

ROLE OF DESIGNERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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"The natural science is concerned with how things are while design is concerned with what ought to be done." (Simon, 1988) A designer is, therefore, a maker who can present new concepts and ideas. The digitalization that keeps upgrading every day has given the design a whole new look, although even inexperienced people are still venturing into this field. This, therefore, poses a significant role for designers to play by using very concrete strategies and processes that should keep getting better. Tovey, Bull, and Osmond (2010) provide a list of designers like industrial engineers, design, graphic, jewelry, and automotive designers.

Designers should be highly involved in their line of duty, whether individually or as a group. As time goes by, they can develop an elevated sense of design, note some positivity, and be actively transformed from one level to another in the industry. This involvement fabricates a learning process for the designers. From explorations to the industry's ups and downs, design manifestations have a role to play in this industry, which is moving at a supersonic speed due to the digital era where design tools are easily accessible. By so doing, they cease throwing in a pity party in case design shops are opened overnight or, better still, when unqualified people seem to hijack the industry. By this, a clear line between a practitioner and an actual design leader will be drawn, making these design leaders own the industry with pride.

Designers should also be multi-disciplinary because they have a couple of responsibilities and can apply the essential elements of design across extensive tasks. The multi-discipline exhibited in the design industry is necessarily not by choice but by the industry's inevitability, the chief leaders' standards with a deep understanding of the value of a perfect design and the job market. As far as multi-discipline is concerned, the design is omnipresent and rooted in languages familiar to us. In foreign disciplines, a common element or pattern of design is used.

Kelley (2007) believes in creating sufficient bridges to curb any barriers in the industry. They do this by creating concepts and coming up with new ideas that involve identifying a need and using processes that prototype probable results. Additionally, being so enthusiastic brings forth vital personal interests, which automatically brings meaning to one's undertaking as far as the design industry is concerned. As stated by Ison and Russel (2000), "it acts as a source of meaning, which provides the energy that helps us do what we want to do."

They should also ensure they communicate effectively, as Stuart Ewen puts it. He says that producers highly recognized in the 1920s used a strategy that transformed savers to consumers mainly through advertisements. Therefore, the designers have a role in using mass media (televisions, magazines, radio, etc.) to reach their consumers and create new tastes. They have a role in developing solid relationships between the viewer and visuals. They do so by first recognizing how visuals should look by considering the message that is supposed to be conveyed.

As the saying goes, the early bird catches the worm. Therefore, designers' early engagements play a vital role that has to be played in this century since it strengthens the design capabilities. It is also more likely to provide a solution even before the project is initiated since most users are interested in solutions and not necessarily the project. Late engagements limit designers' input regarding creativity, and in-depth contribution in their projects is concerned. These late engagements create a time frame that is very squeezed, which might hinder timely planning and the implementation of concepts.

Another role that the makers have in this century is having formal knowledge approaches in such areas as production. By having this formal knowledge, the designers' creativity will automatically improve to higher capacities appreciated in the 21st century. The designers will be able to document their experiences by using case studies and professional development and have the ability to review their projects to widen the comprehension of their field.

Similarly, designers have to understand their contribution to the industry. This implies that they should reconcile with the fact that whatever they do contributes to their customers' experience, whether positively or negatively. This ranges from what they choose at the beginning to the colors they select all the way to the messages sent to their clients. Topalian (2012) holds that there is no product or process or even service that can be introduced in the absence of design; therefore, designers' contribution is something that can never go unnoticed.

It's also their role to create experiences for their audience to have a scope of what the audience involves. It goes an extra mile to the tools used in creating those experiences. They can opt to concentrate on such things as the products or services' usability, utility, accessibility, or desirability. These aspects give value to the target audience; they should be driven by the designer's passion for their work.

Designers also need to use creativity when coming up with design possibilities or, better still, utilizing emotions. This is a role that is well outlined in the evolutionary model, and it goes ahead to show that designers are informed by extensive research and knowledge. In turn, they bring the knowledge into the process of design by making fair use of the designer's common sense. The 21st century is only incorporating the most creative people, and only those who are the 'fittest' survive.

Designers, too, have a vital role in linking societal or individual choices between those deemed more sustainable than the present ones. This substitutes more creation of what is already present since the more similar products are created, the more the probability of piling more obsolete materials because, in this century, what made people happy yesterday might be boring to the same audience today. Having sustainable products or services is a role that designers should take seriously because things keep changing day in day out, and it's their responsibility to keep up with the pace.

They also have a significant impact on the world's future, and they should embrace their roles in working towards a sustainable solution as they strive to upgrade their products and services. The future looks like it is only embracing continuous improvement, and only those who take up this role with great care will live to see the industry's future and experience it. Doing so might be a roller coaster ride, but it is definitely worth it, the worthiness might not be felt now, but it surely will.

It is the role of designers to ensure they have the capability of having problem-solving techniques. The three types of problems that face designers include defined under-defined and undefined problems. The majority of design problems are often formed during the design process, and the designer ought to deal with problems as soon as they arise by considering possible solutions. Those designers who undertake this role entirely are likely to be more involved with other functions in the environment where they operate.

Finally, the designers have a role of ethical responsibility. A designer should be able to study the effects and meaning of what they have come up with, not only from a commercial view but also from the cultural perspective and the social context. They should internally examine what message is transmitted by design and what it says about human relationships since ethically correct designs will connect consumers' basic needs to human rights. Ethicality is basically the backbone of design not only in this century but also since time immemorial.

How the roles might change in 10 years

Change is inevitable, and it is even more rapid nowadays due to the competitive environments. Any industry that is reluctant to change might not be able to survive the next ten years. If a particular project fails to yield a specific outcome, change becomes the only way out, especially when the set objectives are not met. In this context, designers' above roles might change drastically in the next ten years because the environment is also changing.

The designer roles will be shifting to the value that will be placed on the thinking ability since design tools will be easily accessible, and they will also be more automated. This will ensure that only those critical and rational thinkers will pull through, and they will also have to balance and highlight the difference between a thinker and just a mere practitioner. This is the future of designers in the industry.

The roles might also change when the foundations are fully embraced and championed at the highest designer levels. With insufficient foundations, the expectations of a decent end product are unrealistic. In the next ten years, a balance will be created in the execution between qualitative and quantitative data, development, experience, and testing. It won't be practically possible to have an approach that will be as unbalanced as it is or as it was in the past when working out with these designer roles in the modern world.

In the coming years, identity crisis will be a thing of the past to the degree that the design industry is involved. This prediction might be valid because of advocating for the ongoing design value, showing the fundamentals of these designs, passing on these values, and not forgetting to layout returns on investment for each project. Coming up with new paths of ideas and future designs and being a great practitioner in society is faced with many oscillations, but either way, we must prepare for the future.

The most significant challenges we face in the universe are directly or indirectly linked to the earth's survival; global warming is the most visible and still most conspicuous. It goes from inaccessibility to clean water all the way to the emission of harmful that cause irredeemable damage to the ozone layer and health. We should keep in mind that the human population is snowballing, and we are all competing for the same scarce resources. Therefore, designers should adjust their roles, make alternatives, and create more attractive and sustainable materials because of future demand.

Social media is continuously growing and becoming more business-centered; therefore, such roles as communication through print media will definitely change in the next decade since it is becoming more refined as time goes by. This will have a significant impact on how designers pitch their clients. Any designer who will not take the use of social media seriously might have their days in the industry numbered since this is about to become our new normal. Advertising one's work is cheaper, fast and more economical in social media than print media, and it is also easily accessible by everyone with a social media account.

In today's designer roles, skills such as research, teaching, facilitation, and co-creation are not covered by formal education. This will change in the coming years since even today, companies like Hyper Island have started running advanced programs to close this gap. This means that this role is not too far from changing; it might not even take a decade. There will come a time when all designers will have these skills; the creativity, innovation, and knowledge with designers will be nowhere near what we have now.

The future requires a designer who will work creatively with those challenges surrounding innovation in fast-changing environments. (Liedtka, 2012) Therefore, they will have to adjust their roles and collaborate with other designers to innovate more strong and creative approaches and figure out how to overcome doubts that they might have on their own creativity. Therefore, this unity will take the industry's creativity to new heights since unity comes in handy with strength, and two brains are better than one. Whatever the future holds needs more creativity and innovations, so they will have to change their roles and incorporate these changes.

The role of involvement might change since the current industry requires a certain level of confidence and an approach referred to as a don't-worry approach. It's possible to have a more outstanding and preferable solution than the existing one (Kelley, 2007). Confidence has an aspect of optimism, and the current designers who have already anticipated the future are emphasizing the bright side that the current events are taking.

As much as designers have a role of recognizing their roles, there is a need for collaboration between designers and non-designers to ease identification of opportunities and deploring the existing opportunities and, where possible, create brand new opportunities (Ferri, Deakins, and Whittam, 2009). This collaboration helps in focusing on approaches that look more open, and it also loosens the rules, thus inspiring the members in the interdisciplinary teams.

Designers will have to adjust, incorporate and most likely be utterly dependent on in-depth research in their industry due to the emerging technicalities and the development of the e-learning portal. With research, the designers will be able to better understand the current issues together with users and have time to analyze future possibilities. To maintain an updated design, research should be the core undertaking, ensuring a designer remains evergreen in the industry.

In the next decade, designers might be forced to come out of their comfort zones of just being designers and take up the role of being an entrepreneur. The roles of entrepreneurs merged with designer roles might be what will mainly be seen between now and the next decade, and with this combination, it will be effortless to remain in the industry. Commercialization of design ideas is the aspect that is slowly creeping into this industry. Having entrepreneurial skills and business minds will indeed separate the serious designers from the rest.

Outsourcing might be among the changes in this industry that we are about to see in ten years. The approach is being endorsed since most firms are going with the outsourced design. This is due to such factors as limited resources or the presence of factors that hinder investment in design. This approach is more dynamic since external personnel may have fresh ideas that a designer might not have thought of. Outsourcing is gaining momentum overtime since designers with insufficient technical know-how can remain in the industry and maybe top of the industry by using external consultants.

Cultural change is one aspect that is taking shape in today's world, and culture is usually in line with the historical beliefs of a particular community. Therefore, designers might be required to change their roles just a little and try to obtain individual values from the people's day-to-day lifestyles while integrating design elements in their product design. This will link design and culture, ensuring customers are aesthetically satisfied and culturally satisfied. This change in the roles started taking shape way back during Beijing Olympic Games, where they used a torch inspired by Ancient Chinese artifacts, so in the next ten years, it might take a new, unexpected shape.

Designers might tune their world and be forced to be more original than they have ever been and still keep up with this trend and, where possible, improve on the same. Remember, designer products are increasingly becoming easily accessible to a more broad audience, so to stand out copying the competitors might not be a good idea. Digital platforms like Pinterest are already established, and to stand out from the rest, you have to be a one-of-a-kind design.

A particular designer, Jay Goltz, believes that in the decade ahead, there is a high possibility of having retailers with less stores but with a high level of customer service together with fast turnaround times, making buying such an easy task. He holds that one only needs enough stores and not necessarily in every market. Designers in the future will have to consider this because it is possible to be successful with just one well-stocked store and a reasonable number of employees than being stuck in the past with many locations, which is just exhausting. This will automatically translate to few but more engaging retail commissions.

In conclusion, the design is the future that we are all anticipating for. Therefore, it has to keep up with this fast-changing world to remain relevant over time despite the unavoidable challenges that might be encountered. As much as designers are trying to maintain their roles in the 21st century, they should be knowing at the back of their minds that they cannot maintain a status quo, and these roles might change in the coming decades. In case these changes come knocking, the designers should receive them with open arms since it's all about continuous improvement.

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