



Soft Innovation: Economics, Product Aesthetics, and the Creative Industries

Paul Stoneman

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At its heart this book is about innovation and the innovation process. On the way, it considers aesthetics, design, creativity and the creative industries, and a number of other similar topics.

Much of the existing economic literature on innovation has taken a particularly technological or functional viewpoint as to what sort of new products and processes are to be considered innovations. One of the key things this book shows is that there is a type of innovation, here labelled 'soft innovation', primarily concerned with changes in products (and perhaps processes) of an aesthetic or intellectual nature, that has largely been ignored in the study of innovation prevalent in economics.

Examples of innovations that, as a result of this refocusing, are here placed at the centre of the analysis include: the writing and publishing of a new book, the writing, production, and launching of a new movie, the development and launch of a new advertising promotion, the design and production of a new range of furniture, and architectural activity in the generation of new built form designs. The realisation of the existence of soft innovation means that, not only is innovation more widespread than previously considered, but that it may also take a different form than commonly considered.

Soft Innovation addresses key issues such as:

- * The measurement of the rate and extent of soft innovation,
- * The determinants of the rate and direction of soft innovation and its diffusion,
- * The impacts of soft innovation and diffusion upon outputs, productivity, employment, firm performance, trade, and economic welfare,
- * Policy, considering whether there is a rationale for government intervention in the soft innovation generation and diffusion processes, and if so what instruments can be used in such intervention?

Soft Innovation breaks new ground in the study of innovation, and will be key reading for academics and researchers of Innovation, Marketing, and Design, as well as consultants, practitioners, and policy-makers concerned with the creative industries.

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