

PAPER • OPEN ACCESS

## The impact of design competition on design education

To cite this article: Shao-Feng Wang 2019 *IOP Conf. Ser.: Mater. Sci. Eng.* **573** 012060

View the [article online](#) for updates and enhancements.

# The impact of design competition on design education

**Shao-Feng Wang**

Department of Product Design, XiaMen Academy of Arts and Design, FuZhou University, XiaMen, FuJian Province, 361024, China

262273724@qq.com

**Abstract.** Traditional design education needs to keep pace with the times when it comes to changing the ever-changing job market. It is the key to avoiding the pains and mistakes of transformation in the face of various opportunities and temptations. Taking the design competition as an example, this paper analyzes the game relationship between design education and design competition from the perspective of historical background and development trend of the design competition. Combine the case study method with the case method to summarize, analyze and discuss different design competitions. It is finally concluded how design education should objectively treat design competitions. Let design competitions better serve the strategy of design education.

## 1. Introduction

On April 7, 2018, the WeChat public account of the "Humanities Tsinghua Forum" published an article entitled "The Father of Chinese Industrial Design: Liu Guanzhong: The Red Dot Award is a commercial organization to deceive Chinese people" by Li Danyu [1]. Liu Guanzhong, a professor of industrial design at Tsinghua University, said in an interview in this article: "The progress in Chinese design does not require the use of red dot awards to recognize, even if you do not participate in the red dot award, Chinese design is still improving. Subsequently, the Red Dot Design Awards Operating Agency (Red Dot Limited) on April 12, 2018, Björn Steinhoff, Director of Communication and Public Relations, commissioned the Xiamen International Design Week to issue a statement containing the following three points: (1) The Red Dot Award has a long history. Over the years, it has developed itself by maintaining the professionalism and the objectivity of the judging; (2) The judging criteria are strict, and the award is difficult. In 2018, 6,300 works participated in the judging, and one of the "Red Dot Star Award" was awarded a prize rate of 0.015%; 45 of the "Red Dot Honorable Nomination Award" was awarded a winning rate of 0.71%; There are 69 works of the Best Design Award, and the winning percentage is 1.1%. The number of works that won the Red Dot Award is 1684, and the winning rate is 26.73%. A total of 1,798 works received different levels of awards, and the overall entrant's work was winning percentage was 28.54%. (3) Participants are voluntary, our entry fees and benefits are open and transparent, and our competition can promote their works well.

After understanding the views of both parties, it is not difficult to conclude that the contradiction between the two sides is on the surface of the red dot award high entry fee and higher winning rate, and the real contradiction lies in the lack of a credible design competition in the country leading to design. The evaluation criteria are controlled by foreign awards. The invisible, design competition has a profound impact on traditional design education. As an education practitioner, on the one hand, we should make good use of the incentives of the design competition to improve students' enthusiasm; on the other hand, we must also prevent "teaching on behalf of the train." It is misleading of short-term



utilitarianism. This paper discusses the game relationship between design competition and design education from the perspective of design education. We are correcting the theory of competition and anti-competition, returning to the inner education-based thinking, establishing students' correct design values, and rationally screening and using external aids to promote the positive development of design education.

## 2. The development background of the design competition

The following is a three-part discussion of the ins and outs of the design competition: (1) the background and definition of the birth of the design competition; (2) the status quo and growth of the design competition; and (3) the impact of the design competition on design education.

### 2.1 The background and definition of the birth of the design competition

#### 1. The origin of the birth of the design competition

The design is commercial art. The design industry is a production collaboration method born after the industrial revolution. It not only drives the prosperity of the manufacturing industry but also promotes the growth of the surrounding affiliated sectors. The design competition is to grow in this environment. [2]

The early design competition was a public welfare act supported by the design industry. The main body of the undertaking was a government organization or an industry association. The first IF Design Award was held in 1953 at the iF Industrie Forum Design. In 1955, the German Design Association Design Zentrum Nordrhein Westfalen founded the Red dot design award; In 1957, the Japan Industrial Design Promotion Organization (JIDPO) founded the Good Design Award in Japan; in 1958, the Australian Industrial Design Association hosted the GOOD DESIGN AWARDS. 1968. BraunPrize, the German company, founded BraunPrize, Germany's first international design competition. In 1980, BusinessWeek and IDA (Industrial Designers Society of America) IDA (International Design Excellence Awards); in 1985, the Korean government organized the Korea Good Design Award (Good Design Products Selection) is designed to drive the development of the design industry to the high end of manufacturing. The high design competition witnessed the growth of the design industry and continues to be held to this day. Since then, various design competitions have appeared in multiple places at home and abroad, presenting a hot market(See Table 1).

Table 1: The establishment time of major industrial design awards

|                          | IF                              | Red dot                           | Good Design Award | Australian Design Award                          | BraunPrize            | IDEA                                  |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Established Organization | 1953<br>IF Forum Design Company | 1955<br>German Design Association | 1968<br>JIDPO     | 1958<br>Australian Industrial Design Association | 1968<br>Braun Company | 1980<br>IDSA&American Business Weekly |
| Commercial               | Yes                             | Yes                               | No                | No   | No                    | Yes                                   |

The following design competition has both profitability and public welfare purposes. The government-sponsored design competition maintains the real significance of general welfare. Part of the design competition hosted by the company is the campaign for internal design elements, and the other part is the company that operates the award independently.

#### (1) Definition and classification of the design competition

The purpose of the design competition is to award awards in an open and fair manner. According to the Oxford Advanced English-Chinese Dictionary (98 editions, 84 pages), the award is defined as follows: "A judicial decision, esp. after arbitration," simultaneously edited by Gemser and Wijnberg. The book Economic Concept of Industrial Design Awards: A Conceptual Framework states that a prize consists of three elements: (1) the organizer of the competition: responsible for formulating the rules of the competition and providing substantial encouragement, for example, Money or honor. (2) The

formulation and reviewers of the competition evaluation criteria: they are responsible for the regular screening of outstanding works according to the competition rules. (3) Participation in the design competition: the beneficiaries of the award [3] .

## *2.2 Development Status and Growth Mode of Design Competition*

### **1. The status quo of the design competition**

Due to the development of the economy and the popularization of design education, the people have a higher pursuit of quality of life, which indirectly promotes the growth of design competition. Regardless of the quantity and quality of the parametric works, or the improvement of the design business return, the facts have been proved, that is, the design competition is worthy of attention and input. [4]

Traditional design competitions have also evolved in the course of development for their respective purposes. The first category is a non-profit competition aimed at promoting the development of the design industry. They maintain their authority and brand power and are still organized by the government or industry associations. For example, "Good Design Award" and IDEA (International Design Excellence Awards). The other category is to achieve the profitability of the design brand commercialization. The design competition organizer has been transformed from an association structure to a corporate organization.

Whether it is a commercial or public welfare design competition, it is favorable for the progress of the business society and the growth of the human population. Therefore, the prosperity of the design competition is any way for the government to design the industry, the enterprise for the design return, the university for the design. Education has room for growth. This is a weather vane and deserves our attention and support.

### **3. The growth mode of the design competition**

The design competition dominated by profit-oriented enterprises will be more adaptable and adaptable. The government-led design competition will lag in response to market development. The reason is mainly due to the lack of motivation for growth. The profitable race is always trying to promote it actively, while the non-profit design competition is relatively passive. At the same time, as a means of commercial promotion, it has a tremendous guiding effect on the consumer's purchasing ideology. [5]

Government personnel and industry associations mainly organize the non-profit design competition. Their vision is relatively macroscopic, and they plan investment and material from a strategic perspective. Once launched, it will generate greater design power for civil society organizations. For example, the 2018 Fujian Province Straits Cup Industrial Design (Jinjiang) Competition rewards the award-winning works as high as 2.05 million yuan, of which the most outstanding award is 300,000 yuan. The final entry reached 12,351, and this competition was only the fifth, showing that the government-driven design competition is growing very fast.

The growth of the for-profit design competition is more free and diversified, and their benefits are as follows:

(1) Phased registration fee, breaking the high registration fee of the one-time buyout in the past, starting from the lower initial review fee to attract more contestants, and then reviewing fees, final evaluation fees, award fees and receiving payments. The variety of names also made the organizers profitable.

(2) Cooperate with the government or enterprises to outsource some of the awards and collect fees. For example, the IF Talent award for students and designers who graduated within two years from the previous year is changed from one year to one year. Twice. Each time there are about four design propositions, two of which are outsourced to companies or associations. The companies involved in the proposal include Samsung, Hansgrohe, and Haier.

(3) Join-style roving exhibition. In the presentation of award-winning works, on the one hand, you can get support from the local government. On the other hand, you can invite local enterprises to join the exhibition and charge fees. This is the value of the brand.

(4) Customize awards for specific countries or regions. For example, from 2003 to 2001, the IF Design Awards Organizing Committee customized the "IF China Design Award" for China<sup>1</sup>. Similarly, the German Red Dot Awards Agency is also optimistic about the booming Chinese market. In 2015, China Good Design (CGD) was established in China, which is also a new international design award for China. Of course, these are all commercial activities, which promote the development of the local design industry on the one hand and bring benefits to the organization on the other side.

#### **4. The impact of design competition on design education**

##### *4.1 The design competition is in the ascendant*

The emergence of the design competition is not only the meaning of the design of the popular science popularization but also the commercial return for the participating enterprises, which inevitably affects the design education of colleges and universities. [3] In 2010, Taiwanese players won one-tenth of the total number of awards in the IF Concept Design Award (later changed to the IF rookie award), ranking first in Asia. Even the main courses and evaluation standards of some universities. The main topic of this paper is to observe how design competition affects or changes the traditional teaching methods and rules from the perspective of the development of design education in colleges and universities. And hope to find the law from it, and take its essence to its trash, let the design competition actively promote the healthy development of design education. [6]

Analysis of the reasons for the design competition: [7]

(1) The design standard is vague. The ambiguity of the quality standard of design art education leads the society to pay more attention to explicit educational achievements, such as techniques and advertising, thus neglecting the core concept of design education, that is, the training of design thinking and the cultivation of design taste. [8]

(2) Pressure on college admissions promotion. There are too many colleges and universities to start designing, which leads to the survival of the students. Many colleges and universities use awards to promote their teaching achievements.

(3) Student employment advantage. There are some competitive competitions in the student's portfolio that have a competitive advantage. [9]

(4) Government promotion benefits. The local government's investment in manufacturing transformation and the concept of welcoming service upgrades have also actively promoted the development of peripheral design industries.

(5) There are three advantages to holding a design competition: (1) promoting corporate brand and image; (2) facilitating the search for talents and cultivating talents; and (3) harvesting the most programs at the lowest cost [10].

##### *4.2 The negative impact of the design competition*

Design competitions are often not necessarily correct because they are limited by the needs of the market and the level of evaluation. Such guidance will affect social awareness and student creation methods. As Norman said: "Design competition is not only a dream machine but also a place for the birth and continuation of lies." [11]

(1) Many colleges and universities use the game to teach. This kind of destructive competition education has delayed students' basic theory and cultivated correct design values. [12]

(2) The transfer of design education standards. Because the level of the design competition is mixed, it is effortless for junior students to lose their design and focus on the design, and lack of independent judgment.

(3) The lack of protection of intellectual property. A large number of creative works are submitted without protection, allowing companies to get a lot of solutions at polar prices. More seriously, the indifference to intellectual property rights will affect the sustainable long-term development of the design industry. [13]

### 4.3 *The positive impact of the design competition*

The impact of the design competition on the rise:

(1) The transfer of the key points of the college education. Enrich the classroom teaching methods and materials, so that colleges and universities are closer to the market. At the same time, it also has a greater impact on the student's learning orientation. [14]

(2) Changes in student learning orientation. Let design students recognize the commercial and intellectual value of design earlier. Focusing on method guidance, such as the German Red Dot Award Chairman Peter Zec in an interview with Sanlian Life Weekly (65, pp. 63-165) in 2013, "We want to lead the way in product quality and want to share experiences with people. We have been giving back. For example, we have a Red Dot Research Center, research work. We will share these findings with the entire industry, and we are not focusing on one task. This is not the same as other design awards.

(3) Changes in corporate design awareness. Let the value of design become a selling point, while at the same time revitalizing the traditional handicraft market, on the other hand, let more designers invest in the cause of co-creation.

(4) Changes in government investment forecasts. Let the government realize the value of emerging industries and creation.

## 5. Corresponding strategies for design education

The design competition is more focused on economic benefits, and design education is more focused on social benefits. We cannot let design education standards adhere to design contest because of short-term profits.

(1) Return to the education standard, emphasize solid theoretical knowledge, establish correct design values, and cultivate students' independent thinking ability and judgment ability;

(2) Careful screening and custom entry. Let the design competition serve design education, not design education and design competition. For students of different grades, they should select events that suit their abilities. Conduct customized training.

(3) Adhere to the academic design standards. Don't prematurely give classroom evaluation criteria to business conduct. The design education focuses on strategic education, and the design competition focuses on tactical applications. Let students apply what they have learned and ultimately establish the right design values.

In short, the role of design competition can make design education more abundant, and the platform of design education can make the design competition develop faster.

## Acknowledgement

Fund Project: "Inheritance and Development of Intangible Cultural Heritage under the Rural Revitalization Strategy" funded by the Xiamen Intellectual Property Office and the Fujian Provincial Socialist Theory Research Center (FJ2018B023); Fujian Provincial Department of Education funded "Internet +" background of Fujian Province "Industrial Design Intellectual Property Protection" platform mechanism research (JAS170064)

## References

- [1] Sohu News, Red Dot Award is used by commercial organizations to lie to Chinese people. 2018.
- [2] Wu Pinjie, International Design Competition and the Value of Enterprise Entrepreneurs: A Study of Taiwan's Micro Design Brands, In Art. 2017, Successful University. p. 1-136.
- [3] Huang Suzhen, Research on the Benefits of Product Design Awards - Take Taiwan Hand Tools Enterprise as an example, in the Master of Business Administration. 2011, Jinan University. p. 1-41.
- [4] Nasar, J.L., Design by competition: Making design competition work. 1999: Cambridge University Press.
- [5] Li Zhaoxiang, The Impact of Design Awards on Consumers' Willingness to Buy - Take the iF Design Award as an example, in Art. 2011, Taipei University of Technology. p. 1-94.

- [6] Shi Hong, Yang Xiangdong, and Liu Fangwei, Reflections on the current domestic industrial design competition. 2009. 30(1): p. 216-218.
- [7] Huang Li, "Packaging, and Design. Miscellaneous. J. Packaging and Design, Ten Years of Growth, Testimonials – Seeing the 10th Reluctant Design Award from the Design Competition. 2009 (2009 06): p. 74 -75.
- [8] Lin Peiyu and Yang Qingtian, Image Analysis of Graphic Design Works of Taiwan Student Art Competition - Taking the winning works of the 90-97 academic year as an example. 2009(3): p. 43-59.
- [9] Zhou Wanyi, The Impact of Product Layout Design on Attention—Taking Design Competition as an Example, In Art. 2011, Taipei University of Technology. p. 1-160.
- [10] Zhang Juan, Brand Effect of Fashion Design Competition. 2010. 24(4): p. 84-85.
- [11] Zhang Ying, et al., on the shortcomings and improvements of the design competition. 2012 (2012 05): p. 86-87.
- [12] Zhong Yiting, Research on the Impact of Design Competition on Student Learning, in the Department of Industrial Design. 2011, Successful University. p. 1-136.
- [13] Zhao Yongzhi and Tongji University School of Design and Art, Analysis of the Motivation of Enterprises to Establish Industrial Design Competition. 2012 (2012 02): p. 192-193.
- [14] Xie Peixin, exploring design traits and thinking patterns with G-Mark's award-winning design, in Art. 2013, Chung Yuan University. p. 1-204.g Yuan University. p. 1-204.