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▸ **2006 Design Trends - What's Happening in Lifestyle,, Technology, Personal Care, Food**

Senay

Feb 10 2006, 04:00 PM

2006 Design Trends - What's Happening in Lifestyle, Technology, Personal Care, Food

Editor



Group: Moderator
Posts: 471
Joined: 9-August 04
From: Izmir
Member No.: 92
Design field: Fashion Design, Jewelry Design, Textile Design

They're not Brands, They're "Lifestyles"



Brands continue to evolve in the mindset of the consumer; the emotional connection and brand preference is turning the purchase decision from a product selection to a lifestyle choice. As a result brands must look for new ways to grow and more companies are leveraging their core business into collections of new categories.

Companies like Ralph Lauren have championed the expansion from fashion and personal accessories to almost everything for the home. Now every marketer has the same idea. Coach, the leather goods company, now offers a fashion collection; Mont Blanc pens are established at providing a full array of personal and business leather accessories.

Designers are not only thinking about product functionality as the focus shifts to lifestyle enhancing solutions. Even Ferrari's mindset has changed from producing high-performance machines to "We sell lifestyles." The strength of a brand's image, style and quality give us the desire to buy into their lifestyles, a lifestyle we want to make our own.

Luxury is "Best"



Luxury is no longer exclusively the domain of the wealthy. Self-indulgence, paired with one's desire to be socially branded by image, combine for an increasing consumer demand for luxury products across several verticals.

The idea of "desired luxury" is transforming the product offerings of many brands, such as Levi's, which introduced a top-of-the-line pair of jeans that competes against haute couture prices. Aesthetic design is a luxury brand's vital edge and is necessary to compete with other category "bests."

Hungry for Design



The structures, colors and unique functionalities of food packages are key in aiding consumer purchasing decisions. The design of a fragrance bottle has always been critical to a brand's success as it is a major differentiator of one brand to the next. Now packaged food companies are getting their wake-up calls and innovative packages will continue to pop-up and off supermarket shelves.

Getting Technical



Single function products are fading away. Activities such as: retrieving email, checking sports scores,

watching a video clip, taking photos, listening to music, and making a phone call, are converging in a single portable device. The convergence of communication and entertainment has left electronics companies with the competitive challenge of designing the ultimate user-interface experience. The next generation will be hybrid devices that are half land-based and half portable, expanding functionality and interface quality when at home, in the office or on the street.

Tech Kids



Kids are now technology savvy purchase drivers and spending to keep them happy is on the rise. Internet and technological advancements have officially kicked coloring books and GI Joe to the curb. Mp3 players, e-learning, and computer games are expensive necessities for today's youth. A child's desire to have the latest, coolest clothing, gadgets and toys, has challenged many companies with the quest to design the ultimate product experience for their half-pint users.

Design Simplicity At Your Fingertips



Today's consumer is moving - and moving quickly. Convenient and portable products must be designed to match the fast pace of multi-tasking professionals, home keepers and students alike. Compacted cosmetics, remote car ignitions and multi-functional cell phones are accommodating the new pace of life. The design solution of the multi-purpose product is toward ever smaller, simpler and interactive, while design becomes more important to differentiate similar products from an ever more crowded market.

Marketing To Men



The health and personal care consciousness of men is rising quickly. Once brands primarily catered to a man's shaving needs but in 2006 we will see unprecedented offerings in skincare as more men spend downtime at the spa. Aging baby boomer men care more about how they look and feel making exercise hot. As men seek the fountain of youth we find them dipping into pots of anti-wrinkle and rejuvenating creams. Fragrance, fashion and medical specialists are jumping on the bandwagon. The art of shaving has given way to holistic regimes of personal care both internally and externally.

About Kenneth Hirst

President, **Hirst Pacific**, New York

Hirst Pacific is a strategic design firm that provides global solutions to a wide range of international brands. We excel in projects that require innovative solutions with the highest standards of quality, technical expertise, and aesthetics. Award-winning product and retail interiors designer Kenneth **Hirst** provided the creative vision behind such fragrance lines as "Still" Jennifer Lopez, "Celine" Dion, Havana, and Tommy, **Hirst** designed the exclusive 'metal box' packaging program for Movado 'Vizio' watches, and the revolutionary Gillette Series men's grooming products.

A native of Australia, **Hirst** has 18 years global experience in marketing, manufacturing, and design. His expertise encompasses a range of disciplines from high-end fragrances and personal care items to mass-marketed package goods, accessories, medical equipment, lighting and furniture.

Hirst distinguished himself early in his career as an accomplished product designer at home and in the US before teaming with Cato, Gobe & Associates (now d/g*) to launch his first product and retail design firm - Cato Gobe **Hirst**, in New York City. Following the merger in 1990, **Hirst** was named principal and executive creative director, expanding his expertise into packaging and graphic design, global branding and consulting. Inspired with a fresh vision for a new design practice, **Hirst** launched **Hirst Pacific** Ltd in 1996 to provide comprehensive brand image services focusing on design innovation with a strategic approach.

For more information : <http://www.hirstpacific.com>

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