

To what extent the *craft manufacturing* sector is evolving to maintain and perpetuate its know-how while remaining innovative?

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Abstract

Craftsmanship is the sector that generates a significant portion of businesses in France. It challenges societal norms and contradictions through its unconventional nature.

Going faster without compromising high-quality work. Digitalize for an enhanced experience while maintaining a simple human connection.

Pushing towards the use of eco-friendly materials, but remaining traditional. The quest of building a workshop when the world is embracing open spaces. Mastering the entire creation and manufacturing process, avoiding task fragmentation.

Train skilled workers or management professionals.

Retaining knowledge or transmitting it rapidly, everywhere.

Remaining small but be visible everywhere is a paradoxical aspiration.

The broader question of finding balance is highlighted in this thesis.

We identified the existing artisanal statuses, deconstructed, and criticized them.

Interviews provided a critical understanding of artisans.

Concurrently, field knowledge was tested against theoretical insights to comprehend their habits, identify potential challenges, and explore adaptive solutions. As a designer, the challenge is to find a point of entry for intervention. The research encompasses theoretical aspects such as sociology, business, marketing, and history. On a practical level, it involves participating in artisan forums, meetings, interviews, networking, and pre-recorded podcasts.

This thesis involves a selective analysis of craftsmanship, presenting numerous factors to consider, including the relational aspects tied to learning, training, and knowledge-sharing. Visibility and artisanal community play a crucial role, along with the intersection with the client, adaptability potential, and communication with institutions.

The document reveals that 41% of retiring artisans possess specific and essential knowledge that needs preservation.

However, only a third find successors and provide technical training.

To promote an alternative aligned with artisanal practices, it's imperative to consider these factors.

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“L'idéal socio-professionnel de l'ouvrier de l'artisanat réside dans le projet de s'installer à son compte.”

[En]: “The socio-professional ideal of the craftsman worker lies in the aspiration to establish oneself independently.”

Zarca, 1986.



Introduction

This dissertation has its roots in my childhood. I've always been the child who tinkers, who creates and fixes a lot of objects with a particular appetite for craftsmanship and tuning the fine details.

Indeed, craftsmanship implies independence at every level, in terms of both creativity and business management. A low remuneration with regards to its effective work rate and the consequent charges.

State-of-the-art tools to stand out from the crowd. The ability to adapt its customer base to the market and the quality of service alike. Finding the right balance to flourish over time and last. A close physical relationship with the material worked on, which means questioning one's own limits.

It's also an art form I'm familiar with, as I'm transported back to that carpentry workshop when I was 8, where my senses were highly stimulated, the smell of wood and solvents, the number of tools abounding like a toy box just waiting to be rummaged through.

But in reality, this sector is complex. Each trade imposes its own constraints. Craftsmanship is also the product of unique experiences and paths, which makes this sector difficult to quantify and qualify.

Career opportunities for graduated students are uneven, and differences in status lead to constantly changing professional outlooks. That's why it's interesting to assess the extent to which the craft manufacturing sector is evolving to maintain and perpetuate its know-how while remaining innovative.

In order to find answers to this question, we will review the important notions that need to be considered if we wish to study the craft manufacturing sector, with the aim of framing the research findings and defining a common knowledge baseline. We will go through its evolution and representations to open up a global approach to craftsmanship and initiate an analysis of the situation of manufacturing crafts.

In a third time, we'll delve into the concrete basis: the field, the major points of friction and concern for the craftsman, with the objective of comparing and reporting on what is perceived and experienced in reality.

Finally, we'll discuss the ways in which artisans can adapt to their status, with the ultimate goal of identifying the levers they can count on to last.

| Chapter 1

Crafts and their presence in France.

Source: Pair of candlesticks by Jacques DEMÉ in 1690–91. Bequest of Catherine D. WENTWORTH, 1948.



1.1 Definitions.

Craftsmanship is very close to design, and involves independent creation, material production, transformation or heritage preservation.

It is distinguished by its “guarantee of quality” and enjoys a positive image, particularly with the support of the French luxury goods industry.

The definition of “craft” is regulated by law and “artisanal enterprise” alike, both of which were recently harmonized by an amendment to and simplification of the French code de l’Artisanat, which came into application on July 1, 2023 under ordinance no. 2023-208 issued on March 28, 2023.¹

Closely linked to labor and commercial law. It provides further clarification for businesses that have to register with the National Business Register (RNE). It allows the use of controlled designations such as “artisan”, and specifies the responsibilities of the Chambers of Commerce and Crafts. (CMA)

The craft industry can be broken down into 4 main categories:
Food, services, construction and manufacturing.



1.2 Developments and representations, the history of crafts.

The craft sector has not always been as clear-cut as it is today. Like art, craftsmanship was a means of conveying a message behind the products it produced.

One such example is the “Arts and Crafts” movement. It emerged in England and lasted for over a century. A combination of design and art. This current of ideas promotes a critical reform of the division of labor and the dehumanization of industrialization, with honest craftsmanship and quality parts as its model.

This British movement has spread internationally. It led to social advances and promoted women's education at community level in urban areas. The “ByrdCliffe Arts Colony”² and the “Saturday Evening Girls Club”³ were among the most important players.

By the end of the 1920s, the era of modernization had overtaken this movement. The movement is a response to the dullness and need for pleasure and contemplation in handcrafted objects.⁴



Source: "Bowl" Gift of Theodore M. LYTWYN. The Stickley Museum.
Photo by Edith PENMAN, Elizabeth HARDENBERGH.

As far as France is concerned, craftsmanship is said to have been imported from Germany, directly translated from the word "Handwerk" to the Chamber of Crafts and Trades of Alsace, where the term and its definition were publicly used by a high-ranking official.⁵ This initiative is the result of a conglomeration of events and political partnerships, and demonstrates the State's effort to promote craftsmanship in France. In the aftermath of the Second World War, it was also an effort to gain autonomy from Germany. Based on the German model, laws were enacted to define the term "master craftsman", which required no proven qualifications.

From now on, the craft activity can be deconstructed as follows: From art, we acquire technical skills to build an activity, to create an object. An object with a purpose, which refers back to the craft skill, and then when it's a professional trading activity, we speak of craftsmanship.⁶



Source: Bernard STALTER, President of the APCMA, CMA's leaflet.

1.3 Crafts in slight decline.

Manufacturing crafts is akin to arts and crafts. It requires creativity and originality. It's a rich and dense sector, with more than 280 trades.

Each trade has its own codes.

In France, we often hear about craftsmanship through the lens of minority occupations, or stories of artisans with innovative concepts who have succeeded in breaking away from the competition.

This widely publicized image is not the reality. Crafts and skilled trades move in cycles. This is what Cédric Perrin is studying.⁷

He points out that the decline attributed to craftsmanship is not always justified, and is largely due to prejudice and a lack of in-depth research into the industry.

He demonstrates that the time scale of research is a major factor to be taken into account, because over the long term, craft sectors remain stable or with small amplitudes due to the evolution of craft statutes, reforms and new craft practices such as the segmentation of tasks which follows the industry guidelines.

However, he warns of a gradual aging of skilled craftsmen in the manufacturing sector, and a renewal that is not keeping pace with its decline. This is also the view of Olivier Crasset, who estimates the average age of craftsmen covered by the social security scheme for self-employed workers (RSI) at 44.⁸

We also note that, despite being the leading employment sector in France, with over 1.7 million craft businesses in²⁰²⁰ according to CMA France⁹, the craft sector remains fragile when it comes to business takeovers. Only a small third of acquisition requests are successful, whether complete or partial.¹⁰

The creation of small-size companies, which include craft businesses, is proving to be a response to the decline in employment in developed countries of large corporations.¹¹

| Chapter 2

Obstacles to starting up again.



2.1 Meeting point and consumption of crafts.

Following research and interviews with craftsmen. Changes are taking place in the artisan clientele. A gentrification ¹² as prices for raw materials and services rise with the cost of living. A profound shift around the experience that customers come for.

Authenticity is being emphasized, and the quality demanded is increasing, as is the demand for shorter delivery times. But some consumers are starting to get confused.

Clearly related to the transformation of our mass purchasing habits and the increase in quality offered by the industry, it translates into a lack of understanding of the labor time required for traditional work, and the price of traditional raw materials, as is the case for animal hair ¹³ used in antique, noble or high-class armchairs.



Source: Coconut fiber is a highly resilient and durable alternative to animal fiber. Photo by Todd MAUGHAN.

A phenomenon we might call “the IKEA phenomenon”, or the disposable consumerism that is incompatible with craftsmanship, which advocates the originality of each piece. The “made by hand” which is a guarantee of quality or the emotional transport through the object. As Jonathan Dezecot points out, proximity to the craftsman is a vector of attachment and a sense of ownership for the customer.¹⁴

The notion of possession is a key factor in our approach to handcrafted objects, as it is with art.

A new kind of consumer is emerging, devoid of a sensitive approach and essentially interested in the economic, commercial, pecuniary aspect of craftsmanship. Craftsmen are solicited by a second type of customer who is looking for smaller-scale pieces, with modest characteristics that follow urban trends. This is the case with curtains. At a reduced cost. The originality of the piece lies mainly in its material or shaped customization approach. Traditional craftsmanship, which relies on mastery of technique from A to Z and is not focused on originality, is on the decline.

2.2 Craftsman training and the state.

Since its beginnings, the artisan world and the state have been at odds. Behind them lie two distant visions which hardly cooperate. The craftsman, a skilled worker who seeks pleasure in his craft and independence: "autonomous skilled worker", Zarca.¹⁵ The state, which seeks the stability of craftsmanship through entrepreneurship and larger structures, based on capitalism. This is also what I was able to gather from the testimonies of craftsmen who make a distinction between "being a craftsman" and "being a salesman".

The State does not manage everything, and delegates responsibility to its partners: the Chambers of Crafts and Trades (CMA). They aren't in touch with craftsmen, who don't recognize them, thus their actions receive little feedback.

"The State always seems to be one step behind", page 454.¹⁶

This dynamic can be felt in cold data figures such as the record abstention rate for elections to the Chamber of Trades and Crafts, which stood at over 80% in 2010. This

This raises the question of the State's legitimacy to position itself as the representative of the craft industry¹⁷

The State's aim to provide a framework for the craft industry and manage its development is not achieved without the adoption of strict rules, to the detriment of certain traditional craft trades that no longer fit into the State's grid of "promising trades".

The overall framework includes training, advice and financing. Communication and management works and the gestion of the regulatory instances.¹⁸

There is a wide range of organizations and places to access training. These can be broken down into two categories.

Either you apply during secondary education, or afterwards, as a graduate.

This is the case for the Certificate of Professional Proficiency (Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle), which covers a period of two years and is accessible as soon as you have obtained your certificate of general education (Brevet des Collèges). ¹⁹

Or, on the other hand, the DN Made (diplôme national des métiers d'art et du design), which takes 3 years to complete and is only accessible after the Baccalauréat.

The CMA has also introduced a pre-apprenticeship program in the craft sector, starting in 2019, in apprentice training centers (CFA) and CMA centers. In her report, she aims to guide students and introduce them to the craft trades. ²⁰

Above all, however, it hides the ambition to reduce the breakage rate of apprenticeship contracts, which stands at an average of 25% across all craft sectors. ²¹

Given that apprenticeship is a scheme designed to unify the French education system, and is targeting the students who suffer most from failure at school, as evidenced by a circular dated on May 16, 1961. ²²

Some craftsmen complain that the quality of the training provided by the CMA is not in accordance with their profession. One major point in particular is autonomy. Many students arrive at their training courses with technical skills that are not up to scratch, due in part to the way the programs are drawn up.

They don't focus on manufacturing from A to Z, but rather on the broad outlines.

One craftsman also highlights the program's negligence with regard to "elementary" subjects such as mathematics ,arithmetic in this case and the acquisition of fluency in French as much in writing as in speaking.

On the other hand, management and entrepreneurship topics are emphasized in the training courses, and according to the 2023 to 2027 Contract of Objectives and Performance, they will be strengthened, as stated in Axis 3: "to promote entrepreneurship and the economic development of craft businesses".

There are also training courses that are not linked to the State, as is the case with journeymen (*les compagnons*).

We were fortunate enough to be able to talk to representatives of the "Tour de France" branch at the craftsmen's Village fair in Nantes.²³

The students confided in us their wishes and gave us details of their training.

They are on an apprenticeship program. They've chosen a speciality and are moving on to a life on the go. That's what the Compagnons du Tour de France are all about. One young metalworker confided in us his desire, which tended to be echoed by all the craftsmen I met, for a greater artistic content. This leads to the production of limited series, leaving more latitude not only for quality, but also for working with the material and learning precision gestures. A pursuit of tradition.

A young stonemason, entering her 5th year of training, explains to me that in the mentoring branch where she works: the association, the apprenticeship is at the core of the training program, and that working hours are not counted.

But it's also through this rigor that we improve our gestures so that they become automatic.

Like state training courses, journeyman's training is based on a professional project, such as the dissertation, which aims to train students to create a piece from scratch with a challenge. A challenge that the student has not yet faced, with the goal of pushing him or her to think things over. To be able to seek help, to get informed.

To become a companion, you have to contribute to the community. In other words, you owe it to the community to continue your training, the notion of perpetuating knowledge and maintaining know-how.

Last but not least, there's the aptitude to follow a training course.

After a certain age, people's determination and potential for learning is reduced. This is a major obstacle for people who aspire to reconvert their careers.²⁴

2.3 Stress and health.

As mentioned above, the government's aim of stimulating entrepreneurship in the craft sector seems to have been achieved. This is not without fears and pressures for craftsmen, who find themselves alone on the market without a solid grounding in business management. With limited economic and networking resources.

This is the work of Olivier Crasset.²⁵

He writes: "Overall, the further we move away from production and towards management, the greater the mental load.

The workload is also significant. He estimates it at around 53 hours a week on average. For the self-employed, the stress of running the business adds to the physical strain.

The new craftsmen, mostly staff members or self-employed, are subject to physical demands and frequent accidents and sick leaves.

Health is a sensitive issue.

Craftsmen's concern for their health is not linear, as orders are often lower in winter than in summer.

We also warn that the availability of health-related research in the craft sector remains low, and that the results are sometimes misleading, as they don't take into account the effect of the "healthy worker".^{26, 27}

The question of how to take health into consideration in the craft sector has become dominant over time, as the body becomes weary and less resilient, and is strongly linked to its financial capital. This situation offers the possibility of turning the relationship between health and business on its head.

Craftsmen seem to seek help only as a last resort. A choice that leaves less margin for recovery and heavier medical care requiring immobilization, extended downtime or even cessation of activity in extreme cases. Health is also at the heart of a craftsman's production. Certain tasks and gestures are essential to the smooth running of the project, and cannot be handed over to employees.

Among young craftsmen, many stop working before the first year and are salaried employees, apprentices or on short contracts.

According to Insee, in France, without focusing on the craft sector, 35% of limited-term jobs were held by the 19-25 age group in 2016.²⁸

But particularly in the manufacturing sector, this is a problem, as craftsmen would like to find young people who can hold out over time, which doesn't appear to be the case, as Laurent Remaud, a staffer by profession, expresses.²⁹

From another angle, the deterioration of health is synonymous with the adaptation and evolution of working conditions. Craftsmen are changing products, while maintaining their know-how and the ability to work with raw materials. They are turning to smaller series, and rethinking their customer base. They reduce, reorganize their working hours, or invest in machines that incorporate enhanced ergonomics.

More generally, the investment in production machinery (often converted) comes before the improvement of working conditions.

2.4 Delegating and managing.

The body's fatigue is a trigger for taking health into account. It's an opportunity to reconsider one's operating model, and thus protect oneself.

Knowing how to delegate and make enlightened decisions is essential to maintaining a craft activity.

This is the case of ceramist Manon, broadcasting from the France Culture studios.³⁰

She explains that she has changed her approach to her work in order to deal with the pressure and tension of the clay market.

She works on small pieces that spread like seeds, offering a competitive advantage in terms of prices, which are limited. This has the benefit of giving her customers the opportunity to make them happy while preserving the expression of her own personality inside her pieces.

Manon emphasizes the work she has been able to do on time management and her work schedule.

In a different area, Caroline Mazaud, a teacher-researcher in sociology who focuses on the craftsman, describes the extent to which you have to be cunning, to have «métis».

This is because craftsmanship is organized according to age groups, which reflects the maturity of the craftsmen. So you need to know your own abilities, as well as those of your employees.

Turnover is high, which requires the craftsman not merely to have a solid network, but above all to carefully manage his financial situation.³¹

We also heard this testimony in the ground research phase.
“the crucial point is land». ³²

With the objective to reorganize working hours and reduce management time. Craftsmen join their forces and bring up a cooperative business of production. (SCOP) ^{33, 34}

There are many reasons for this. Firstly, financial. Each member can exercise his or her right to vote, but also his or her right to withdraw from the capital.

The scop also makes it possible to protect the workforce when a company finds itself in a difficult situation, and to avoid having to put its employees on the dole.

Aside from these financial aspects, it is above all the approach of grouping together infrastructures that is interesting, enabling investment in accounting, group purchasing of raw materials, employee participation in the company's results, and facilitating takeover via Scop members directly. ³⁵ To return to the managerial dimension, it is antinomic to the artisan's quest. The manager is more concerned with self-accomplishment and gaining power, while the craftsman is looking for its autonomy. The craftsman adopts a directive and paternalistic attitude.

He doesn't wish to share the power he has acquired. ³⁶

The craftsman acts fully on an operational level, from setting up to selling his products. The administrative side is secondary, and often a burden. It's a constraint he tries to avoid.

It's in this context that the role of women among craftsmen takes on its full meaning.

We found that the craftsman's wife plays a central role in the management and running of the craft business.

She is the manager, from establishing the store to attending markets. It is the wife who manages the couple outside the professional activity.

This remains a limited reality, as the craftsman's job alone does not provide the couple with financial security. ^{37, 38, 39}

2.5 Artisans's typologies and inequalities.

Craftsmen's difficulties in setting up as self-employed workers are closely linked to their status and social condition.

Social condition is a factor that defines the craftsman's choice of study. We also talk about the search for practicality as opposed to academic knowledge.

This is an opportunity to develop behavioral skills such as oral fluency for customer interviews, autonomy and organizational skills. Other profiles are closely bound up with family status, leading their choice of reconversion to be a "transversal transfer, or even a social downgrading".

Their career path often takes them through the educational system, then on to the hierarchical ranks of large companies, enabling them in the long term to build up assets for their own independent business.

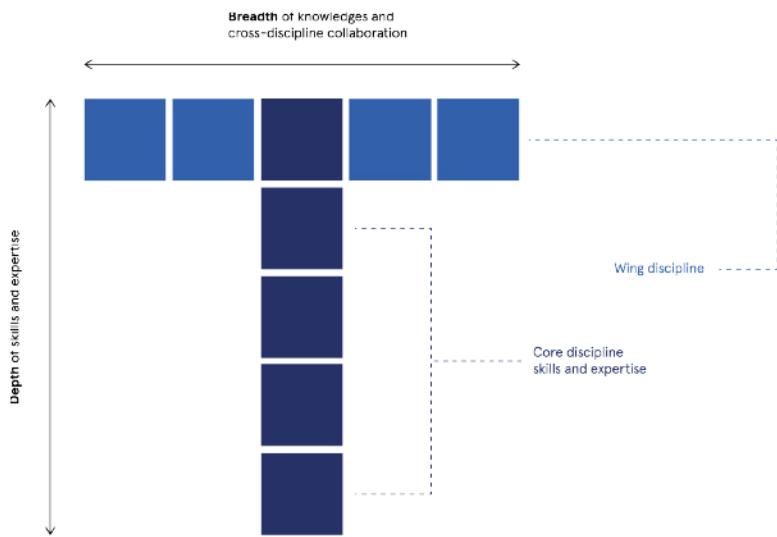
These reconversions reflect a deep-seated need for consideration within the salaried workforce. Independence is a means of escaping from deteriorating wages and working conditions. These two typologies of new craftsmen are not chosen migrations, but forced by a form of failure (exams, redundancy, burn out).

More generally, Cédric Perrin shows that people are more likely to settle in times of crisis, and that this is the case for all of us.

Echelle	Dimensions	Application
Camus (2004)	Origine, projection, Singularité	Produits alimentaires uniquement
Spiggle et al. (2012)	Maintenir les normes et le style de la marque, honorer l'héritage de la marque, préserver l'essence de la marque, éviter d'exploiter la marque	Extension de Marque
Napoli et al. (2014)	Engagement de qualité, héritage, sincérité la rareté qui repose sur le talent, la discréetion et l'originalité, et la stabilité liée à la cohérence, la sincérité et la moralité	Marque
Moulard et al. (2015)		Marque humaine

Tableau 2 : Les instruments de mesure de l'authenticité perçue

Source: Figure, adapted from Paturel and Richomme-Huet (2005).



Source: Figure, explaining the «t-shaped» matrix and its functioning.

Craftsmen from working-education backgrounds don't have the same access and chances of long-term survival as craftsmen from other backgrounds ("working-class") , who benefit from joint government bodies that support the craft industry. (UPA, CGPME and CMA for apprenticeships).

But also to European legislation which aims for the creation of independent businesses in all fields. The economic context must also be taken into account, as converted craftsmen have the means to do so, thanks in particular to redundancy bonuses and extensive financial investments. The wife's financial security stabilizes the household. Their cultural and educational capital enables them to set up in a flexible way. They contact associations and CMAs more frequently to put together solid financing records.⁴¹

The legislative context is favorable to the escape of managers in their quest for independence, as they are not required to have a professional qualification following the 1996 Raffarin Law. This partly justifies the creation of craft businesses in the form of entrepreneurship.

At the same time, there are a number of converted craftsmen who follow a "t-shaped" profile, tailored to the development of a new business.⁴²

They encourage the development of skills across a broad range. The traditional craftsman, on the other hand, focuses his growth on a specific ability, in the shape of an I. His versatility is less versatile, but his expertise is highly refined.

This development strategy seems less suitable for entrepreneurship.

2.6 Insufficient visibility.

The examples of artisan typologies seen above raise questions about a transition from the traditional artisan to the converted craftsman.

However, despite the popularity of reorienting towards the craft sector, visibility within this sector remains spotty. Current communications initiatives are largely ad hoc, whether promoted by public or private institutions. They are supported by sponsorship. Examples include the European Crafts Days (JEMA).⁴³

The Institut National des Métiers d'Arts (INMA)⁴⁴ also contributes to the promotion of French craftsmanship, showcasing the breadth of this sector and listing the talents of no fewer than 281 professions.

The INMA makes it a priority to ensure that arts and crafts are recognized under French law. Collectives, associations and artists residences such as the Domaine de Kerguéhennec and the Institut Européen des Arts Céramiques (IEAC) also contribute to the development of the craft by bringing together local people and young people.⁴⁵ The private sector, with fashion houses such as LVMH, Kering and Chanel⁴⁶, are seizing on craftsmanship as a showcase for their heritage and are closely involved in marketing their iconic branches.

They are staging exceptional crafts in a luxury hub designed to satisfy the growing demands of foreign customers and their future exports. Although a first step in response to the decline in the number of traditional dressmakers, this hub is not intended to open up the luxury sector to the general public.

During international events, the craftsman is not in his workshop and doesn't always have effective means of communication. Business cards, photos of their best creations or real models, succinct professional projection workshops. A limited range of tools. All these factors skew the public's experience of craftsmanship. Authenticity is vaguely perceived, and doesn't encourage the dialogue between an uninitiated public and professionals.

Craftspeople themselves question the benefits of these fairs; in particular, their appeal to young people.

«You'll see, well, there aren't that many young people under 30. Unless you count the companions next door». ⁴⁷

Visibility remains a major challenge in the craft industry, and calls for sustainable solutions that adapt to audiences with varying sensitivities (entrepreneurship, need for concreteness, artistic practices).



Source: The artisan's village, Nantes, 2023.

| Chapter 3

Complexities and adaptations.

Source: Matthew NAFRANOWICZ using a French carding machine. Photo by Emily Julka.



3.1 Innovation and adaptations.

This third part has been devoted to pointing out the obstacles to the renewal of the craft industry, and identifying the constraints associated with the craft profession and its status.

Although there are barriers, there are also levers to push ahead with new modes of craftsmanship.

Digital technology to the rescue of craft manufacturing.

Coming from industry, CAD/CAM (Computer-Aided Design and Manufacturing) has turned the world of art upside down.⁴⁸

In upholstery, almost all seats are manufactured industrially, reducing the number of quilters who haven't had time to change their market segments to capitalize on their work.

Others have taken the step to innovate in their content and manufacturing processes.

This is the case of scrap metal makers who, with the advent of numerical controls (lathes, milling machines, laser cutting, etc.), are able to push the limits of material limitations to produce sustainable and ecologically responsible parts (working with new alloys).

Recently, additive manufacturing technologies such as 3D printing, combined with bio-materials such as Leatherstone, have become a vector for innovation.⁴⁹

Research is being carried out into new shapes and volumes for objects that can be designed by hand.⁵⁰

Managing innovation is a key stage in determining when it's time to go beyond or break with a routine. How to integrate these new routines.

The spread of innovation between craft businesses takes place at multiple levels and places (at the customer's premises, in the sales department, in production), and involves the exchange and sharing of knowledge.

Innovation by craftsmen can be classified into ⁴ categories: innovative design, advanced innovation, tailor-made activity, routine activity and reinvention. ⁵¹

These disruptive or incremental innovations need to be taken into account when building a strategic positioning. The notion of autonomy is strong, with an emphasis on the singularity and originality of services. In practice, evolution is characterized more by the "challenge, the novelty" that each piece represents, as opposed to the technological innovation found in large groups.

Chanel's M 19 hub is a concrete example.

Co-design with the customer or multidisciplinary workshops are the catalysts of this innovation and are a reference point for innovation. Combining know-how, understanding and combining.

Some craftsmen radically change their trade through technology transfer or the use of new components or intermediate products.

Value creation model: dedication, quality and proximity to the design-innovation duo.



Source: Photograph, Leatherstone from Hors Studio.

Craftsmen actively support voluntary commitment to innovation. However, the limits of his portfolio; his status as intermediary or executive greatly affect his innovativeness.⁵²

The craftsman's capacity for agility determines his ability to innovate incrementally.

The ability to design-innovate relies on a managerial approach and a modern, less technical approach (following the research program by Bréchet, Journé-Michel and Schieb Bienfait, 2008).⁵³

You need to have a solid grasp of routine activities (organizational and trust-related) to be able to delegate and open up. There's a certain amount of cleverness that goes into combining originality, work organization and the contribution of knowledge to the team, while bringing about discussion with customers and energizing the point of sale.

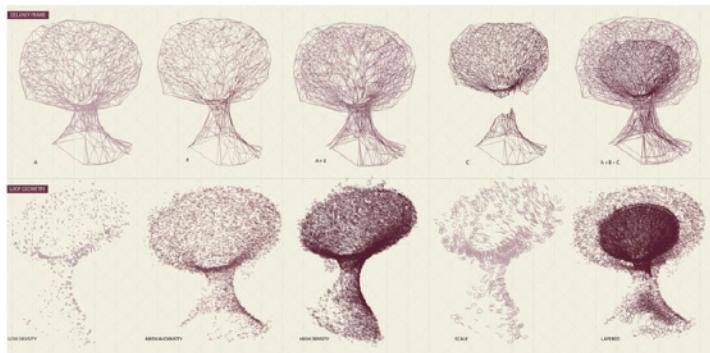
The example of the baker and the bread of the week.

The figure of today's craftsman: a man of the trade, but also a man of management and versatility. We also associate him with his long-term life project.

Another door to innovation is approaching the marketing aspect and customer consumption patterns. the «crafterization» (la craftérisation). It features the traditional codes and values of craftsmanship to communicate and sell their products. It's a trend that's right up there with the times. It advocates authenticity, boldness and quality. It's a response to the changing behavior of certain consumers, revealing both their aspirations and their fears.⁵⁴

Innovation is not only possible in the functional and formal aspects of craftsmanship. A second approach can be envisaged in terms of legal protection and the intellectual dimension that gives craftsmanship its specificity.

In legal terms, it differentiates artists from craftsmen. Craftsmen's independence explains why they are registered with the Répertoire des Métiers (RM). Machines must not replace the manual work of the craftsman, who then becomes a merchant. The awarding of labels can not only protect the craftsman's art, but also the market value of his knowledge. It is also a means of adding value to the business when it is sold. The EPV "Entreprise du Patrimoine Vivant" label aims to preserve and combat the disappearance of traditional know-how. To be granted the label, a company must have a rare know-how (high-tech or traditional) or a specific economic heritage, or a value in terms of notoriety and geographical heritage, implying a cultural or ancestral dimension. The label is issued by a legislator for a renewable five-year period. The tools of intellectual property (IP) help guarantee the modern "knowledge economy".⁵⁵ There is a need to broaden the intellectual dimension of the craftsman's work. This would enable craftsmen's work to be valued, and artisan creativity to be protected and even encouraged.



Source: Figure, Anisha KALYANSWAMY, volumes and topologies exercice.

3.2 Neo-artisans: a model of adaptation.

In this last part of the dissertation, we discuss the new generation of craftsmen. Reconverted and from a higher social class, they are known as "neo-artisans". They don't hesitate to delegate and play the role of entrepreneurial manager (turned business).

Neo-artisans have access to different resources directly linked to entrepreneurship, such as propulsion and incubation programs.⁵⁶

Neo-craftsmen respond to a modern counter-culture of our time, far removed from the hippies.

"They are striving to give credibility to the idea [...] that we can invent models of behavior that break with the paths laid out by the scientific religion of unlimited technological development, and that increasing the gross national product can take the place of neither ethics nor the art of living."⁵⁷

They are integrating digital transformation into their everyday work.⁵⁸

They are committed to training and are fully flexible in their working techniques. This makes it possible to work longer and in better health. Being a neo-artisan is characterized by an open attitude.

They are curious about public policy, want to mediate around their trade, and strive to defend their existence in the community.

Last but not least, being a neo-artisan isn't something just anyone can do. Craftsmanship remains codified. Traditional artisans and artisan families are not always willing to share resources and networks.

Integrating into artisan groups seems to be an exacting task, as you have to remain humble, acclimatize to the hierarchy of ages, and prove your worth and ambition.

The process of setting up a business is subject to considerable mental stress and pressure, and is a source of resignation for many, as the challenge of going from salaried employee to self-employed owner is a major one.





Conclusion

Through this thesis, we have highlighted the frequent challenges faced by artisans and the significant transformations in the manufacturing sector. We explore how the public perception has shifted, leading to the gentrification of the customer base and a consumption dynamic reshaped by the industry.

Statuses break the codes of traditional craftsmanship, fostering increased autonomy for today's artisans.

In my research as a designer, I conclude that design must introduce a new flexible approach to artisanal training. It should intervene during the training period when the artisan's focus is complete and emphasize main know-how.

The profile of a «neo-artisan» seems more fitting, given its flexibility and alignment with contemporary trends. The design solution will have to be functional and based on knowledge-sharing.

That's why, for my final project, I aim to address the question: «How can I assist artisans in the manufacturing craftsmanship sector in passing on their businesses before they retire?».

I plan to address, as the main resolution axis, the transmission of know-how among the craftsmen during the training period, and the way in which it can be used to bring about a spontaneous sharing of knowledge.

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Appendix

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The *craft manufacturing*.

In this essay, I invite you to follow my thoughts on craftsmanship. To what extent is it a strong imprint of our French territory, the vector of unique know-how, but also what are the challenges it faces.

Through this dissertation, I wish to share with you my sincere experience in understanding this original and sensitive field of activity.

To highlight the complexity of their trades, the stories of craftsmen who have found and fully integrated innovative levers into their production processes.

My aim is to open the doors to the dimensions of training, starting from his craftsmanship development, to his choice of status and his independence as a company director.

Ivan Petite