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Dial Soap

Homework #7

To me, good design can mean multiple things. In terms of medical design, I look at products in terms of appearance and ease of use in both the hardware and the software aspects, since I am a computer scientist. Nowadays, good software design is becoming more and more important as all of our products start depending on technology more. Good hardware design can either be something very appealing to the eye, or something that is hard to notice at all. For things like blood sugar monitors for diabetics, having a monitor that isn't very noticeable can be a good thing for some people. Others would want to have something that also looks nice. Finding the balance between these two is what constitutes a "good design". In terms of good software design, having a user interface that is easy to use on a device with a screen is very important. As we age, not only do more health problems generally arise, but our ability to cope with different user interfaces also decreases as well. Having a user interface that is intuitive to use and easy to understand is key in making a good biomedical device. One important element to consider is to have the user interface not go overboard with options. If it is a blood sugar monitor, have it just display the blood sugar level, don't have it do extra things like give you a 5 day weather forecast or something like that. A simple interface is a good interface.

As was referenced briefly above, BMED products are different from most consumer products in that a good design does not necessarily mean attention grabbing. A medical device that is not very noticeable might be what some people are looking for in a medical device. Because of this, it is hard for BMED companies to follow the same design process as other companies when designing new products. BMED companies also have to reallocate their spending in terms of design. For a medical device, less money should be spent on the design and more money should be spent on the actual functionality of the device when compared to normal products. Having a fully functional medical device is much more important than having one that just looks good.

BMED companies are outsourcing some of their product design because that way the people with the most skills in a certain area are working on that part of the product. A company that focuses on product design will be able to do a much better job than a BMED company in designing a product that consumers will look at and want to buy. On the other hand, a product design company could never match a BMED company in terms of understanding what the product will actually do. Having the outside shell be outsourced and developed elsewhere allows for the BMED company to focus on what is most important: how the device will function. The functionality of the device is by far the more important part, and the extra time and money that outsourcing the design job gives the BMED company is well worth it.