

# BetterByDesign

A monthly feature celebrating design, as related to the categories we love the most.

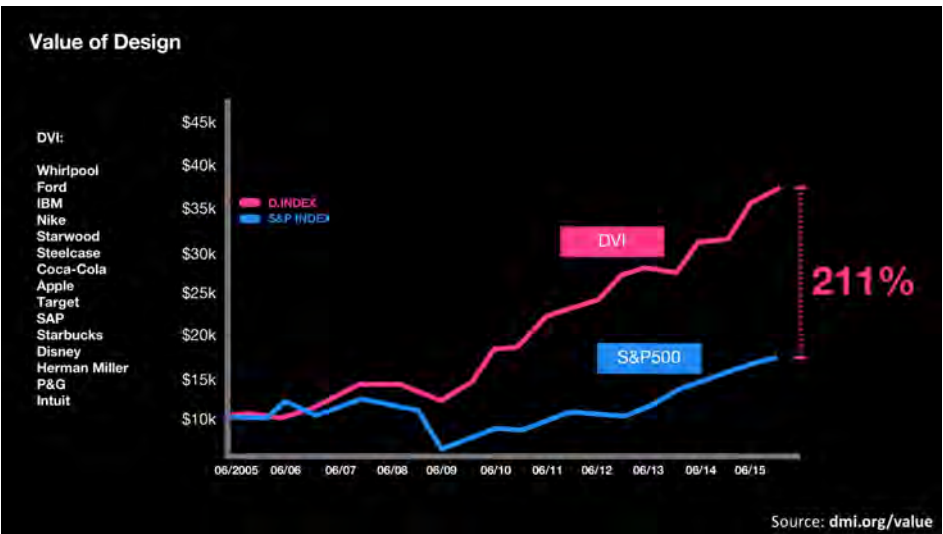
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Design is not just a marketing tool. Design is an agent to be harnessed to transform businesses. It is not just a remit of creatives; design helps multiple stakeholders and functions work better as a system. It is not just a “nice to have.” Design-led businesses gain tangible, measurable business advantages.

I’ve been in the design industry for over 20 years, and it’s safe to say that during that time our lives have been completely transformed in remarkable new ways. Keeping up with change poses new challenges for you and me, as well as designers and businesses. Shifts in behaviors, expectations, and experiences provide incredible opportunities for business growth. Capitalizing on these growth opportunities requires consistent and persistent care and development of strong brands. This is where design plays an integral role; not just from an aesthetic standpoint, but from a holistic business standpoint. To quote Dr. Raff Speth of Jaguar, “If you think good design is expensive, you should look at the cost of bad design.”

A design-led company is one that puts design at the core of its brand. The organization weaves design principles into everything it does— from research and strategy to creating content. Leadership and management at these companies think beyond transactions and focus on creating beautiful experiences that build lasting and meaningful relationships with customers.<sup>1</sup>

Design has power. It is the connective tissue within organizations, and it increases the human value of brands for all of us. It creates satisfaction and provides us with delightful experiences, improving our commitment and loyalty to brands. It has the power to increase the adoption of products and services. For example, I never thought my parents, who are in there early 70’s, would be Instagram users.



The statistics don’t lie:

- Design-driven companies have outperformed the S&P Index by 219% over the last 10 years.<sup>2</sup>
- 50% of design-led companies report more loyal customers as a benefit to having advanced design practices.<sup>1</sup>
- 41% of design-led organizations report higher market share, and 70% of those report stronger or best-in-class digital experiences woven into their design.<sup>1</sup>
- 91% of design-led companies list design as a critical part of the customer experience.<sup>1</sup>
- 46% of design leaders cite an emotional bond with customers as a defining characteristic of their advanced design practice. Design-led firms consciously put the customer first.<sup>1</sup>

When I first wanted to be a designer, I was exhilarated by the potential of having people interact with my creations. Nothing was more thrilling than seeing an artifact in a store that I created. I still, to this day, wake up every morning and have a desire to make things that matter for others – in a world that looks much different than it did 20 years ago. But the beauty of Design Thinking is that it’s just as important, if not more important, today. Design makes us see things and solve things differently, making design not just good for business, but essential for growth.

1. “Design led firms win the business advantage,” Forrester Consulting, 2016  
2. “The Value of Design,” dmi: design management institute, 2015

