The architecture of design integration: How internal and external design integration drive launch strategy proficiency and NPD performance

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Abstract

Although research on design integration is emerging and organizations are aiming to embed design more strategically, limited focus has been paid to how firms can effectively integrate design both internally across functions and externally through their network to strengthen their launch strategy and, in turn, new product development (NPD) performance. This study utilizes survey data from 247 U.S. firms to demonstrate that internal and external design integration have a positive impact on NPD performance through proficiency in launch strategy. Importantly, the influence of each integration type depends on the level of market dynamism. Internal design integration is more beneficial in stable environments, where firms can rely on established knowledge and routines. In contrast, external design integration becomes critical in dynamic markets that require new insights and broader scanning capabilities. These findings connect research on design, NPD, and marketing strategy and offer guidance for managers on how to configure design capabilities to support product launches and attain superior NPD performance amidst market dynamism.

Track: Innovation Management & New Product Development