

This ICU is based on an analytic synthesis of 78 articles which in the world press deal with design labels.

Through an insight on a reasoned selection of worldwide upcoming innovation drivers, we call attention to where convergent efforts from innovation 'movers and shakers' are heading for.

Key drivers

- Three areas are on top of the innovators' agenda:
 - *In the knowledge-based competition, will Europe succeed in imposing its quality-based competitiveness? Through a 'DESIGNED In Europe' Label?*
 - *Buildings' sustainability: to be publicised*
- *as key component of the European identity, with European architects as ambassadors?*
- *Will the policy recognition of innovative bottom-up initiatives at EU level be a way for design policies reinforcement ?*

Matching stakeholders' shifts

by Pierre Bitard and Alain Quévieux, April 2010

SYMBOLS OF INDUSTRIAL INNOVATION EXCELLENCE

- When competition is also quality-based: the 'made-in' label is to be translated into solid and renowned 'designed-in' : product design labels as amplifiers of industrial quality:
 - *"Get a German design label, stupid!" : in the battle for country branding, industries worldwide vaunt their German design labels. Capitalising on successful European components, a renewed form of smart specialisation?*
- Twenty years after the "made-in America" report, first of its kind, even the US policy feels the need to engage in the battle of concepts: "designed-in America" vs. "designed-in Europe"?

LANDMARKING SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

- Architects as pivotal performers of the greening of the buildings, architecture contests as the basic principle for the dissemination of excellence
- Not only do the design labels & awards make the greening of the buildings visible but also do they promote inclusiveness (cf. "design-for-all")

USER-ORIENTED SOFTWARE MARKERS

- Design labels, used as signs of the 'improvement the users' experience' while increasing the brand value:
 - Cf. "transparent", "washable", "operated according to the user's hand gestures", "paper-thin handseet", "stick-like", "chameleon function", etc.... and incorporating global positioning systems for marine and land navigation, mobile positioning,
- Design labels, as catalysts for design niche mobiles only? E.g.: Designs for a rich ageing population?

IDEAS FOR CHANGING EUROPE

A RESEARCHER'S THINKING

The most important success factor of LG's Chocolate Phone development was the adoption of the design-oriented product development strategy. Prior to the development of Chocolate Phone, LG's general phone development pattern involved first developing the function and later deciding on the design to match it. The key to success of the Chocolate Phone was held by the design and marketing sectors. For this reason, LG, which formerly stressed the cultivation of inside talent, took the risk of scouting outside veteran marketers.

One of them was the marketing division leader, Changmin Ma: the "black label" was not born through deliberation from the company side, but rather from considering what consumers wanted in a product.

Pr-Jang Seongleun and colleagues, in Research Technology Management, March 2009

A BUSINESSMAN'S INTEREST

[On the 50th anniversary of the company's inauguration, Kimho won the award for "Tire Manufacturing and Design Innovation of the Year" at Tire Technology Expo at the Cologne Messe, on 10 February 2010]. It means a great deal to us that such a prestigious panel of judges has recognized the pioneering nature of our work.

It represents the work of many people, in particular the engineers at KETC and our R&D operation in Korea, who are always open-minded about our ambitions. Thanks too to for the patience and expertise of our development partners in the UK.

Roger Jenkins, Managing director of Kimho's Birmingham-based European Technical Centre (KETC) [on Kimho's second prize this year, after I/F Product Design Award]

GRIPS Intelligence Corner

Design labelling and Corporate social responsibility in Europe

• **European design labels' characteristics:** there are many multicriteria, third-party and voluntary design labels in Europe, which main characteristics are: 1. Their support organisations often benefit from governmental recognition (and sometimes funding); 2. Judging by their evaluation criteria, the design labels can be clustered in three groups, according to their keywords: "competitiveness" (e.g. DesignPreis, Deutschland), "inclusiveness" (e.g. Design for All, Italy), "quality of life" (e.g. "index: design to improve life", Denmark); 3. The labels apply to specific products, environments and systems, and not to an organisation as a whole.

• **At stake:** EU level policy initiatives which would aim at raising awareness on the potential of design via demand side measures such as labels, capitalising on the rich know-how and excellent reputation of existing national/ regional labels. Raising end-users awareness on design and up-taking of design by industries define corporate social responsibility: an influential integrative driver for sustainability and competitiveness in Europe!

POLICY SUPPORT ON THE MOVE

DESIGN, A WAY TO GET OUT OF THE CRISIS,

MOVING UP THE VALUE LADDER

Raising competitiveness with innovation by design

From 23 to 25 October 2009, Beijing hosted the 2009 Icoagrada World Design Congress and the First Beijing Design Week. On this occasion, Chinese designers representatives stressed that the Chinese economy suffered heavily from the global economic crisis, with factory closures and layoffs. And, as made very clear by Zhu Tao, president of China Industrial Design Association, and Freeman Lau, a world known Hong Kong designer, design has role to play to get out of the crisis.

Citing Korea's Five-year Plan for Industrial Design Promotion

"Without our own design, we won't have our own brands. Without our own brands, we won't be independent in the world. Being an OEM (original equipment manufacturer) is no way out. China is the world's largest producer of more than 200 product types, including bicycles, batteries, furniture, shoes and TV sets, according to the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology. But critics say "Made in China" often means cheap and low value-added goods with thin profit margins, which are frequent targets of anti-dumping measures by other countries. If Chinese companies wanted to transform crisis into an opportunity, they would have to focus more on industrial design and develop their own brands, and the government should help.

ROK had been aggressive in supporting the design industry by formulating the Five-year Plan for Industrial Design Promotion, providing training and building design infrastructure. Samsung is the most frequently cited example of the country's design policy. In the 10 years since the Asian financial crisis, Samsung won more than 100 international design awards. With better products, its sales grew by more than 200 percent, while its profits rose more than 20-fold." [Zhu Tao]

With design, Chinese entrepreneurs as OBMs (original brand manufacturers)

"To many enterprises, design is not about being beautiful or not. It is about being right or wrong. Chinese businesspeople must change their ways of thinking, discard the mindset of being a "manufacturer" and accept the concept of being an "entrepreneur." An entrepreneur had a pioneering spirit and was willing to risk and set up brands. It is time for Chinese companies to transform from OEMs to ODM (original design manufacturers) and further to OBM (original brand manufacturers). The mainland was blessed with a huge consumer market, giving Chinese brands an opportunity to become world-class brands through more creative design and marketing. If a brand sells very well in China and a quarter of the world's population buys it, it is virtually a world-class brand." [Freeman Lau]

Excerpts from China's 'Business Daily Update', "China's manufacturers to design their own recovery", 26 Oct 2009