INTEGRATED DESIGN LEARNING METHODS IN FASHION RETAIL DESIGN STUDIO

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Abstract

The growing complexity in the economic sphere, the accelerating rate of change, the omnipresence of information technology and the globalisation of cultural processes spin an intricate web of flows of goods, people and information, assigning a central role to policies capable of enhancing and developing innovative potential through research, education and learning. What stands before us today is a world far from the simple recipes of classical industrial culture: it is a complex world in which high technology plays at re-combining itself into the most diverse of forms, with mature technologies as much as with refined forms of artisanal production. The expected homogenisation of productive models has left room for an explosion of variety. The competitive value of businesses is ever more linked to their ability, enclosed within design action, to integrate codifiable and transferable knowledge with that which is tacit and contextual [1] [2]. Interdisciplinary knowledge becomes the qualitative and operational parameter capable of interpreting and guiding new production and consumer scenarios along local and global paths. Non-linear paths, let it be clear. Singular adventures, where a multidimensional thought supports «that game played between clarity and obscurity that is complexity itself» [3]. Within this framework, the purpose of higher education must tackle the formation of theoretical knowledge and that of operational knowledge and be capable of weaving a different kind of dialogue between educational contexts and productive realities. In design education, attention is focused back onto the relationships between basic and specialist knowledge, between knowledge and skill, between high-culture technical and scientific information and the know-how that can be applied directly in the professional world. And the learning methods themselves are based on these.

With regards to this, the present paper describes the structure, format and contents planned and developed in view of the “Fashion Retail Design Studio” Course held within the context of the Laurea Magistrale programme (equivalent to Master of Science and hereinafter referred to as LM) dedicated to Design for the Fashion System (School of Design – Politecnico di Milano). The Course’s structure, starting with a given design theme, was a chance to experiment with a workshop model in which teachers (professors, researchers and professionals) could experience the close interaction between building up knowledge and skills, with the use of different learning models within an experience-based context.

The disciplinary standpoint is that of Retail Design and the area is that of Design for the fashion product-system. Retail Design is characterised as a field with a strong directorial capacity of bringing together and integrating skills – just as an example, those concerning interior and service design, communication design, set, exhibit design and management –. This integration is reflected in the educational project both with regards to the contents and the organisation of the design workshop. The course is divided into 4 sequential learning moments, pursued in line with varying pedagogical models, all interdependent and focused on exploring different aspects of the same design field.

Keywords: Design Education, Project-Based Learning, Integrated Learning Methods, Experiential Learning Process, Fashion System Retail Design.

1 INTRODUCTION

The fashion industry finds its place within the new globally competitive market increasing those phases in which the role of design, creativity and knowledge management constitute its characterising elements, while also assigning a central role to policies that enhance and develop its potential: research, innovation and education. Design is given a strategic role for its ability to bring meaning to the production system which today shows its most immaterial side. Furthermore, the strong bond between this disciplinary area and formalised knowledge, along with knowledge connected to creativity, allows it to express a peculiar ability in managing an innovative project which is ever more the end result of multidisciplinary action.
The fashion industry implements the innovation of Retail spaces as the main vehicle for viewing and representing the value system underlying brand policies. The project follows a context of significantly multidisciplinary activities which range from knowledge about the production supply chain, about markets and about the social implications of the act of buying, along with a key awareness for commercial and marketing aspects. It is only after an in-depth phase of analysis and integration of the different fields of knowledge involved that a designer applies their ability to creatively translate the business’ aspirations into a functional and emotional project, with their final goal being to define an innovative shopping experience. These processes necessarily tend to have a significant impact on the educational system which needs to tackle the construction of a theoretical knowledge base along with an operational one that is suitable for weaving together a different dialogue between the contexts of education and productive realities. Within the Politecnico di Milano’s School of Design, already results can be seen of a first reflection on how and with which tools to teach future professionals about how to insert themselves into the world of new practices dedicated to retail design. In design education, attention is focused back onto the relationships between basic and specialist knowledge, between knowledge and skill, between high-culture technical and scientific information and the know-how that can be applied directly in the professional world. The space for consumers, a place for selling but also a field of knowledge for other meanings, shifts its designing phase (and before that even its conceptualisation) towards the simultaneity of denser values which, however, are also more inconsistent, towards new contexts of rational (but also sensitive) realisations, towards material (but also immaterial) forms.

This shift of focus onto qualitative aspects, opening up to a multitude of potential directions and the radical indeterminism that characterises the fashion product and the ways in which to channel its own meanings become an impetus for implementing a higher education that is dedicated to the fashion design system.

2 NEW KNOWLEDGE PARADIGMS, NEW CHALLENGES FOR TEACHING

To make the most of what one learns is a philosophy at the heart of knowledge which matures when the dynamics of technological and social change developed over periods longer than decades [4]. Now it is, on the other hand, taken for granted in all the literature regarding contemporary techno-productive and socio-economic systems that the context throughout which design takes place is characterised by intense and continuous swarms of innovation. As a consequence, knowledge is constantly changing, skills are constantly changing, even the methods required by the world of design are constantly changing. This is the reason why, for some time now, design has assimilated acquisition processes for new knowledge, along the lines of such learning dynamics. Conceptualising the act of designing – in the sense of an engine of innovation – as a form of learning, has gradually brought about a shift in the focus of those carrying out the training, from first-order learning, where interest in the content of such knowledge is key, to second order learning, where central importance is instead given to interest in the relevant procedures, techniques, methods of acquisition, selection, transfer, integration of different knowledge, anchoring new knowledge to that which we already possess, reusing what we have learned within a specific problematic context in different situations [5].

It is in the nature of the knowledge developed during design phases to englobe from the very beginning, almost like a genetic factor, the potential of transferring to different uses, other situations, other designs, those forms of knowledge that are developed with a specific purpose in mind. And it is also in the nature of design that there is a tendency to act as an attractor and catalyst for seeds of knowledge taken from different disciplinary fields which, by contamination and hybridisation, generate new knowledge coagulations.

Jorge Frascara describes the act of design as an interdisciplinary one “focused on problems” [6]. It is on the basis of the problem waiting to be defined that the designer learns to identify the range di expertise required for its solution. Changing every time. Because the nature of the problems faced is always different. All of which calls on design, on the one hand as an act of an intrinsically multidisciplinary thought process, on the other as a “bridge discipline” needed to help converge and incorporate pieces of knowledge that vary in accordance to the varying areas of expertise involved in its intervention. Furthermore, in design, as in all forms of transformative knowledge, not only content but the tools, techniques and ways of thinking are also moulded by the problematic object. A crucial matter for design training. In fact, the same dynamic that brought about the definition of distinct disciplinary areas, is a dynamic of composition, decomposition and re-composition of knowledge which, parallel to the agglutination of various disciplines’ contents, at the same time witnesses a process of appropriation on behalf of each disciplinary field of specific tools of enquiry, methods,
techniques, peculiar languages which all, both on an analytical and operational level, have been moulded by their own particular area of expertise.

Hugh Aitken attributed great importance to the assigned role during the knowledge transformation processes which accompany the design practices that lead to innovation, from the defined figures of translation, figures situated within the intersecting areas of disciplines, capable of recognising the languages, the behaviours, the cognitive models, the methods and operational thought processes of the various fields involved and of using this various thought equipment uniting them into a coherent synthesis [7].

Schon tackled a particular aspect of the matter at hand, that is, the possibility of using what one knows regarding a design situation which each time is considered to be unique to other cognitive contexts. The system of images, comprehensions, actions and reflections, built up through different design experiences, can be activated and used only if the meaning of the new situation, perceived as unique, is able to be linked to what is already part of one’s repertoire. Once again we are facing the issue of being capable of identifying analogies and differences between what is learned and what is new in the situations taken on. According to Schon, our behaviour acts in line with a logic of “exemplary cases” or cases that are paradigmatic, as analysed by Kuhn. Our experience, in other words, allows us to construct a repertoire of exemplary cases and problems on the basis of which, in future situations, we are able to form new action frameworks through processes of variation [8].

In design education, one must ask oneself about the meaning of variety, about the value of the same problem recurring again and again in different contexts, about the overlapping areas of experience, about the ways in which the issue taken into consideration during design activities can be gradually expanded. As supported by Bonsiepe “the design methodology is founded on the hypothesis that under the design process, albeit throughout the variety of situations to be faced, lies a common structure, that is, a number of constants that form something of an armour, abstracting from the specific content” and it is the reinforcement of this very armour that must be pursued when acting in a design-related exercise [9]. It is no coincidence that with regards to the teaching side of design, one of the ever-present issues concerns the ways in which design practices are set up – both from the standpoint of defining the perimeter of the matter’s context and from that of its contents, and finally from that of the methods to be used – so that what is learned during practice simulations can be reused in solving real problems that take place in the real world and can also be reused in other problem-solving situations.

In the theoretical reasoning surrounding knowledge transfer and reuse processes from places of theoretical learning to those of practical application, from places of simulation – teaching, that is – to those of its real use, from a specific problem being tackled to contiguous problems, a central role is taken on by the issue of the context of use and application of knowledge.

Attention to context leads us to abandon the idea that the results of a cognitive action have ant general validity. And this is even more so the case for those learning practices – still lacking proper study on a theoretical level – which, in the form of learning by doing, learning by using, learning by experience, seem to anchor their results inescapably to the here and now. It is explicitly assumed, in other words, that the value of knowledge acquired during experiences aimed at solving a particular problem has a localised value.

What, on the other hand, must be trained in a student is the ability to assess situational distance – different purposes, different resources, different value models of reference, etc. – among varying applicative contexts.

Design exercises in this sense become the place where a cognitive mixture of new and previous experiences, of permanent and variable notions learned, of primary and accessory knowledge, of generalised and localised knowledge.

3 COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN FASHION RETAILING

Fluid contemporaneity [10], cities that are global [11], widespread [12] [13], intangible [14], infinite [15], networks [16]. Welcome to the platform of postmodernity: a magmatic and floating platform where the system of objects finds meaning and at the same time weaves a fabric of narrative, symbolic and experience-based relationships. The fashion industry, perhaps because, more so than others, it has lived on a halo of meaning which it has been able to create through its products, is today in the process of changing its nature from primarily manufacture-based, focusing its design strategy towards
functions of a less material kind: trendsetting, communication policy definition, branding and retailing, product design, quality control, etc. This has been met by new related professional figures, including the brand manager, the fashion coordinator and the product manager born to introduce a new view of the definition processes for product and service architecture and to govern the complex system of relationships which reaches beyond the borders of a single company. The traditional concentration of responsibility has been replaced by a “flat pyramid” structure in which knowledge and skills circulate in a new manner, connected to roles and activities that previously lacked designing and transformative functions. The competitive value of a company also no longer leans on the classic price leadership concept or on the various kinds of qualitative differentiation. The value chain is now dotted with a multitude of nodal points in which knowledge is processed, transformed and aimed to anticipate, define and visualise market trends and to create relational exchanges with the final audiences.

Within this new context and, in an ever-growing way, industrial businesses have begun to show a particular interest in retailing policies. It is in fact in the new physical and digital retail spaces that the fashion system builds up increasingly important relationships between design, knowledge, culture and its own audience.

The moment the company’s “product” evolved to annex, as an economic value, services and experiences as well, the sales space took on a new role. No longer a “containing” indirect channel for goods and information on brands and products, but a complex space capable of representing the natural physical extension of the brand and of communicating the identity, personality and values of the brand itself to the market.

Not only that, but the new sales space, which fully conforms to the emerging theories about the importance of experience-based consumption [17] [18], of experience marketing [19] and experience economy [20], becomes a key hub of information coming directly from the market. For fashion business companies, creating a “memorable” purchase experience becomes the main distinguishing factor in a saturated market in a constant state of evolution. Defining a new shopping experience begins with knowing the values of the brand and the company’s philosophy. Knowing that every company has a product and its own history to convey, the true difference can be found in the way in which they transmit this to their audience and their effectiveness in doing so. There are companies that tell stories of elegance and exclusivity, others that convey the value of their traditions, others still that focus on transgression. The stage on which these stories are showcased is the retail space.

The greatest expression of the recovery of the distribution network by industrial businesses can be found alongside the definition and design of the first Flagship stores: stores in which design, far from elaborating a mere aesthetic and formal solution, takes on a transversal standpoint, capable of conveying a framework of meaning through the selection, visualisation and representation of those signs and symbols that are necessary to create a meaningful company story for its audiences (as a response to specific behaviours and desires), for the space (with regards to functional, ergonomic, communicative and sensorial characteristics) and for the company itself (in strategic forms of value and placement). From this moment onwards, investments in terms of strategies, designs, innovations, contaminations and hybridisations have yet to stop. In fact, they brought about a process of constant innovation both in terms of sales format and concept and in terms of the new perspective they have taken on becoming an actual company “product”.

If we were to trace an evolutionary sequence can observe how the Point of Sale, managed with a primarily industrial logic and considered financial leverage in view of achieving sales objectives, lasted until the early ‘90s. From that period we began to see the first Point of Purchase where the main role was not assigned to the product, but to the design of a particular atmosphere, of spaces that could stimulate the senses [21], in which all know-how was implemented regarding visual merchandising techniques. From the early 2000s we witnessed the sales point’s transformation into a Point of Permanence, where the design objective was to create a space in which the consumer is encouraged to spend a portion of their free time; the objective is not focused on selling products but building up a scenario that begins to insert into the retail space opportunities for cultural consumption. This is the case of Corso Como 10 in Milan, Prada in New York, Merci in Paris. Concept stores, in which the retail activity is integrated with that of art galleries, bookstores, cultural show and exhibition spaces, events that bring about the use of the retail space for motivations that are not strictly of an economic nature. With the exception of sporadic cases, now belonging to the past, architecture and design have underestimated for a long period of time the role that the distribution sector would have had for urban and social development within the today’s world and in the same way, universities had never structured specific study programmes.
Today, the level of innovation made possible by digital technologies is leading us towards another complication of the consumer system and thus of the design of spaces for sales. The true challenge emerging in today’s market is assigned to new omnichannel consumer processes. The chain reaction of new digital technologies has created the conditions for a process of constant innovation towards consumer models and thus new sales formats and concepts.

Creating a recognisable shopping experience remains at the heart of the expectations of consumers and of companies’ communication strategies, and yet we are witnessing an amplification of the tools with which economic exchange operators can establish lasting relationships. New web technologies make us acknowledge the parallel and interconnected existence of a variety of channels for contact and economic exchanges, which pave the way for equally frequent narrative and interpretative scenarios, within a retail space we could call augmented. At the same time technology inserts itself into the physical space allowing for the emergence of new unwitnessed consumer experiences.

New strategies connected to retail innovation increase the phases in which design’s role along with that of creativity and knowledge management become characterising factors. At the same time, the complexity of current retail spaces constitutes an interesting workshop in which the need to operate through multidisciplinary design groups becomes apparent. Here the designer acts as a cognitive intermediary, a connecting figure between trade (commercial managers, sales point directors, salespeople, agents) and the operators in stages preceding the sales point (scenario and consumer trend design research area, product trend research, style department, design/industrialisation).

4 FASHION RETAIL DESIGN STUDIO. AN OPPORTUNITY TO (RE)DESIGN MULTIDISCIPLINARY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FIELD OF DESIGN EDUCATION

Having stated all of this, within the Retail and merchandising design Workshop of the Study Programme in Fashion Design System (MSc) taught under the Politecnico di Milano’s School of Design, an experimental design phase has been initiated aimed at investigating the practices and forms of knowledge needed for launching a complex retail design project. The objective is to define a set of skills that are necessary for turning a student, a designer in this course, into a figure who acts as a “bridge” between the fields of knowledge involved in such a retail project.

This LM programme, of an international vocation, offers to form highly qualified professional figures, capable of managing complex design processes both in the context of the fashion product-system and in the strategic management of processes linked to fashion sector businesses.

The course has a strongly workshop-based foundation and structure and, under the supervision and coordination of a qualified teacher, involves a multidisciplinary team of researchers, contract teachers and professionals throughout teaching activities. This multidisciplinary aspect at the heart of the teaching staff, accompanying personnel who are highly academically qualified and expert professionals from the industry, benefits the transmission of multiple fields of knowledge, educationally structured while also being anchored to the practical side, which can only be acquired through professional hands-on experience. In the same context, the LM within which the Workshop is inserted is aimed at an audience of international students, with different educations and backgrounds and who, for the most, have not completed a first-level degree within the Politecnico system. For this reason, the Workshop, planned to take place within the first LM year, focuses on conveying an experience-based educational methodology, capable of encouraging abductive processes [22] and in which design acts as a bridge between knowledge and skills [23] and not a mere design exercise for spaces-products-services tied to specific areas-contexts.

Design workshops today represent a consolidated educational approach within the Politecnico di Milano’s School of Design (and, even more so, within the School of Architecture); since the ’90s, and the foundation of the School of Design, the educational offer has provided with techno-operational and theoretical-methodological courses a design workshop-based educational structure that is also experience-based and focused on the teaching principles of learning by doing applied to design as the object and methodology of the project at hand. Indeed, the learning by doing approach [24], based on the principle that makes practical experience the starting point for every cognitive action, assigns a central educational role to the concept of experience: experience on the ground, direct engagement and, last but not least, a moment of reflection spent on the activities carried out and the results obtained actively engage the student throughout their learning process and stimulate them towards experimenting with the knowledge and skills acquired [25].
In this context of reference, the Fashion Retail Workshop assumed as its object and disciplinary horizon the design of spaces and of consumer experience within the world of fashion – physical, but also virtual, spaces within which businesses and consumers meet and experience new moments of interaction – and aims to tackle the issue of contemporary retail as a complex system of relationships which neither begins nor ends with the design of a physical sales space but which involves the understanding and predefinition of competitive scenarios with meaning, the design of sales and purchase experiences, the analysis and experimentation of new systems of representation and visualisation of identities, values and business strategies.

In order to respond to these learning objectives, the Workshop, lasting a semester, has been structured into a sequence of four didactic modules: these are independent from an expected results standpoint and, partially, from the standpoint of subjects tackled, however the modules are connected and coordinated with one another by a strong teaching system which “holds the ranks” of a complex process-based teaching model focused on designing strategies and systems of smart and omnichannel consumption experiences within the fashion system sector.

The students are expected to come out of this learning experience having developed three different kinds of team projects – teams made up of international members with varying knowledge and skills – and having faced the final design step as an individual exercise.

![Diagram](image.png)

**Fig. 1 - Fashion Retail Design Studio. Integrated Design Learning Map.**

The first step opens up the reflection with a historical, sociological, iconographic study of a series of selected iconic products from the fashion industry (such as the stiletto, the trench, the Breton shirt, etc.). The iconic product assigned represents for each group of students a chance to research, analyse and reflect on the meaning, role and evolution of very specific fashion symbols that have marked and modelled today’s, and not only today’s, collective imaginary. The analysis, which interweaves the various levels of fashion history, sociology and business management, guides students towards understanding and defining a specific audience tied to the assigned iconic product and towards constructing and developing a meta-design scenario [26], a visual metaphor capable of launching students – in the following step – into generating innovative, sustainable and identifying
design concepts. In this phase, the outcome expected takes the shape of written and graphic mood boards aimed at giving a summarised and thought-out return to the learning process carried out and which hints at the potential design directions as anticipated.

The second step is aimed at guiding students towards designing a smart experience within the retail sector. In a sales scenario which, therefore, ties in and integrates in-store and online purchase experiences and which increases the number of chances and the value of moments of contact and exchange between a fashion business and its consumer of reference. In this context, students are guided towards creating a new brand and relative products or complementary semi-products and towards designing an omnichannel purchase experience capable of ranging from user-engagement strategies to designing the layout of the spaces. This second moment of guided design, which represents the core of the workshop’s educational experience, encourages students to face a variety of design areas: from interior design to exhibit design, from visual design to user experience design.

The third step focuses on a design opportunity that is accurate and defined: designing a window display. This second-to-last didactic module is thematically and methodologically tied to the previous step and requires students to apply the design methodology previously experienced to a given context and space, of a limited size. Designing a window display space allows students to put their own creativity to the test within a highly experimental context, with fewer restrictions to feasibility and with a limited, defined timeframe. The expected outcome, a physical scale mock-up of the window display project, also allows students to put into practice skills tied to the physical representation and visualisation of a design project.

The final didactic module, which overlaps partially with the previous step, is conceived as an instant design workshop. The module is aimed at designing and realising, in the form of a demonstrative prototype, a communication project for launching or promoting a hypothetical event tied to the brand and the retail space previously designed. During this opportunity, the compression of timeframes running between launching the brief and the deadline, along with the requirement to produce individual works, aims to encourage students to use the skills acquired thus far in a subjective and original manner and to transfer them into a visual communication project that is distinct and personal.

The four modules described so far focus on and pursue different phases of the design process, they activate these phases with different levels of intensity and they conform them to the expected learning outcomes. The re-elaboration of the framework proposed by Kyle Graham Brand (see fig. 2) shows five phases of the design process (Comprehension & Analysis; Scenario Development & Ideation; Concept Development; Concept Refinement; Delivery & Presentation) represented as overlaying layers: indeed, there is no precise moment in which one can identify the end of one phase and the beginning of the next [27]; the design process always appears to flow through blurred borders, with frequent steps back, recalibrations and reiterations.

| COMPREHENSION & ANALYSIS | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| SCENARIO DEVELOP. & IDEATION | | |
| CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT | | |
| CONCEPT REFINEMENT | | |
| DELIVERY & PRESENTATION | | |

*Fig. 2 - K. Graham Brand’s Design Process Framework revised by the authors.*

The Comprehension & Analysis phase refers to the first moment of approach, comprehension and exploration of the problem/design brief (goods context analysis or reference services analysis, audience, competitors, technologies involved, etc.); Scenario Development & Ideation is the meta-design phase in which possible and plausible scenarios are anticipated [26] along with the first design ideas capable of anticipating a change in the given context; the Concept Development and Concept Refinement phases refer to the emergence of sustainable concept designs – through a constant
The gradual process of development and selection – and to their following perfection in terms of cultural, strategic and productive sustainability; the final phase, *Delivery & Presentation*, refers to the final descriptive, technical and narrative “packaging” step in the format required for the selected and proposed design. Fig. 3 shows how the four didactic modules proposed within the Workshop have activated, in various ways and with different degrees of intensity, the different phases of the framework described above. If the first teaching module insisted on the phases of analysis and setting with regards to the design problem, the third and fourth modules – thanks to the definition of a precise and defined set of design restrictions – have instead stressed the aspects of creative and immediate realisation of design concepts and the following assessment through adopting study prototypes and high-fidelity mock-ups. The second teaching module, which as was already mentioned represented the core of the workshop experience, on the other hand, covers the entire creative-conceptualising process: from comprehension and analysis of the context of reference (a gradual re-elaboration of the previous step) to presenting a finished project.

![Fig. 3 – Relationship between the Design Process Framework and the Fashion Retail Design Studio Didactic Structure.](image)

The Workshop’s didactic structure, a complex structure both from the standpoint of provided contents and from that of the disciplines and methods involved, favoured an initial openness towards sectors presenting significant cultural content, not necessarily tied to the world of design – such as fashion history, the evolution of consumerism, sociology and management in the fashion sector – followed by gradually focusing on disciplinary areas that are closer to design – such as fashion design, interior and exhibit design, services and experience design and, last but not least, communication design (this last one being instrumentally transversal across all moments of the proposed design experience). The Workshop, therefore, adopted a didactic approach that is inter- and trans-disciplinary in order to «provide potential educational benefits that can develop into lifelong learning skills that remain essential to a student’s future development» [28]. In this educational workshop context, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary models find an optimal platform and structure for integrating theoretical content with work models that connect and hybridise a variety of disciplinary perspectives [29] [30] [31] and provide students with an effective and complete approach to acquiring a designing and creative methodology.

The workshop structure has also favoured the adoption of an integrated and innovative didactic model: the adoption of a variety of contents and formats (thematic and methodological lectures, instrumental lessons, presentations and discussions on case studies) and different channels (frontal and participative lessons, testimonials from industry experts and field visits) has encouraged a natural integration of contents and didactic methods and an ad hoc transfer into the four didactic modules. The end purpose of this learning experience did not, therefore, end with the transfer of a disciplinarily
defined “knowledge package”, rather, from a cognitive standpoint [32] [24], it achieved its purpose by engaging with the students within a recursive process of applying a design-driven methodology. The focus point thus shifted from the object of design – in this specific case, the retail space – to managing a complex of operators, restrictions and potential and to acquiring a design methodology capable of hybridising codifiable knowledge and contextual knowledge and the purpose of which is the design of relationships, of a complex system with meaning.

5 CONCLUSION

The design scenarios achieved in the conclusive phase of the experimental experience present an overall picture that makes the premises defined at the start more than satisfactory. The design concepts for new retail spaces pave the way towards design choices that are significantly integrated with strategic ones, connected to the system of values at the core of the defined brands. From the standpoint of the system of disciplines involved, a weaker contribution came from those closely connected to the more specifically managerial side and that of new digital technology, for which an intervention was theorised (and later realised) of two introductory lessons aimed at sharing the problems of the specific sectors with the students. The space conceived for these areas of knowledge was not sufficient for transferring the necessary skills and practices. The idea is, therefore, to intervene once again on the learning model proposed by moving forward with another experimental experience capable of increasing and integrating the area that is most connected to management and new digital technology.

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