

The authors provide synthesized summaries of research on product design conducted over the 20-year period from 1995 to 2014, as well as suggestions for future research. Building on the conceptual model of product design proposed by Luchs and Swan, the current project describes research findings based on a review of 252 articles drawn from eight of the academic journals most influential to marketing thought, and identified by their inclusion of the terms “product design” or “industrial design” within their abstracts, subject terms, and/or author supplied keywords. Specifically, the authors provide integrated summaries of 25 product design subtopics organized within Luchs and Swan's original 11 product design research topic categories, which, in turn, address the following three general product design research categories: context and strategy, product design process, and product design consequences. These summaries are followed by suggested future research opportunities to address gaps in the literature. In addition to seeking inspiration for future research based on a review of extant research, the authors illustrate an approach for exploring research opportunities based on current and emerging industry trends, such as sustainability, the sharing economy, and the emergence of consumer-oriented health and performance management products. For each identified industry trend, the authors provide illustrative design implications with consequent illustrative research opportunities. This balanced approach to identifying near-term research opportunities based on extant research and based on industry trends, i.e., looking forward and externally, may in turn improve the potential impact of future research on both knowledge development and on industry practice.

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