

Furniture, Fashion and Industrial design

A long tradition of integrating design, high quality, branding, flexibility and constant innovation has given Danish companies within the design related sectors a strong competitive edge and established them as global leaders within their fields.

Danish design is selected by the government as a sector with a particularly promising international potential in the future and the sector is supported by a range of programmes under the headline Creative Denmark. This covers sectors that have made Danish design a major catalyst for export – exclusive high end products as well as popular consumer goods. This includes furniture, fashion and industrial design. Common to these three sectors is that large brand names has paved the way for smaller upcoming companies, and thereby maintained a constant regeneration of the design principles within each sector.

Traditionally, Asia in general and Thailand in particular has been a focus point as a production hub for Danish furniture, clothing and industrial products. This has created jobs and opportunities for many Thais. In recent years, the economic growth and prosperity of Thailand has increased the interest in Danish lifestyle products among Thais. Simultaneously, the Danish design industry has become increasingly interested in Thai consumers and opened outlets in many of Bangkok's upscale department stores.

Design Furniture

Denmark has been at the forefront of the international furniture scene since the 1950s and Danish furniture design fills the halls of the world's most prestigious museums from New York to Tokyo. Design classics by famous individuals in architecture and a new generation of innovative furniture designers go hand in hand to ensure that this prominent position is constantly renewed. Furniture for home usage accounts for the bulk of Denmark's furniture manufacture, but commercial and contract furniture from Denmark is also in high demand among professional architects, developers and operators all over the world.

The furniture sector in Denmark is currently comprised of app. 400 companies that produce furniture of a value of approximately Baht 110 billion yearly. The combination of advanced technology and a high level of technical competence has ensured the sector the highest productivity among European furniture manufactures. In terms of exports per capita, Danish producers can be considered global leaders. More than 80% of the production is exported, making the Danish furniture sector Denmark's sixth largest export industry.

Fashion

In recent decades, the fashion industry has been one of the most progressive Danish sectors in utilizing global opportunities when it comes to clothes, footwear, jewellery and accessories. Through a developed international cooperation, Danish companies have reached a level of competitiveness, which is highly recognised by foreign markets. Headquarters in Denmark specialise in design, customers and strong business models, while most production has been outsourced to Asia. The Danish fashion, textile and clothing industries have grown to become

the fourth largest export industry in Denmark and enjoys a favourable global position, especially within the European market.

The Danish textile and clothing industry has for many years been under strong global competition. During the 1980s, it met severe rivalry and was faced with demands of lower prices, which led to increased outsourcing to Eastern Europe and Asia during the 1990s. This outsourcing has had a significant importance for the competitiveness of the industry today.

From 1990 until today, the total turnover of the industry has risen by 145% and the export turnover by 120%. In 2005, 15,000 persons were educated within the field and today 4,500 design companies are placed in Denmark.

The textile industry is especially known for its flexibility and entrepreneurship, which also explains the early outsourcing initiatives, compared to other European industries. In addition, Denmark enjoys a unique platform for the North European markets partly due to Copenhagen Fashion Week. With more than 40,000 people and over 1,600 purchasers participating each year, it has become Northern Europe's leading fashion event.

Industrial Design

Industrial design has played a significant role in Danish industries for the past fifty years and has contributed significantly to the export success of many Danish products. Today, design is not only associated with functionality, but also means creativity, aesthetics and simplicity, and the sector covers a wide spectrum of designed industrial products. Many Danes are critical about the design and quality of the products they use in their everyday lives - from teaspoons to television sets. This has challenged the industry to balance function with innovation, timelessness and beauty and given the industry a strong platform for competing at the global markets. In this way, the design edge of industrial products has become an increasingly important part of the export potential and competitiveness of the industrial design sectors.

Association of Danish Furniture Industries: www.danishfurniture.dk

Danish Design Centre: www.ddc.dk

Danish Fashion Institute: www.danishfashioninstitute.dk

Federation of Danish Textile & Clothing: www.textile.dk

Copenhagen Fashion Week: www.copenhagenfashionweek.com