in Business (Design Council, UK), the Second European Workshop on Design Support (Lyon, Oct 2005) and the Service Design Workshop (Cardiff, Dec 2005), both part of the SEEdesign partnership activities.

This issue of the SEEdesign Bulletin opens the second year of collaboration of the SEEdesign partners, whose aim is to improve design support mechanisms through the knowledge (and inspiration) gathered from the project activities. With this in mind, the forthcoming International Workshop on Design Support – IWDS 2006 – promises to be a remarkable meeting. The SEEdesign partners are inviting experts and practitioners from around the world to share their views and experience of providing design support for companies. IWDS 2006 will take place on 10 – 11 May 2006, in Cardiff, UK. Full information about the programme can be found on the website www.iwds.org. We very much hope you will be able to join us at this event.

Gavin Cawood and Gisele Raulik
Design Wales



THE SEE DESIGN PARTNERSHIP

The SEEdesign Bulletin is produced by Design Wales as part of the activities of SEEdesign – a project part-financed by the European Union (ERDF) within the INTERREG IIIC Programme.

SEEdesign provides a unique opportunity for seven partners from around Europe to share their experiences of delivering design support programmes. As a consequence of developing constructive working relationships over the three years of the programme, the outcome will be the realisation of best practice models and the development of tools to measure the effectiveness of current and future projects.

Design Wales / PDR - National Centre for Product Design & Development Research

Cardiff, Wales, UK
www.designwales.org.uk
www.pdr-online.co.uk

Dylunio Cymru / Design Wales



Design Flanders

Brussels, Belgium
www.designflanders.be

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The Design Centre of the Czech Republic

Prague, Czech Republic
www.designcentrum.cz



Design Centre Rhone-Alps

Lyon, France
www.cdra.asso.fr

CENTRE DU DESIGN
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Experimental Centre for Furniture and Furnishing - CSM

Poggibonsi, Italy
www.csm.toscana.it



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Design Centres as Elements of Design Infrastructure

Dr Terence Love, Curtin University, Western Australia



Design activity is the means by which knowledge is converted into specifications for creating real-world products, systems, services, organisations and processes. These provide competitive advantage, and the means for fulfilling economic and social development agendas. Nationally, design activity depends on the provision of a multi-functioned infrastructure of which design centres are a core component.

Over the last five years, I have undertaken research into national and regional design infrastructure in Europe, Southeast Asia, and Australia. The research indicates design centres can play a significant role in a nation's economic and social development, innovation, and the building of competitive advantage at national and firm levels.

A nation's design infrastructure is the combined resources available to undertake design activity. Elements of design infrastructure include:

design professionals	design centres
businesses undertaking design	government agencies to promote design
departments undertaking design within organisations	design-focused associations representing those undertaking design
national design policies	government agencies to develop design-focused policies
hardware and software tools available to support design	organisations commissioning and funding design research
organisations educating designers	organisations educating design researchers
design researchers	organisations undertaking design research
organisations commissioning design activity	organisations representing design research

The resources of a nation's design infrastructure form a complex network across the large number of domains of design activity. Currently, over 650 subfields of design have been identified (unpublished research T. Love and K. Friedman). The number of domains is increasing annually in line with developments in new fields of knowledge and increased awareness of the role of design activity in other domains.

In essence, design centres are multi-function service centres that act as nodes connecting and providing access to other elements of design infrastructure. The issue of access via a single address is a defining feature and an important source of the value that design centres offer. Access may be through a physical or virtual address. Until recently, it was assumed that design centres needed a physical location. Increased use of the Internet, however, offers the possibility that some design centres could be wholly virtual organisations with a web services presence providing the access point.

The complexity of design infrastructure and the very large number of interconnections and interrelationships between design infrastructure elements have resulted in a wide range of different forms of design centre, each with different purposes, visions, missions and strategies. Nations with their different developmental trajectories in design and innovation have different forms of design centre. In some countries there is an apparent redundancy of design centre resources. In other countries, there is an absence of design centres even when a clear need can be readily observed.

A central problem is how to design successful design centres that maximise the benefits of the investment in resources. Addressing this problem requires addressing several subsidiary questions. The following derive from applying the CATWOE criteria of the Soft Systems Method as described in, for example, Hutchinson (1997):

- What are the current best practices in design centre design?
- Who benefits from design centres?
- Are there characteristic 'types' of design centre in different contexts? What are their defining features?
- What are the different perspectives, interests, motivations, values, hegemonic and institutional forces and factors that shape design centres?
- Who are the different players and stakeholders that commit resources to, and gain benefits from, design centres?
- Who has the power to create and control design centres?
- What are the characteristics of the environments in which design centres operate?
- How do design centres relate to their contexts and national design and innovation trajectories?
- Who is in the best position to run or manage design centres?

Answers to the above questions are likely to be different from different stakeholder groups and constituencies with different interests. Value creation, and value exchange, however, is central to the successful functioning of a design centre just as in the design of any organisational, business, institutional arrangement. This raises two further questions, 'Value to whom?' and 'What are the market mechanisms for the exchange of value in design centres?'.

Constituent Market Orientation (CMO) analysis, see for example Tellefsen (1995), is well suited to addressing these issues. CMO analysis requires first identifying the constituencies influenced by, and influencing, the design, management and functioning of a design centre. The second step is to identify the market orientations of these constituencies towards value creation and exchange, and the implication for the purposes, functions, values, resource commitment, evaluation processes and management of a design centre. Figures 1 and 2 offer a comparative view of typical constituencies of a business organisation and a design centre.

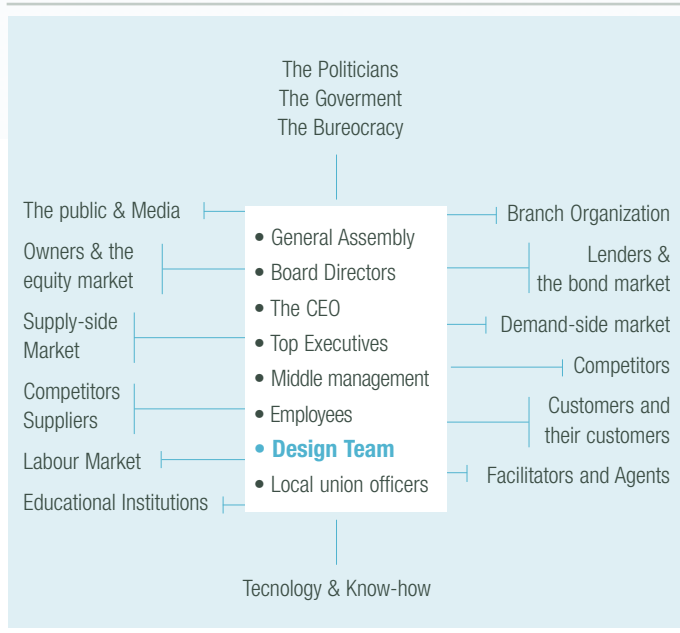


Figure 1: Constituencies involved in a typical business using design (PowerPoint slide from presentation of Tellefsen & Love, 2002)

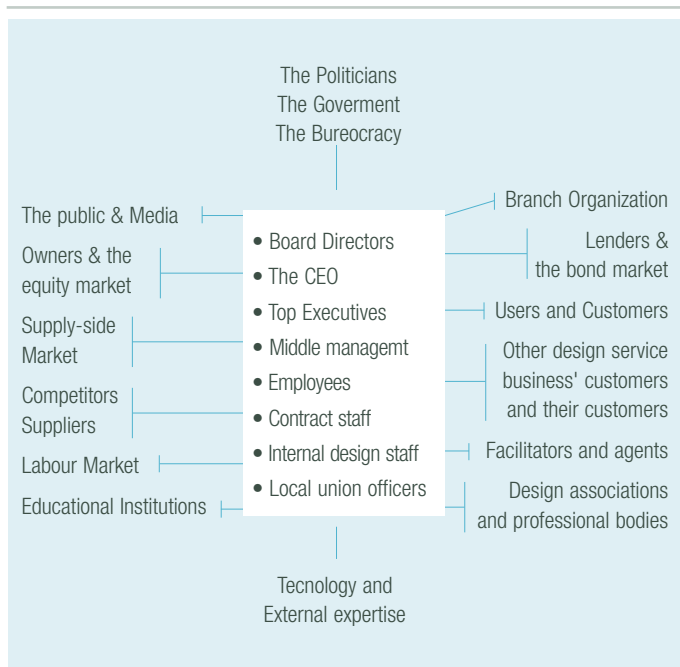


Figure 2: Design Centre constituencies

Research into design centres shows that they are strongly influenced by funding sponsors and current management and tacitly or explicitly focus their role on providing their benefits to a restricted number of constituencies. In most cases, the practical outcomes of these constituency-based influences emerge in terms of decision in four areas:

1. Specific domains of design on which the design centre focuses and offers access to design infrastructure
2. User, stakeholder and constituent groups the design centre will support
3. Sources and resources of design infrastructure the design centre will offer access to, and the types of access that are offered
4. Organisational structure of the design centre as an organisation, i.e. the way the management of the design centre strategically structures its physical organisation to use its funding and resources to achieve its mission and vision

The three exemplars of design centres illustrate the above points: Designium (Finland), Ornamo (Finland), and the Engineering Design Centres of the UK. The Designium design centre at the University of Art and Design (JIAH) in Helsinki primarily undertakes research and provides access to up-to-date research findings about the use of design in business contexts in Finland. In the main, it focuses on 'Art and Design' craft-based design domains rather than technology-based design. In part this is a consequence of a language issue because in Finnish there is no word for 'engineering designer', and the term 'design' translates roughly as 'handcraft work'. In contrast, the role and functioning of Ornamo focuses on supporting professional interior designers. The role of Ornamo is shaped by the power balances between design constituencies, in this case, between differences in legal authority granted to architects and interior designers. In contrast to both Designium and Ornamo, the UK 'Engineering Design Centres' have little to do with 'Art and Design' domains. Their focus has been to undertake technical research to support engineering designers in designing products and systems that have competitive advantage through advanced technical knowledge. In each of these three exemplars, the structure of their organisation, what they do, what they offer, and who to, is shaped by a combination of the interests of their funding sponsors, and the will of their current management.

Addressing the problem of how to improve the design of design centres requires standing back from the situation, learning from existing design centres, and identifying the core components of the situation and the relationships between them.

Morphological review of existing design centres suggests a four-part taxonomy of design centre types along a spectrum from the promotion of design activity to design research:

- Promotional Design Centre
- Design Advice Centre
- Design Services Centre
- Design Research Centre

Promotional Design Centre:

Key features of this type of centre are that it is located in prime public retail space; has an open and welcoming appearance; presents aesthetically pleasing displays of designed products, storyboards, graphically enhanced drawings, photos and 3D displays of design representations. This type of design centre has two important roles. The first is to explain to business how other businesses have benefited from using designers in terms of: improved competitiveness; improved profitability and growth; environmental and social responsibility; and improved sustainability.

The second is to promote government support programmes for using design services and improving design activity. In terms of location, the effectiveness of a promotional design centre depends on its public visibility and accessibility. Its physical form might be conceptualised in different ways. For example, a very small promotion design centre might use portable displays in targeted public spaces

such as Local Government Offices, shopping centres, industrial parks and small business advice centres.

Design Advice Centre:

Key features of this type of design centre are that it provides straightforward advice about design and about access to design resources, and operates from an easy-to-access office environment. This type of design centre would be expected to offer access to expertise in general product design; design processes; innovation processes; patents, copyright, and design rights; and business development. In addition, small and micro businesses may be offered basic teleworking access to software for drawing and illustration, simple 2D and 3D design, and business planning.

Design Services Centre:

Key features of this type of design centre are the provision of advanced facilities and expertise for the designing, prototyping and testing of a wide range of products and services. This would be expected to be located in a mixed office and technology environment such as in a technology park. The services provided might include: rapid prototyping services; access to in-house product designers; access to usability testing facilities and evaluation and measuring facilities; access to 3D development software, CAD/CAM software; extensive access to information needed for designing; focused access to expertise in a wide range of discipline areas, e.g. first class industry specialists and academic researchers.

Design Research Centre:

Key features of this type of design centre are the provision of two services. The first is as a contact point for arranging design-focused research to be undertaken, typically under contract, perhaps subsidised by a government funding support. The second is to make available, and facilitate access to, an extensive body of up-to-date design-focused research findings. This latter may also involve providing professional librarian and research assistant support for searching, collating and reviewing current research material and patent libraries. Depending on constituency orientation issues, particular design research centres may focus on specific design domains and specific areas of design research such as:

- Information on materials, processes, environments, legal and business contexts etc
- User needs, usability
- Efficiency and effectiveness of design processes
- Design management
- Branding effectiveness
- Improving individual and team design skills
- New design support software and hardware: CAD/CAM, Product Lifecycle Management software etc
- National design infrastructure, e.g. benchmarking indicators of design activity and design resources in industry, commerce, government, education and not-for-profit sectors
- Evaluation of outcomes of designed policies

Each of the above four idealised types of design centre has a different function and role. Organisationally, and physically, however, for particular circumstances functions and roles might be combined, for example, in using a promotional design centre as the physical or virtual front access for a design research centre.

Summary and Conclusions

In conclusion, designing a 'successful' design centre means designing a multi-service centre with a single point of access that focuses on achieving targets in relation to the significant constituencies and stakeholders; their orientation and values; specific domains of design activity; and identified functionality.

The key issues for the successful designing of design centres can be viewed in terms of four focal dimensions:

- **Domain focus:** Design is undertaken in over 650 different domains that can be roughly separated into three categories: technical (requiring mathematical expertise); 'Art and Design' (those design fields that primarily originated in craft skills); 'other' design sub-fields (design fields such as 'government policy design' and 'education programme design' that are not included in the other two categories). Individual design centres are likely to offer services relating to particular domains, either within or across the above three categories.
- **Constituency focus:** There are many constituencies and stakeholders in design activity that range from government bodies developing policy to users of products, systems, services and organisations that have been designed. Design centres are managed by and for a restricted group of constituencies/stakeholders and it is necessary to identify these constituencies prior to commencing the design of a design centre.
- **Constituency market orientation focus:** Constituencies and stakeholders involved in creating and managing a design centre will have specific and identifiable market orientations: ideas about who the design centre will benefit and how the design centre will create value in a market situation. These should be reflected in the design centre's vision and mission statements and strategic plans.
- **Functional focus:** The four types of design centre outlined in the previous section have different functional purposes. The four type taxonomy provides a simple framework within which the detail of the above three focal dimensions can be located. ■

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Dr Terence Love is a Research Fellow at Curtin University, Western Australia and a specialist in multi-disciplinary, design-focused research. Currently, his primary research focus is on how the different elements of design infrastructure contribute to innovation, building knowledge-based economies and fulfilling economic and social development agendas at national, local and firm levels. Terry is an international corresponding member of the Design Research Society and has written over a hundred design research publications in the last ten years. He is a regular visiting research fellow at Lancaster University, and a visiting professor at UNIDCOM Institute of Design and Communication Research at IADE in Lisbon, Portugal.

Michelle Berryman

Michelle Berryman runs Echo Visualization, a design consulting firm in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, specialising in product interface design and exhibit design work. Active with the Industrial Designers Society of America (IDSA) since 1993, Michelle currently serves as the Executive Vice President for this national organisation. In this interview she talks about design promotion in the USA, where, interestingly, a professional organisation plays the major role.



It is very interesting to see how design promotion is developed in the USA and the role that IDSA has been playing in this. Could you give us some examples of the activities that IDSA has been running?

IDSA sponsors several programmes actively. One of our newest programmes is called 'Design Awareness'. The idea is that we have put together a somewhat modular presentation on what industrial design is and the value that it can bring to product development, marketing and sales. It is supplemented and fortified with case studies that provide actual business data about success. We're currently packaging it so that volunteer members within our organisation – not necessarily people in leadership roles, but everyday designers who participate in a variety of industries – can take this package and deliver a presentation to potential clients, to a professional organisation or to a group that is a potential market for us. We have successfully delivered this programme now to the Society of Mechanical Engineers National Conference, to the Consumer Electronics Show and to the National Manufacturing Week. We have hit audiences who maybe have some idea of what we do, but not entirely and we have gotten a lot of really positive feedback from that.

We have a non-design executives programme that we sponsor. In that programme, we invite our members to send us the addresses of three non-design executives who are in decision-making roles in marketing, engineering, research and development, for instance. Then, every year we send a letter from a top business executive that explains how industrial design has proved to be an important investment for their company. With the letter, we attach a list of any IDSA members who work at that company, including contact information. We also provide them with a subscription to Innovation, which is our quarterly design journal. We conduct the same programme for educators to help advance the design department's status with their institutions. This approach is really low cost yet effective. Corporate design offices say that their budgets have been directly increased as a result of this programme and they have seen their staffs enlarged because of it. We have also had non-design executives who have moved to different companies, who have then contacted us because they would like to continue receiving Innovation as they found it to be valuable. That's a result we are pleased with!

We have another programme to reach young people and interest them in industrial design. For this, we work with a group called the ITEA: it's the International Technology Education Association. Its members are teachers in primary, middle and high school programmes introducing technological literacy to children. For ITEA, we write a regular article in each issue of their journal and we develop projects that they can take straight into the classroom to teach design principles. We have also taught seminars on industrial design for these teachers at the ITEA conferences. This way they educate children at a very young age, so that as they enter university, or go into the working world, they have base level knowledge of design and how it operates.

It is important to say that since IDSA is a volunteer organisation with a very limited annual budget, if things are not producing results and they don't look like they will produce results within a period of about a year, we have to take the best practices from them and move on to something else. We can't perpetuate something that is ineffective.

You introduced your answer saying that IDSA sponsor these activities. How is IDSA funded?

IDSA is membership based. We have 3,200 members who pay us dues each year. In order to do more without increasing dues, we seek sponsorships and develop programmes that help companies achieve particular goals when those goals coincide with IDSA's mission

to advance the profession. We are now receiving only 27–30% of our income from dues. One recent example of these programmes was the Nov.2005 HP/IDSA DesignAbout: The Other 6 Billion, a conference exploring ways to develop and design for the huge markets not currently being served by multinationals. Another is the recently completed Microsoft PC Start Something competition, whose winners were designs that considered what the future of the PC might look like. The winners were announced at the Consumer Electronics Show this January and each received a huge prize. IDSA will publish the results in our journal, Innovation, capturing the insights of a stellar jury.

Do you receive any financial support from the USA government?

I won't say that there is not funding from the government; there are government projects that we have applied for and won funding to execute, such as our recent work with the US Environmental Protection Agency to develop and distribute a curriculum for educating designers on how to make informed environmentally responsible decisions. But that programme is the exception. The government in the USA is not sponsoring design exhibitions, competitions, publications or other events to promote the use of design in business and to the public. Nor is it purchasing industrial design to a significant degree.

Is this a barrier to be overcome in order to intensify design promotion activities?

Our barriers are really money and volunteer effort – how much money can we raise or generate and how much volunteer effort can we tap into – what sort of resources can we gain access to? Our professional staff at IDSA are exceptional, for the limited budget and the limited time that they have (a group of 12 paid staff). Their network of media contacts is remarkable. Their ability to mobilise and engage with volunteers to participate is tremendous. That's our biggest strength, but it's also our biggest weakness. If we don't have good motivation for the volunteers, or if the volunteers can't afford the time or the money to participate, then it limits us. If we can get them engaged and encourage their outward participation, then we have an extensive network of people who are all working with us.

Are there any other organisations involved in the promotion of design in the USA?

The Industrial Designers Society of America is the main professional organisation for industrial designers in the United States. There are design-related organisations that designers can participate in that have depth of information in particular areas, such as the American Institute of Graphic Arts, the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, the Association of Professional Design Firms and the Association of Computing Machinery. IDSA is the most dominant organisation, devoted holistically to industrial design and all that that encompasses.

You have listed various activities developed by IDSA. It is interesting when you say that you can't perpetuate activities that are ineffective. So what has been effective?

Our most successful design support activity is the relationship we have with Business Week magazine and their sponsorship of the Industrial Design Excellence Awards, which began in 1991. Due to this sponsorship, the magazine publishes our winners in both its print and online versions. One of the things that has resulted from this is a substantial list of case studies, the entry kits. The entry kits have to answer business questions as well as design questions. We have recently instituted

another programme called the Catalyst Award, and its entries must answer tough business success questions in finance and marketing. These are difficult because so often the executives have moved on and the new people don't care about what was achieved under someone else's watch. Nevertheless, the content gives us valuable case study material documenting actual success in the marketplace, like did it increase market share, did it increase volume sales, did it reduce cost, cut time to market, increase shareholder value? And so we really are now developing a very substantial body of knowledge about how effective design is and we're putting it to work for us. We use that extensively in the Design Awareness Programme.

What has been the main impact/result of this programme?

It is clear that people today are significantly more aware of design in the United States than they were ten or fifteen years ago. People can talk about design intelligently, which is an amazing thing. While I can't document it with hard numbers (again, we don't have the resources to research this impact), I would say the signs show industrial design as a growth industry in the US. Corporations are investing more resources in it; more schools are opening programmes offering it; enquiries from prospective students are up and the level of uninformed questioning by business executives is down. We are being asked to contribute strategically, not just with form solutions but with product planning. Business Week has done a better job of talking about the success of industrial design in business terms than most business journals do. And it has gone to regularly hitting the target audience over and over and over with the message, and then evolving that message to the strategic impact level. Now, in fact, the magazine is turning the story into a huge income source through its online Innovation & Design section. The business leaders who are making the purchasing decisions are getting the message.

Future. How do you see the future for design promotion activities in the USA?

I think the future of design support in the United States is going to look similar to the way it's looked over the past 10 years. It's going to be still focused directly at business. I don't see the government giving us financial support. There will be opportunities when the government will take notice of what we have done and provide additional publicity for us and verbal support that may, in turn, lead to additional industry support, but I don't see financial support coming out of it.

Really what we need to do is to improve and continually to collect measurable data and continue to take advantage of the media outlets that we have access to. Continue to provide good interviews and good design resources for the media to contact and to showcase. In this we are fortunate because the media love industrial design. Graphic designers have expressed frustration that they can't show the 'hot product' type story that opens the door for industrial design. Great industrial design is a real page-turner for the press.

We have started working more closely with the government in terms of government grants. As I have already mentioned, last year we received a grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency to develop a curriculum for teaching sustainable and ecologically responsible design at university level. It informs the faculty and students about the trade-offs of one material or process over another and it provides uniform access. I see activity like that happening and advancing the practice of industrial design. The better we do our work, the easier it will be to bring attention to our best practices and their value. ■

Many IDSA resources are available on the website www.idsa.org
Okala, the introductory curriculum on ecological design for product design students, is available at www.idsa.org/whatsnew/sections/ecosection/index.html.

Professor M P Ranjan

Professor Ranjan's experience is closely linked to the National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad, India. NID was set up in 1961 to create awareness, educate students who could perform in the design sector, conduct research and promote design within India – a very broad mandate. In 1981, he headed NID's consulting activity, a position that he held for about ten years. During this period, he wrote close to 4,000 proposals for professional projects, attending numerous briefings and discussions. Based on these efforts, almost 400 major projects were realised. This is a respectable ratio, considering that at the time design was a totally new phenomenon in India.



Professor Ranjan, what is the role of NID in promoting design among Indian industry?

NID is funded by the Indian government and has the unique position of acting as an educational institute on the one hand and as a design promotion organisation on the other. NID is also the biggest design research and consultancy organisation in India and has five major functions, namely education, promotion, research, consulting and publication, quite unusual for any design school.

The National Design Policy is to be finalised soon and will usher in a new era of expanded government support for design in India. Through this we expect to see the setting up of the National Design Council and the establishment of many more NIDs in India in the near future. In the absence of this proposed infrastructure the NID at Ahmedabad has been playing the promotional role in the country.

We have set up a Design Showcase at the India International Trade Fair complex (ITF) in New Delhi and over the past five years we have conducted annual Design Summits in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIP&P). The Design Business Incubator (DBI) at NID which is supported by the Department of Science and Technology is another initiative to help establish design businesses in India.

NID has through its Departments of Outreach Programmes and Projects conducted numerous Design Research projects in the crafts and social sectors of our economy while its consultancy wing handles professional design projects for industry and government agencies. In these initiatives individual industries can commission NID faculty and students to undertake specific design assignments for a professional fee. Another new initiative is the setting up of industry sponsored Chairs at the Institute to carry out long term research for a specific industry sector. We currently have Chairs in stainless steel, textile based nano-technology applications, user interface design and information design for the IT sector and more such collaborations are planned.

NID faculty have been involved on government and international planning panels and have influenced national policy through such participation. I have been personally involved in the bamboo sector and the crafts sector in India in various national bodies as a subject expert. We also have an industry training wing that offers short term training programmes in design for managers and technical experts from Indian industry. The NID's student diploma projects have also been another major avenue for opening up demonstration projects in a variety of industry sectors in India. These are documented in 'Young Designers', a series of annual publications from the NID from 1989, of which I was one of the founding editors.

How is design organised in India, in terms of academia, industry and government?

Design is distributed with many stakeholders and many different sectors, each one managing their own group. There is no governmental agency that has a mandate to promote design in these sectors. It is our Institute, the NID, which has taken on the responsibility but it is not actually mandated to do it or even funded to the extent that is required to do that kind of promotion.

Having said that, there is a lot of design activity in India. Design schools have been set up in a number of different technology institutions. These are expanding and we anticipate in the next few years there is going to be a real explosion of new initiatives in design education due to growing demand (globalisation and competition).

Industry on the other side has shown more interest in recent years in design. The relationship between NID and the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) is getting strengthened.

On the professional side it lacks a lot of organisation in the product design area. There was a professional society called SIDI (Society of Industrial Design of India) that was set up in the late 70s and early 80s but it is not operative anymore. In the communication design area, there is a very active advertising guild and they have been able to sustain interest and organise themselves.

There are countries where governments play an important role in investing on the promotion of design for the population and industry sector. Is this the case in India? How is the relationship between design and government?

NID was founded in 1961 and since then it has been supported by the government. It is currently funded entirely by the Ministry of Industry & Commerce. Institutions which are looking at textile garments and fashion design are funded by the Ministry of Textiles. The technology institutions too have started design schools, which are under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, which is the Education Ministry and so on. It means that there is no single ministry which is looking after design education in India. It is distributed and I think that will still continue with more design institutions being set up under other sector ministries like agriculture, environment etc., rather than looking at design as a shared feature that works across disciplines. So there is some amount of competition there and some lack of clarity, some unevenness in terms of the fund flow into the design sector because each ministry is dealing with it as if it was their own baby and not looking across the larger roles of design action for the economic and social development of India.

It seems that the relationship is quite rich. Even so, do you think that there are ways of improving this support?

Yes, I think there is still a need for government recognition to start with. There is a lot of government funding that goes into strengthening industry, industrial infrastructure, promotion and support. Science and technology has got a ministry, so has each of the activity areas. Design has no such champion and it is underfunded within the government sector, particularly in comparison with science and technology.

When we were meeting with policy makers at the Department of Science and Technology (DST), one suggestion that we made was that every science and technology project should have a design component built into it, so that whatever investments come into it will eventually reach the market as finished products that are useable and valuable. So, in this way design can be integrated right at the beginning of these S&T projects and if such policies are adopted we will find that the effectiveness of the design ability will reach an enormous level in India. It is an opportunity ripe and ready for picking. There are enough designers outside, in sufficient numbers to service all these needs, once our policies come in place.

The other thing is with large government spends - for certain kinds of activities - I would require it to be passed through a design audit process at some point of time before implementation.

Design audits . . . this is an interesting concept

Why not? Say, for instance, you put in a railway station, how good is it for the users? Another opportunity: the country is huge! Cultural diversity is enormous - fourteen major languages, hundreds and hundreds of dialects, food habits which vary enormously. I would imagine there is also an opportunity for product variety within these regions, which reflect some of the cultural types. Rather than a centralised kind of organisation, I would imagine regional and sub-regional kinds of initiatives which are rooted in the local culture and the local idiom and which would then compete with each other and create the variety within the country which is possible.

And a final one: we believe that each sector would be able to invest in schools or align with colleges and work with them for focusing on that sector. So if you have regional engineering colleges, we are encouraging them to start design programmes, but they would be aligned to the large regional focus that they need to have. Industry alignment . . .

In the last issue of this Bulletin, Arlene Gould talked about geographical issues in Canada. This seems to be an issue in India as well, given its size and diversity . . .

I believe that India needs to handle design and design support at many levels simultaneously due to the enormous scale and scope of work to be done in the 230 sectors of our economy that are in desperate need for design services. India is a vast country and it is therefore quite necessary to look at regional and sub-regional initiatives to promote design across India. The national initiatives in progress today are good for the future of design action in India but I believe that we will also need sector-specific initiatives for each of the sectors of our economy if the use of design is to be systematically introduced to all sectors in need of such design support and service. With the opening up of our economy, our industry and economic sectors are all facing intense competition and the need for design is being felt in more and more sectors.

We need to look at design in a comprehensive manner in India which I hope the ongoing National Design Policy initiatives of the Government of India will address in the days ahead. We need multiple levels of involvement with national, regional and sectoral initiatives to promote and support the use of design in India.

What are the barriers to be overcome to make design support more effective in India?

One thing is to have government funding, the other one is to make the design profession more pro-active to government policy and to make them actually ask for and obtain adequate supports. The third is that some amount of regulation is urgently required, because even in design education, policy formation and direction setting it is too centred in a few individual hands who can take unsubstantiated decisions and drive the shape of design in an arbitrary manner.

Thank you, Professor Ranjan. To conclude, how do you perceive design and design support progressing?

I think it has a very good future, increasing awareness in industry and government of the need for design. As a result of that I think a lot of systems will get innovated and we will be party to many of them, so I am extremely positive about this.

The emphasis on design support - as against design promotion - is a very important distinction. Design promotion is something that governments will have to do and continue to do to make sure that awareness is built both in the public as well as in the industry sector. However, design support is perhaps a far more effective and sustainable way to get direct involvement of designers with industry, to ensure that they move up the value chain very rapidly and competently at that. This way, all the efforts that are made in the direction of increased design use by industry will be worthwhile. ■

Further information about NID and its activities can be found on its website, www.nid.edu

‘Design Makes the Difference’ Workshops

(Design Flanders, Belgium)

The future of design in the Belgium region of Flanders has never been so bright and with Design Flanders (DF) heavily promoting the use of design for businesses, there are plenty of good times ahead for all involved in the process. Design Flanders was born out of VIZO (Flanders Institute for Small and Medium Enterprises) and seeks to promote designers and their designs, support companies in their search for a designer and act as a large source of information on design for public access.

The importance of design cannot be understated and so DF has introduced a number of programmes to encourage the use of design including a series of workshops labelled ‘Design Makes the Difference’, as part of the ‘Design Management’ programme. The aim of the workshops is to bring designers together with companies. Specifically, it is targeted at managers of companies, in particular SMEs, who want to know more about introducing design in their business strategy. All the while these collaborations provide useful case studies for anyone interested in design as a strategy, and encourage the growth of design within Flanders.

Occurring two to three times a year, the workshops last an entire day and comprise of one theoretical lecture, three success stories of design management and presentations about Design Flanders and the VIZO Department of Business Consultancy. The exclusively small number of companies invited to the workshops (only 30) allows for effective discussions and flow of information.

To ensure a wider range of knowledge is shared, three collaborations, all different in their nature, are presented and the participants are then able to ask questions during the interactive lecture. To keep the workshop interesting and challenging, DF invites three companies, which differ in terms of their sector (furniture, plastic, lighting etc . . .), level of design management, motivation to introduce design and kinds of independent and external designers (industrial designer, craftsman, etc), to give the presentations.

‘Design Makes the Difference’ also allows for companies to see actual examples of past successful collaborations, so they will get a better view of how to successfully implement design into their company’s strategy. DF came up with the idea of inviting past clients to give a 30 minute presentation of the successful project. A representative from a Flemish company and a designer detail various aspects and points of view from their project. The audience can see and feel the communication between the manager and the external designer, as well as the confidence of the manager as the decision-maker. These are key factors for the success of the project management process.

All lectures are published in full text (Dutch – English), including the PowerPoint version, and freely distributed to all the designers and companies involved, as well as to all the European partners of Design Flanders.

At the end of the workshops guests and lecturers are asked to fill in evaluation forms, where they can ask for further counselling from DF and/or Business Consultancy. DF and Business Consultancy work together with those clients offering advice about design. These evaluation forms show that almost all participants are convinced that design is an essential success factor for the industry in general and their company in particular. The results show the benefits of the workshops:

- 25% of the participants didn’t work with designers and do now.
- 30% of the participants worked already with a designer but have now extended these collaborations.
- 5% of the participants already have their own design department, and found the workshop very useful, with some now using external designers.



- Overall, 60% of companies attending the workshops have implemented design, and 30% have started thinking about the process of design implementation.

Since 2001, the workshops have been a way of promoting design to companies and to the public in Belgium. These events fit perfectly within the three main objectives of Design Flanders:

- The development of social and economic support for design in Flanders.
- The development of promotional activities, to acknowledge the added value of design as a quality promotional and innovating instrument.
- The development of company focused activities to show that when design is well used as a management instrument it strengthens the performance of private companies and stimulates export and international competitiveness.

The workshops provide companies with detailed and proven knowledge of how they can effectively fit design into their strategic planning. Guests are encouraged to interact, which allows for plenty of effective discussion and networking between companies and designers. Managers have the opportunity to meet designers and make appointments with them to discuss design possibilities.

At a cost of around 20,000 euros per event and financed by the Flemish Government, as well as the EDF (European Design Forum) project and the ESF project CONCREaS, the workshops have been very successful. So far, there have been eight workshops, attended by 120 companies from different sectors.

DF highlights using past success stories as ‘role-models’ for prospective companies as the key factor in the success of the workshops. It is the first-hand knowledge and experience on show, coupled with the encouragement of intensive interaction that provides such a useful function for companies wishing to use design further. Whilst acknowledging the fact that managers of SMEs are often hard to contact, with 6000 invitations being sent out and only 30 companies attending the workshops, still the success of the workshops is undeniable and they are an opportunity that businesses should not miss out on. ■

For further information please contact Ingrid Vandenhoudt at Design Flanders – ingrid.vandenhoudt@designvlaanderen.be

Casa Toscana/Green Home

(CSM, Italy)



Solid wood furniture, Fattorini

Casa Toscana / Green Home is an ongoing environmental quality label for the Tuscan furniture industry. It was piloted in 1997 and has its origins in PhD research work emanating from the Department of Architecture Technology and Design within the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Florence.

The objective of Green Home is to stimulate, develop and promote the virtue of eco-friendly features in furniture products to Tuscan SMEs. The theme of being ecologically sound will function as a positive regional peculiarity which will help endow their products with an extra dimension of value. It can also become an instrument of competitiveness in foreign markets. The main idea

driving the project is the need to define a strong local identity to be used by the manufacturing system as a means to enter and compete in a global market.

Accordingly, the project aims to create an environmental quality label for Tuscan furniture where the 'environment' becomes a central part of a product's value. The label will be defined in keeping with the principle of eco-sustainable exploitation of natural resources and gas emissions discharged during the manufacturing period and by assessing the product's environmental impact. The product is principally targeted at furniture manufacturers who have premises in Tuscany so anyone awarded the label has to have both registered offices and premises in the region. At another level, the project is targeted at designers working in this sector with the aim of enhancing their knowledge and sensibility with regard to 'eco-sustainability'. Ultimately there is the consumer and the project aims to influence the purchasing habits above and beyond those who are already aware and responsive to the issues of sustainability.

The staff that studied the definition of analysis methods included personnel from Consorzio Casa Toscana and from Centro Sperimentale del Mobile (CSM). These are the two bodies that promoted the project and that represent Tuscan furniture enterprises. Other staff involved are scholars and researchers from the Architecture Technology and Design Department of Florence University and from the Forestry and Environmental Technologies and Science Department of the Forestry and Agriculture Faculty. Other experts came from the Istituto Ambiente Italia, Milan who examined the environmental impact evaluation methods and checked the Life Cycle Analysis (LCA). There was also a Technical Committee which validated the regulations for the attribution of the label involved and other experts. The project has pulled together different scientific / creative competences (i.e. architects, designers, wood technicians, environmental engineers, etc.) and this is one of the most innovative aspects of the project.

The project has been a three-stage process:

- The first step was the definition of a scientific methodology of analysis as support for the project. By means of an environmental 'health-check' involving 30 Tuscan furniture companies, the project carried out a LCA of products which took into account all stages of the production process. From procurement to manufacturing, from packaging to transportation, from usage to divestment, the end result was a database enabling us to evaluate the environmental impact of each type of material used and each category of product. The environmental quality of the product was evaluated on the basis of three impact categories; damage to human health, damage to the ecosystem and damage to fossil and mineral fuels.

- The second step was the definition of the criteria necessary to grant the label. Two quality bands, obtained by moving from the lowest impact value of the company's production, determine the environmental assessment. The products not achieving these bands cannot receive the label. Every three years the levels are reviewed and reduced, with the objective of achieving a continuous increase in a product's environmental quality and sustainability.

- As a third step, a Scientific-Technical Committee (STC) was established with a group of experts who have worked on the definition of the rules for awarding the label. Each product is evaluated according to its environmental performance: the SCT is called upon to evaluate the eco-impact of the product and compare it with the limits of the label. After this preliminary analysis the SCT carries out an environmental audit at the company's premises to evaluate information supplied in a questionnaire the company will have been asked to complete which describes the characteristics of the product. Then the label is granted and the product / company is given a final evaluation report.

To date there have been 40 companies involved in the project of which 25 have at least one product certified. A total of 50 products have been granted the Casa Toscana / Green Home label. However, it has been noticeable in the two years of the project's lifespan that there has been an increase in local companies interested in and attentive to, the environmental consequences of their activity. This is evinced by an increase in the number of requests for certification submitted to the STC and by the use of the label logo on websites / catalogues. One indicator of the project's success might be discerned in the fact that a company called Fattorini at the start of the Casa Toscana project had only 10% of its production made of 'eco-products'. Now the 'eco-products' amount to 100% of production and the number of employees has risen from 4 to 13 in this period.

Perhaps the biggest obstacle that the project had to contend with was the scale of the companies involved. Very small companies are not used to thinking long-term. The environmental audit in such companies and the information retrieval needed of the company's resources (lighting, energy, water consumption, etc.) created delays often because of a simple lack of computerisation.

The cost of the project was roughly 300,000 euros for the period 2000–04 and it was sponsored by the Regione Toscana and private funds. The Casa Toscana label has been, and still is, one of the key products of CSM because of its strategic weight even within Regional Government policies. ■

The photographs show items by Fattorini and Segis, which represent two very different aspects of the Green Home label. Fattorini manufactures traditional wooden furniture with a typical bio-image, whilst Segis works on products like the Pacific chair, which involve high technology processes such as air moulding and mono-materiality.

For more information please contact Irene Burrioni at CSM – irene.csm@editnet.it



The Pacific chair, Segis

France hosts the Second European Workshop on Design Support

As part of the continuing activities of the SEEdesign project, the seven partners meet together twice a year at a workshop. In October 2005, it was the turn of the Design Centre Rhone-Alps to host the second European Workshop on Design Support, in Lyon. This included a Steering Committee Meeting and a SME seminar.

The Steering Committee Meeting observed that one of the quantitative goals of the SEEdesign programme had already been fulfilled: the constitution of a network of European Design Centres to include a minimum of 30 partners (details can be found on the SEEdesign website: www.seedesign.org). Following an update of the partner centres' activities in the previous six months, the EWDS was opened up to invited guests.

The Design Centre Rhone-Alps had invited a couple of new partners in European Design promotion, and their presentations were really interesting. The Design Centre of Cieszyn, Poland, was created at the start of 2005. It gave a presentation of its activities and shared the questions it uses to stimulate interest amongst Polish companies to start using design. In Portugal, the Portuguese Design Centre has started up a new programme, with the aim of promoting Portuguese companies abroad through their design. This includes the integration of designers into companies, development of at least one product and participation in exhibitions in Spain, Russia, the United States and Italy.

On the French side, Maguy Gabillard, director of the Design Centre Rhone-Alps, gave a brief presentation of how design promotion is structured in France, as there are several organisations all with different aims and objectives. After this presentation the floor was given to two recent French initiatives from Bordeaux and Paris.

4 Design in Bordeaux started its activities a couple of years ago with a programme of industrial design training for SMEs. Today the organisation runs a real Design Centre programme of design promotion activities.

The Brand and Design Club in Paris was created in 2003 and has succeeded in bringing together 140 members since then. About once a month, the Club organises a get-together with prestigious speakers, based around a theme. Since the beginning, these events have had more than 2000 participants. The Club is a really good example of networking: on the more informal side, the aim is to create links between its members and to bring about meetings and occasions to collaborate.

The EWDS was followed by a SME seminar "Design & Marketing for Innovation", with nearly 150 participants. This featured the following speakers: Nokia, Delsey, Faurecia, the SME Otio and the design consultancy Avant-Première. After this, the SEEdesign partners participated in a round table discussion to share the experiences of their countries.

The next workshop will be the International Workshop on Design Support (IWDS 2006) and will be held in Cardiff on 10-11 May 2006. IWDS 2006 will be open to all with an interest in design support issues, not just the seven SEEdesign partners. Further information about IWDS 2006, including details of how to register, can be found on the website www.iwds.org ■



Cox Review of Creativity in Business

In 2005, the UK Chancellor Gordon Brown commissioned Sir George Cox, Chairman of the Design Council, to carry out a major review looking at how best to enhance UK business productivity by drawing on British creative capabilities. The review was published in December 2005 and addressed a question that is vital to the UK's long term economic success – namely, how to exploit the nation's creative skills more fully.

The result was a set of specific recommendations to be considered by the British Government, businesses across the UK, the education sector and also broadcasters. The recommendations are grouped under five headings:

- Implement a national support programme which will tackle the issue of awareness and understanding within SMEs
- Improve the effectiveness of Government support, including a review of the R&D Tax Credit system
- Broaden the understanding of tomorrow's business leaders
- Use the power of public procurement to drive imaginative solutions
- Raise the profile of the UK's creative capabilities via a network of regional centres of innovation and creativity

The Chancellor's response was very positive, supporting key recommendations from Sir George. We now have to wait and see how the plans will be taken forward and whether each of the English Regional Development Agencies and other UK home nations respond to the challenge. ■

The Cox Review is available for download on the UK HM Treasury website: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/cox_review/coxreview_index.cfm

Partners gather for a Workshop on Service Design

The service sector has been growing considerably in recent years, increasing in significance for a nation's economy. Alongside this, service design has been emerging as an important issue for design support activity.

In December 2005, Design Wales invited the SEEdesign partners to meet in Cardiff for a day of discussion and training on this new topic. The Workshop was run by the Engine Group, a London-based design consultancy that has developed expertise in service design by working with clients such as Orange and Virgin. They provided the group with an introduction about the topic, followed by a facilitated exercise about how service design principles can be applied within SMEs. The partners agreed that this had been an interesting and informative event, raising a number of issues to be addressed in order to facilitate the development of support for this sector. ■

IWDS [2006]

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON DESIGN SUPPORT



Cardiff, Wales UK
10 & 11 May 2006

Design Wales would like to invite you to attend the third International Workshop on Design Support – IWDS 2006

Schemes for design support and design promotion initiatives are no longer a novelty. Almost every country in the world runs either design-dedicated programmes or studies for the establishment of strategies that will enable local companies and the country to exploit design for their economic development. We have passed the stage of advocating the importance of design strategies. Nevertheless, there is a need for further mature discussion and objective evaluation of current activity while providing inspiration for new challenges and directions. This is the objective of the International Workshop on Design Support – IWDS 2006.

The two-day programme will emphasise creative practice in design support and promotion schemes, new concepts within this field and emerging demands. It will present strategic plans from countries which have successfully integrated design into their core activities for economic development. IWDS 2006 will also discuss the contribution of different design support schemes to the development of countries and the scope of this contribution (economic/social/cultural). This topic will progress towards the development of measurement tools for the objective assessment of investment in design support programmes.

We aim to create a provocative debate about the practice of design support based on experiences and studies presented from different countries around the world. The list of speakers includes Sir George Cox (UK), Professor John Heskett (Hong Kong) and Professor Dong-Sung Cho (South Korea) as well as practitioners from CANADA, DENMARK, FRANCE, THE NETHERLANDS, USA, UK.

For more detailed information please visit www.iwds.org. Registration is now open.

We look forward to welcoming you to Cardiff!



www.iwds.org

The SEEdesign Bulletin is the communication vehicle of the SEEdesign partnership and is devoted to publishing material – articles, interviews, case studies – related to the practice of design support in different countries.

The opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the SEEdesign partners.

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