

**Summaries of Selected Sessions from the  
2008 AMA Winter Educators' Conference  
(Austin, TX)**

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## 1.2 Marketing Research, Technology, and Innovation (Special Session)

### **Innovation, Product Development and Diffusion I**

#### Chairs:

*Raji Srinivasan, University of Texas-Austin*

*Ashish Sood, Emory University*

#### Participants:

Designing Coolness: Brand Building in the Global Fashion Industry *Paola Cillo, Bocconi University*

*Jaideep Prabhu, Imperial College London*

*Om Narasimhan, University of Minnesota*

*Rajesh Chandy, University of Minnesota*

Does the Stability of a Product Development Team Shape New Product Success?

*Rebecca J Slotegraaf, Indiana University*

*Kwaku Atuahene-Gima, CEIBS*

Total Product Design and Customer Experience: Insights from the U.S. Automotive Industry

*Raji Srinivasan, University of Texas at Austin*

*Gary Lilien, Pennsylvania State University*

*Arvind Rangaswamy, Pennsylvania State University*

*Gina Pingitore, J.D. Power and Associates*

*Daniel Seldin, J.D. Power and Associates*

**Session Summary Writer:** Abdullah Al-Jafari, Oklahoma State University

Why are some brands “cool” while others are not? This research addresses this question by examining the role that the people behind the brand play in creating and maintaining coolness. Rajesh Chandy defined cool brands as those that are seen as desirable by the customers. According to the authors of this paper, coolness is an important dimension that influences the success of the brand in the market. Coolness will encourage customers to communicate positive word of mouth to others and increases the willingness to pay. The authors tested their thesis in the context of the global fashion industry. Chandy’s presentation focused on how individuals make brands cool. He stated that cool designers will create cool brands. Thus, his research dug deep into the antecedents such as education that might lead to the development of cool designers. He referred to the combination of resources that enhance forming a cool designer as the social capital. In his presentation he also answered the question of how can people become cool designers. According to his point of view, a person can achieve that in three different ways: Maison (France), Fashion School (USA & UK), or Family Business (Italy). The authors measure coolness by examining appearances of ready-to-wear brands in Italian *Vogue*, one of the leading magazines in this industry. Another reason to use this methodology is the ability to track ads by time. They concluded that the individual matters in developing coolness, and cool designers have access to social capital.

Next, Rebecca Slotegraaf presented her research entitled “Does the Stability of a Product Development Team Shape New Product Success?” She showed that stability in the product development team is a desired thing because it leads to greater internal communication, collective knowledge that might lead to better decision making, greater cohesiveness, and shared understanding among the team members. On the other hand, stability could have some negative impacts on the success of new products. She highlighted that stability might lead to less external communication. And high levels of stability could end up with collective rationalization. Thus, as a conclusion, stability is considered good; however, too much stability is not good. The level of stability of the product development team influences the competitiveness and the quality of new products. This research focuses on increasing the efficiency of product development and implementation by understanding the process by which new products are developed.

Finally, Raji Srinivasan’s paper provided a new concept to product design. Srinivasan showed that the current literature focuses on functionality of the product as the most important dimension of

the product design. However, her research introduces a new concept of product design that looks at more than one attribute (e.g. shape, size, coolness). She contends that all these attributes influence the customer response. Thus, a new concept of product design should incorporate such attributes. According to the Total Product Design introduced in this paper, product design is not just firm oriented any more, customers can also participate. TPD incorporates three dimensions: functional, sensorial (aesthetic), and meaningful (coolness). This study was conducted within the automotive industry. The results showed that what might be functional (size) for some customers is different from others (power). Thus, the mapping of the product characteristics on the TPD's three design elements will vary across customers. Finally, Srinivasan concluded that when developing product designs more is not always better.