Insights: Design Management

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Design management is a business discipline, which is focused on a organization's design resources and activities. It consists of a creative process, supports a culture of creativity, and builds a structure and organization for design. It is refers to the integrated management of design on the level of management, organization, and strategy as well as to the management of the design system of the company.

The objective of design management is to develop and maintain a suitable business environment in which the company can achieve its strategy and mission and vision through design, and by establishing and managing an efficient and effective system. Design management is a comprehensive activity on all levels of business performance (operational to strategic) that effect design, from the discovery phase to the execution phase. Simply put, design management is the business side of design.

The discipline of design management overlaps with the related management disciplines of marketing management, operations management and strategic management.

In his classification of design (1976), Gorb divided design into three different classes. Design management operates in and across all three classes:

- ✔ Product (industrial design, packaging design, service design)
- ✔ Information (graphic design, branding, media design, web design)
- ✔ Environment (retail design, exhibition design, interior design)

Design management incorporates a relative new approach of integrating design thinking as a concept in different business functions.

On an abstract level, design management plays integrative key roles in the interface of design, organization, and market. The key roles are to,

- ✔ Align design strategy with corporate and/or brand strategy

- Manage quality and consistency of design outcomes across and within different design disciplines (design classes)
- Enhance new ways of user experience; create new solutions for user needs and differentiation from competitors

Design leadership

Design leadership leads from creation of a vision to changes, innovations, and implementation of creative solutions. It stimulates communication and collaboration through motivation, sets purpose and future direction to achieve long-term objectives.

Different types

Different types of design management exist depending on the type and strategic orientation of the business

Product design management

In product focused companies the design management focus lies mainly on product design management, including strong interactions with product design, product marketing, R&D, and new product development. This perspective of design management is mainly focused on the aesthetic, semiotic, and ergonomic aspects of the product to express the product qualities and manages diverse product groups and product design platforms.

Brand design management

In market and brand focused companies the design management focus lies mainly on brand design management. It can be distinguished into corporate brand management and product brand management. In this perspective of design management, the brand is the core, which results in a strong focus on the brand experience, customer touch points, and reliability, recognition, and trust relations. The design, like all brand elements, is strongly driven by the brand vision and strategy.

Corporate brand design management

Brand and market focused organizations are concerned with the expression and perception of corporate brand. Corporate design management implements, develops, and maintains the corporate identity or brand. This type of brand management is strongly anchored in the organization to control and influence corporate design activities, the design program play the role of a quality program within many fields of the organization (internal branding). It is strongly linked to strategy, corporate culture, product development, marketing, organizational structure, and technological development. A creative culture, knowledge sharing processes, a strong vision, design leadership, and good work relations support the work of corporate brand management.

Product brand design management

The focus of product brand management lies not on the corporate, but on the single product or product family. Product design management is linked to R&D, marketing and brand management and is present in the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) industry. It is responsible for the visual expressions of the individual product brand, with its diverse customer–brand touch points and the execution of the brand through design.

Service design management

Service design management deals with the newly emerging field of service design. It is the activity of planning and organizing people, infrastructure, communication, and material components of a service, for improving its quality, the interaction between service provider, customers, and the customer's experience. The increasing importance and size of the service sector, both in terms of people employed and economic importance, requires services to be accurately designed in order for service providers to remain competitive and to continue to attract customers. Design management focuses traditionally on the design and development of manufactured products. Service design managers can use many theoretical and methodological approaches from product design management. Systematic and strategic management of service design helps the business to gain competitive advantages and to conquer new markets. Companies that pro-actively identify the

interests of their customers open up new and profitable opportunities if they develop service offerings that create good and pleasant experiences for the customer.

Companies in the service sector are innovating by addressing the IHIP-challenge, they are addressing the Intangibility, Heterogeneity, Inseparability and Perishability of service:

- ✔ Services are intangible, they have no physical form
- ✔ Services are heterogenic, because unlike tangible products no two-service delivery experiences are alike.
- ✔ Services are inseparable, because the act of supplying a service is inseparable from the customer's act of consuming it.
- ✔ Services are perishable,

Based on the specific characteristics of services, service design management differs in several aspects from product design management.

Business design management

Business design management deals with the newly emerging field of integrating design thinking into management. In organization and management theory, design thinking forms part of the Architecture / Design / Anthropology (A/D/A) paradigm, which characterizes innovative, human-centered enterprises. This paradigm also focuses on a collaborative and iterative style of work and an adductive mode of thinking, compared to practices associated with the more traditional Mathematics / Economics / Psychology (M/E/P) management paradigm.

Since 2006, the term Business Design is trademarked by the Rotman School of Management, they define business design as the application of design thinking principles to business practice. The designedly way of problem-solving is an integrative way of thinking that is characterized through a deep understanding of the user, creative resolution of tensions, collaborative prototyping and continuous modification and enhancement of ideas and solutions. This approach to problem solving can be applied to all components of business and its management is what business design management is about.

Urban design management

Urban design management involves mediation among a range of self-interested stakeholders involved in the production of the built environment.

Urban design management offers prescriptive advice for practitioners trying to organize city planning activities in a way that will increase sustainability by increasing satisfaction levels.

Architectural management

Architectural management can be defined as an ordered way of thinking which helps to realize a quality building for an acceptable cost or as a process function with the aim of delivering greater architectural value to the customer and society. It refers to the management of architectural design, as well as architectural management in general. Architectural management falls into two distinct parts: office or practice management and project management.