

KCDM project: Achieving Business Excellence Through Design

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Both in life and in business, today's world is marked by uncertainty. Financial crisis, scarcity of natural resources and climate change challenges, globalization and digitalization have shattered the decades-old models and give little assurance for the future. In order to survive and thrive, companies have to be agile, willing to learn and adapt constantly. And most importantly: they have to turn their focus from technology, resources and price-based competition towards creating real value for their users.

When used strategically, design provides companies with tools for managing uncertainty and finding relevant answers to questions and dilemmas on user needs and expectations. Employing design management for actively managing all areas of its user touch points enables companies to stay consistent in the areas of identity and communication while at the same time fostering innovation of products and services. It provides means for sustainable, knowledge and added value-based development through systematic improvement of user experience.

The Competence Centre for Design Management (KCDM) was a pilot project for introducing potentials and the benefits of design and design management to Slovene companies. Initiated in 2012 by Gigodesign, one of Slovenia's most successful design agencies, and funded by the European Social Fund, it connected 19 ambitious and forward thinking Slovenian companies with global sources of design management knowledge. In 2.5 years of operation KCDM achieved outstanding results. Consistently improved business results throughout the partnership (70% growth of added value per employee, 245% growth of net profit, 14% growth of business income), international recognition of the project (DMI Design Value Award, 2016), and raised awareness of design management potential in Slovene and international business environment have set a solid foundation for further development and integration of design and design management in Slovene companies and increased international competitiveness of Slovene economy.