

Design and new growth potential for mature industries

Transformation of the ornamental rock cluster in Macael (Spain)



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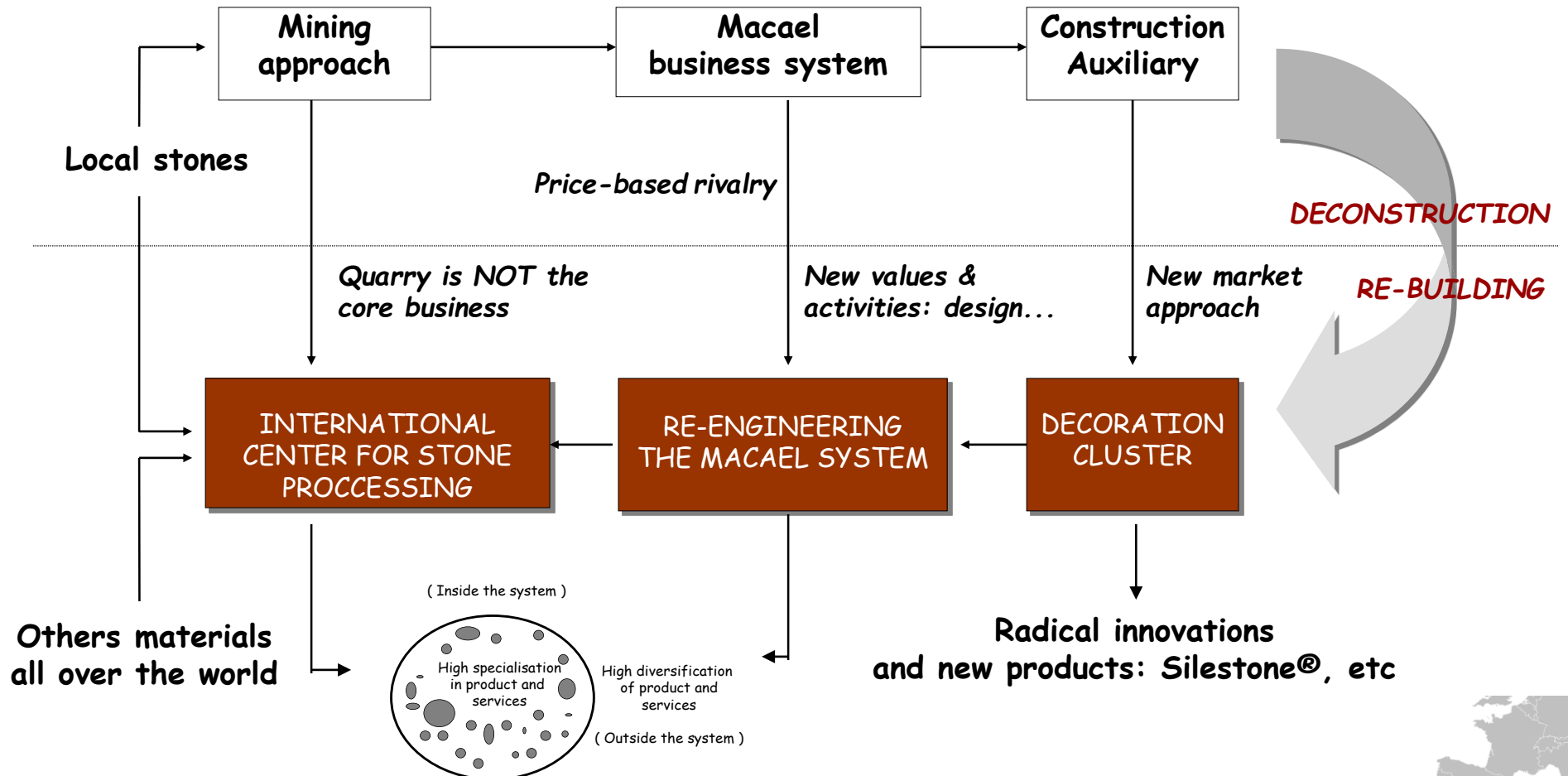
Re-thinking the ornamental rock industry in Macael

Europe still keeps a prominent position at world level in production and trade of marble and other ornamental stones, mainly thanks to Italy and Spain, and in hard competition with other big producers and exporters like China, India, Turkey or Brazil. Within this industry, Macael is the most representative local productive system in Spain, where around 300 firms operate, most of them small and medium sized enterprises. The so called *Spanish Carrara* has a background of centuries in the extraction and processing of white marble and other ornamental rocks. But from a product life-cycle perspective, at the beginning of the Nineties of the last century clear signs of maturity emerged. At that time Macael was too much focused on local stones, with lack of product differentiation inside the local business system, and rivalry mostly laid on the price.

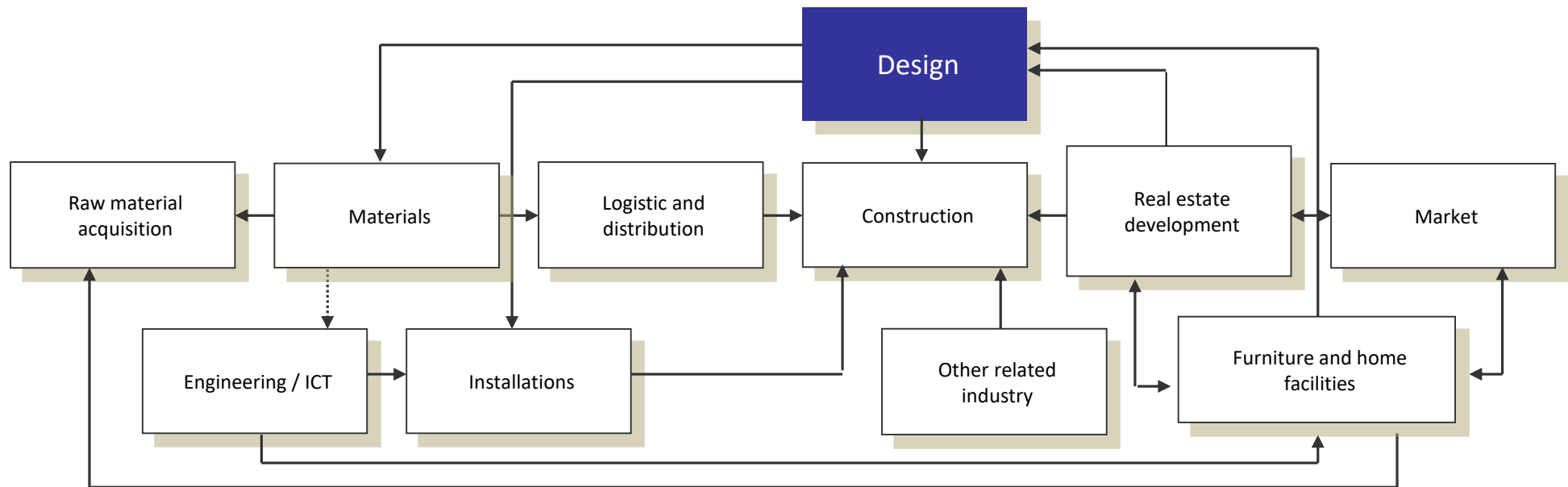
However, as a reaction to such a declining situation, the ornamental rock cluster in Macael has dramatically evolved in the last 20 years, from a mature cluster operating in the construction auxiliary sector to a more sophisticated positioning, this time more close to interior design and decoration. This process of conscious strategic change - a sort of productive deconstruction/re-building of the whole local cluster - has come out from a new way of envisioning of the value chain in the construction sector, particularly the wide-scope role of design and its increasing linkage to the production of (new) materials. Eco-design or smart building are trends that are now shaping that value chain in sustainable construction.

The fuel of this process has been an understanding of the transforming role of design, along with some radical innovations. Macael showcases a complete re-positioning of a mature industry through a mix of technological innovation, design and creativity, market intelligence and global logistic.

Strategic change at the ornamental rock cluster in Macael



Value chain of sustainable construction: role of design



Cosentino, world leader in quartz surfaces

In this context, the impressive evolution of the leading firm within the Macael cluster, Cosentino S.A, showcases perfectly how spill-over effects from design can significantly contribute to give a new growth potential to mature industries. All started in 1990 with the appearance of a radical innovation in the firm, the Silestone®. According to the firm web page, “silestone is a compound made of natural quartz, which makes it extraordinarily hard and resilient. It is the one and only countertop made of quartz with bacteriostatic protection, giving it hygienic properties that are not to be found anywhere else on the market”. The silestone is an excellent surface for kitchen countertops, bathrooms, worksurfaces, bar/ reception tops, floors and wall cladding. In addition, it allows an almost infinite pallet of colours, what extend the number of decorative possibilities.

Since then, the firm is quite focused on providing innovative hard surfaces for interior design as its key competence. In 1997 the group started its global expansion and nowadays is the world´s major manufacturer of quartz surfaces. Only in the USA Cosentino has 13 Centers as logistic nodes, showroom and meeting points for architects, interior designers and traders.

This leading position has been reached due to continuous innovation and a permanent influx of top quality design. Concerning the latter, Cosentino is a distinctive promoter of the best architecture and interior design, always applied to new materials.



Thus, the firm organizes annually the Cosentino International Design Challenge that in 2013 will held its 7^o edition <http://uk-ie.cosentinonews.com/cosentino-tv/>.

Regularly Cosentino commissions avant-garde designs like the so-called Shaping Silestone project (2012) by the renowned Brazilian designers Campana brothers, or “Beyond the Wall” (2013) a spectacular spiral by the architect Daniel Libeskind exhibited during the Milan Design Week.

The Cosentino’s committment with creativity goes beyond product design and inspires all the company’s facets, from advertising and communication to the corporate social responsibility. In 2011, Cosentino received a Golden Lion Award at the Cannes International Festival of Creativity for its video “Silestone, Above Everything Else” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJfP6QVDFGo>.

According to Christophe Gontier, managing director for Cosentino UK “Cosentino is committed to creating innovative materials that inspire designers, the industry and our customers”.



Left: *Shaping Silestone project*, modular kitchen furniture designed by Fernando and Humberto Campana.

Right: Cosentino stand at the 2010 Milan International Furniture Show, a spectacular space also created by Campana brothers.

El objetivo de esta edición consistirá en la definición de un plato de ducha en un baño singular desde un nuevo planteamiento conceptual, empleando fundamentalmente los materiales Silestone y/o Eco by Cosentino®.

La forma y superficie de zona de actuación será de libre elección por parte del alumno.

Habrà que considerar la fabricabilidad de las piezas y que éstas se deben construir a partir de paneles sin curvos y cortadas de tablero exclusivamente.

VI EDICIÓN

COSENTINO

DESIGN CHALLENGE

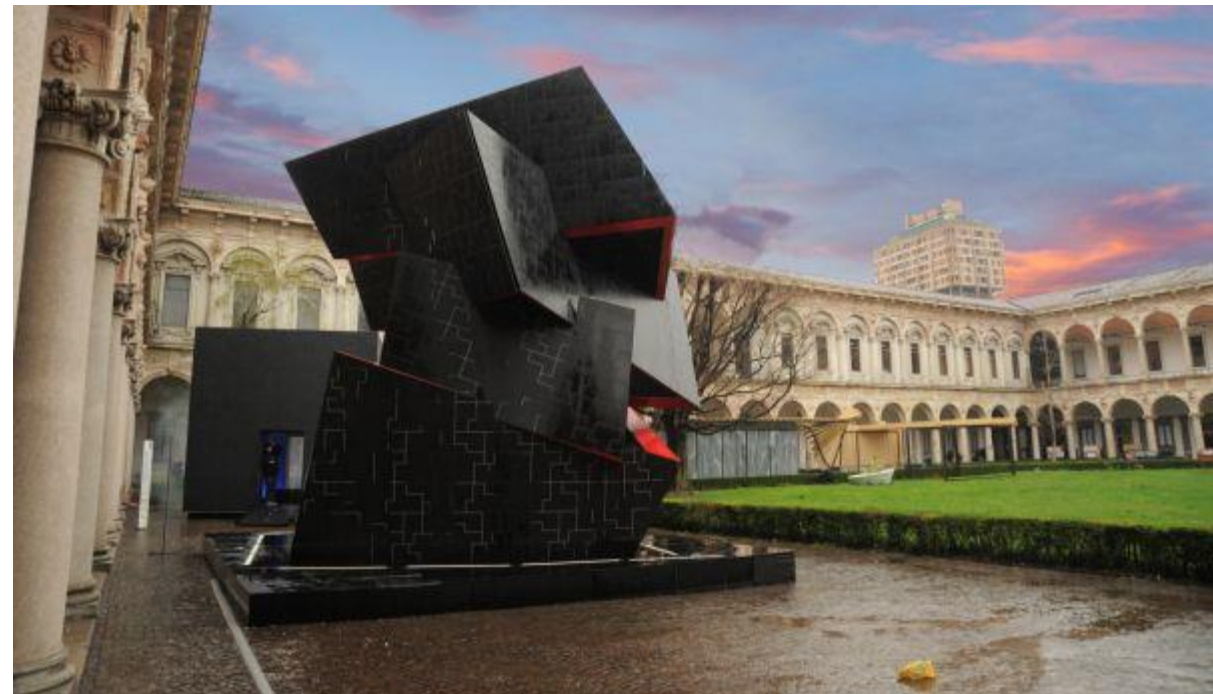
CONCURSO INTERNACIONAL DE DISEÑO

Diseño de un plato de ducha integrado en un baño singular creado con Silestone® y/o Eco by Cosentino®

PREMIOS
Investigación: 1000 Euros
Creatividad: 1000 Euros
Uso del material: 1000 Euros
3 Menciones especiales

Fecha de entrega: hasta 1 de Junio 2012
Contacto: idea@cosentino.designchallenge.org
* Para bases y más información: www.cosentino.designchallenge.org
* Lugar de entrega: Apartado de correos 16110, 28005 Madrid o vía email: idea@cosentino.designchallenge.org
El Jurado Internacional estará integrado por profesores de reconocido prestigio.

Cosentino Design Challenge



Beyond the Wall (2013) by Daniel Libeskind, commissioned by Cosentino for the Milan Design Week

