

Trapped by Design

We, consumers, are trapped by design choices made by designers who are trapped by industry requirements, which are trapped by the growth imperative.

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Project Information (EN)

Make sense, not profit.

Research into design choices made in big corporations opened a door to a room full of psychological exploitation techniques. Based on cognitive biases and heuristics, they change consumer behaviour to meet the needs and wants of those who embed these design choices in their products. Unfortunately, it often happens at the expense of consumer autonomy and our environment.

The most important task for humanity now is to stop mindlessly chasing profit. We need to remember how it is actually to be human and not let illusive lifestyle propaganda dictate what we want, what we do, how we see ourselves and how we treat other human beings. I am trying to remind people of what is actually important and what they actually need from products by breaking the narrative in which evil products exist.

By encasing a slot machine in a collective image of "Labubu" type products, I am showing that even such behaviours as gambling are being actively promoted in product design and development to increase sales. There is not even a hint of concern for overconsumption becoming a habitual response to newly released products. Even less so for the environmental impact of careless overproduction.

How exactly?

Trapped by Design is an example of an alternative to exploitative products. Everything in the installation except for eyes and internal skeleton was made from recycled, repurposed or second hand materials - in contrast to the industry where virgin materials are cheaper than recycled ones. 100% of the funds raised through the installation is going to an environmental organisation - Milieudefensie who are acting together with Friends of the Earth here in the Netherlands - not being pocketed and hoarded on a private bank account. In addition, it is a one-off that provides an experience for a small price and not a mass produced copy of a copy selling for an unreasonable amount of money. And last but not least - it discloses all of the underlying psychological principles such as Illusion of scarcity, Anchor bias, Loss aversion bias, variable ratio reinforcement schedule, social comparison, Baby schema and many more.

Projectinformatie (NL)

Image List

Filename	Caption	Credit
image52_1787693346.jpeg		
graduationshowminerva26-fotojuliaodenkirchen-06613_1787930678.jpg		Julia Odenkirchen

Filename	Caption	Credit
minerva-graduation-nielsknelis-402-b0019720-large_1787932961.jpeg		Niels Knelis

The images above are included in the ZIP under /images.