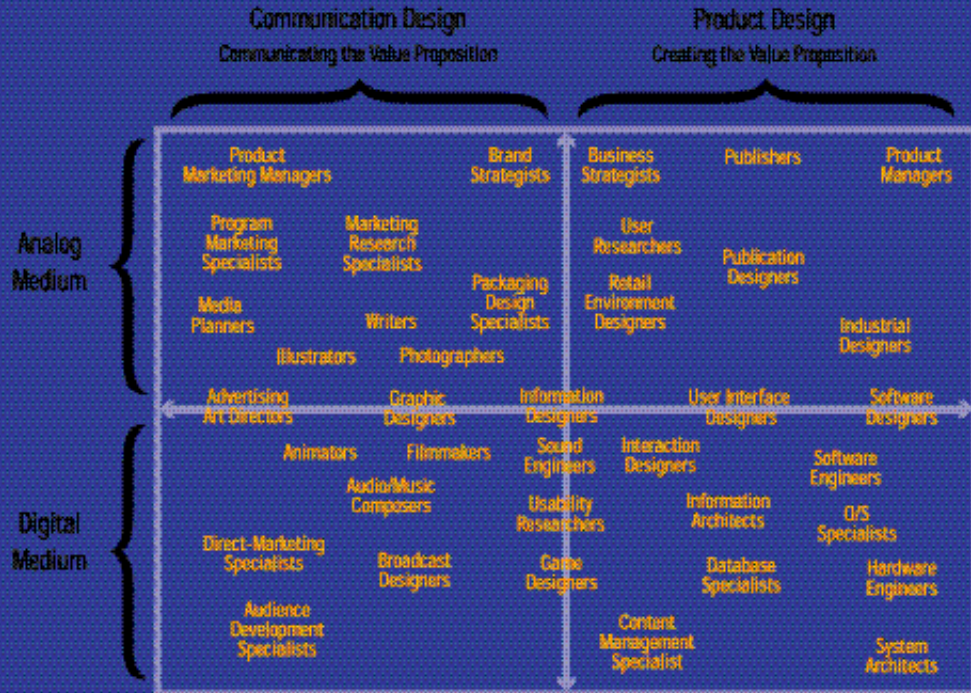


THEN

Before a digital networked world, individual design practices were not unlike modern Europe countries before the European Union (EU)—each practice has its distinct boundaries and its practitioners, like people in the EU countries, have their own language, processes, gods and cultural idiosyncrasies. The economic viability of these communities depended on frequent exchanges with one another; the tensions between design practices are minimized by the serial-nature of the work process. Changes and influences on one another were at glacial-pace. Adoption of best practice occurs at the speed of habit not out of necessity. Tools of the trade did not operate with a common digital DNA code or hardware platform. Who would have thought that you could edit film, create illustrations, typeset a magazine and program a dynamic database publishing website all on a single computer workstation? Not more than twenty years ago these design practices had little in common with material, process and/or technique.



NOW

The seemingly autonomy of rule and self-determination for design was not to last. The internet and its enabling technologies change the perception we have about time, space and people—and in its wake, it has altered boundaries, economics, infrastructures and culture. "More-faster"—more choices, more formats, more ways—is the operative environment design functions within. The intent use of any design work and its applications are no longer finite but with many interdependencies and many generation of "re-purposing" and "re-use". Design is modular and its parts are interchangeable—"tagged" and "meta-data-ed". In a networked world, the strongest design is not only the sum of its parts but also how its weakest link performs. Pressure? The tension that existed between various design practices is still there; they are only heightened by the parallel-nature of the "new" work process. How we get along is no longer an implicit fact; it's an explicit imperative. Collaborate or die.

