

DELIGHT LIGHT

Design Brief 2016

Delight in Light is a movement to encourage excellence in design and a better understanding of the role lighting plays in our lives through a number of initiatives of which the design competition is one.



theLIA

Organised by the industry body, The Lighting Industry Association on behalf of its members who are all potential employers of product designers. A well-established competition having started over 30 years ago and has become recognised as the major national competition for students or newly qualified designers

Brief

In the normal course of events when a design brief is delivered to a company, it is a cross-functional team that will receive it and work will be apportioned according to the strengths of the team members. In the case of the Lighting Designer Competition- you are the team. As such it is a useful exercise to 'interrogate' the brief from a number of perspectives in order to gain a better understanding and a varied impression of what is being asked of you. By this we mean look at it from the point of view of not just the product designer but the marketing guy, the toolmaker, distributor, and of course the end user.

Start with customer needs

Successful new products should be based on what your research tells you the customer could need and want in the future. This can come from a range of sources including small focus groups, analysis of products already successful in the market place and trends where the web can be invaluable. You are looking for an insight through this research that might differentiate your product from others on the market.

The Market

Research here is essential to understanding the risk and financial return of developing new products. You should consider:

- Anticipated market share
- Price range
- Market size and growth trends
- Competitors products

Product specifications

It is important having identified the market and customer needs to stay on track and constantly check that you have not drifted away from the core values that you want to build into your design and those that are contained within the brief.

Here are the key elements to the design brief for this competition:

Purpose

The product should be an interior light intended for domestic or light commercial use. When considering the purpose it is important to consider the product within its intended environment, for example- don't forget the importance of other nearby light sources or indeed daylight.

Performance

It may sound obvious but primarily the light should perform a lighting function. By this we mean it should provide light which is useful in the environment beyond that of a glowing object. Fundamentally it should be safe and suitable for the immediate environment- for example you might have to give some special considerations if designing a children's night light or a garage work light. Energy efficiency is not just a 'nice to have' feature anymore; it is in many cases a legal requirement. Consider the types of light source at your disposal and their efficiency weighed against costs and quality of light.

Features

What features can add value to your design in support of or in addition to its primary function? Would it benefit from easy assembly, the addition of easy clean surfaces or is it easily recycled. Consider features that will help in the buying decision but test the validity of these on others to ensure you have not convinced yourself that a feature is a benefit when others may not see it that way.

Reliability

How long is this product or its components expected to last? What is the weak link in the product in terms of longevity- is it the light source or the electronic components? Have you considered sustainability? If it fails for any reason can it be easily repaired by the end user or distributor?

Aesthetics

How will the light look compared with the competition? Can the ergonomics be incorporated into the design to improve the aesthetics? Ensure the coatings or materials are compatible with the environment in which the light is intended to operate and are in line with current colour trends and in the case of the light- does it withstand any heat generated?

Quality

Does the perceived quality match the target market expectations or if you have a retailer in mind, does it match their brand aspirations. Does it need to look expensive or simple and practical?

Packaging

Whilst we are not expecting a detailed presentation of the proposed packaging for the product, it is a help to judges if they see you have considered it in the design process and have not designed an excellent looking product that would be extremely difficult or costly to get to the end user.

Production

You should be clear where the volumes of your product are pitched. If it is a light intended for high volume sales through a major international retailer the judges will expect to see consideration of this in the choice of materials and tooling whereas a small production run will call for a very different approach.

Cost

The judges will expect you to be able to answer questions on the cost and sale price of your product. They will want to see that you have considered:

- Prototype costs
- Development costs
- Tooling costs
- Manufacturing costs
- Labour costs
- Marketing costs
- Distribution costs

It is important to consider the selling price expectations of the retailer as well as checking there is enough margin between your cost and selling prices to make an acceptable profit.

Remember the guidelines provided within this brief are intended to ensure you regularly 'sense check' your design. Judges will be impressed if you can justify the changes you made as your design progressed. Don't be dissuaded from trying something different but just check you are still on track to fulfil the needs of the whole supply chain.

Good luck and happy designing
www.delightinlight.org



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