

# The Business of Design

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Class Hours: Tu Th 11:00 am - 12:30 pm

Dates: Jan 3 - 12, 2023

Office Hours: By Appointment

Format: Virtual

## Course Introduction

This course's objectives are twofold:

1. The first is to examine the impact design can have on an organization's strategy and growth - How can design help the business?
2. The second is to identify areas of opportunity that various design industries have to restructure their business model - How can we change the business model within the design industry?

In the first half, we will examine how to deploy design strategy at micro and macro levels for a business. By understanding the drivers and behaviors of our end user base and the underlying motivations of the organization, we will identify the monetary levers that design has the ability to move. Using design principles and behavioral science, we will understand how changes in design have an impact on the economics and a firm's bottom line in increasingly AI and data driven industries. We will examine four different cases:

**Technology:** In an age of digital disruption, how can design play a role in delivering seamless experiences to the user and simultaneously improve KPIs?

**Retail:** What is the direct link between physical store design and layout, the target market psychology and impact on the business? How does this translate into e-commerce?

**Social Impact:** How do design mental models need to change to create impact at scale?

**Real Estate:** How can we balance the right legal and economic variables with the conceptual and aesthetic elements?

In the second session, we will use architecture as the primary industry to unveil opportunities to restructure the business model in the built environment space, while preserving the core of the role of the designer.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Designers will have an understanding of business KPIs and terms.
2. Students will understand how to impact key metrics of the business while staying true to and preserving the innate role of the designer.
3. Students will understand the different industries that use design as a key player in the business.
4. Designers will understand how rethinking long-accepted design principles (like accessibility) can change scale of impact.
5. Students will understand how design has the ability to reorganize strategies within the firm for greater impact.

## Schedule

Class	What we will discuss	Pre-readings
Class 1	<p>The business of design in technology:</p> <p>In this introductory class, we will discuss design principles that allow the designer to be thoughtful about how to think carefully about the user, but also understand the KPIs that the business cares about (MAU, DAU, churn etc). How do does one use an understanding of those design principles to create smoke tests or improve areas of the user funnel?</p>	TBD
Class 2	<p>Design in Retail and Real Estate:</p> <p>We will discuss how design in the physical space impacts the revenue using two cases. For example, how do store layouts, signage, directions and relationships between the zones impact how people shop?</p>	TBD
Class 3	<p>Social impact at scale:</p> <p>We will primarily use Google's Next Billion User Research as a starting point to understand where design plays a role in social impact. What aspects of design are preventing users from feeling the full impact of social impact projects? What design principles (like accessibility) can be rethought to obtain better scale?</p> <p>In this case, the key performance indicator is not revenue or cash flows, but the number of communities and people that can be impacted.</p>	<p>Google Next Billion Users Research</p> <p>Specific Readings TBD</p>

Class 4	<p>Restructuring business models within the design industry:</p> <p>We will use architecture as the case study to determine what the flaws are in the current system - why are architects overworked and underpaid? Where does the money in the built environment industry go? What are the key stakeholders and players involved?</p> <p>We will then discuss different business models that can be deployed that allow the designer to get a larger cut of the pie and be involved in the lifetime of the building, while preserving the role of the designer.</p>	TBD
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**Deliverables**

The assignments will be a one-paragraph response of the pre-read to dissect the role of design in the business. The responses may also propose which area of design can be restructured in the industry, how to rethink the design processes and how that impacts the business (with important KPIs drawn out - MAU/Revenue/PNL etc). Special attention must be paid to continue designing ethically and to preserve the role of the designer.

**Attendance**

Attendance is mandatory for every class. Students may ask for an excused absence via email, ideally up to 12 hours before. In the event of an emergency or class conflict, the sessions will also be recorded and the presentation will be distributed.