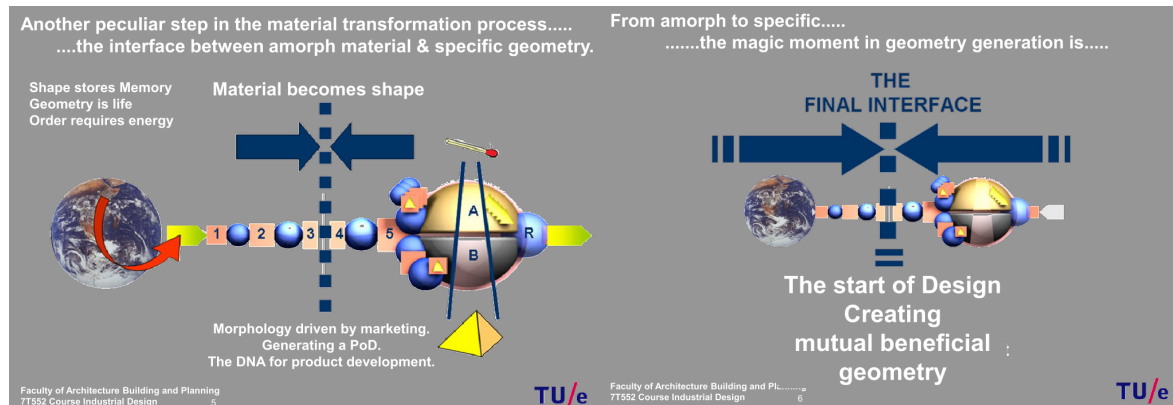


The "Final Interface".



© Illustration from my TUE lecture. Design-and-the-final-interface-2010

The supply or value chain is our global Santa Claus. It is the basis of our economic system. Every link in the chain adds value. Those links are parallel or sequential "gate-in/gate-out modules". Each output of a link is a "product" that is in turn an input for the next link. Products at the start of the chain are materials, semi-finished products or components. Products at the end of the chain are usually assembled into finished products.

Products originating from these links can be used anywhere, they can function autonomously. Other products can only function as part of a system. Like a house should have a location, or a tire should have a rim. In addition, there are products that are made in stock or only to order.

Products, wherever they are in the chain, are created by design. I define "design" as the transformation of data into information. Information itself is a product. A product is everything you supply to a market. A service, physical or virtual.

In the manufacturing chain, "design" is a magical moment! The moment when an idea, a concept, changes by transforming an amorphous material into a specific geometry, dictated by the "market". Specific means based on specifications, a schedule of requirements. Just as in a human, animal or plant, the characteristics and shape are defined by DNA and its biotope. These specifications are a set of conditions, a theme, that relate to the product to be produced as well as specific circumstances such as time, available transformation, technology, location, market, fashion and society.

This complete set of internal and external conditions is what I call the "final Interface". The magical moment in the transformation chain where yet another artifact is extracted from society. The precipitation of this is reflected, is visible, in the product produced. That "final interface" is the "Cradle", the cradle of everything we make.

Rinus van den Berg

Industrial & architectural designer.