



**driving customer engagement
through compelling design**



HANSONDESIGN

brand strategy + design

**beautiful, better,
balanced
to drive customer
engagement**

Every day, C-Suite executives balance risk with opportunity in the calculation of ROI. Such raw numbers, however, fail to fully consider the importance and value of a brand's intimate relationship with its customers.

Pressure from competition and shareholder demands often force CEOs to relegate “soft” tools—like design—to tactical-level maneuvers, rather than using design to deliver on increasing customer engagement.

Enter the concept of Compelling Design.

Compelling Design elevates design thinking to a strategic driver, and enables brands to make customer engagement the priority. This top-down, C-Level approach to design not only helps minimize financial tunnel vision, it inspires organizations to improve from the inside out.

Compelling Design influences brands in innumerable ways, from product planning to materials costs; from corporate responsibility to the granular details of social media. But that's not to say Compelling Design is a pure strategy play: Instead, we're building the kinds of user-first experiences that make ordinary customers into loyal brand evangelists.

**beautiful, better,
balanced**
an evolutionary
process

Hard-wired into the fundamental human condition is the desire to improve our life experiences. Regardless of culture, age or economic status, we seek continually to surround ourselves with things that make our lives better, more beautiful, more balanced.

Think about it, these three inherent human ‘criteria’ drive virtually every decision we make. So to push customer engagement in today’s hot-minute digital marketplace, it’s vital that any new product, service, or brand embody these traits. For a product to become, according to Steve Jobs, “insanely great,” it must improve my life, work really well—every time—and have immense thrill-appeal.

Compelling Design overlays these three fundamental principles into design thinking, which is based on ideation, empathy, agile processing and prototyping.

Compelling Design begins at conception, when entrepreneurs look for innovative and creative business strategies to deliver on their vision. Stepping-stones on the pathway to success include access to capital, a well-conceived plan, a culture of co-creation, aesthetics and—most importantly—a ‘high key’ audience eager to own it and be a part of what you offer. And that’s where Compelling Design can play a pivotal role.



beautiful



better



balance

You must have a baseline understanding that what attracts and satisfies customers is the promise of a **better** customer experience, a more **beautiful** product, and a strong measure of **balance** (*often expressed as self satisfaction, comforting or easy*). Nail those, and you’re well on your way.

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We know people engage with, and invest in, products and services that “stick” by invoking a positive emotional response. Compelling Design allows for a continual process of engagement and improvement of business methodology that strives to anticipate these human motivations and responses.

Taking this one step further, Compelling Design is based on seeing, feeling, and visualizing net positive experiences of the target users’ personas. When addressing customer needs, reactions, and desires first—along with the best ways to serve and satisfy them—designers can quickly visualize the pathways and touch-points that produce success in intuitive ways.

Startups and investors find Compelling Design’s humanistic approach to be more effective, relational and engaging. Since early business success relies heavily on quickly mobilized investment capital and knowledge, Compelling Design uses ‘positive plus agile’ discovery processes to accelerate traditional design thinking empathy. By letting teams ‘see and feel’ more positive factors during this stage, leadership can more easily visualize the pathway to innovation. And ultimately identify and deliver exceptional user experiences.

**garrett melby
good company
ventures**

Garrett Melby, co-founder and Executive Director of GoodCompany Ventures, an accelerator for social entrepreneurs, says *“Always know the reason...early stage innovation is about ‘making and giving’ in order to discover ‘Value Creation’...‘User-centric design’ needs to be propelled by negotiating a common mission between broad objectives and consumer needs and desires. In order to discover ‘Value Creation’ one must be sincere, modest and be in touch with the user to create deeper affiliation and loyalty.”*

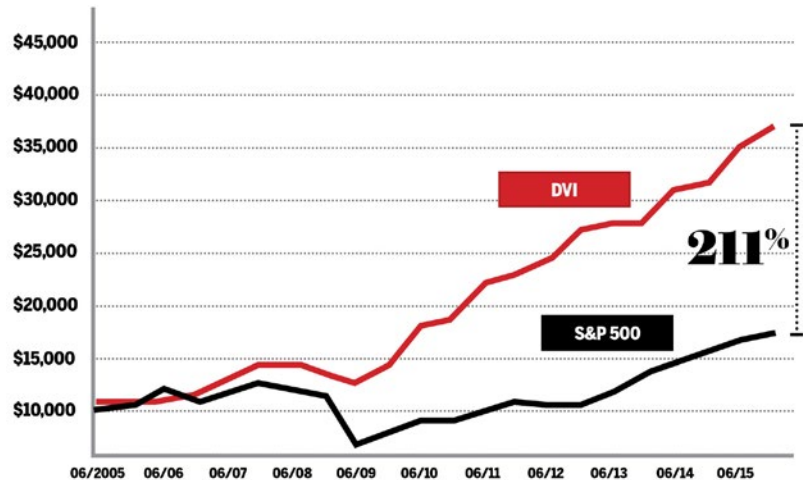
why design in the boardroom

When company leaders embrace design at the top, they're already way ahead of those that don't, as clearly demonstrated in the 2015 DMI Design Index. Design-conscious companies like Apple, Starbucks, Intuit, Nike, and IBM outpace the competition and are leading the new 'collaborative economy.'

DMI: Design Value Index 2005-1025

DESIGN-CENTRIC ORGANIZATIONS:

APPLE
COCA-COLA
FORD
HERMAN MILLER
IBM
INTUIT
NIKE
PROCTOR & GAMBLE
SAP
STARBUCKS
STARWOOD
STANLEY BLACK & DECKER
STEELCASE
TARGET
WALT DISNEY
WHIRLPOOL



seth johnson
design advocate
head of client
experience for
IBM studios

Seth Johnson of IBM Studios, says typically, these firms are strategically well resourced with diverse design talent. They apply design in brand marketing, and as a competitive advantage in product development, research, positioning, and maintaining a high level of customer 'likes.'

"IBM thinks about it in terms of a mindset, not a business process. Designers can help in disruption of 'business assumptions' by visualizing thinking with new concepts and by re-focusing problems around actual user needs and human outcomes. More and more design is considered vital to growth. At IBM, design and designers are fully embedded in the business units. They are exposed to and involved in the business and are key members of multi-disciplinary teams. This adds agility and speed."

Everyone is searching for the next big hit. Traditional sales strategies rely on 'likes' and 'clicks' data. Design and Data—seemingly at odds with one another—can synchronize data with creative intelligence to continually improve customer experiences.

randy j. hunt
etsy

Thinking that the data tells you what to do is a misunderstanding... interpretation and decision-making is critical. We have to participate in this practice, make decisions and choices. We use data to see where there are problems or opportunities. This tells us where to focus our attention, spend our time and energy - that's all quantifiable data."

**Data drives decisions.
Decisions drive design.
Design drives desire.
Desire drives everything.**

"Then when we dive in to work on the thing defined - we will use other qualitative research to hear the stories and understand what people are experiencing. Design can serve as a means to an end, as it focuses on the problem, it can solve the need. Design equals the 'form of impression' that can be targeted at an opportunity."

So what does this mean for the intersection of customer engagement and bottom line ROI? When Compelling Design is given C-suite priority, a Chief Design Officer can help other senior leaders expand their vision to incorporate the three B's—Beauty, Better, Balanced—into top-level product and brand initiatives. Compelling Design helps organizational leaders intuitively see and feel what users experience, then reflect those values into new product or service experiences as outward representations of the brand.

about the authors

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