Brno University of Technology, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Institute of Machine and Industrial Design, Dpt. of Industrial Design

Opinion of supervisor to the doctoral thesis

Name of the PhD. student: Ing. Martin Ondra
Supervisor: doc. Ing. arch. Jan Rajlich
Study branch: Design and Process Engineering Design, topic Mechanical Engineering Design

Topic of dissertation thesis:

Brand identity in design of industrial product.

Industrial design is a discipline between science, technology and art. As a separate discipline it was formed after World War II, and in Czechoslovakia (not only) it lacked and still lacks a theoretical basis, which is evident by the lack of professional and/or scientific literature, including the impossibility of publishing relevantly, lack of objective criteria of approach to design, evaluation, etc. More and more a certain "black hole" is also felt into which even real products, design solutions and thus the memory of a fairly recent past is going.

The purpose of the topic was originally to document the visual style and production program of an industrial enterprise from the former Czechoslovakia and to compare the requirements of the brand identity in general to find the elements of the visual style including the products and the share of industrial design in their development and production to develop characteristics or define the specifics of the visual style of a given company. In the course of the work, the original idea of the content and extent of the work had to be fundamentally corrected and narrowed, in the intentions required for this type of work at the Institute of Machine Design in FME. On the one hand, the thesis had to build on some of the already published scientific work, and also to leave space for further research and complementary solutions to the problem to follow-up researchers.

The PhD student has succeed in solving the initial problem of assignment, but he was to resign from examination of a historical point of view. He focused on the detailed analysis of company Narex's 13 products. Defining and evaluating in particular the shape elements and other elements supporting the brand identity have become the essence of the thesis. The analysis has been based on 4 drills, and a grammar consisted of 57 rules. He backed up his stories with several of his own designs, thus adding work to authenticity.
The doctoral student himself presents the following summary of the thesis: „This thesis is concerned with study of the brand identity elements in the product. Current state of knowledge leads to findings about the brand identity, shape grammars and methods for exploring the similarities in the product. Works are focusing on capturing the brand identity and the development of a shape grammar tool that would help the designer in his creative process, but the literature lacks in study of the actual designing process. An actual brand identity is studied in terms of logo, colour and shape to a creation of a shape grammar. After the analysis a shape grammar based hypothesis of how the brand identity is transferred throughout the innovation process is formulated.”

Ing. Martin Ondra demonstrated a self-standing approach and analytical skills, as well as the ability to draw his own conclusions and opinions. Individual chapters of the thesis work together in a coherent way and form a logically constructed complex. High-quality synthetic elaboration providing a good overview and evaluation of the current possibilities and demands is created from an available level of knowledge. The context is found by concentrating his work on aesthetics – perception of color relationships, compositional rules and shapes. These are beneficial both for design creation and for marketing purposes. Finally, the author makes appropriate conclusions and suggests further development options of the process of transferring brand identity from past to innovated products.

The dissertation is handled expertly, it is written in almost plain language (although in English...) and it brings a new perspective on the issue (even when designers themselves are not very much accessible to any objective recommendation to their work – see answers of Mr. Šindler, the designer...). However, the response to the recent publication of the results in the Emerald scientific journal shows the need for such work (the publisher has announced that the number of downloads of the article by users is more than twice the average in the first two months of publication).

I recommend the thesis for a defense.

signature of supervisor

In Brno, September 27, 2017