

THE CREATIVE SPARK

by Tim Scott Kump, *BulletBrand.com*

Design Goes Mainstream.

In recent years “design” has exploded into mainstream consciousness. No longer is Ferrari the ONLY car company known for its sleek, stylish automotive designs. Now, every car maker in the world offers stylish models that appeal to every demographic and price range. The Hyundai Tiburon is so well-designed it has been compared to the Ferrari 456. That’s great automotive design for under \$20,000! Honda recognized that design and styling are becoming more important to consumers and redesigned the Accord to improve their once-staid image and appeal to sophisticated buyers. Target hired renowned architect/industrial designer Michael Graves to create high style products so its customers could enjoy great design at affordable prices. Kohl’s has introduced an exclusive line of home furnishings and apparel from designer Vera Wang. Not to be left behind in the designer race, Penney’s will be representing an exclusive line of clothing and home accessories from Polo Ralph Lauren. By aligning themselves with famous designers, these stores hope to up their respective images through the cachet that these arbiters of good taste bring.

While Target was a leader in introducing great product design to the mass market, interior design and fashion design have also become more popular through TV exposure. Shows like *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, and *What Not to Wear* have helped teach viewers how to think about design as it relates to their everyday life. These shows all teach design principles by showing examples and the thought process behind creating great design. The principles of good design apply to all design. Color, scale, balance, texture, rhythm and shape are just some of the principles which guide graphic design, interior design, automotive design, fashion design and every other design discipline. All of this exposure to design has created consumers who have a much more sophisticated eye for design than ever before.

These examples illustrate how design plays an emotional role in helping consumers identify with products and companies. Design has become a recognizable and valuable business resource, not merely a process. Design is a proprietary corporate and cultural asset that should be actively planned and managed to maximize a company’s image, communications and sales. Because of information overload in society today, design is a crucial tool that helps business strategize the focus of the communications needed, articulate the message, and then deliver that message through creative means and media.

Unleash the power of design for your personal expression and to improve your business image. Hire design professionals who can effectively create a branding/marketing program for your company that will differentiate it from your competition. For homeowners, work with interior designers who can help you create a stylish, comfortable living space that fits your unique personality. Remember, great design costs just as much to produce as bad design. *In the long run, great design is always worth the investment!*

Benefits of Good Design:

- Better aesthetics
- Improved functionality
- Builds image
- Helps clearly communicate
- Emotionally appealing