



CEMAGRAM

The official newsletter of the Computer and Electronics Marketing Association

Looking Back

Marketing Magic with Industrial Design

The importance of industrial design in "humanizing" and marketing technology products was the topic of October's CEMA meeting.

Award-winning industrial designer Vladymir Rogov brought along several examples to illustrate his point: that successful product design must create an "uncluttered corridor" between technology and the mind of the consumer.

In most industries, Rogov said, the major players share the same basic technology. The only difference is the way each company executes that technology through product design.

Computers, for example, consist basically of the same elements: a monitor, disk drive, keyboard, etc. Yet most people can recognize a Macintosh or an IBM PC immediately. The reason: Both Apple and IBM have developed their own unique "form language" around this technology, and this language is carried through the design of all their products. That approach is evident throughout Apple's and IBM's product lines, from the look of the monitor to the style of the interface.

This type of focused, consistent design helps build a company's

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identity, Rogov said.

In one marvelous series of slides, Rogov showed how a Japanese company, Kenwood, used their name and corporate logo as the basis for virtually everything the company touched. From products to brochures to advertising to trade show exhibits to business cards and letterhead to their corporate vans and headquarters building, the Kenwood name and logo was used to draw the company's diverse elements into one cohesive image. Such consistency, Rogov said,

makes those who work for the company - as well as those who buy and use the product - feel a part of a large, stable entity.

Another important element of industrial design is paying attention to the end-user, and how he/she will use the product being designed. Rogov gave several examples, including an ultra-luxurious car that was designed and built for marketing in the Middle East. The car was built in England, and the British people were shocked and put off by the car's conspicuous opulence. But the wealthy Arabs for whom the car was designed thought the car was perfect, and the entire year's production was sold in just a few days.

Design plays an important role in product advertising, too, according to Rogov. He said the first step in making an ad attractive is to make the product itself attractive. Like advertising, design must reflect the mood of the times. It must evolve and change as people's tastes change.

The implicit language of style, said Rogov, gives us a way to see our lives in progress.

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