

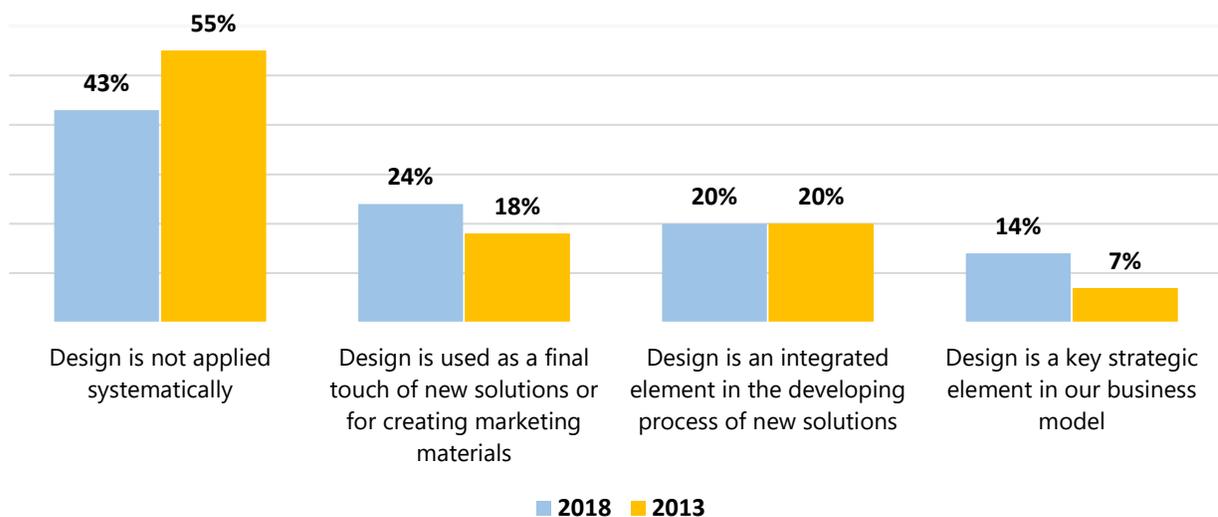
# Use of Design in Estonian Enterprises and Foundations

## Summary

The purpose of the study "Use of Design in Estonian Enterprises and Foundations" is to explore the current state and to map the needs and opportunities of private and public enterprises, as well as foundations and NGOs established by the state in regard to design use. Recommendations for improving and increasing design use are also proposed.

To fulfil the purpose of the study, strategic documents and literature related to design development were analysed, questionnaire-based telephone interviews and semi-structured face-to-face interviews with industry managers and experts in production and service companies as well as with design companies were conducted.

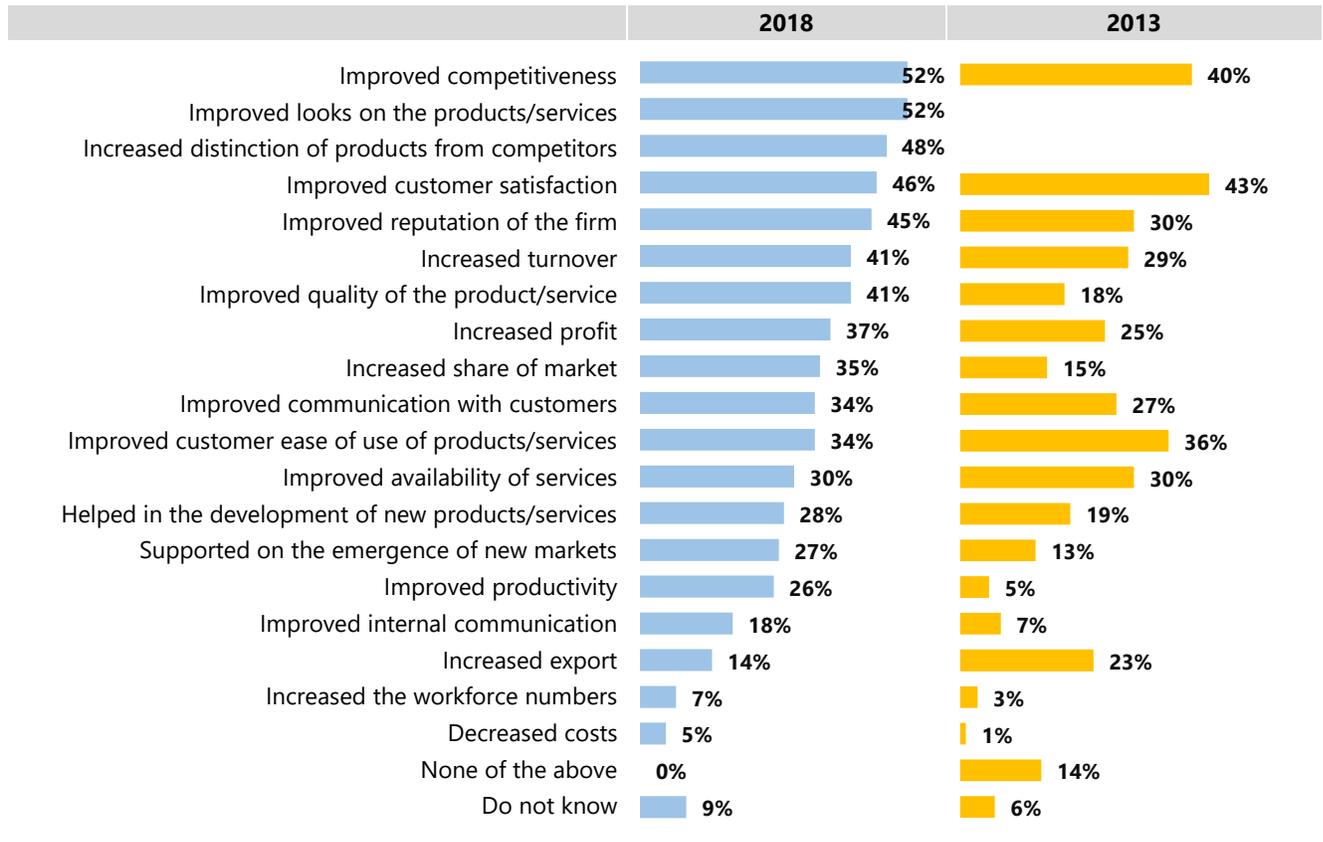
The study showed that the meaning of design for enterprises is largely dependent on the previous experience of design use. Generally speaking, companies associate the use of design mainly with graphic or interactive digital design, and design is mainly used to create the company's visual identity. However, more attention has recently been paid to service and product design. The systematic and informed use of design as a creative, strategic management and organisational tool is rather modest in enterprises. Businesses are predominantly either on the first (they do not use the design systematically and consciously) or on the second step (the design is used to give a final touch in the development of something new or for marketing) of the so-called design ladder (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** *The firms position on the design ladder*

As a rule, the CEO, marketing manager or development team are responsible for design use in the company. The experience with the use of professional designers' services is largely positive in companies. The respondents are satisfied with the quality and availability of the services (except for product design).

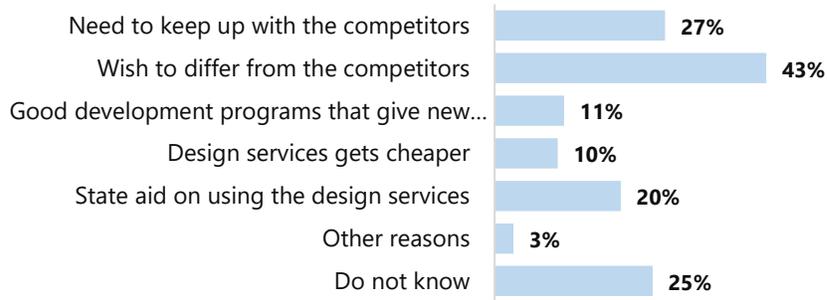
In general, companies do not measure the impact of using design but a lot of benefits are associated with it, especially when it comes to communicating with the customers and to the quality of produced products and services (see Figure 2). The main obstacles in design use are lack of awareness of the possibilities of using design, lack of confidence in the positive impact of design use, and in some cases the availability of design services (price, providing services under acceptable conditions). The need to use design services, however will continue to grow (see Figure 3).



\* The empty categories were not possible options for the survey in 2013

**Figure 2.** Subjective benefits on the usage of design for the firms

Companies do not see a vital role for the state to play in organizing and directing design use. Rather, it is feared that various state subsidies and measures could create an unfair competitive advantage on the market.



**Figure 3.** *What would make the firms to put more attention on the design in the future*

As a result of the study, six key recommendations were provided to enhance design use. First, to develop an interactive design recognition program for businesses. Second, to carry out an analysis on the need for design support for businesses and, if deemed necessary, design appropriate business support measures. Third, work out systematic methodologies and metrics tools for businesses that measure the impact of design use. Fourth, to review the national design curricula, based on consultations with various industry and business strategy companies offering jobs for designers. Fifth, to improve the organization and conditions of the design service procurement (better information dissemination, more transparent access conditions, more professional decision-making and the development of professional customer communication in government agencies). Sixth, to evaluate the need for a professional standard for designers after few years.