

Evaluating the State of Product Design in Trinidad and Tobago

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Abstract: *This paper describes a study of product design and manufacturing companies in Trinidad and Tobago. Using the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA) database, three companies engaged in original mechanical or electrical product design and manufacturing agreed to participate in the study. Design process and product audits were used to evaluate the current design practice and quality of the designed products. The research findings demonstrate that local design process capabilities and product quality are lacking within Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's). This was due to companies not being able to afford full-time product design expertise and formal design skills not being appreciated by business owners. Recommendations were made to address this situation including design education workshops to sensitise business owners about product design techniques and audits, and national incentives to encourage and support the business of product design through product design partnerships.*

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