

# Value of design for companies



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### Abstract

This paper talks about the importance of design for companies. Articles in this paper explain why design is necessary and how it is an investment for companies. Good design allows companies to grow and to no longer pay for advertisements. Companies need design to stay relevant. Companies are constantly adjusting and improving to society's needs and wants. Good design is vital for success in startup companies. This paper examines six different articles about design and how companies need to invest in design to be successful.

*Keywords:* design, companies

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Design is the reason companies either succeed or fail. Good design, according to Braun's code, is innovative, useful, aesthetic etc. (Giard, 2009, p. 173). Good design is crucial for companies in order to be successful. Investing in design saves companies' money in the end. Companies like Apple have been saved by design. Good design starts conversations and there is no need to pay for advertisements because people will do it free. This paper explains why design matters in business.

## Why Companies Should Invest in Design Early

Companies care about design but tend to procrastinate and set it aside. According to Wilson (2017), " Design is an investment, not an expense. But

it's not uncommon to hear startups claim that they value design, but are going to wait to engage a design team later: " We need design, but we just can't afford it right now." (p. 1). Wilson is saying that startup companies believe that design is an expense and do not realize that it is an investment. Wilson continues by saying, " While I have been lucky enough to collaborate with some of the most design-centric companies in the world, there are still those that don't know what they don't know. They have been advised that they need design, but they don't understand how it can help them reach or surpass their goal, so they don't go all in." (p. 1). Experienced Wilson says companies do not know the value of design and therefore do not invest in design as much as they should. Investing in design early is vital because it could cost more if delayed. Wilson states, " Many times, this results in a company cutting corners, deferring design to a later date, or using a cheap, inexperienced resource that ultimately costs them more." (p. 1). When companies do not invest in design early, they do not meet their financial goals and then go a cheaper route that ends up costing more.

### Staying Relevant with Design

People go through phases and want new things. Emerald (2011) states, " Part of the challenge of running a major corporation that has already had great success is not so much the continual growth, but staving off decline and being able to reinvent yourself in every cycle." (p. 6). Staying relevant means a lot to companies. People like change and companies need to adjust to keep up with its consumers. Apple is known for reinventing itself. Emerald says, " The modern-day Madonna, at least in the first decade of the twenty first century, is of course Apple. Reinvention has come hand in hand with <https://assignbuster.com/value-of-design-for-companies/>

innovation for the tech giant from Cupertino, California, and it has grown to become the biggest company in the world on the back of cutting edge technology partnered with some of the most sophisticated industrial design the world has seen. iMac, followed by iPod, followed by iPhone followed by iPad – each product has accelerated its reach and growth with year-on-year double digit growth.” (p. 6). Apple is known for good design and is constantly changing and improving their products to stay relevant.

### Good Design

There is good design and there is bad design. Wilson (2017) states, “ Good design levels the playing field and gives you an unfair strategic advantage to compete against industry incumbents with huge marketing, advertising, and R&D budgets.” (p. 1). Wilson is saying is that good design gives companies an advantage to compete with bigger companies. Wilson continues by saying, “ Well-designed products start conversations and generate their own marketing fuel. Think of entrepreneur born companies like Nest, Tesla, Dyson, and Square. When you cut corners on design, you pay in marketing and advertising to make up the deference. Invest in design now or pay later.” (p. 1). When something is well-designed, people will talk about it and it will be known. Wilson closes by saying, “ Design is optimization, tireless tenement, and the rethinking of assumptions. It’s the best way to combat competition and stay immune from commoditization...” (p. 1). Design is critical to fight competition.

### Reinvention

Many other companies have also reinvented themselves and stayed relevant. Steve Jobs is remembered for saving Apple with design. Emerald (2011) states, “Famously, Steve Jobs came back as CEO and engineered the mother of all comebacks, and...how IBM, McDonald’s and Google have faced the need to change, albeit in different scales and in different cycles, offering many lessons for other businesses to learn.” (p. 6). Apple and other companies like IBM have made comebacks from reinvention. Emerald continues by stating, “Both have re-engineered the company so that it is once again the go-to guy for companies in need of management support, adapting itself for the technological age they and their clients are now confronted by.” (p. 7). Reinvention keeps companies going by consumers continuing to buy their products because of improvements. Emerald states, “Yes, that IBM. And along with McDonald’s and Google they have recently faced epoch-defining changes that have led to successful upgrades in their corporations that have been even more successful than Gates’ eyewear in the intervening years.” (p. 7). Change could make a vast company to an even vaster company. Emerald concludes by stating, “In 2010, IBM had \$100 billion of revenue with profits of \$15 billion, allowing it to spend a staggering \$6 billion on R&D, spending which helped bank nearly 6, 000 patents that year, more than any other company in the world.” (p. 7). Investing in design and reinvention increases profits and the profits could be reinvested again in redesign.

### Design and Patents

If something is designed good, people tend to copy it and that is why there are design patents. Samuelson (2016) states, “Design patent law was

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originally intended to encourage investments in novel and inventive ornamental designs for articles of manufacture, such as carpets and lamps.” (p. 22). Design patents were originally for carpets and lamps. Samuelson continues, “ However, many design patents have been granted in recent years to makers of advanced information technologies, such as smartphones. Often these are for component parts of their technologies, such as product configurations and virtual designs embedded in software.” (p. 22). Companies like Apple and Samsung have design patents for their smartphones.

### Replication or Innovation

There are basic rules of how a smartphone should look like. Samuelson (2016) states, “ The most recent of several litigations between Apple and Samsung involves three design patents that cover specific portions of the external configuration of smartphone designs: a black rectangular round-cornered front face for the device; a substantially similar rectangular round-cornered front face with a surrounding rim or bezel; and a colorful grid of 16 icons to be displayed on a screen.” (p. 22). There are patents for the typical design of a smartphone. Samuelson says, “ Apple sued Samsung for infringing these patents, as well as for infringing trade dress rights in the external design of the iPhone. A jury found that Samsung had infringed both Apple’s design patents and trade dress rights and ordered Samsung to pay \$930 million in damages for these infringements.” (p. 22). Apple has sued Samsung for copying their designs. Samuelson states, “ Samsung challenged the Apple design patent infringement claims because some aspects of the patented designs are too conceptual or functional to be within the valid

scope of the patents. Geometric shapes, for instance, are concepts in the public domain.” (p. 23). There are rules to design and only certain things can be used in ones’ work because if not, it could result in serious fines.

Samuelson concludes by saying, “ Differentiating between “ ornamental” and “ functional” elements of designs for articles of manufacture is a trickier matter, but surely the test for infringement of a design patent should focus on that design rather than products as a whole.” (p. 24). Design can get tricky at times and can cause legal complications but that does not stop major companies like Samsung from using design to their advantage.

## Conclusion

Companies need good design to be successful and stay relevant.

Küçüksayraç (2015) states, “ Design has a pivotal role in sustainable consumption and production, and ‘ without the contribution of design, the full potential of sustainable consumption and production, and thus sustainability, cannot be realized’ (Spangenberg et al., 2010).” (p. 456).

What Küçüksayraç is saying is that design is necessary. If companies do not invest in design, they will not be successful.

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