

The Green Product Design Network

Fall Term, 2010
Volume 1, Issue 1

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A Great Term for the GPDN!

Welcome to the first newsletter for the Green Product Design Network! The GPDN is composed of faculty, staff, students, industry people, and members of the community who are interested in creating innovative products and accelerating their acceptance in the market place. We're a team of chemists, designers, communicators, business strategists, and marketers who endeavor to work together to make a difference in the world.

The GPDN is one of the first five 'Big Ideas' supported by the University of Oregon. The Big Ideas are part of the Phased Focus strategy to systematically raise the quality of all aspects of the University.

Our goals are not modest: in addition to developing new products for a more sustainable world, we also want to make Oregon the epicenter for green product research, education and leadership.

To do this, we must move beyond our own specialties and work together to innovate. This term, we've focused on building our network, reaching out to the community, and taking a leadership role in all types of green discussions.

The momentum has begun. The press and the public recognize the value of our work, and we are happy to share our successes with you in our first newsletter.

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Upcoming Events

- ◆ March 30:
Green Design and Green Marketing at the JMSA: visit Facebook to learn more!

GPDN Mixed it Up at the LCA Mixer

A discussion on Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) and an introduction to the GPDN brought the UO and community members together for a "thinking mixer" November 16. The event drew graduate students, entrepreneurs, government policy workers and professors from a number of departments. "The idea is to solidify a base of LCA expertise here on campus. This event brought together an energetic group with very good ideas," said LCA Working Group Leader Erin Moore.

"Our goal here is to bring the right people to the right problem at the right time and be flexible enough that as the problems change, the teams change," explains Jim Hutchison, UO

chemistry professor. GPDN looks forward to holding similar events throughout the year.

Individuals attended for various reasons, ranging from information seeking to networking. Thomas Price, Green Lane board member and CEO of Safety Health and Environmental Works, attended the mixer for general information. "I'm trying to always be on the cutting edge, and I hope I can contribute to today's discussion," said Price.

Individuals gathered were interested in a wide array of LCA practices. From plastics that conduct electricity to green car interiors, it was clear everyone was excited to connect and share.



John Frazier (Nike) and Scott Exo (Food Alliance) at the Green Guides Forum

Photo: Jack Liu

“We feel that if we’re going to say something publicly about a product, or something about how a product is made, we have to be able prove it,” said John Frazier, Director of Considered Chemistry at Nike. “We have to maintain the trust of the public.”-GPDN Green Guides Forum, 12/1/2010

Green Guides Forum at Turnbull Center

Chemists, marketers, product developers and graphic designers gathered December 1 at the Turnbull Center in Portland for a discussion on the proposed Green Guides, the new Federal Trade Commission regulations for green marketing. The event was sponsored by the GPDN and the School of Journalism and Communication.

The proposed Green Guides provide guidance on qualifying green claims, utilizing seals and certifications, and discussing toxicity and renewable energy. They also provide guidelines for when terms like ‘recycled’ and ‘compostable’ can be used appropriately.

Panelists included John Frazier, Director of Considered Chemistry at Nike, Scott Exo, Executive Director of the Food Alliance, and Eric Brody, consultant, with Shift Advantage. The panel was moderated by the GPDN’s Kim Sheehan. The panelists discussed both the strengths and the weaknesses of the Guides, but agreed that the emphasis on qualifying green claims should help with greenwashing, the practice of overstating environmental benefits in messages.

A follow-up event is being discussed for this spring. Check out Facebook and Ning sites for updates.

GPDNers Spread the Word!

Fall term saw the GPDN leadership members traveling around the world to share research, to learn with industry, and to talk about the GPDN.

Tom Osdoba and Kim Sheehan attended the Green Business Innovation Forum in San Francisco.

In October, Julie Haack and Jim Hutchison traveled to Berkley to participate in the Green Chemistry in Education Symposium. There they

presented in the morning panel on Green Chemistry Curriculum that highlighted the open source approach being used to infuse green chemistry into the Berkeley curriculum. While there, Julie was interviewed for the “Living On Earth” radio show.

Also this term, Erin Moore (LCA Working Group Leader) presented papers at LCA -X in Portland, Oregon, and at EcoBalance 2010 in Tokyo, Japan.

Logo Contest Update

What is the best way for the GPDN to visually communicate what we do? To find out, we announced a logo contest in October, and more than 60 entries were received from UO students, graduates, employees, and community members.

See a sampling on page 4 of this newsletter, and view all of the entries at our Facebook site.

The GPDN leadership selected five logos as semi finalists, and the five creators are now working with Colin Miller and Marlitt Dellabough from UO Design and Editing Services to refine their logos.

The winner of the logo contest will be announced early in Winter term.

Ad Students Promote Compostable Wastebasket

Last spring term, product design students in the PD199 Studio Class taught by Sara Huston developed a wastebasket to facilitate the separation of compostable paper towels from other waste in public restrooms. Paper towels make up the vast majority of waste in UO's public restrooms, and until now this waste was not easily compostable. This fall, journalism students in the J340 Principles of Advertising class taught by Professor Kim Sheehan, developed advertising campaigns for the wastebasket as their term projects.

J340 students were excited by the opportunity to collaborate on this project. "It was great to have a 'real project' to work on as opposed to a hypothetical product," said journalism student Kelsey Reddicks.

"Most everyone we talked to said they really care about the environment, but feel doing the right thing isn't easy because it takes time and usually more money. The students we talked to seemed excited about the wastebasket idea because it would be an easy step for them to be part of the "green" movement," said Analise Baarstad, a journalism and public relations student.

Students also invented names for the basket, including the Bio Bin, EcoCan, Green Queen, and TrashPost.

The advertisements and other work developed in the advertising class will go into the students' portfolios. "Having a tangible product that pertains to this campus and possibly be marketed, makes our portfolios stronger," said Reddicks.



Ad students developed campaigns for this wastebasket created by PD students. The basket separates compostable paper towels from other trash, and the entire basket is compostable as well.

PDX Class Creates Sustainable Products

Students in the "Home/Business Office Products" course unveiled fall term projects December 1 at the White Stag building in Portland. The students were asked to design a product that fit a defined consumer target, while connecting with the given consumer on both functional and emotional levels. Although sustainability and green design were not the focus of the assignment, the majority of the students considered "cradle to cradle" philosophy, and applied green design when possible. "Sustainability is one of the basic principles of design and should be present in everything we do," said instructor Christian Freissler from Ziba Design. After the presentation, students had the choice to enter their designs into the Staples Global Eco Easy Challenge.

The students, working on fifth year BFA degrees at UO's Portland campus, divided into groups and individually came up with products that would match a given consumer. Students presented their products each touching upon materials used, process of manufacturing, and reasons why they developed their item.

Some projects incorporated "green design" by focusing on materials, longevity of product, and energy sources, such as the "Speakeasy" Bluetooth speaker made out of recycled aluminum and goat leather for durability and longevity. Other products included an energy-saving manual pencil sharpener and paper shredder, staple free stapler, recycled plastic stamp with plant-based ink, kinetic charger, and plume pen made from "Arboform," a one hundred percent renewable raw material.

What's Next?

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We're on the Web!
Come visit us on

Facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Green-Product-Design-Network/102238399837642> and

Ning:
<http://uo-gpdn.ning.com/>

We look forward to winter term with great classes, visits and events involving sustainability and green thinking.

Classes include:

--J399: Issues and Theories of Sustainability Communication. This is the first class in a two-part series taught by Deborah Morrison and Kim Sheehan in the School of Journalism & Communication, and funded by the Meyer Fund for a Sustainable Environment.

--PD 350: Objects and Impacts: Explores how design influences and is influenced by materials and manufacturing processes, taught by Kiersten Muenchinger.

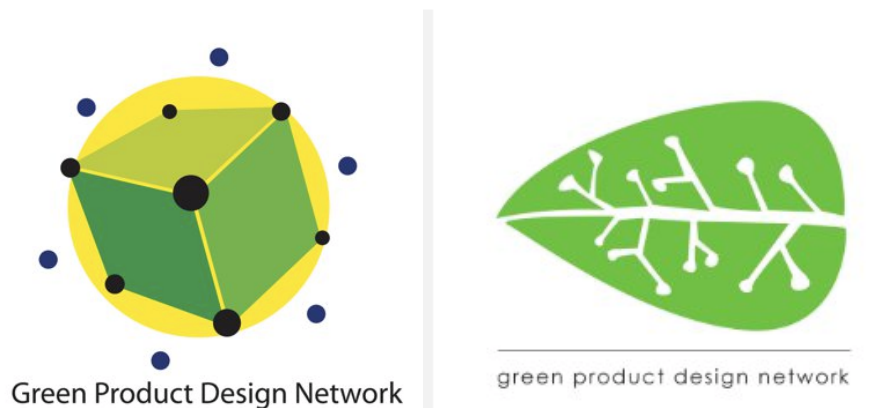
--MGMG 610 Sustainable Business examines the role and importance of sustainable business in society, taught by Jennifer Howard-Grenville.

Visits in the planning stage include:

-- a visit with Jonathan (Jon) Fink, the new VP for Research and Strategic Partnerships at PSU. He came from Arizona State U. where he was VP for Research and the leader of their Sustainability Center.

--a lecture by Dr. Gregory van Buskirk, a Research Fellow at the Clorox company in San Francisco who focuses on "taking green mainstream".

Logo Design Winners: stay tuned for an announcement of our new logo. Here are two of the entries we received:



Stay tuned for our next issue in April, 2011, and join us on Ning and Facebook for updates, photos, videos and more.