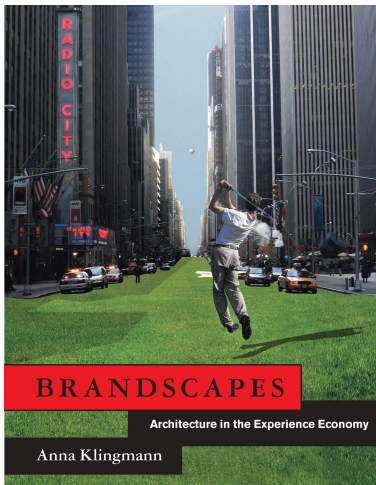


Brandscapes: Architecture in the Experience Economy/ Anna Klingmann.—Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, September 2007.—364 p.: ill.—ISBN-13: 978-0-262-113031-16-41532-1 (cl., alk. paper): \$29.95.



Critic and architect Klingmann argues it's time for an "organized renewal of architectural practice," that draws lessons from the experience economy and branding. Marketing skills are now the force driving architectural practice and in order to be successful, firms must adapt. In other words, she says, architects need to look at how marketers target consumer satisfaction. They must look forward and outward to attract consumers who identify with brands and they must become advocates for their clients.

Klingmann, founder and principal of KLINGMANN, couples current architectural practice with an innovative brand experience, identifying value creation and innovation as keys to creating a market space. Referencing successful business and marketing strategies, she urges architects to adopt design principles based on successful brand experiences. To support her arguments, she cites successful brandscapes, including Niketown, Sony corporate headquarters, and Baltimore's Harborplace. Her examples lack depth and research based analysis, but they do illustrate her passion for the branding experience

in design. She overlooks what seems like an obvious example of branding, the wildly successful Bass Pro Shops, complete with an outdoors experience; the first megastore opened in Springfield, Missouri in 1981, and the enterprise has quickly grown to approximately fifty stores, with more in the planning stages.

Klingmann identifies two cutting-edge brand firms, SHoP and UN Studio in Amsterdam. She points to UN Studio's design of the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart as essential brandscape architecture that successfully combines materials, financing, engineering, marketing, and styling for success. SHoP applies computer techniques with pragmatic applications in design, as found in New York City's imaginative East River Waterfront.

Although Klingmann's focus is on using brand identity as a substitute for the form and function of buildings, she also suggests that branding may be applied to entire cities. Her ideas are persuasive, but this reviewer ultimately believes there is far more to designing a building, city block, or city than applying consumer identities to physical structures.

The author's tone is sometimes academic and sometimes popular. Though branding is not a recent concept and the examples cited in the book are, in most cases, obvious, this is still an important book for students and architects, because it makes the case that successful architectural practice needs to change and respond to consumer and client needs. The book is recommended for collections strong in current architecture trends.

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