

# **Innovation by copying: a design management perspective**

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## **Abstract**

The present research aims to provide a theoretical discussion about the concepts of copy, knowledge and innovation, analyzed from the perspective of design management. The paper is primarily grounded under the assumption that it is possible to gain knowledge that fosters innovation by copying.

**Keywords:** Copy, Knowledge, Innovation, Design Management

## **Introduction**

As innovation has become indispensable in corporations practices (Hamel 2003), it appears that copying innovations have also become a recurring, more economical and interesting practice for many companies and governments (Kim 2005; Shenkar 2005).

At the corporate level, for example, is common, after the introduction of a radical innovation in the market, for several other companies to take advantage of the wave created by developing imitations of these innovations. In this sense, the copy of the original innovators, can contribute to the consolidation of the new market (Markides 2005).

However, to ensure competitiveness, and continue to innovate, companies have adopted policies to protect innovation, the creation of the patent system. In this respect, the copy is considered legally susceptible liability practice as provided by property law (INPI 2011; Lima 2006).

In the field of design, the copy has also been restricted both from a legal standpoint (INPI 2011) as the social point of view, such as with Plagiarism award, created in Germany, where companies that copy some products receive a statue and the fact is reported in the press (Plagiarism 2011).

However, what is observed in practice is that a copy has been used by many companies (Murray 2011), and supported by several countries regimes. It is understood that this is because many managers envisioned that from the practice of copying could be possible to acquire skills

that foster innovation. This is the case of China, and has been the United States (Shenkar 2005), Japan and South Korea (Kim 2005). In such cases the use of copy occurred aimed at improving competitiveness, or as a form of technology and processes (Kim 2005; Shenkar 2005) learning at a reduced cost, and often aiming at innovation (Kim 2005).

It is also found in the present scenario a number of actions that are related to copy, especially with regard to the facilities that exist today with respect to the free dissemination on the Internet of various materials. One such movement is the "Don't make me steal", composed by people who were not satisfied with the dichotomous situation between doing illegal downloading of movies or the difficulty of paying for them (Don't make me steal 2011).

Analyzing the problem from the point of view of design management (Mozota, Costa, Klopsch 2011), area of our interest, we believe that both copy and innovation can be incorporated in the three levels of decision making (strategic, tactical and operational), concomitantly or not.

Given this controversial topic, a review of further literature could contribute in a relevant way to understand the various ways that copy can be inserted as a phenomenon in relation to the management of design. This theme is presented on the basis of data provided by a preliminary review of literature which, while paradoxically are a side actors that promote the protection of innovations (authors like Prahalad, Hamel, large industrial music industry, governments like the United States, and those who have more to lose by being copied than copying etc.), other are actors who are against the authorship, claiming it is an institution in crisis (Creative Commons license, Motion Do not Make Me Steal, Pirate Party, among other actors as Murray, Miranda). In the latter case, focus is on knowledge sharing and defending the free access to information, understanding that it is necessary to qualify the issue of authorship, since it is subject to multiple interpretations. Moreover, the protective strive to create tougher laws to punish the offenders.

It is understood that this fact takes greater prominence, to live in a world that is more and more being inserted in the digital context, and therefore control the sharing of information is not only increasingly difficult, but also makes less and less effect on the characteristics of digital media. Tackling the copy is not only a difficult task, as it can, in the long run, benefit a select group of people, while the majority is being deprived of access to information and knowledge.

Therefore, the copy as a phenomenon can be analyzed from different points of view or disciplines such as sociology, psychology, economics, philosophy, ie subjects that can see the copy according to their respective concerns. Particularly in the context of design, because it is a multidisciplinary activity, i.e., it involves a number of disciplines, the practice of copying can be analyzed, for example, from the historical point of view with regard to their practice; sociological, relative to the consumer; of design management at the tactical, operational and strategic levels; technological, economic, legal, based on the intellectual/industrial property; marketing; and theories of design. In this work, the research performed attem up to the implications of copy in the world of design management.

The existence of the copy as a phenomenon that persists for decades, cultures and brand presence anywhere in the world, is capable of promoting knowledge for innovation (Murray 2011). It was and is used in different times in history as a learning tool and from the field of technical, process, style, making innovation more accessible since it believes that great ideas do not appear instantaneous insights, but a vast repertoire of ideas from various places (Johnson 2010; Murray 2011).

This study is guided by the assumption that it is possible to acquire knowledge that fosters innovation by copying. The assumption set up by a preliminary literature review, also identified a dichotomy in the discourse behind innovation and copy. While many agents on one side advocating the protection of knowledge, often camouflaging the process that drives innovation, and vetoing

free access to information, restricting the practice of copying, several other actors in society argue that knowledge can not be private to a limited number of people and should be shared, contributing to the improvement of ideas and so, in fact, allowing the creation of products, services and innovative systems. It is understood that, if the energy spent to combat the practice of copying was used strategically to promote the development of innovations, since it is increasingly difficult to fight it, it would generate synergy to rethink current models, further contributing with improvement of products, services and systems.

## **Methodology**

Our search for published researches from the past ten years has shown us that research about design management has a lack of studies that integrate copy and innovation in the same thematic area. The search for material for the literature review was based on the use of the main theme and the words copy, imitation and plagiarism in Portuguese and English in databases in design area, Google scholar, Annals of Congress and books, and research published by leading design authors in the last ten years.

## **Copy, knowledge, innovation and design management**

Early last decade, Bruce and Bessant (2002) scholars spoke about the importance of the relationship between senior management and designers, for designers understood that acted synergistically with the strategy at various levels in product development (Bruce and Bessant 2002). Thus, the union between management and design has been recognized as a facilitator of business performance, being able to affect the enterprise (Bruner and Emery 2010; Mozota, Costa, Klopsch 2011) economy; and countries (Mozota, Costa, Klopsch 2011). In this context, one establishes what are known as design management and its three levels: strategic, tactical and operational.

The Design Management Institute (2012), the organization responsible for promoting research and discussion about the management of design since the 70s, defines it as being the business side of design. To compete ongoing processes, business decisions and strategies that enable innovation, creating products effectively, design services, communications, environments and brands. These activities are aimed at improving the quality of life; provide organizational success and competitive advantage, combining design, technology, management and customers (DMI, 2012).

In this sense, the government has an important role in the participation in the design and business performance as it can elect political support in different ways, such as financial support, design education, partnerships between schools and industries, as observed in some countries like Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Britain, Denmark and most recently, Brazil. There is a significant number of designers and agencies, and consistent numbers that link the design as innovation and creativity tool, gaining good results for business growth (Mozota, Costa, Klopsch 2011).

With the “(...) development of design methodology in the 60s, developed in Anglo-Saxon countries the first trend to recovery of design management in the context of business activities (...)” (Bürdek 2006). The first contribution in this direction came from Peter Behrens in the early twentieth century, and came from the corporate design of the Olivetti '30s activities on the work of English Michael Farr 60s, who conducted one of the first reflections of the system project management, creating guidelines "of how design can be handled at the enterprise level" (Bürdek 1989 apud Bürdek 2006) Various other actions appeared with similar around the world to follow, such as Germany and the United States (Bürdek 2006).

The design management had recognition from administrators who understood that the design was not just to mere aesthetic considerations, but rather through significant investments in the economy (Barbosa Filho 2009; Bürdek 2006).

For integration of the design to a company occurs it is possible to use a system of forms that Mozota, Costa, Klopsch (2011) classified on the basis of design disciplines. Disciplines such as : design environments (workspaces , reception areas , factories , exhibition spaces); product design (machines, commercial products), packaging design (commercial products, promotional material) and graphic design (letterheads, notices, invoices, files, reports, computer screens, advertising, signage, trade names and technical documentation (Mozota, Costa, Klopsch 2011) .

The entry of design in a company can occur by different means, either by launching a product innovation, which also involves research and development, or development of promotional campaigns, participation in exhibitions, improving packaging, brand valuation or creating a new brand and visual identity, internal and external communication. The most common design for the input structures are product and innovation policy; corporate and brand communications policy; and retail space and brand positioning in retail (Mozota, Costa, Klopsch 2011).

It is understood that the management of design has innovation as a strategic partner. Through innovation, policies can be space for that design management is introduced into the corporate environment (Mozota, Costa, Klopsch 2011).

Jayme (2009) explains that “(...) innovation has been growing in recent years as one of the essential requirements for all types and sizes of companies”. In this sense, the author presents a set of changes in business activities integrated through innovation as described in the Oslo Manual. This set details the innovation in the following activities: goods or products, processes, organizational and marketing (Jayme 2009) services.

Thus, it is understood that, as we saw earlier, all these activities that involve the design are subject to interpretation by managing the design, since it considers design as a core competency.

In Brazil the management of design has recently been implemented with the help of diffusion of total quality control and government incentive programs, since an understanding of the need occurs insertion design as a strategic tool for economic development and increased competitiveness industrial by corporations and the government itself (Minuzzi et al. 2003).

Casteirão (2006) explains that design management can be understood as an activity "macro strategies of designers (or interdisciplinary groups), with decision-making power of an organization structured to shape the company profile, products and/or services" (Minuzzi et al. 2003).

In the mid 80s, Topalian cited by Minuzzi (2003) explained that the management of design was divided into two parts. The literature relating to senior management, where they occur strategic definitions, policies and decisions of the company; design and management of project activities. In the '90s, Gorb brought a concept that design management was the operationalization of resources available design firms in order to meet their goals. With that, the design would place the company in accordance with the identification and better adapt the design to their problems and train managers responsible for putting into practice the design (Gorb 1990).

Minuzzi (2003) discusses in his work that the design management deals with the coordination of all design activities, aiming at the objectives defined in the company. For the author, the company's identity is defined as the business philosophy is put into practice, ie when the transformation of the organizational culture (Minuzzi 2003) is given credibility to the values, business mission occurs.

The design management is defined by how we think and what we think design under management (Mozota 2006). In this sense, the author proposes the design to be thought of as

strategy, process and/or style, while managing to be thought of as command and control, as the art of collective action, and how to manage change.

A full management model that has the design as core competence, makes use of flexible administrative plan and that encourages individual initiative, independence and risk taking, as opposed to the Taylor model, which is hierarchical (Kistman 2011; Mozota, Costa, Klopsch 2011).

## **Theoretical debate**

In this session, relying on historical research and exchange of ideas among important writers in the field, discusses the considerations raised about the relationship between copy, knowledge and innovation, from the perspective of design management. Building on the core objectives of this work, we intend to reach conclusions about the subject.

It is argued here that the dialogue between copying and innovation in the management of design because it is understood that both themes are relevant area by the fact that within the business management copying can be absorbed in the levels of decision making of corporation and second because it is the design management primarily an innovative management model, and the design is gaining weight as a business function, since it has long been recognized as a helper in the economic markets.

We agree here that the design management, while involving the business side of design, it is a management model that has as its core competency design and is present in the central power in the decisions that need to be taken within an organization. Therefore, several decisions within a corporation are also oriented by design, bringing a division of three levels of decision-making: strategic, tactical or functional, and operational level.

The literature review brought understanding of the design and management is a unique management model that works constantly to innovation of the corporation and all its productions, including its culture and business ethics and product delivery. The management of design proposes an innovation in the entire production, and horizontal cycle and therefore should cover the entire company. Thus, innovation must occur in whole, enlightened and deliberate, because it defines the politics of product design and communication, highlighting the role of design.

The concepts of trend and innovation brought, is understood that there are three stages involved in the development process of innovation, both stages can draw a parallel with the notion of copying bringing with it greater assertiveness and effectiveness to the corporation that wishes to have a primer balanced between investment risk and return.

It is understood also by literature review that innovation is seen as critical to survival of a company, requiring that entrepreneurs are visionaries, allowing foreseeing the technological and consumer behavior at a future time evolution. In this sense, it has the support of several methodologies and tools, which support the concept of copy that can bring help for senior managers in their business strategies. For this, they may be guided by the use of research and analysis of competitors, trend research, market research, etc. benchmark.

As envisaged, that innovation is not necessarily an original creation, but inspirations on products/existing ideas and that differentiation and ensures the future survival of businesses who are fighting in design management strategies. You could say that the repertoire of alien ideas that are used directly or indirectly, wholly or partly are dialoguing with the concept of copy.

Here the copy was understood as something that can be very beneficial when you copy and that is copied. Accordingly has Aristotelian mimesis, which carries the meaning that the more a work of art of approaching reality, it would be more mimetic. It is understandable though, as brought by Compagnon (2010) that rethinks the subjective mimesis as imitation of the world. In

addition, in that, when applied in the design industry, the copy can be seen as reinterpretations of products and, to some extent, other products, especially when dealing with redesign, adaptation and creative imitation.

At this point in the debate, regarding the discussion about the redesign is understood that this strategy allows for a reinvigoration of a product or service. Can be great practice of development and innovation output in the developed and redesigned copied product.

In the case of creative imitation, it is understood this as an activity that does not disobey any legal means for supporting the development of products when applied in the early stages of industrialization, such as when used by countries that have a low level of investment in the industrial sector. In the same sense, we understand creative adaptation also as a kind of copy since it is based on the products and recreates them with tweaks, improvements and new trends.

Through literature review, it can be identified that many studies on economic market culture found that copyright is able to generate many benefits that future investors benefit more than the authors of "original" products. Analyzing the historical unfolding is understood also that in the universe of design, secrecy and exclusivity have become tools of commercial advantage.

When speaking about copyright, it is recalled before the definition of piracy, namely that whatever the product, work with unauthorized sources, violating patent laws of products and profiting from them later, even without paying fees to the authors of product, taking it as a kind of copy that is characterized by infringement laws.

Within the various possibilities of imitation also has reverse engineered, making it very difficult to detect the presence or absence of copy. It is understood as a reverse engineering process that occurs through the deconstruction of a particular brand of product, there may be subsequently reassembling to change a few details and association with another brand than the original. In this sense, it is understood also reflective imitation, where the company lends just a few features of the original product and not all his systematic altogether. In this case it may be a practice adopted by the subject that does not know that the place (the entrepreneur), so does intentionally (the criminal), and as a strategic policy of a government (complacent government) (Strehlau 2004).

It is understood here the notion of plagiarism as a fraudulent imitation, where the idea of the original author is stolen and the person or entity that stole the idea as an author signs of something he definitely did not create .

The relationship with the copyright CC license, Creative Commons, thinking on virtual access to databases that are in accordance with the copyright and the speed of information that we have today. It is understood it as a creative and practical way to combine legal issues, copyright and dissemination of knowledge.

Already under government practices, it is understood that China adopts a style of production based on the copy, disregarding patents, bringing harm to various companies and their patents copyright.

Copying, when consented and not bypassing any legal standard patent, is extremely beneficial economically in a design management. In these instances, it is reflected, too, that some laws, norms and concepts about copyright and the way certain companies deal with it should be reconsidered, so that all involved to take advantage of the situation.

Therefore, some laws in practice are obsolete and need to be rethought to monitor the social, negatively or positively, never regresses.

In design management, guided by Demarchi (2011), Brunner and Emvery (2010), Lockwood (2009), Mozota, Costa, Klopsch (2011) and Neumeier (2009) it is understood that the strategic design is critical in designing innovations trends and therefore of various concerns, are interested in user experience (or final consumer).

In the case of Design Thinking, an approach that seeks to balance the analytical thinking and intuitive thinking, it is an interesting tool to generate competitive advantage through innovation. This approach can be grounded in the various potentialities of the designer (driven by design management), as well as being a medium (tactical design) that occurs for knowledge acquisition. It is understood here that Design Thinking cannot be ruled in or use copy (even if not literally) in their process steps.

3D Printers and Downloadable Design are examples of cheapness and accessibility to the common public has today, with the internet, the products that were once strictly belonging to companies with profitable returns on standard productions and series. It is understood that today is the end consumer who can make prints on clothes, who print materials that were exclusive graphics that make stencil on clothes and various other examples of independent production involving or not the appropriation of ideas and direct quotes linked before copyright. In this sense, we understand the importance of governmental laws and dynamics that adapt to these changes and facilities that the democratization of current information generated.

Furthermore, it is understood that copying collaborates with companies that copy, especially when they require low investment in exchange for production learning. When approached strategically copying can be a stage for the acquisition of knowledge.

In many phases of natural history, copying was a creative process, as long as this was in favor of improving an idea. Originally, it was a concept created to distinguish those who could hide your sources or references then when released, unreleased sound like. In this course, the intention was to generate competitive differentiator between brands of producers.

Copy is inherently present in many activities of everyday life, from the unconscious projection and identification in social behavior between individuals, even the most trivial and obvious elements, such as standardization of laws, stylish, professional behavior, rules social, etc. The neurolinguistic explains, for example, that the child, in their training phase, learns to articulate speech and various other behaviors through imitation and repetition of the behavior of adults.

Here, it is understood that copy culture enables the development of innovative and profitable trends in the economic markets.

Many authors and movements argue that knowledge is not something that occurs by a specific author of a particular author, but that the formation of knowledge in the individual is given by the result of the many voices and motivations that are talking to him (family, school, religion, needs, internal and external desires). As someone to devote to study Nietzsche's philosophy, for example, it is understood that it is not interesting to state that knowledge is apprehended extremely incisive and specific manner, as it is believed that any assimilation of new content happens to the plurality of many other knowledge rooted in the individual: what some see as subjectivity. That is, knowledge is the sum of many other knowledge and consists of numerous tacit, explicit and tangible results.

It is also understood there are several exceptions that deliberately copy the products of other countries. However, worth noting that it is not the intention of this paper to discuss philosophically the copy, nor say that it is a con, after all, it is thought that often attempt to combat copying, besides being exhausting is somewhat a witch hunt currents of thoughts with no adaptation and plasticity in development and evolution (good or bad) in the world.

On the other hand, there is the speed issue of exchanging content today. Copy and "sharing" has become very easy and even banal. It would be appropriate to use copy for the economy and in personal spheres, rethinking new business and economical models that adopt copy as a starting point.

If those who adapt survive better, we understand that innovation is not to create something new, but to produce or adapt something that is able to promote a change in the social, economic, cultural, political aspect and other fields. In this sense, although it is not appropriate to disregard laws, using the excuses of others' ideas, but the copy is often taken as the market offers products at exorbitant prices, or because technological learning is slow, not encouraging the development research. Becoming a difficult thing to be fought, many strategists can make use of the practice of copying and thereby reshape its business, the copy is allowing , or by copying , remaining within the competitive market, and still profiting from it.

Those who reinvent and renew are able to keep up with trends and will naturally survive economically, according to new aspects of society. An innovative company absolutely should feel threatened, as will always be regarded as a pioneer, regardless of whether or not copied its products. As seen, in some cases, the copy can be very beneficial to the companies that are copied.

In this aspect mentioned, copy can be crafted strategically to strengthen a product-driven conceptual innovation, for example. It is understood that the maintenance of the conceptual innovations, or the legacy brought by them, it is difficult to maintain, since they are difficult to develop, so it is important to rethink ways to stay one-step ahead. In addition, upon to how it was brought by the literature review, that corporations make use of a primer balanced innovations, ie, using conceptual, incremental and radical innovations.

Besides, there are also several advantages in innovation-driven companies. In addition, we still have a strategic plan using both copy driver point, or copying the model of another company business, with end products that are not literal copies.

We can also understand the existence of enterprises involved in innovation and always rely on tactics that absorb copy (techniques, tools, methodologies copied) to the acquisition of knowledge, for example. However, there are companies that use copy at the operational level (as piracy cases, cloning, spoofing), as the copy takes place directly on the products, even if they are intangible products.

In both cases, it is understood that it is the role of design management to control all content that relates to innovation because, as was suggested in the review of literature, that among the various tasks of design management, there are also design product policies and brand communication. Hence, design management is important and covers topics of vital issues within a company that intends to innovate.

Regarding the relationship between copying and innovation is understood that it happens according to how she is able to talk and the acquisition of this knowledge. The copy will engage with innovation depending on the level of knowledge that is absorbed and this depends largely on which strategic positioning and what purpose the economic market - and consumers - want to copy the short, medium and long term. It is understood that still depend on what are the tactics used by the copy process occurs , otherwise it will only explicit results on an operational level and have little chance of generating innovation and creating beneficial or readings from the point of view of profit. Therefore, the relationship between copying and innovation in design management occurs through efficient and effective strategies and tools for knowledge absorption occurs.

Thus, copy is a constant target of epistemological confusion, especially regarding the concepts of piracy, counterfeiting, cloning, imitation, plagiarism. This confusion still generates a derogatory term that brought, over the years, the misjudge interpretation of what copy is or is not, if it is negative or not, obscuring the creative process in favor of economic interests. In many cases it is not interesting that copy becomes a clear and deliberate practice to society. However, as was seen, many economies seize imitation of practices to go a short way along the learning technological knowledge. It is understood that for these countries copy, when used conceptually



and tactically, propels innovation and positive returns, bringing innovative products to their manufacturers. In this sense, it is deemed to be interested in the sector of design management that governments adopt policies to support design, giving economic support, partnerships and also cultural reeducation about the relationship of copy and knowledge acquisition process that will result in innovation.

## Conclusions

In general, it is considered that this research contributes to design, innovation, copy, but for design management in particular, since it is understood that it can be absorbed as strategy and tactics of an organization. In addition, it can promote social and cultural changes (use of copy artifacts, forgery and piracy, copy legal issues, criminalization and discrimination copy), technological, economic (profit and loss with the copy), relevant to corporate governance matters, logical production and development of corporate culture.

However, it is known that this study will be continued and detailed within the design management of the various copy concepts brought here. The way the subjects were treated here was given by the need to bring together many themes and settings, as this study is seen as one of the first in this thematic area within the design management.

Finally, it is considered that the subject “copy” needs further attention and study from researchers and experts of design management, because of its increasingly presence in society brought by information availability and new production processes resulting from informatization and computerization.

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