

## AN INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPLORATION OF DESIGN AND MARKETING INTEGRATION

**M Roberts-Lombard** (Department of Marketing Management, University of Johannesburg)  
**R Holland** (School of Engineering and Design, Brunel University, UK)  
**B Lam** (School of Engineering and Design, Brunel University, UK)

This article examines the interconnected and uneasy relationship between design and marketing. Managing this tension is important for marketers, whose viewpoint of differentiation is a combination of design excellence and market execution. Creative designs that are innovative and clever, generate new interest in a saturated market. Products that are well designed, communicate a message of quality and value to a consumer. Leaflets, packaging, signage and logotypes provide visual cues to reinforce the values of the organisation to the customer. Promotional activities and advertising campaigns make consumers aware of new products and convey a message to the consumer about the product and/or service that is available. This article therefore explores the convergence of design and marketing. A comparative study, integration of arguments and the case study approach are followed. The convergence of cultures represents an opportunity for marketing and design to build collaborative models for the development of products, services and brands. A contextual evaluation of this research, using a grounded theory approach, reveals that there is a convergence of design and marketing thinking reflecting a growing understanding of cultural factors and is driven by economic imperatives such as increased competition, growing virtual worlds and greater consumer demands.

*Key phrases: Design, marketing, integration, convergence, synergies*

### INTRODUCTION

Marketing and design are interconnected. Innovative designs open up new markets and clever design rekindles in a mature market. Well-designed products communicate quality and value to the consumer. Logotypes, leaflets, packaging and signage provide visual cues to reinforce the values of the organisation to the customer. Advertising and promotional activity make consumers aware of new products and give a message to the consumer about the product and/or service available (Bruce & Daly 2007). Aldersley-Williams (1994) stated in Balmer and Gray (2003:974) that "designers talk strategy, but like pretty shapes and colours." He failed to acknowledge that there is a growing body of design management educators, researchers and strategists who are contributing valuable new thinking about using design as a strategic resource. Yet, six years previously Aldersley-Williams (1994) argued that it is imperative for designers, marketing and other managers to work together when creating corporate identity schemes. However, Powell (2007) argues that the problems remain current in identifying concerns by business owners and managers about "creative mavericks".

James Dyson, famous for his revolutionary design of vacuum cleaners and other innovative products was scathing about marketers, when he wrote "The modern marketing man has neither the time nor the inclination to learn about the creation and

manufacture of things he is meant to be making more attractive to the consumer. He simply applies his all purpose skills to selling more of what already exists and the world gradually bores itself to death ". Chris Holt, during an 11 -year period as Head of Design Management with British Airways, reports his experience of both frustration and cooperation working alongside marketing professionals. On the whole, it was felt that design was understood by most and teamwork and cooperation prevailed, each party bringing value to the task in hand, resulting in a better product output and a corporate identity that was supported and underpinned by all concerned. Two case studies were commissioned by British Airway's recording the chronology and processes undertaken by British Airway's own Design Management team during the creation of a worldwide integrated design-led communications campaign in 1996, and the reconfiguration of the organisation's corporate identity in 1997. In 1999 Alan Topalian published the identity case study in which he observes "*It was decided that such a project should be sanctioned and Design Management were asked to prepare the business case. Considerable time and effort was put into the preparation of this business case by Design Management in conjunction with Marketing, Finance and other departments within the group. The identity gained Board approval in August 1996*" (Holland, Holt & Ariyatum 2009).

Regarding the global communications campaign, Topalian (1996) observed "Marketing condensed information generated into digestible form; Design Management helped to analyse feedback and advised how it could be translated into effective communications, and Market Research prepared presentations for the Directors". Further evidence came to the fore of the convergence between the design and marketing professionals in a major international corporation. However, it has been Holt's experience that the general level of cooperation at British Airways is the exception rather than the rule, and there is often more tension than harmony between the two disciplines (Holland et al 2009). Designers report that they feel undervalued, but they have to earn the respect of marketers by embracing a deep understanding of business. By integrating the design and marketing strategy, all professionals can achieve a consistent product or service experience for all stakeholders.

## **CONFICTING VIEWS ON DESIGN AND MARKETING**

Designers are innovators and trendsetters who attempt to initiate change, to make a leap of imagination, and produce an idea. Design departs from the realm of pure aesthetics to create objects that serve human needs. Design reflects human needs and wants, as well as the dominant ideas and artistic perceptions of the time. The

designer must accommodate economic, aesthetic, technological, and commercial constraints and arrive at a synthesis. He is a “creator of form” who understand creation in the context of predefined imperatives established by other professionals, and places human values over technological ones (De Mozota 2003). The common perception of designers is that their approach to their subject matter differs from the rational analysis and scientific rigor of the business disciplines. Designers are perceived by other functions with intrigue and frustration. Designers view design perfection as “a spiritual quest – a goal to be achieved in stages” that lies in contrast with the output performance orientation of other functions (Beverland 2005). For the majority of designers, the concept of “rational analysis” is too deterministic. The reason being that they are strongly individualistic in their expressionism and vitality towards design (Heskett 2002).

Molotch (2003) reports that designers are suspicious of market research because “market research isolates a product from the context of its purchase or use and cannot predict how it might catch on with time and exposure. Designers think they are the ones who project forward in terms of market preferences, whereas market research documents preferences in the present”. Despite the functional role of design within the realm of marketing, Von Stamm (2003) writes of the continuing gap between marketers and designers when she writes “the lack of understanding of the differences leads many managers to view design and creativity as something close to black art, something which cannot be managed and is therefore better left alone”. Marketers simply do not trust designers with a brand. They perceive the design function to be a subsection of marketing focusing more on product development, whilst the latter is responsible for decision making and management (Holland et al 2009).

Marketing is perceived as both a way of thinking that focuses on satisfying customer needs, as well as a set of activities in which organisations apply this way of thinking in the world. Marketers think about ideas, goods and services that satisfy the organisation’s goals as well as the needs of customers (Klopper, Berndt, Chipp, Ismail, Roberts-Lombard, Subramani, Wakeham, Petzer, Hern, Saunders & Myers-Smith 2006). Marketing is furthermore perceived as a philosophy and a management orientation that emphasises customer satisfaction. It is a set of activities used to implement this philosophy. Marketing is therefore a process that anticipates and satisfies consumer needs by means of mutually beneficial exchange processes. Marketing wants to achieve this in a profitable manner through efficient managerial processes (Lamb, Hair, McDaniel, Boshoff & Terblanche 2008). Marketing is by its very nature concerned with the interaction between the organisation and the

---

marketplace, while design is an activity that translates an idea into a blueprint for something useful whether it is a car, a building, a graphic, a service or a process.

A focus group was conducted amongst 32 individuals (16 designers and 16 marketing practitioners) to determine how designers and managers interpret key words used in their contemporary professional communications. A list of twenty (20) keywords was drawn up by a group of experienced design and marketing professionals. These 'experts' were selected on the basis of their long experience of the design-marketing interface. Keywords were printed on a survey form and the multi-disciplinary design participants and marketing practitioners were invited to write one word, the first word which comes to mind, against each keyword listed. This was done spontaneously and the participants did not spend time thinking about it. Four groups of eight (8) were compiled, consisting of two groups of multi-disciplinary designers and two groups of marketing practitioners. The two groups of multi-disciplinary participants compared their results and the marketing practitioner groups followed a similar approach. Each group leader briefly presented his/her results, and the main areas of difference were identified according to each key word. The participants were then requested to summarise their findings into five broad categories according to their discipline. These categories were identified by the participants (i.e. multi-disciplinary designers and marketing practitioners) as characteristic of both designers and marketers as professionals in the market place). This is illustrated by Table 1 below.

Table 1: Key conflicts between design and marketing

CATEGORY	DESIGN	MARKETING
<i>Approach</i>	Innovative through design	Systematic
	Non-profit	Profit orientated
<i>Attitude</i>	Creative and original through design according to personal preference	Creativity and originality in marketing is driven by the needs and wants of the target market
	Not process driven (i.e. not structured or systematic)	Not process driven (i.e. not structured or systematic)
<i>Focus</i>	Trendsetters	Trend supporters
	Inter-connected with design idea	Communicate design idea through advertising
<i>Goal</i>	Satisfy own design needs	Satisfy consumer needs
<i>Inclination</i>	Non-rational thinking, emotional sculptures	Rational thinking to inform the market
	Non-strategic thinkers	Strategic planners
	Not market research focused	Strong focus on market research

Source: Researcher's own construct

From Table 1 it can be deduced that marketing requires design expertise to meet user needs and communicates brand values through a myriad of elements, namely products, packs, corporate identity, advertising and environments such as a retail outlet or a restaurant. Design, on the other hand, is a visual realisation of marketing and conveys, in particular, brand values to the consumer.

## **CONVERGENCE OF AIM BETWEEN DESIGN AND MARKETING**

Organisations must start out with the needs, the realities, the values of the customer. Consumerism requires the organisation to define its goal as the satisfaction of customer needs. It demands that the organisation base its rewards on the contribution to the customer. Despite the emphasis on marketing and the marketing approach, marketing is still rhetoric rather than reality in far too many organisations (Wind 2009). This is particularly true for high technology organisations where the design brilliance that created the new innovation in the first place, takes on a higher status in the organisation relative to the required marketing skills (Maciariello 2009). Maciariello (2009) further argues that either implicitly or explicitly, the preference for design-related knowledge and skills becomes a type of core rigidity – a barrier to the cultivation of marketing talents and expertise.

Drucker suggested that the need for market information is particularly important for knowledge-based designs, as the ones seen in most design industries, compared to other types of designs may seem paradoxical, but knowledge-based designs are more market-dependent than any other kind of design. Careful analysis of the needs, and above all, the capabilities of the intended user is essential. Therefore, for design innovative organisations, the need to be market or customer orientated is particularly important (Uslay, Morgan & Sheth 2009). Dutta, Narasimhan and Rajiv (1999) found a strong interaction between the technological and marketing capabilities of an organisation, where organisations with a strong research, development and technological base stand to gain the most from a strong marketing capability. They further argue that a strong marketing orientation is one of the most fertile sources of ideas for design innovation. Organisations in high technology markets need to excel not only at generating new design innovations that deliver value to the customer, but also at commercialising these designs. Not surprisingly, market orientation has been shown to lead greater creativity and new product performance in high technology organisations (Im & Workman 2004).

The arguments above indicate that superior technology and design alone are not sufficient enough to achieve marketplace success for high technology organisations. Conversely, a strong market orientation without commensurate development of a

strong innovative or technological capability can have a negative effect on new product and market performance. Taken together, these arguments suggest that a combination of effective marketing and superior design or technology capability is required for the highest levels of marketplace success in high technology industries (Baker & Sinkula 2005; Dutta et al 1999). In South Africa, the MTN Cellular Group has successfully integrated their design and marketing departments over the past five years to both accommodate consumer preferences to meet market demand, and to stimulate design creativity through product originality and innovation (MTN 2009).

Figure 1: The MTN logo



As part of the increased focus on improving capacity to deliver on the business strategy, MTN South Africa (see the company logo in figure 1) has been restructured into a functional organisational design. This has resulted in revised sales and service, strategy and business development, departments being implemented, and the marketing and design departments being merged to address customer preferences more successfully. An outcome of the latter was that a number of innovative and customer focused products were introduced in 2009. Below are two examples (MTN 2009):

- MCharge, MTN's virtual recharge mechanism, was revamped to increase the availability of MTN airtime. This, together with introducing R5 as MTN's lowest airtime denomination, is targeted at dormant and low-usage customers.
- Two new pricing plans, Pay-As-You-Go (PAYG) call per second and peak maximiser, were introduced and are designed around peak use and targeted at high Average Rate Per User (ARPU) prepaid customers.

Looking forward, MTN South Africa is getting momentum and is well positioned to deliver a good performance. A key focus area will be network roll-out, particularly in terms of improving quality of service, capacity and self-provisioning. Furthermore, improvements to the overall value proposition, distribution and customer service will contribute to this performance. Data 3G, in particular, is expected to show stronger growth due to more competitive pricing and increased coverage.

Designers therefore realise that they need the marketing function to enhance their level of success. Why? The reason being that marketing provides a continuous interaction with the customer, ensuring that design innovation delivers value that

customers find appealing (Beverland 2005). There is therefore only one valid definition of organisational purpose, namely to create a customer. Any organisation has two – and only two – basic functions, namely marketing and innovative design (Maciariello 2009).

## **CONVERGENCE OF EDUCATION ON DESIGN AND MARKETING**

Design is an important function for an organization, despite the reality that the integration between design and business functions such as marketing is perceived to be difficult. The reason being that the value system of designers and the output- and performance-focused outlook of business functions, especially marketing, are not aligned. Designers are true to their craft, have stylistic consistency and remain true to expressions of place. Marketers, on the other hand, perceive their function to be strategically informative with the sole purpose to satisfy consumer needs and enhance profitability for the organisation (Bruce & Daly 2007:934-950). Such a discrepancy in thinking, necessitates designers and marketers to become more educated on the importance to interact and interrelate the two functions. Why is education on the inter-connected role of design and marketing important? Why should designers know, understand and respect what marketers are doing and vice versa? The arguments below will provide light on the matter.

Marketing is so basic that it is not simply enough to have a strong sales department and to entrust marketing to it. Marketing is much broader than selling; it is not a specialised activity at all, but encompasses the entire organisation. It is the whole organisation seen from the point of view of the customer. Concern and responsibility for marketing must therefore permeate all areas of the organisation (Drucker 1964). This argument of Drucker is important when considering that the primary focus of an organisation is to satisfy the needs and wants of customers and to deliver superior value to them. Organisational goals will focus on profit maximisation through customer satisfaction via coordinated marketing and inter-functional activities such as design and innovation (McDaniel, Lamb & Hair 2008).

Marketing requires design expertise to meet customer needs and communicate brand values through a myriad of elements, namely products, packages, corporate identity, advertising and environments, such as a retail outlet or a restaurant (Bruce & Daly 2007). Riezebos (2003) argues that in a brand strategy, several instruments are used to achieve set goals. For several of these instruments, design plays a large role. Design can differentiate products (goods and services), create a unique selling position and arouse feelings of desire and interest. Whether it be technical performance, style, reliability, safety or ease of use, design can make qualities

visible. Consumers can be influenced in their decisions by design; it is therefore advisable to handle this instrument with care. Bell, Ledolter and Swersey (2006) argue that design management and marketing have many common intersections. In the marketing that was developed in the 1960s, design became ever more important. In the beginning design was understood as a marketing instrument, it further developed itself and today it can be seen on the same level as management. Today's management theories speak of an equal partnership between marketing management, product management and design management. The Edcon Group (see the company logo in figure 2) is the leading clothing, footwear and textiles (CFT) retailing group in Southern Africa, trading through a range of retail formats. The organisation has grown from opening its first store in 1929, to ten retail brands trading over 1 000 stores in South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland and Lesotho (Edcon 2009).

Figure 2: The Edcon logo



The success of the organisation is partially due to the ability, innovativeness and focus of the design and marketing team to provide consumers with products that meet their needs and wants. The marketing team in the organisation is responsible for the continuous research of consumer needs and changing demands through a systematic approach, whilst the designers are allowed to be innovative through their designs, but with the primary objective of addressing the preferences of consumers. Such new product developments are then communicated to the target market through the most appropriate communication channels. The integration of design and marketing as part of the business strategy of Edcon, has however resulted in an increase in market share to a 31% share of the formal clothing, footwear and textile market in South Africa. Designers are also influencing the marketing strategy of Edcon by emphasising a stronger focus on organic growth from the Department Store and Discount Divisions. This approach is in line with the South African government's policy of economic growth and job creation in an environmental friendly manner (Edcon 2009a & 2009b).

Marketing and design therefore connect in many different ways to produce a given result, ranging for example from working with graphic specialists to produce a new letterhead, or the development of a new brand of chocolate, to a different kind of motor vehicle. Marketing practitioners – whether they are based in a service, retail or manufacturing environment, spend a significant proportion of their time working with

design. Scientists can invent technologies, manufacturers can make products, engineers can make them function and marketers can sell them, but only designers can combine insight into all these things and turn a concept into something that is desirable, viable, commercially successful and adds value to other people's lives. For the marketing professional, design management entails managing those corporate activities that generate products and corporate communications, which aim to optimise customer satisfaction and business success (Bruce & Daly 2007). Considering this, there is a definite need for designers and marketers to become more respective towards the role played by each within the organisation. Respect that can be achieved through increased education about the function performed by both designers and marketers in their support for organisational goals.

## **CONVERGENCE OF THINKING STYLE BETWEEN DESIGN AND MARKETING**

Marketing and design have been recognised as being key contributors to new product development (NPD) and commercial success. The design and development of new products typically involve collaboration among scientists, engineers, industrial designers, market researchers & marketing managers (Langerak, Hultink, Robben 2007). The aspects of design focused on by the various functions involved in product development differ widely. For example, engineering design focuses more heavily on the function of a product and the means by which that functionality is delivered (e.g. mechanism), than does industrial design, which focuses more on user-product interfaces, ergonomics, functional enhancements and aesthetics issues. Marketers are typically concerned with identifying and understanding market opportunities, as well as with collecting information from or about customers that will help to shape a product's design. They also focus on developing a programme or strategy for ensuring a product's commercial success, and the decisions this entails frequently affect the design of a product in the form of 'constraints' (e.g. size, weight, colours, desired product positioning, price points) (Veryzer 2005).

From the above statements, it can therefore be argued that although each of these disciplines may contribute to the overall design effort, they have varying approaches and focus on different (although interrelated) product design issues. A clear indication exists that designers and marketing managers need to develop convergent thinking styles on product development and product marketing. This is supported by the argument that good design differentiates organisations and makes products "stand out from the crowd".

A convergent thinking style between designers and marketers could provide the following marketing benefits to design, namely (DTI 2005):

---

- Enhances product and service quality;
- Differentiates products and services;
- Markets products and services and enhances organisational image;
- Lowers production and/or maintenance costs; and
- Adds to the creativity, intellectual property and competence of the organisation.

The process of design encompasses a series of activities that focus on planning and decision-making to allocate form to a product, packaging, brochures or logos. However, organisations could have a different approach to how they manage the design expertise within their organisation, and harness it to realise its potential within the market place. This approach requires a strong focus on the marketing function to inform and convince potential customers to purchase the product and thereby, to increase market share over a specified period of time. There is a further indication that the future survival of an organisation in an evolving market place will depend more pertinently on the convergent thinking of designers and marketers to ensure a competitive edge through originality and marketability. (Bell et al 2006).

The originality and marketability of the MTN brand (i.e. the product and service component) is illustrated by the following example, specifically aimed at the 2010 soccer World Cup to be hosted by South Africa in June 2010. MTN South Africa strengthened its visibility in the South African cellular market by unveiling the longest Vuvuzela in Africa at a ceremony in Polokwane, Limpopo on 8 September 2009. As part of its 2010 Soccer World Cup marketing campaign, MTN invited art and design students from around South Africa to enter their “design a gantry” competition. There were two prizes on offer for gantry design in Polokwane, and another one in Nelspruit. Polokwane’s design that was selected depicts a true soccer symbol that is unique to South Africa’s culture, the vuvuzela. The 300 square metre design features the profile portrait of a football supporter with head shaved to resemble a soccer ball, enthusiastically blowing the vuvuzela to welcome the World Cup supporters and players as they enter Polokwane (MTN 2009). This design-marketing interface initiative is therefore contributing to its market attractiveness as follows (MTN 2009):

- By illustrating to the dominant black consumer base that the company is supporting the interests of its target market.
- The company has a vested interest in the promotion of South African sport.
- Sending a message of “We care for you, please continue to care for us through your support”.

## CONVERGENCE OF BEHAVIOUR BETWEEN DESIGN AND MARKETING

It has been extensively argued that marketing plays or should play a significant role in the early development of products, and that it is combined with other areas of expertise (e.g. design) to address critical user-product interaction issues. Marketing has established itself as a critical role player in the product development process, particularly in the early stages of product development (Veryzer 2005). Kotler and Armstrong (2008) states that marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and organisations obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging value with others. In a narrower business context, marketing involves building profitable, value-laden exchange relationships with customers. Therefore, marketing can be described as a process by which organisations create value for customers and build strong customer relationships in order to capture value from customers in return. Nagai (2003) argues that to retain market share, managers should arrange for all employees to continuously measure and improve customer reactions to the design of their goods and services. Therefore, if design is to be managed seriously – with all the seriousness attached to operations or finance, then we cannot afford to rehearse any further the injunctions against “marketing myopia” that Theodore Levitt made more than 20 years ago in 1965. We need to move on from the past of marketing theory to a perspective on design futures.

Olson (1981) states that a design strategy is the effective allocation and coordination of design resources and activities to accomplish the objectives of an organisation of creating its appropriate public and internal identities, its product offerings and its environments. Therefore, to understand the marketplace and deliver superior customer value, require knowledge of the (cognitive) structure and the processes involved in consumer perception and the interpretation of design. This will ensure a further understanding of product design, as well as the establishment of its relationship to other areas of marketing and consumer research (Veryzer 1999).

It can therefore be argued that both designers and marketers need to converge their aim of focus to obtain answers to the following questions. Answers to these questions can not only enhance the ability of the designer to develop products that will deliver increased consumer value and satisfaction, but will also empower marketers to communicate customer value more successfully to their target market. The questions are (Webster 2009):

- What is our business?
- Who is the customer?
- What is the value to the customer?

- What will our business be?
- What should it be?

Both designers and businessmen will therefore have to learn to practice marketing as an innovative force in itself. They have to learn that the truly “new” does not, as a rule, satisfy demands that already exist. It creates new expectations, sets new standards, markets possible new satisfactions. Innovative design and marketing therefore create markets. New product designs always needs new markets which were not even conceivable until the new technology created new designs which stimulated new consumer demands (Maciariello 2009). Trueman and Jobber (1998) argue that design is more than a functional activity and is connected to marketing in three different ways, namely:

- At the product level, good design leads to the production of quality goods and services that)can improve image and increase the consumer's perceived value of new products, so that they command a higher retail price in the marketplace.
- At the process level, designers can interpret, integrate and communicate new ideas... (so) likely to speed up and increase efficiency..... and reduce time to market.
- At strategic level in terms of brand building..... and the development of a corporate design culture.

Bruce and Daly (2007) also state that designers are not trained to be strategic thinkers, but are a creative resource that can make a strategic contribution in terms of developing new market opportunities and revitalising new markets. In addition, the Design Council of Britain (2006) understands the role of design in business as follows:

“Scientists can invent technologies, manufacturers can make products, engineers can make them function and marketers can sell them, but only designers can combine insight into all these things and turn a concept into something that is desirable, viable, commercially successful and adds value to other people's lives”.

It is against the background provided above, that Table 2 illustrates the potential areas for marketing and design to connect to produce a given result.

Table 2: Potential area for the convergence of designer and marketing aims

DESIGN	MARKETING
Innovative design developments	Innovative marketing of designs
Setting of trends	Marketing of such trends to stimulate demand
Profit generation through innovative designs	Profit maximization through the marketing of new, fresh and innovative designs that meet target market needs
Design creativity should be aligned with target market preferences	The marketing of creative designs to stimulate target market preferences
Interact with marketing professionals on target market preferences for new design ideas (e.g. via consumer research)	Communicate new design ideas through advertising to the target market
Align own design needs with target market preferences to enhance consumer value and satisfaction	Satisfy consumer needs through continued provision of consumer value. This can be achieved through a stronger collaboration with designers to inform them of target market preferences, whilst respecting the individuality of designer designs
Increase rational thinking aligned with the inputs of marketing professionals enhance consumer value in a competitive market environment to ensure continued business growth and survival	Rational thinking to inform the market about new designs to stimulate demand and enhance market share
A market research focus could enhance business through the delivery of increases consumer satisfaction and value. This can be achieved through a stronger alignment with marketing professionals	Strong focus on market research. Such research should be communicated back to designers to ensure the accommodation of consumer preferences and enhancing consumer value

Source: Researcher's own construct

## CONVERGENCE OF CULTURE

The term marketing means many things to many people. Some people think it means the same as personal selling, while others think it is the same as personal selling and advertising. Marketing has two facets. Firstly, it is a philosophy, an attitude, a perspective, or a management orientation that emphasises customer satisfaction. Secondly, marketing is a set of activities used to implement this philosophy. Today, marketing must be understood not in the old sense of making a sale – “telling and selling” – but in the new sense of satisfying customer needs. If the marketer does a good job of understanding consumer needs, develops products that provide superior value, and prices, distributes and promotes them effectively, these products will sell very easily (Strydom, Jooste & Cant 2000). Noble and Kumar (2008) state that historically, product design has most often been considered a process for creating functional differentiation through added features, superior performance, amongst others. However, with the advent of more design-orientated organisations, such as

Apple and Dell computers, design is increasingly being seen as an important strategic tool in creating preference and deeper emotional value for the consumer.

Both the marketer and the designer want to communicate the functional and emotional benefits of the product to the consumer. In the marketplace, competition necessitates the designer and marketer to collaborate more definitely in the product development process to ensure the satisfaction of customer needs. This can be achieved more successfully through consumer interaction via market research to determine the consumer's evolving needs and wants (Carson, Devinney, Dowling & John 1999). Bruce and Daly (2007) summarise the convergence of culture between designers and marketers as follows:

"The integration between marketing, production and design is important to enable products to be configured that correspond with customer needs and which can be produced economically, so the products offer value for money; it also ensures that information about customer needs and efficient production can be fed into the design process at an early stage, saving time and avoiding more costly modifications later. Observation of product in use, understanding of the visual cues and tactility of the product and issues with the product are helpful. Designers' grasp of such approaches could be utilised by marketing to enhance configuration and to facilitate early adoption of the product or service".

## POTENTIAL SYNERGIES

Kotler and Rath (1984) argue that "design is a strategic tool" enabling marketers to match customer requirements to a product's performance, "fitness for purpose", quality, durability, appearance and price. Thus, Archer and D'Ambrosio (1976) has described designing as the "trick of discovering which set of attributes prospective purchasers would value and of discovering a product configuration embodying them at the right price". For each market segment the mix of attributes and the price the customer is prepared to pay will differ. The argument of Kotler and Rath is that consumers' perceptions of the product are shaped by its configuration and ability to convey "value for money" in comparison with alternatives. Putting effort into design is one way in which organisations can add value to their products and hence command higher prices. However, in mature industries in which many products are competing for the same market, value for money alone is not enough. Where many products represent value for money, design is also regarded by marketers as an ingredient needed to make their organisations products distinctive, or to "differentiate" them from the competition (Walsh, Roy, Bruce & Potter 1992).

An evolutionary market environment, growth in competition as well as globalisation necessitate organisations to become more customer focused in their product and brand image designs. A stronger interaction between designers and marketers would require designers to interact with marketing professionals on a regular basis to establish the preferences of the target market for which they design, or to whom they want to communicate the organisational brand. Marketers, on the other hand, will have the responsibility to communicate new designs or the organisational brand image to the target market to stimulate awareness, increase demand and enhance market share. The ultimate goal, being increased profitability and design preference amongst consumers, can then be achieved.

### **OPPORTUNITY FOR A NEW PARADIGM BASED ON CONVERGENCE OF DESIGN AND MARKETING THINKING**

The convergence of cultures represents an opportunity for marketing and design to build collaborative models for the development of products, services and brands. A contextual evaluation of this research, using a grounded theory approach, reveals that there is a convergence of design and marketing thinking reflecting a growing understanding of cultural factors and driven by economic imperatives such as increased competition, growing virtual worlds and greater consumer demands. It thus offers the promise of “two tribes at peace” and the convergence may be expressed as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Adaptation of Walker’s “Two tribes at War” 1990

Characteristics	Managers	Designers	Converging 2009
Aim	Long term	Short term	Next generation of products and service-intense competition – life cycles
	Profits/returns	Product/service quality	Profitable products and services with design as added value
	Survival	Reform	Managed evolution- incremental innovation
	Growth	Prestige	Growth through impressive innovation - linked to organisational leadership
	Organisational durability	Career building	Encouraging creativity at all levels – embracing creativity as core business need
Form	People	Things	Products and services that satisfy people- trend to user-centred approach
	Systems	Environments	Creativity founded on systems thinking
Education	Accountancy	Crafts	Skills for added value- respect for other professionals
	Engineering	Art	Digital convergence- hybrid professionals
	Verbal	Visual	Powerfully communicated brands integrating narrative and environment

Characteristics	Managers	Designers	Converging 2009
	Numerical	Geometric	Exploratory approach – addressing complexity issues
Thinking styles	Serialist	Holistic	Growing holistic approaches to support strategic thinking
	Linear	Lateral	Lateral thinking encouraged – acceptable for all to be creative
	Analysis	Synthesis	Combined for strength in multi-disciplinary environments
	Problem-oriented	Solution-led	Creative solution sought for well defined problems – better briefs
Behaviour	Pessimistic	Optimistic	Realism about context- less "idealism"
	Adaptive	Innovative	Models of creativity and risk emerging
Culture	Conformity	Diversity	Needs leadership to find balance and creative team management models
	Cautious	Experimental	Evidence that innovation rewards –at the heart of business strategy

Source: Adapted from Walker (1990) and convergence added

Both marketers and designers are converging in their agreement on the value of systems and holistic thinking, and investing much intellectual effort into defining problems and generating creative alternatives. Strategic designers are no longer strange lonely artists detached from the world around them, but 'people' confident in their roles in multi-disciplinary teams. An example of research demonstrating such benefits may be found in Ivins and Holland (1999). Three views of the current relations between marketing and design are offered by Figure 3.

Figure 3: Evolution of Design and Marketing Relationship



Source: Adapted from Ivins and Holland (1999)

### Possibility of integration

The convergence between marketing and design is revealed as a natural phenomenon by Figure 3[3], but important questions arise about how to proceed. Questions about issues such as cultures and semantics need attention, and in

building the models further questions arise about added value to corporate brands, storytelling, narrative and leadership. The complex challenges of designing a corporate identity and building a corporate brand through designing a great customer experience need high quality multi-faceted thinking.

## CONCLUSIONS

The article makes a case for the integration and successful development of marketing and design, and identifies challenging issues to achieve a greater understanding and ultimate convergence of the marketing and design disciplines. It is important to begin with a thorough investigation of practices and educational provision. This is essential in relation to education, since a relatively small number of progressive design schools are ready to engage in developing a new paradigm. An agenda of issues to be addressed to further explore the potential benefits of cooperation needs to be drawn up and the authors offer the following framework for future study:

- Investigation into the characteristics and cultures of design and marketing environments;
- Evaluation of the processes and models used by marketing and design for strategic branding;
- A study of the semantics of the two disciplines: key terminology used by both disciplines;
- Evaluation of cross-disciplinary teamwork to develop new models to support creative teams; and
- Development of more multi-disciplinary courses – particularly at postgraduate level- which integrate design and marketing [and other functional areas] thinking.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

ALDERSLEY-WILLIAMS H. 1994. *Corporate Identity*. London: Lund Humphries.

ARCHER S.H. & D'AMBROSIO C.A. 1976. *The theory of business finance: a book of readings*. New York: Macmillan.

BAKER W.E. & SINKULA J.M. 2005. Market orientation and the new product paradox. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 22(6):464-482.

BALMER J. & GRAY E. 2003. Corporate Brands: what are they? What of them? *European Journal of Marketing*, 37(7/8):972-997.

BELL G.H., LEDOLTER J. & SWERSEY A.J. 2006. Experimental design on the front lines of marketing: Testing new ideas to increase direct mail sales. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 23:309-319.

**BEVERLAND M.B.** 2005. Managing the Design Innovation – Brand Marketing Interface: Resolving the Tension between Artistic Creation and Commercial Imperatives. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 2:193-207.

**BRUCE M. & DALY L.** 2007. Design and marketing connections: creating added value. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 23(9-10):929-953.

**CARSON S.J., DEVINNEY T.M., DOWLING G.R. & JOHN G.** 1999. Understanding Institutional Designs Within Marketing Value Systems. *Journal of Marketing*, 63:115-130.

**DE MOZOTA B.B.** 2003. *Design Management – Using design to build brand value and corporate innovation*. Allworth Press. New York.

**DESIGN COUNCIL UK.** 2006. Lessons from America. *Design Council*. Available from: <http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/en/Design-Council/Files/System-Files/Download>. Accessed: March 2009

**DRUCKER P.F.** 1964. *Managing for results*. New York: Harper & Row.

**DTI.** 2005. *Creativity, design and business performance*. DTI Economics Paper No 15, London: DTI.

**DUTTA S., NARASIMHAN O. & RAJIV S.** 1999. Success in high technology markets: Is marketing capability critical? *Marketing Science*, 18(4):547-568.

**EDCON.** 2009a. *Company Profile*. Available from: HYPERLINK "<http://www.edcon.co.za/Edcon/About+Edcon/Company+profile.htm>". Accessed: July 2009.

**EDCON.** 2009b. *Strategy*. Available from: HYPERLINK "<http://www.edcon.co.za/Edcon/About+Edcon/Strategy.htm>". Accessed: July 2009.

**HESKETT J.** 2002. *Toothpicks & Logos: Design in Everyday Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

**HOLLAND R., HOLT C. & ARIYATUM B.** 2009. *Corporate Identity and Corporate Branding*: A case for Integrating Design. (Paper read at the second annual Congress of the Faculty of Management at the University of Johannesburg held in Johannesburg on 11-13 March 2009. Pretoria: 136-148.).

**IM S. & WORKMAN JR J.P.** 2004. Market orientation, creativity, and new product performance in high technology firms. *Journal of Marketing*, 68(2):114-132.

**IVINS J. & HOLLAND R.** 1999. Reflections on the operation of large multi-disciplinary projects in engineering, design and design management. *IEEE Journal*, 42(4):371.

**KLOPPER H.B., BERNDT A., CHIPP K., ISMAIL Z., ROBERTS-LOMBARD M., SUBRAMANI D., WAKEHAM M., PETZER D., HERN L., SAUNDERS S. & MYERS-SMITH P.** 2006. *Marketing – Fresh Perspectives*. Pearson Publishing: Cape Town.

**KOTLER P. & ARMSTRONG G.** 2008. *Principles of Marketing*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

**KOTLER P. & RATH A.** 1984. Design: a powerful but neglected strategic tool. *Journal of Business Strategy*, Emerald Group Publishing, Bingley.

**LAMB C.W., HAIR J.F., MCDANIEL C., BOSHOFF C. & TERBLANCHE N.S.** 2008. *Marketing*. Oxford University Press: Cape Town.

**LAMB C.W., HAIR J.F., MCDANIEL C., BOSHOFF C. & TERBLANCHE N.S.** 2008. *Marketing*. Oxford University Press: Cape Town.

**LANGERAK F., HULTINK E.J. & ROBBEN H.S.J.** 2007. The mediating role of new product development in the link between market orientation and organisational performance. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 15:281-305.

**MACIARIELLO J.** 2009. Marketing and innovation in the Drucker Management System. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 37(1):35-43.

**MCDANIEL C., LAMB C.W. & HAIR JR J.F.** 2008. *Introduction to Marketing*. Thomson-South Western: Mason.

**MOLOTCH H.** 2003. *Where Stuff Comes From*. New York: Routledge.

**MTN.** 2009. *MTN South Africa*. Available from:  
HYPERLINK "<http://www.mtn.co.za/AboutMTN/Pages/MTNSA.aspx>". Accessed: June 2009.

**NAGAI K.** 2003. *Brand Strategy and Design*. Tokyo: Pie Books.

**NOBLE C.H. & KUMAR M.** 2008. Using product design strategically to create deeper consumer connections. *Business Horizons*, 51:441-450.

**OLSON J.** 1981. What is an esthetic response? In E. C. Hirschman & M.B. Holbrook (Eds.), *Symbolic consumer behavior*:71-74. Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Consumer Research.

**POWELL S.** 2007. Organisational Marketing, identity and the creative brand. *Journal of Brand Management*, 15(1):41-56.

**RIEZEBOOS R.** 2003. *Brand Management*. Prentice-Hall: Harlow.

**STRYDOM J., JOOSTE C. & CANT M.** 2000. *Marketing Management*. Juta & Co Limited: Kenwyn.

**TOPALIAN A.** 1996. *The People Concept – taking the Masterbrand of British Airways below-the- line*. London: Alto Design Management. 1996.

**TRUEMAN M. & JOBBER D.** 1998. Competing through design. *Long Range Planning Journal*, 31(4):595-605.

**USLAY C. MORGAN R.E & SHETH J.N.** 2009. Peter Drucker on marketing: an exploration of five tenets. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 37(1):47-60.

**VERYZER, R.Q.** 1999. A "Nonconscious Processing Explanation of Consumer Response to Product Design". *Psychology & Marketing*. Vol. 16, No. 6:497-522.

**VERYZER R.W.** 2005. The Roles of Marketing and Industrial Design in Discontinuous New Product Development. *The Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 22:22-41.

**VON STAMM B.** 2003. *Managing Innovation, Design & Creativity*. Chichester: Wiley. 2003.

**WALKER D.** 1990. Two tribes at war? In Oakley M (ed.) *Design Management: A Handbook of Issues and Methods*. Oxford: Blackwell.

**WALSH V., ROY R., BRUCE M. & POTTER S.** 1992. *Winning by design*. Blackwell Publishers: Cambridge.

**WEBSTER JR F.E.** 2009. Marketing IS Management: The wisdom of Peter Drucker. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 37(1):20-27.

**WIND J.Y.** 2009. Rethinking marketing: Peter Drucker's challenge. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 37(1):28-34.