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## Design Thinking: What To Read After Our Special Report

A while back we published a [special report on design thinking](#) in which design luminaries such as [Edward Tufte](#), [Donald Norman](#), and [Nancy Duarte and Garr Reynolds](#) gave practical advice on how managers can do their jobs better by thinking like designers.

Our interest in the topic didn't end when we published the report; we still aim to keep up with the latest in thinking about design thinking and share it with you. Here are three new books pushing the field forward:

[The Design of Business: Why Design Thinking Is the Next Competitive Advantage](#) by Roger Martin is a tough-minded elegant survey of why design thinking shouldn't be considered some soft thing that's nice for business at the edges but not necessary at the core. Martin is the dean of the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto (he's written eloquently on [why business schools need to change](#)). His brief but comprehensive volume is full of examples from the usual suspects (Procter & Gamble, Cirque du Soleil, the folks who make BlackBerrys), but he finds new wrinkles in old stories and perspectives others have missed. If you ever thought analytical thinking alone was enough to run your business, Martin will set you straight. (For more, [Martin summarizes his arguments in the current BusinessWeek](#).)

[Thoughts on Interaction Design](#) by Jon Kolko is an underground classic. It was published independently in 2007; its 1000-copy print run sold out quickly and photocopies have been passed around *samizdat*-style. Kolko is an associate creative director for the innovative consultancy [frog design](#) (the company also publishes one of our favorite interdisciplinary magazines, [design mind](#)). In this book, he collects essays (by himself and others) that capture the state of interaction design and give such designers, his primary audience, the tools necessary to explain the value of what they do to the businesspeople on your team. Managers: give yourself a competitive edge by knowing this before the designers on your team have to tell you.

[Streams, Walls, and Feeds: 107 Design Guidelines for Improving Notifications, Messages, and Alerts Sent Through Social Networks and RSS](#) by Janelle Estes, Amy Schade, and Jakob Nielsen is the most tactical of the three new volumes. [The Nielsen Norman Group](#), which produced this report, is a leader in usability research and consulting; its reliance

on original research is what makes it such a successful consultancy. In its latest report, the company evaluates how companies communicate via some of the most popular and cutting edge social media. As it usually does, Nielsen Norman finds most companies wanting. This report shows why satisfaction levels of most people who interact with companies via social networks are so low and what companies can do to improve them. The link at the beginning of this paragraph leads to a summary of the report. The full thing, 209 pages long, is expensive and [outlined here](#). Like the other books here, it emphasizes how important design thinking is to maximizing your business operations.

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  - By [Jimmy Guterman](#)
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