



reddot design award

Trend spots "red dot award: product design 2009"

In times of economic crisis a large number of companies banks on good, honest product design. The higher the design quality, the better a company can position itself in the global market. Here the consumer is the focus of interest. The highest ease-of-use and a down-to-earth performance of the companies – these are the characteristics of the award-winning products. Design is the catch phrase of the 21st century. It reflects zeitgeist and material culture. However, design also carries great responsibility, because it has to react to global as well as individual needs.

This year, the merging of different living spaces as well as the use of high-quality materials and experimental use of new manufacturing techniques are important topics. Cooking and dining areas are being combined, bedrooms and bathrooms are merging into wellness oases, and the significance of the garden as a continuation of the indoor area is growing. Natural elements, white or beige hues, and wood or stone are used in current furniture design as are bold colours such as yellow, purple, and blue. Due to the many design options, which are used in innovative ways by the designers, everything seems possible; however, clear forms continue to dominate.

Living rooms and bedrooms

In the category "Living rooms and bedrooms" designers are responding to the global problems with harmonious, meditative design elements. Clear colours, discreet forms and a return to the natural serve as sources of inspiration. New materials and innovative manufacturing techniques are perfected with good design solutions. Product structures are time and again opened up with lightness and transparency. Design often functions as a mediator between the latest printing technologies or manufacturing techniques, which are descriptively implemented. Designer often use elements from the design language of contemporary architecture. The trend lies in the products' extraordinarily high-quality workmanship and their sustainability. The flexible combination possibilities take into account the idea of individualisation.

Households and kitchens

In the "Households and kitchens" category design creates an emotional added value which revolutionises the kitchen as a living space. The design concepts function as an authentic portrayal of our everyday culture. The



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technological development in the production process is translated into an ergonomic, aesthetically high-quality form and is expressed in the devices' intelligent, user-friendly operability. Digital technology determines the surfaces of modern kitchen appliances. Unusual design concepts open up completely new perspectives in the kitchen area. The aesthetics of operating elements is entirely determined by pure design. The design solutions are emotional while at the same time meeting the highest hygiene and safety standards. Energy efficiency due to optimised induction technology is one of the central themes for designers in the "Households and kitchens" area.

Tableware

In the "Tableware" category it is acceptable to break away from timeless, reduced design quality and follow current trends. The designs are consistent throughout, and their aesthetic quality is exceptionally high. Innovation and tradition go hand in hand. In no other category does the new compete in such an obvious way with the familiar, nowhere else does the form dominate the products to such a great extent. The designers get their inspiration from everyday use; their designs are functionally elaborate and reflect great attention to detail. The products provide insights into the design process, and a return to craftsmanship is clearly discernible. German design has a long tradition in this area and keeps setting quality standards; however, material, production and design standards are as high as never before also on an international scale. Naturalness, charm and ecological awareness inspire the designs. The future is fine, soft elegance and feminine forms. Traditional forms are re-interpreted and implemented in a high-quality, modern way.

Bathrooms, spa and air-conditioning

The manufacturers of the category "Bathrooms, spa and air-conditioning" also attempt to position themselves in the market with high quality and well thought-out innovations in order to prevail against the competition. High-quality, well-manufactured and thus durable products are in line with the trend. In times of crisis the consumers put increasing emphasis on the highest quality and durability. The design in the category "Bathrooms, spa and air-conditioning" arouses emotions and appeals to the senses – the holistic wellness idea dominates the design. Harmonious combinations of different materials and design languages question traditional values and integrate ideas from Far Eastern cultures in a holistic, deliberate product design.



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Lighting and lamps

The category "Lighting and lamps" displays an exceptional wealth of ideas. Despite the regret about the disappearance of the traditional light bulb and its specific quality of light designers experiment with new technologies in an inspiring way – in a way that not only saves our resources but also fascinates and appeals to emotions. In all areas, from lighting for living spaces to the area of medical technology, the use of LED technology enables completely new, intelligent design possibilities. Admittedly, the designs created using this comparatively young technology still require further development; however, it is already possible to make the material of the technical elements disappear almost completely behind the aesthetic form of the lamp. The focus is on the design itself, on the immediate form and function. Efficient, environmentally friendly and interactive – the modern lighting technology holds enormous potential, and allows a look into the future today.

Gardens

In the category "Gardens" designers experiment with materials, forms, and concept interpretations. The designs are original and hold great future potential. As a continuation of the indoor area the significance of the garden will also further increase in the coming years. With intelligent functionality and high ease-of-use the garden has gained a new value. Weather-resistant and easy to use from day to day, the products feature a natural and harmonious aesthetics. With outstanding functionality, ergonomics and form, the design language is emotional and sensitive throughout. Innovative materials become essential parts of the design process with the human being the centre of the design focus.

Sport and games

On the one hand, innovative materials inspire the design, while on the other hand a return to the natural encourages customers to use products. An exotic lifestyle stimulates designers in the category "Sport and games"; new manufacturing techniques offer unprecedented design interpretations. As in other areas, the human being is the centre of interest; human ergonomics is the role model for a dynamic language of forms. The design holds back sensitively and supports targeted areas in which it can optimise movement sequences. Aesthetics and utility value are exceptionally high; quality dominates the design in the category "Sport and games".



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Fashion and accessories

Design starts where the existing is questioned and interpreted in a new way. In a category that is so closely linked with design, trends rarely become apparent. Instead, styles set the mood. This year, the designers in the category "Fashion and accessories" show careful restraint. Passion and courage appear to take a back seat in favour of loyalty to traditional design styles. Permanence in such a short-lived area as fashion? Here it is vitally important to experiment, to let go of limiting standards with regards to the choice of materials and traditional forms. The technical possibilities hold enormous design potential – and the designers have to take advantage of these possibilities in order to create innovations.

Watches and jewellery

In the category "Watches and jewellery" this year's expert jury would like to see more courage in the development of concepts and more vitality in their implementation. Designers are more likely to refer back to past designs than risk something completely new. The designs are inspired by modern technological innovations the design standards of which, however, have not yet been implemented optimally. The high quality standards, which pointed the way in past years, appear to restrict rather than motivate designers. Existing forms have to be questioned and aesthetic concepts have to be left behind in order to create something really new. The intensive analysis of existing forms, however, forms the basis for future innovations.

Architecture and interior design

Efficiency and flexibility are the main criteria of good design in the category "Architecture and interior design". With durable materials and sustainable product concepts designers manage to combine the highest quality with elegant details. Sophisticated designs form the basis of implementations with excellent craftsmanship. The simpler a product appears to be at first glance, the more complex its utility is. Intelligent and individual solutions offer high utility value and maximum ease-of-use. The designers exploit established forms and strive more to optimise existing solutions rather than create new innovations. The work with proven elements creates a solid basis and suggests consistency and trust to consumers.

Offices

In the category "Offices" a clear, traditional language of forms determines the design. Communication is the centre of interest. Material



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qualities, surface design and modern manufacturing techniques bring surprising results and point the way to the future. Ergonomically optimised, office furniture design features an almost staged quality. The play with colours and forms never becomes banal; the products are consistently looking respectable, independent and high-quality. Spatial concepts are re-interpreted to benefit the individual; thanks to intelligent furniture design, private workspaces can be created even in open plan environments. High-quality, natural materials offer an enormous potential of design possibilities. Transparency and the targeted use of clear accents characterise the aesthetic theme in the "Offices" category.

Industry and crafts

The more intelligent the design, the higher a product's utility value and quality. In the category "Industry and crafts" the aim is to simplify operating sequences with well thought-out, ergonomically optimised products and to create the largest possible utility. Often the decisive difference is in the detail, and the thinking and development process of the designer is perfected in the product. An increasing number of manufacturers from the areas of consumer goods as well as machine and investment goods invest in good design because they have recognised that a consistent design concept enables a clearly discernable increase in product quality. A return to material as the basis of good design is clearly discernible; overall, successful forms are undergoing a modernisation which goes hand in hand with the technological progress.

Life science and medicine

The category "Life science and medicine" has developed enormously in recent years not least thanks to the change in demographics. The design aims to make everyday life easier for all age groups. Self-sufficiency in the case of illness is made as easy and self-explanatory for the patient as possible with an intelligent combination of state-of-the-art technology and ergonomic design featuring well thought-out details. The design has developed a clear direction: the more complex the technology, the more reduced the language of forms. The product quality is as high as never before, not least thanks to the use of the latest materials; the negatively connotated medical aspects are taking a back seat with haptic and hygienic aspects defining the designs.

Automobiles, transport and caravans

The design in the category "Automobiles, transport and caravans" looks very established overall and has obviously been integrated in the



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production process as an elementary part. While traditional brands bank on high-quality craftsmanship in design, new automobile generations show higher conceptual standards. Sporty, dynamic lines upgrade all vehicle classes. The headlights are used as central elements in the front design and give the vehicles their individual expression. Interior design with loving attention to detail including a logical arrangement of the operating elements offers the highest comfort for driver and front-seat passenger. The consistent design concepts successfully manage to lastingly increase product quality. Similar to other categories, here the choice of materials also has a great effect on the design process. The designers increasingly recognise the functional and aesthetic potential of the different materials and attempt to stage them effectively and aesthetically.

Entertainment technology and cameras

When the market is saturated designers face their biggest challenge. The goal is to set accents with innovative design concepts, to translate the variety of technical possibilities into an original and individual form, while at the same time staying true to the company culture. The seemingly never-ending potential enables the designer also to risk breaking away from traditional forms. The results are courageous forms which have the potential of influencing our product culture long-term and of pointing a direction for future designs. The playful use of design possibilities just takes place on the surface; in times of crisis the designers of the category "Entertainment technology and cameras", too, refer back to the successful concepts of recent years. The technology is developing rapidly and forms are subject to a constant optimisation process.

Communication

Never before has communication been as simple as today; never before has communication had such an entertaining added value. The design in the category "Communication" is very diverse and geared to a large variety of target groups. In such a fast moving discipline it is indispensable to optimise competitiveness with the highest quality and to respond to customers' needs as quickly as possible. While in the past designers tried to translate technical complexity into user-friendly forms, this year is dominated by sophisticated design that ensures the product stands out from the masses of competitors. Everything seems to be possible; however, quality is always a major criterion with all products. The borders between pure communication instruments and multimedia tools are becoming increasingly blurred. Today's innovations open up a view of the near future: communication is constantly changing, and also



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in the coming years the technological progress will generate needs which appear foreign today, but will have to be implemented directly in appropriate, user-friendly designs tomorrow.

Computers

The design in the category "Computers" is always determined by the latest technology. The more complex the functions, the more important a simple yet intelligent formal realisation becomes. Modern computer design is increasingly geared towards the different needs of target groups and appears to offer devices in all colours and sizes. There seem to be no limits to visual flexibility, and the rapid technological development is successfully translated into professional designs. The materials' haptic qualities are an essential part of the process of increasing aesthetic appeal. Despite the complexity of the industry's content, design in the category "Computers" increasingly take into account ecological and health-related factors. Lower-emission design opens up the path to the future; the user's health has become as important as the ease-of-use.

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