

Reinventing the online platform as an interactive B to B experience!



As young urban New York designers, Weston and Brenda Andersen received an award from Living Magazine for the Egg Vase with Lip Form, Once they started their own production company there was no time for competitions. Andersen Design went where few productions dared to tread, into fluid glazes and individualized decorative techniques.

I recently came upon an article about a revival in cottage industries, [Cottage Industry Revival; A Modern Twist on Contemporary Crafts](#). This is a story that I could have written about a cultural framework fitting my vision for Andersen Design assets, so I filled out a form for the investment company that published the story.

Andersen Design is a re-start company but the form is written for start-up companies. so I reinterpreted the questions to fit our framework.

Web and Platform Development

One question was whether I am interested in the company's tech program including [UI UX designers](#). The online platform is a social contract for a heterarchical network of makers and free enterprise entrepreneurs. The UX designers will have to interact with the legal consultants, and makers and use their knowledge to create an interactive way of working together.

Even with a legal framework, there needs to be an unwritten agreement on rules of fair play, which is how the small enterprise free market worked before non-profit organizations stepped in [to change the rules to their advantage](#). Then enter the dominant online platforms, and the one-way street is established.

The Andersen Design platform for product makers should be grounded in general terms of agreement and include options to negotiate business-to-business relationships.

A network of small entrepreneurs will need both legal terms of agreement and an unwritten social contract based on a mutual understanding of fair play stated as constitutional principles.

Andersen Design is familiar with having its designs imitated or copied. Recently I came across an image of a pair of our rabbits with ears back, one smaller than the other. The smaller rabbit is a case where someone used our rabbit to make a mold, which resulted in a smaller version. A commercial version of our brown slip now exists, which the imitator must have used to produce a knockoff of our work.

I wrote to the person who published the image. The woman responded pleasantly and is an Andersen collector in Arkansas, where [the Wingate Foundation](#) is located. The Wingate Foundation [funded](#) the Watershed Ceramic Center for the Arts five million dollars but does not accept unsolicited grant applications.

Word is that one must connect to such foundations via social media. (This is social media)

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I asked if she had any connections to the Wingate Foundation. She did not but would ask around, she said, and I thanked her and made mention of [the six degrees of separation](#).



[Rabbit with Ears Back](#) in Andersen Brown Slip

The best protection against intellectual property theft is to do what one does better than anyone can imitate. Although there is a commercial brown slip imitator of Andersen Design's brown slip on the market the Andersen product also uses an original body and an original white glaze. In ceramics, relationships produce the quality of the effect. Complexity creates an inimitable quality.

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The individualized production for which Andersen Design is known came about because Andersen Design was established by individual artisans creatively engaged in the work process.

A company with its own design and research department will always be a leader in the field, achieving high-quality individualized results.

As all this was happening, two individuals from an NYC investment company viewed my LinkedIn profile. It is flattering to be viewed by investors but hedge funds and derivatives make an unlikely match for Andersen Design. Andersen Design has [a product line](#) large companies

might be interested in but making an individualized product with original and interactive glazes is complicated, calling for an original and interactive production structure.



The art of Glazing. An elegantly restrained drip

However, It's important to understand financial instruments and how they interact with the world.

There are reasons why the wealth gap decreased from the reform of the 1930s and increased from the 1970s to today's extreme divide. Jan D Weir is an author who writes about the causes of wealth inequality from a banking system perspective and posits what can effectively restore a bell curve of wealth distribution. Please follow him.

[Follow Jan D Weir](#)

[Royal Stafford](#) is an example of a traditional ceramic company. It was established in 1845 in Burslem, England, a landmark of the Stoke-on-Trent potteries. Its production is still located in England:

Royal Stafford produces two lines of [Eva Zeisel's](#) work. Its [ceramic-making process](#), is similar to that of Andersen Design except that the glazes and decorating colors used by Andersen Design make our production more complicated. Royal Stafford uses non-interactive glazes and limited color choices. Royal Stafford uses decals for its decorative pieces.



Even when executed by the same artist, each bowl is unique.

Andersen Design stands out among ceramic production companies for its hand-crafted techniques and original and interactive glazes. That is why the form of production that Andersen Design needs is unconventional. A network of smaller independently owned studios can do “individuality” better than a large top-down corporation.

If a studio in a network of studios producing the Andersen line should want to use only one or two glazes, that can be done because each studio is independently owned and makes its own decisions. Some studios may choose to become the experts in a particular glaze or decorating technique. Any studio can create glazes, and negotiate with other studios on the use of their creations.

The UX designers might work with the legal department to develop template agreements. Designing terms of agreement for the use of Andersen Design's assets can become the basis of template agreements for others to use.

The Andersen Design website will represent the aesthetic sensibility and philosophy of the brand. The website will include curated products by other artisans who will benefit from the historical brand recognition that Andersen Design has built, and they will become co-creators of its future historical journey.

Another question asked was if I am interested in a co-founder. I answered affirmatively. Andersen Design is what it is because the founders were engaged in the work process of making ceramics. There was never a desire to scale up just for the sake of being larger, which happens when the primary goal is financial profit. Instead, as new designs were created, the line grew until it required a larger participation. This might be a difficult concept to sell in the capital investment field targeting becoming an IPO in the publicly traded market, and that is how the working class and the ownership class become separated. Then we see concepts of "psychological ownership" emerging in academic fields working in the interests of large corporate culture to devise ways to encourage workers to use their "[psycap](#)" for the benefit of the publicly traded corporation.

[Cory Doctorow](#) coined the term "enshittification" I believe enshittification increases with scale. On Reddit, there is a discussion about Etsy, which I have heard has been enshittified for quite some time. You can follow it in the link.

[Reddit Conversation about the enshittification of Etsy](#)

Not expressly about Etsy, but it feels relevant: “Here is how platforms die: first, they are good to their users; then they abuse their users to make things better for their business customers; finally, they abuse those business customers to claw back all the value for themselves. Then, they die.”

The rumored enshittification of Etsy, invites a new way of selling handmade crafts online as small but curated platforms rather than mass Amazon-size sites that sell everything. [Andersen Design](#) has the established brand recognition to do a curated venue.

[Eva Zeisel](#) taught ID as product design for mass production, exemplified by easy-to-control glazes. When Dad told Eva he was moving to Maine to start his own production company, she exclaimed that it was a hard thing to do! (with or without added-on complexities!)

Establishing [Andersen Design](#) was a hard thing to do. That’s why it shouldn’t be wasted but instead, the assets should be put to good use so that others can enjoy the creative lifestyle of free independent makers.

Wikipedia’s history of industrial design is an interesting read. It starts like this:

***Industrial design** is a process of [design](#) applied to physical [products](#) that are to be manufactured by [mass production](#).^{[1][2]} It is the creative act of determining and defining a*

product's form and features, which takes place in advance of the manufacture or production of the product. Industrial manufacture consists of pre-determined, standardized and repeated, often automated, acts of replication,^{[3][4]} while [craft](#)-based design is a process or approach in which the form of the product is determined personally by the product's creator largely concurrent with the act of its production.^[5] [Industrial Design Wikipedia](#)

The Wikipedia description contrasts industrial design with craft design. [Andersen Design](#) merged them. The forms are pre-determined but the finishing is infinitely variable. A tree painted in the brown slip could be described as a “pre-determined, standardized and repeated pattern”, each has roots, a trunk, and branches, and yet every tree pattern executed by an individual artisan is unique. “The form of the product is determined personally by the product's creator largely concurrent with the act of its production”. This is also true in the fettling of a slip-cast form. A hand-finished piece has an entirely different feel than a machine-finished piece.

I submit that as AI is increasingly used in production, a new call for handmade products will emerge as a complementarity.

It is possible to create limited editions by individual studios, each with its own style of executing a repeatable pattern. Within the brand, individuals can have their signature, consistent with philosophical concepts of heterarchical relationships of parts to the whole.

Andersen Design did not go into numbered limited editions, but production was limited by the smallness of scale, allowing the market viability of the classical line to endure in time. Andersen Design is a low-profile collectible with room to grow in a world market.

Wikipedia's history of production makes this resonating point:

As long as reproduction remained craft-based, however, the form and artistic quality of the product remained in the hands of the individual

craftsman, and tended to decline as the scale of production increased [Industrial Design Wikipedia](#)

I concur. A network of independently owned ceramic artisan studios retains the production of the product in the hands of individual craftsmen while providing a much-needed collaborative community.

As nature pushes back against the effects of the human race on the environment, mankind must necessarily undergo a paradigm shift in which economies of scale will be re-examined.

Periods of normal science in which an accepted paradigm is well-established are punctuated by “paradigm-shifts” or scientific revolutions, which can be analogous to what psychologists term a “gestalt switch” [The Conscious Universe](#) by Menas Kafatos and Robert Nadeau pg 6

The psychological gestalt-switch is already on as the remote workers and work-life balance movement. There is an emerging sensibility on the horizon, expressed in the story about [a cottage industry revival](#) and the [Wikipedia](#) article about Industrial Designs. These stories are refreshingly sympatico with the philosophy of [Andersen Design](#).

Cottage industries need town ordinances that accommodate businesses in a home. Cottage industries should be included in both economic development and housing solutions. In Maine, there is a battle to be fought with the state planning massive “production housing” for a projected population increase such as Maine as never seen before as the State plans its new “space economy”, not only a [Maine Space Corporation](#) but an entire economy controlled by the state.

In recent news there is a new articulation of what Industrial Design entails:

DEFINITION OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

At the 29th General Assembly in Gwangju (South Korea), the Professional Practice Committee unveiled a renewed definition of [industrial design](#) as follows:

Industrial Design is a strategic problem-solving process that drives **innovation**, builds business success, and leads to a better quality of life through innovative products, systems, services, and experiences. **Industrial Design** bridges the gap between what is and what's possible. It is a trans-disciplinary profession that harnesses creativity to resolve problems and co-create solutions with the intent of making a product, system, service, experience or a business, better. At its heart, **Industrial Design** provides a more optimistic way of looking at the future by reframing problems as opportunities. It links **innovation**, technology, research, business, and customers to provide new value and competitive advantage across economic, social, and environmental spheres. [World Design Organization](#)