

# Will the Trump Bump translate to engineering design work returning to the U.S.?

Every presidential election cycle brings in the hope for reform and change for the better. Small business owners were keeping a close watch on the U.S. presidential elections 2016, to completely understand the effect of political landscape after the conclusion of the elections and the rhetoric of “trying to help small businesses”.

The election of Donald Trump as the president of the U.S. has come as a huge shocker for many. However, many small business owners have welcomed this change as they feel the country needed this fresh and non-political perspective of Trump, keeping in view the current economy and unlevel playing field.

One example is the boutique product design firms, once a prided small business industries of the U.S., has been challenged with off-shoring of services and trade policies of the last decade. Chinese/India design firms were the

assumed choice of the product/manufacturing industry in getting the designs done for their products. Basically, they could get the design work for free in exchange for the tooling and production of the widgets, an apparent compelling proposition. Over the same period of time, many companies were finding it difficult to work with the off-shore firms owing to the following reasons:

- The qualities of the designs have never lived up to the aesthetic, innovation and functional quality of U.S. product designs.
- The initial cost was one of the most attractive factors of the off-shore firms, but the increased total costs combined with inferior designs have made the matter worse for the purchasing firms.
- Lack of proper communication and time differences is another factor why U.S companies are drifting away from off shoring design firms.
- Other issues that are being faced by U.S companies include a delay in the deliveries and customs issues
- However, most important is the theft of their intellectual property as these firms are using the same designs for their other clients or own competing products.

New taxes or tariffs have been threatened on imports by the president elect Trump administration which will make the cost of unfair trade practices higher for the importers. All of this political fiasco has will help the position for the local engineering design industry and perhaps make its comeback in the United States, by providing high-quality designs at the



affordable/competitive rates. Additional benefits of same time zones, local communications, collaborative teaming and ability to visit the designers working on your project, will improve the overall U.S. product industry.

Leveling the playing field by Trump will actually be helpful for the local design industries in making their ground stronger as the perceived competition from the cheap imports will reduce a great deal. They will be able to make distinctive designs serving high on quality at lower rates to target their market in the most efficient way.

Apart from the boutique product design industry, many other small businesses can make use of this opportunity in making their ground stronger with the diminishing popularity of imported services and in-shoring of manufactured items, especially high end, technically challenging designs. These America first policies will enable them in promoting a local industry which will ultimately lead to a bootstrapping in the industry. The engineering design work, which had lost its position owing to the Chinese industry invasion, currency manipulation, over promise and under deliver practices, may regain its position if the stricter trade policies are implemented and a made in the US sticks.

The Trump administration policies are no doubt going to affect the economy and the financial environment of the United States in a big/different way. Some industries may suffer because of them but for some, the policies may prove to be very beneficial and long-awaited.



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