



Special Theme
**Dazzling
Design for
2015**

A design that is appealing and helpful for everyone

Why shut out potential users? Why create specialist products that only a few will buy? The concept 'Design for All' offers attractive solutions with inclusive products, which are easy, safe and comfortable for everyone to use.

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TRANSLATION: EMMIE COLLINGE | PHOTOS: EDAD

Specialised products created for people with disabilities are only appealing to the specific users that they're aimed at. So consider the potential of a well-made product that every single one of us would find simple and comfortable to use. Given today's changing demographics, more and more people are benefitting from products made with the 'Design for All' concept.

By 2020, over 65s will account for 29.5% of the EU's population, and therefore the number of people with limited abilities will increase. Inclusive design can support more independent living, but these products need to be easy and safe to use, as well as being adaptable to meet certain needs. The EVOline plug (Schulte) reduces the amount of force your body needs to exert; all it

needs is a gentle tipping motion to remove it from the socket. Interestingly, added value comes from its flat form, guaranteeing it remains hidden behind furniture and cupboards.

The salad shaker (Oxo) takes an egalitarian approach to use, as both left and right-handers can use it. Thanks to this, it has the necessary flexibility in terms of handling that will be of particular benefit to those suffering from rheumatism and weakness in their hands.

The CinemaConnect smartphone app (Sennheiser) enables cinemagoers to have



customised sound, either by making the dialogue more understandable or with the addition of audio description for visually impaired people. Particularly interesting for the 'Design for All' concept, the app enables the viewer to watch the film in any of the available languages.

By improving your product's design and making it more accessible to the few who'll benefit from easier usage, it will ultimately appeal to and reach a wider market. Floor level showers have now become the standard in terms of comfort and modern architecture, as well as being of immense value to those with mobility problems.

To convince businesses of the importance of inclusive design and 'Design for All', the author has compiled a study together with partners from the 'Design für Alle – Deutschland' competence network for the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology. The study shows the vital economic role that small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) can play as the demographics of the country change. Management, product development and marketing therefore have to be re-thought and the challenges met effectively, implemented well, and often with external help.

Product language and marketing messages should not single out or highlight the user's impairments, as no one wants to buy a product that stigmatises them – even if it does make their life easier.

Below: Step-free shower. Photo: www.kaldewei.de

Bottom left: Easy-pull plug in super flat design.
Photo: www.schulte.com

Bottom right: Salad spinner, to be used single-handedly, designed by Oxo. Photo: www.grauwert.info

