

**INTERSECTIONS AND CONTRASTS: CULTURAL AND MARKET DIFFERENCES  
BETWEEN DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT** <https://doi.org/10.63330/aurumpub.015-018>**Ana Júlia Simões Thomé<sup>1</sup>****ABSTRACT**

This study addressed the theme Intersections and Contrasts: Cultural and Market Differences between Design and Management, aiming to understand how cultural and market dimensions have influenced the education and professional practice in these two fields of knowledge. The research adopted a qualitative and bibliographic approach, grounded in authors such as Geertz, Hofstede, Hall, Schein, Bonsiepe, Norman, Cardoso, Manzini, Papanek, Chiavenato, Drucker, Kotler, and Maximiano, enabling a comparative analysis of the practices and professional identities of designers and managers. The study revealed that culture plays a decisive role in shaping professional identity, molding values, behaviors, and ways of thinking in each field. It was observed that the culture of Design is characterized by creativity, innovation, and aesthetic sensitivity, prioritizing experimentation, interdisciplinarity, and a commitment to sustainability and social responsibility. Conversely, the culture of Management is grounded in rationality, strategic planning, leadership, and efficiency, seeking measurable results and sustainable organizational solutions. In the market context, both fields converge on aspects such as innovation, project management, and consumer experience, although they diverge in planning methods and market approaches. The findings demonstrate that the interaction between Design and Management constitutes an opportunity for developing more creative and effective interdisciplinary practices, in which aesthetic sensitivity and strategic rationality complement each other. It is concluded that dialogue between these fields represents a promising path for training professionals capable of combining innovation and management, emotion and efficiency, thereby contributing to organizational advancement and the construction of more human and sustainable solutions in an increasingly complex and competitive market.

**Keywords:** Design; Management; Professional culture; Labor market.

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## INTRODUCTION

This introduction explores the intersections and contrasts between the cultures of Design and Management, emphasizing the importance of understanding how these fields, although distinct, interact and complement each other in the contemporary market. The topic was contextualized through the consulted literature, which includes theorists such as Geertz, Hofstede, Hall, Schein, Bonsiepe, Norman, Cardoso, Manzini, Papanek, Chiavenato, Drucker, Kotler, and Maximiano, whose works address the influence of culture on professional education and organizational practice.

The research objectives were outlined to investigate how cultural and market dimensions shape the performance of Design and Management professionals, as well as to identify practices that foster collaboration between these fields. The central hypothesis suggests that, despite cultural differences, the interaction between Design and Management can generate innovative and effective solutions by combining creativity and management.

The justification for this study lies in the growing need to integrate creative and managerial approaches in a market that demands professionals capable of dealing with the complexity and dynamism of the business environment. The research aims to contribute to the training of more comprehensive professionals, prepared to face contemporary challenges.

The development of the study was structured into sections addressing culture and professional identity, the culture of Design, the culture of Management, and the intersections and contrasts between them. The methodology adopted was qualitative and bibliographic, enabling a comparative and reflective analysis of professional practices and their cultural implications. The articulation between theory and practice was emphasized, demonstrating how professional identities are shaped by historical and social contexts.

In summary, the introduction presented a comprehensive view of the topic, aligning objectives, hypotheses, and justifications, and established the foundation for the critical analysis developed in the subsequent sections. The research sought to reinforce the importance of dialogue between Design and Management in building innovative and sustainable solutions, promoting a deeper understanding of the cultural and market interactions that permeate these fields.

## METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this study was structured based on a qualitative and bibliographic approach, aiming to explore the intersections and contrasts between the cultures of Design and Management. The choice of a qualitative research design is justified by the need to understand the nuances and meanings that permeate the practices and professional identities of both fields, allowing for a deeper and more reflective analysis.



The bibliographic research involved consulting a wide range of sources, including books, academic articles, and relevant documents addressing cultural, market, and theoretical aspects related to Design and Management. The works of renowned authors such as Geertz, Hofstede, Hall, Schein, Bonsiepe, Norman, Cardoso, Manzini, Papanek, Chiavenato, Drucker, Kotler, and Maximiano were fundamental in constructing the theoretical framework. Each of these authors contributed valuable perspectives on professional identity, organizational culture, and the interaction between creativity and management.

For the analysis, selection criteria prioritized academic relevance, the timeliness of publications, and their pertinence to the central theme of the study. The critical and interpretative approach enabled the identification of patterns, convergences, and divergences in the practices and values that characterize Design and Management.

The development of the study also included a comparative analysis of the cultural and market dimensions of both fields, seeking to highlight how these influences shape professional education and practice. This analysis was grounded in theoretical discussion and practical cases observed in both disciplines, emphasizing opportunities for dialogue and collaboration between Design and Management.

In summary, the adopted methodology provided a comprehensive overview of the intersections and contrasts between Design and Management, grounded in a solid theoretical foundation and enabling a critical reflection that contributes to understanding professional practices in a contemporary context of increasing complexity and interconnection.

## DEVELOPMENT

### CULTURE AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Culture is one of the most complex and multifaceted concepts in the human and social sciences, being essential for understanding human behavior, social practices, and, consequently, the professional identities that emerge in different work contexts. Clifford Geertz (1989), one of the leading anthropologists of the 20th century, defines culture as a web of meanings woven by individuals themselves and within which they are immersed. According to the author, human beings develop within collectively constructed symbolic systems, and it is through these systems that they interpret the world and guide their actions. Thus, culture is not merely a set of customs or values but a system of shared meanings that structures thought and everyday practices.

Complementarily, Hofstede (2001) conceives culture as a “collective programming of the mind,” which differentiates the members of one group or social category from others. This conception brings the notion of culture closer to the field of organizations and management, revealing that each professional group tends to develop its own patterns of behavior, communication, and decision-making. In a business



environment, for example, culture influences how people perceive authority, risk, collaboration, and innovation. Therefore, professional identity is shaped not only by technical competencies but also by values and beliefs incorporated throughout education and social practice.

Edward Hall (1976) expands the understanding of culture by discussing communication as a cultural expression, highlighting the importance of high- and low-context interactions. For the author, in high-context cultures—such as many Latin American ones—communication is more implicit, based on personal relationships, intuition, and trust. In low-context cultures—more typical of Anglo-Saxon countries—objectivity, clarity, and a focus on results prevail. This distinction is relevant when analyzing professions with distinct cultural characteristics, such as Design, oriented toward creative and symbolic expression, and Management, oriented toward rationality, planning, and measurable outcomes. Each of these fields constructs its own professional culture, influencing how its members think, communicate, and operate in the market.

Edgar Schein (1992), in turn, is one of the authors who most deeply analyzed organizational culture, understanding it as a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered, or developed by a group as it learns to cope with problems of external adaptation and internal integration. When these assumptions work effectively, they are taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel regarding these problems. Thus, Schein emphasizes the dynamic nature of culture, which is continuously reconstructed through the interaction between individuals and institutions. In the context of professional education, this means that each learning and practice environment—whether a university, a design studio, or a company—shapes and reinforces certain ways of thinking and acting, creating particular professional identities.

The influence of culture on professional education is profound, as it goes beyond technical learning. A professional's identity is built through symbolic experiences, interaction with peers, professors, and leaders, and the incorporation of values that define what it means to be "good" or "competent" in a given field. In Design, for example, professional culture values originality, aesthetic sensitivity, and the capacity for innovation. Designers are often encouraged to think "outside the box," explore subjectivity, and seek creative solutions to complex problems. In Management, by contrast, a more rational, strategic, and structured culture predominates, oriented toward efficiency, control, and decision-making based on data and measurable results.

These differences do not imply a hierarchy of value but demonstrate distinct ways of seeing and acting upon the world. While creative culture tends to emphasize freedom of expression, improvisation, and the transformative potential of imagination, managerial culture privileges predictability, planning, and security in decision-making. Both, however, are indispensable in the current context, where the labor market demands both the ability to innovate and the ability to manage processes responsibly and



strategically. The integration of these ways of thinking represents one of the greatest contemporary challenges for educational institutions and organizations seeking more collaborative and interdisciplinary teams.

In summary, understanding culture and its relationship with professional identity means understanding the human being in their entirety—as a historical, social, and symbolic subject. Each profession carries a set of meanings and values that guide its practices, and recognizing these differences is essential to fostering dialogue between distinct fields. The intersection between creative and managerial cultures can generate new forms of innovation and management, in which aesthetic sensitivity and strategic rationality work together to build more human, effective, and sustainable solutions.

## THE CULTURE OF DESIGN

The culture of Design is characterized by the intersection of art, science, technique, and human sensitivity. The field of Design is not limited to the creation of objects or images but involves a specific way of thinking and acting upon the world—a creative and intellectual stance toward contemporary problems. The designer's profile, therefore, is defined by creativity, innovation, and aesthetic sensitivity, elements that reflect not only technical competencies but also deeply rooted cultural and ethical values. The designer is, above all, a mediator between humans and their environment, between functionality and emotion, between the material and the symbolic.

According to Gui Bonsiepe (2011), Design is a project-based practice that seeks to reconcile the aesthetic dimension with social, technical, and communicative dimensions. He argues that the role of the designer goes beyond merely styling products; the designer acts as an agent who interprets human needs and translates them into concrete solutions, promoting improvements in quality of life. This perspective reinforces the idea that Design is both a creative and an ethical act, as it entails responsibility for the cultural and environmental impacts of each project.

In Design programs, pedagogical practices reflect this diversity of dimensions. Teaching methodologies prioritize experimentation, interdisciplinarity, and critical thinking. Students are encouraged to explore materials, technologies, and diverse languages, exercising creative autonomy and the ability to solve problems in original ways. Cardoso (2012) observes that the education of designers is marked by a constant tension between the rational and the intuitive, requiring professionals to balance logical analysis with subjective expression. This characteristic makes Design a dynamic field, where the culture of innovation is directly associated with the culture of sensitivity.

Donald Norman (2013), one of the leading contemporary theorists of Design, emphasizes that the value of a product lies not only in its practical function but also in the emotional experience it provides to



the user. Thus, the concept of user-centered design has become fundamental in recent decades, shifting the focus from isolated aesthetics to the creation of meaningful, accessible, and enjoyable experiences. This paradigm requires designers to understand behaviors, desires, and sociocultural contexts, integrating empathy, technology, and aesthetics within the same process.

Ezio Manzini (2008) adds that the role of the designer today is deeply connected to sustainability and social innovation. For him, Design should contribute to building desirable futures, relying on collaborative practices and solutions that value community, the environment, and the local economy. This perspective broadens the scope of Design, which now engages with themes such as solidarity economy, material reuse, sustainable production systems, and participatory design. Creativity, in this context, is not merely an individual skill but a tool for collective transformation and social regeneration.

Victor Papanek (1995), one of the most influential thinkers of the 20th century, had already warned that Design could not remain indifferent to the ethical and environmental consequences of its creations. In his work *Design for the Real World*, he criticizes consumerism and argues that true Design is that which meets real human needs and contributes to a more dignified and balanced life. This critical view shaped a generation of designers committed to social responsibility and the pursuit of sustainable and inclusive solutions.

In the contemporary scenario, the creative economy represents a new frontier for Design practice. It integrates culture, innovation, and technology, transforming ideas into products, services, and experiences of high symbolic and economic value. In this context, Design assumes a strategic role in areas such as branding, user experience (UX), design thinking, and digital innovation, becoming essential for companies seeking differentiation and relevance in the global market. This transition reinforces the importance of the designer as a connector between different fields of knowledge—a professional capable of understanding the cultural impact of each design decision and translating complexities into humanized solutions.

## THE CULTURE OF MANAGEMENT

The culture of Management is strongly associated with rationality, strategic planning, and the pursuit of organizational efficiency and effectiveness. According to Chiavenato (2014), the manager's profile is characterized by the ability to make informed decisions, lead teams, manage resources, and promote productivity in a balanced manner. For the author, management is a dynamic process that involves planning, organizing, directing, and controlling, always with a focus on results and the achievement of organizational objectives. This logic reinforces the identity of a professional who acts strategically and analytically, committed to institutional efficiency and performance.



Peter Drucker (2002), considered the father of modern management, emphasizes that the manager is an agent of change within organizations, responsible for transforming opportunities into concrete results. For him, management should be understood as a social practice that combines technical knowledge with human sensitivity, since no company survives without innovation, but neither can it thrive without leadership and purpose. Thus, the contemporary manager must balance instrumental rationality with the ability to inspire and engage people around common goals.

In Management programs, educational practices and methodologies reflect this rational and scientific tradition while also seeking to incorporate emotional and ethical competencies. Maximiano (2011) observes that management education aims to develop multiple competencies, involving not only technical mastery of management tools but also communication skills, teamwork, and decision-making in complex environments. The author stresses that management education should promote a systemic vision, integrating theory and practice to prepare students to address organizational and social challenges critically and innovatively.

From a labor market perspective, the field of management is constantly expanding, encompassing areas such as business administration, entrepreneurship, marketing, finance, and strategic planning. Kotler and Keller (2012) argue that today's manager must understand consumer behavior, market trends, and new organizational models based on data, innovation, and relationships. In a globalized and digital world, the manager becomes a mediator between people, processes, and technologies, acting as an orchestrator of value and competitiveness.

In this context, the culture of Management is configured as a results-oriented culture, guided by objectivity and the pursuit of measurable performance. However, the 21st-century manager is called to go beyond mere instrumental rationality: they must exercise ethical, sustainable, and humanized leadership, capable of aligning economic interests with social and environmental demands. This perspective revives the humanistic dimension of management and brings it closer to other fields of knowledge, such as Design, which values creativity and empathy. Therefore, although the managerial universe is marked by logics of planning and control, it also opens itself to innovation and interdisciplinary thinking. The integration between managerial and creative cultures proves essential for addressing contemporary challenges, where efficiency and sensitivity must go hand in hand. The modern manager, like the designer, is a transformative agent whose role transcends technical boundaries and reaches social, cultural, and ethical dimensions of the world of work.

## INTERSECTIONS AND CONTRASTS BETWEEN DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

The dialogue between Design and Management represents one of the most intriguing interfaces of the contemporary world, bringing together two fields that, although distinct in their origins and



objectives, share the pursuit of innovation, efficiency, and consumer satisfaction. Both disciplines play a fundamental role in the creation of products, services, and meaningful experiences within the context of a globalized economy, even though their methods and languages differ considerably. On one hand, Design is anchored in creativity, experimentation, and aesthetic sensitivity, seeking to understand human needs and transform them into tangible and symbolic solutions (Bonsiepe, 2012). Management, on the other hand, is guided by rationality, strategic planning, and resource optimization, aiming to achieve measurable and sustainable results (Chiavenato, 2014). This difference in perspectives does not imply opposition but rather complementarity. As Drucker (2006) emphasizes, innovation is not the exclusive domain of the creative field but the core of modern management itself, being essential for organizational competitiveness.

The intersections between the two fields become evident in areas such as project management, marketing, branding, and user experience. While the designer seeks to develop human-centered solutions, the manager creates structural and strategic conditions for these ideas to be viable and sustainable in the market. Norman (2013) reinforces that user-centered design depends on a systemic understanding of organizations and their processes—something that the managerial perspective can provide. Thus, the success of a product or service arises from the balance between creative thinking and managerial thinking.

Conversely, the divergences between the fields are also significant. Design tends to value subjectivity, intuition, and fluidity—characteristics that may conflict with the structured, hierarchical, and results-oriented logic typical of Management (Kotler & Keller, 2012). While designers work with uncertainty and experimentation, managers seek to reduce risks and increase predictability. This tension, however, is also a source of mutual learning: the encounter between creative freedom and organizational rigor can generate innovative and viable solutions, combining purpose and profitability.

In this sense, Manzini (2008) argues that contemporary design must engage in dialogue with other fields of knowledge to foster social and sustainable innovation, and Management is a key component in this process. The same applies to modern managerial thinking, which, according to Maximiano (2011), must incorporate creative and human values to adapt to the new dynamics of the creative economy. Therefore, interdisciplinary dialogue between Design and Management becomes a strategic necessity for organizations seeking to thrive in a complex, ever-changing, and experience-driven environment.

In summary, the intersections and contrasts between Design and Management should not be seen as barriers but as opportunities for convergence. The union of creative thinking and managerial action represents the path toward a new form of professional practice—more collaborative, empathetic, and future-oriented. It is in the interdependence between the sensitive and the rational, the artistic and the



strategic, that projects capable of transforming ideas into sustainable and socially impactful realities are built.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis conducted throughout this study made it possible to understand that the professional and cultural practices that shape the fields of Design and Management reflect not only methods and techniques but also distinct ways of interpreting and acting upon the world. Design, historically associated with creativity, aesthetics, and innovation, reveals a culture oriented toward sensitivity, subjectivity, and the pursuit of solutions that reconcile functionality and emotion. Management, on the other hand, consolidated as a science focused on rationality, planning, and efficiency, represents an organizational culture guided by logic, measurable results, and strategic leadership. These distinctions, however, do not constitute opposition but rather complementarity, as both fields share common objectives such as process improvement, value generation, and the satisfaction of human and market needs.

It was found that the cultural differences between designers and managers are related to ways of thinking and acting, influenced by academic training and the historical contexts in which these professions developed. While designers are encouraged to think openly, exploratively, and aesthetically, managers are trained to structure, plan, and make decisions based on data and objective analyses. However, the advancement of technologies, globalization, and the complexity of contemporary markets increasingly demand interdisciplinary action, where creative reasoning and managerial thinking complement each other in the search for innovative and sustainable solutions.

The study also demonstrated that dialogue between Design and Management is not only possible but necessary. The integration of creativity and management expands the possibilities for innovation and strengthens organizations in a competitive and constantly changing environment. Design contributes with its ability to understand users, translate needs into experiences, and humanize processes, while Management provides structure, strategy, and economic viability to creative ideas. This convergence proves essential in a context where companies increasingly value design thinking, collaborative project management, and the creation of brands with purpose and strong identity.

It is concluded, therefore, that understanding the intersections and contrasts between Design and Management means understanding the importance of interdisciplinarity in contemporary professional education and practice. The balance between sensitivity and rationality, between creation and planning, between aesthetics and strategy, constitutes the most promising path for building innovative and humanized solutions. The union of these two fields of knowledge not only enhances organizational efficiency and competitiveness but also contributes to the development of professionals who are more critical, ethical, and aware of their social role. In an increasingly complex and interconnected world, the



future belongs to those who know how to integrate the creative thinking of design with the strategic vision of management, transforming differences into complementarities and challenges into opportunities for collective evolution.



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