

Chapter 22

Innovative Approaches for Avant–Garde Artifacts: Discovering the Future, Reinventing the Design Thinking

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ABSTRACT

In the last decade, the society already regenerated their cognition by collective consciousness that leads humanity to moral attitudes and in a responsible manner upon global concerns. Likewise, as in various industries, the designers also have set up a sensitive approach through sustainability and empowerment. The new generation designers are the current change-makers that are shaping the future. For enhancing design innovation, current technology augments the creativity along with diversity and eligibility of applied techniques, and it enables the designer to work interdisciplinary. Any context or inspiration that stands in the edges of creativity is not out of the realm of possibility, only if it covers up social, environmental, or cultural concerns in harmony. To achieve distinctive results, the empirical approaches of design should be encouraged for solution-oriented and revolutionary projects. Therefore, this chapter discusses in-depth why and how designers should align with the integrity of art, engineering, science, technology, and sociology for holistic design-thinking.

INTRODUCTION

Despite causing tremendous global issues such as climate crisis, pollution, and overgrowth of urban sprawl, the marvelous creativity of humankind developed sensational artifacts as well in the 21st century. During the last decade, the rapid development of the industry also provided increased accessibility to technological features in daily life, resulting in more productivity, affordability, and eligibility for devices and digital tools. This emergent development in the worldwide industry has been named as the

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Fourth Industrial Revolution (I 4.0) (Schwab, 2017). Within a short, three-year period, driven by the unprecedented circumstances of the global pandemic, it only took a tiny virus, COVID-19, to prove to the world the outcomes of I 4.0. Apart from the all the negative consequences of the confinement, general lockdowns, and social isolation, the reality of digital features, globalization, and connectivity have shown to humankind that life is happening at the same time in both the physical environment and in cyberspace.

Even though the current era already has been defined as the digital era (Negroponte, 1995) the Corona Virus Pandemic made society realize that the world is adapted to the current digital revolution. During the social isolation period, the community was able to keep personal and professional contacts via online mediums. Although the quarantine exigencies psychologically stressed the society, and dictated maintaining almost all communication tasks via an Internet connection, the incontrovertible effects of digitalization, the global communication through digital networks, and access to connectivity facilitated a smooth isolation period.

Into the bargain, the digital era brought the term hyper-connectivity (Wellman, 2001) to the table, which is the use of many systems and devices so that you are always connected to social networks and other sources of information (Harper-Collins, 2020). The term arose from the human-to-human, human-to-machine, and machine-to-machine communication in networked societies. Hyper-connectivity changed the ways of communication and converted it from being used in a specific context to a constant interaction facilitated by the complexity, diversity, and integration of emergent technologies, software, and devices using the network.

Similarly, examining another perspective and identifying the benefits from all the negative references of the pandemic, and focusing on the advantages of the digital era and hyper-connectivity, the discussion could be led further through a more comprehensive perspective on how to rephrase the vision for the future. On the way of examining the big picture related to the outcomes of design in the last decade, it is essential to focus on how to approach the design artifacts. If this one tiny virus, together with an invisible layer of cyberspace, could change how society perceives the world, why not apply the same vision to the current design-thinking methodologies?

BACKGROUND

The community of the current era is named the *Wired Society* (Martin, 1978) or the *Network Society* (Van Dijk, 1999); (Castells, 2009). The current world population is constituted by various cultural generations, such as Boomers, X, Millennial, Z, and Alpha. Especially the last generations, Millennial, Z, and Alpha populate the Network Society. The existing society is informed, aware, and active upon the global issues by the more responsible and prudent terms emerging in their cognition. *“This cohort is believed to be genuinely different from previous generations in terms of social practices, learning styles, and even cognition, due to their early and constant engagement with information technologies”* (Burdick & Willis, 2011). The generation is shaping the next one with mindfulness for moral attitudes and responsive manner upon social, environmental, and cultural concerns.

The majority of the future society will be generation Alpha and their children. Our society is in a constant knowledge flow, which shapes the collective behavior in the big picture. As a result of hyper-connectivity and, consequently, globalization, the societies worldwide are increasingly enlightened and face socio-cultural interlaces. The Generation Alpha and Generation Z will transform the Network Society in an enthusiastic way with their capabilities.

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