

Characterizing design styles: Which design style is it and why?

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Abstract

Design styles are commonly used to label and categorize products and function as a heuristic for consumers in their purchasing decisions. Therefore, marketeers, designers and consumers would benefit from a common understanding of design style characteristics. However, so far, the design literature is lacking of consistent and comprehensive design style characterizations. With this article we want to contribute to design theory and marketing management by 1) providing characteristic aesthetic attributes and symbolic associations of five highly influential design styles 2) assessing commonalities and differences of the respective design styles on the basis of a comprehensive profiling scheme. Thus, we aim to close the existing literature gap on aesthetic and symbolic descriptions of design styles by concretizing and empirically verifying apparent assumptions about their stylistic characteristics and relationships.

Keywords: *design styles; style characteristics; product aesthetics*

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