



Museum of Design Portland

November 25, 2008

In late 2006 South Waterfront's Art, Culture, and Science committee created a mission statement for Portland's youngest neighborhood: "We are an inclusive, progressive community on the river sustaining an atmosphere of vibrant possibility". Out of this vibrant possibility the enthusiastic idea for a design museum was born.

[LOCATION] The combination of a forward-looking neighborhood and the concentration of creative talent in Portland is the ideal breeding ground for a world-class design museum. Portland is one of the leading creative cities in the USA and its strong creative economy generates with about 18,000 jobs in 1600 firms annual revenues of \$2 billion and a payroll of nearly \$1 billion. This creative class is looking for "abundant high-quality experiences, an openness to diversity of all kinds, and above all else the opportunity to validate their identities as creative people" (Richard Florida). We currently only have three major design museums in the USA: New York's Cooper-Hewitt, the Atlanta Museum of Design, and the Architecture and Design Museum in Los Angeles. Portland represents an opportunity in the northwest corner of the country.

City leaders envision Portland becoming a center of excellence for creativity and innovation. A world-class design school and the design museum are potential building blocks of this long-term vision.

[PURPOSE] A destination, where people find enjoyment, inspiration, and meaning in exploring authentic objects of design. It elevates the spirit, enlarges thought and feeling, stretches the imagination, and offers enchanting experiences. The objects presented by the Museum of Design in Portland would include consumer products, electronic equipment, transportation design, design concepts, environments, and spaces. Especially the baby boomer generation, which grew up in a consumer society, is very receptive to learn about the design of the products they are familiar with and the stories behind each object. The millennials also look for an analog alternative to their highly digital world.

[BENEFIT] Portland's creative industry benefits from a museum through the attraction of creative talent. Although Portland is host for world-class design firms (i.e. Nike, Adidas, Columbia, Ziba, or Allied Works), the city's location is somewhat remote, and it can be a challenge to motivate people to move to the West Coast. The museum helps further grow the local design culture, attract people, and be a great venue for local firms to present their work.

The City of Portland not only benefits from the increased tourism, especially generated through impactful special exhibitions with high numbers of visitors, but also from the significant contribution to the creative image of the city. For the local community the design museum is a great symbol of pride.

There is a strong potential that other design museums like the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York can benefit from having a cooperating partner on the West Coast. Expensive exhibitions, which currently are being shown only once, can be transported to the Museum of Design in Portland, for west coast audiences.

[TEAM] Since April 2008 we have grown a grass roots support group on Facebook (Let's build a Museum of Design) and currently have over 600 members supporting the vision for the museum. Many experts have surfaced: non-profits, marketing, design, architecture, museum board. For more information, please contact:

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[If we can dream it, we can build it.]