



reddot design award

Press release

Essen, March 16, 2009

Crisis managers with potential for popularity – creative field is the source of a new wave of optimism

Although design is only half as popular as love, compared with Barack Obama or David Beckham it is very high up on the international popularity scale. This, at least, is the result yielded by the international search engines in the world wide web. Design is also currently a hot topic for many manufacturers worldwide, who hope to reanimate their share prices with the help of good design. The results of this year's "red dot award: product design" in Essen provide further evidence of this development. Never before has the level of participation from companies been as high as in this year. This is despite the fact that the competition for the sought-after red dot awards has been the first choice for global industry for a long time now.

The 3,231 entries for the "red dot award: product design 2009" stemming from a total of 49 nations testify to the fact that design is precisely the platform for international companies that appears to be essential in order to survive on the global market. The increase in the number of participating companies by around 16% demonstrates the economic potential of design in times of economic crisis in particular. The international jury of experts awarded the "red dot" to 683 products for their high quality of design, and the best 49 received the "red dot: best of the best" award. Because it is often details that separate good products from great products, 194 products received an honourable mention in recognition of their especially refined detail solutions. 17% of all awards went to Asia this year, with 53 of the successful products coming from Taiwan alone. The huge innovation potential demonstrated by the products from Asia this year provides proof that good design is certainly no longer exclusive to the western world.



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Creative potential for the future

"More and more Asian companies have understood that they can only succeed on the international market if they respond to their competitors with top design quality. The results have wholly convinced our red dot jury that Asia is the market of the future," says design expert Professor Dr. Peter Zec, initiator of the red dot design award. In the past, it was through quantity that most Asian countries excelled in the international manufacturing competition, but in recent years there has been a substantial move towards quality. Peter Zec describes the award-winning products as follows: "Whether in the field of electronics, automobiles or products for home use, the Asian countries have come up with product ideas that are consistently inspiring and have the potential to set international trends. The large number of Taiwanese participants in the competition in particular has shown us that the priorities in the Asian design industry are constantly changing. The industry is therefore part of the efficient economic competition, and this will have a positive effect on the global market." The high level of consistently strong design products from Asia underlines the fact that a global benchmark is important in order to gain international footing. According to Peter Zec: "The results of the 'red dot award: product design 2009' are a clear indicator of where the creative potential for the future lies."

Design quality as an economic factor

The design value of a company is becoming a decisive factor in weathering the economic crisis. Design constitutes added value, transforming brands into the influential stars of our everyday lives. Peter Zec states critically that "In a world without familiar brands, we lose direction. Brands have the potential to give a culture an identity and their design performance gives it direction, a whole way of life, and shapes our everyday life in a lasting manner." This is reflected in this year's trend in favour of increased quality awareness on the part of the manufacturers. Targeted investment in design is a successful market strategy. "In times of crisis, the respective companies make a conscious decision to submit fewer products, but these products are better than ever before," says Peter Zec. This year's entries came from a total of 49 nations. For the first time, prize winners included products from nations that had not traditionally been connected with excellent design quality in the past, such as India, Thailand, Brazil, and Lebanon.



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The red dot design award

The red dot design award dates back to 1955. With around 11,000 entries from over 60 nations, the award is now the world's largest and most distinguished design competition. It breaks down into the three different disciplines "red dot award: product design", "red dot award: communication design" and "red dot award: design concept".

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