

PRODUCT DESIGN

The visual element seems to have monopolized designers' attention and efforts. This may be due to a number of factors including the vividness of colors and perspective, the glancing and distractible nature of the eye, the brain's overconfidence in what it sees, or the fact that it has a greater range than any other sense. In any case, it seems that it would be one of the most functionally debilitating senses to lose. However, it is not the only aspect of product design that need be considered. Shallow understandings have selected this sense to work in when no such choice need be made. The best products will address the true nature of the need they resolve as well as satisfying the client in both mind and body. The body should be stimulated through as many complimentary sensory inputs as possible while the mind is enriched and refreshed by the ethos a product embodies.

Due to the long range of eyesight, we can see a product from some distance away while other senses require closer proximity if not direct contact. Therefore, our first experience with a product is its appearance. Our brain's creation of a new file name and location reflect this initial impression and visceral blush of what it thinks is to come. Despite the human ego's strong affinity to judge, our superseding curiosity and hard-wired quest for meaning bid us pause. We are called to investigate further and it is at this time that the other senses become involved. When they are not addressed at all or are determined to be lacking, a stale impression in the brain may then erode our initial visual excitement.

Even when all sensory inputs have been considered and crafted, successful product design is incomplete. As the client or end user continues to use the item and reflects on the experience, the mind becomes more deeply involved. Consideration of this future contemplation and analysis is one factor lacking in many companies cutting costs to the point of the detriment of their products. However, the cost of its consideration at the point of product conception is negligible as it demands deeper thought over financial outlay. The way to accomplish this is to understand that the physical product is only part of what is being delivered to the client. The way non-visual sensory interactions support the initial visual platform, the artistry and harmony with which all contribute to the composition, and the product ethos they seem to convey, and the environment in which the product is delivered and used are all part of the whole. Such a holistic approach to product design will lead to objects which leave people feeling fulfilled. Comfort, familiarity, facilitation of one's actions, and support of a person's core understandings of the world will shift perception of the object. The brain will personify it, translating its inanimate use into a more organic relationship. These new file allocations give products a more dynamic nature in which they can be forgiven of minor faults and maintain interest over longer periods of time. However, too successful a product is nothing to fear as people's fickle nature is also inherent. Success of previous products will not dissuade them from wanting the "next new thing." It will in fact have built their emotional reserve, instilling them with a confidence to venture on to new purchases.