

Crowdsourcing Contests and Potential Participants

Underlying reasons for participation and inhibiting factors

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Abstract

A crowdsourcing contest is a particular type of Open Innovation operated by companies who want to outsource a part or parts of their innovation process. This happens when a company makes an open call to the public, asks to perform a certain task, and sets a prize as a reward for the best solution. Scarce studies have focused on understanding what would motivate as well as inhibit potential participants to take part in crowdsourcing contests.

Hereafter, the current study took a qualitative approach to analyze the motivating and inhibiting factors of graphic designers who have never engaged in crowdsourcing design contests, thus considered potential participants. In doing so, this research involved 9 in-depth semi-structured interviews with three groups of graphic designers that were selected with a generation criterion. Specifically, this study took into consideration Gen Z, being the last generation to enter the labor market, Gen Y and Gen X. The current study compared informants' answers with the aim of understanding whether the respondents of younger generations are more extrinsically motivated than respondents belonging to older generations. The results of this study highlight that potential participants' motivations to partake in crowdsourcing contests do not differ across generations in terms of a prevalence of intrinsic over extrinsic motivating factors and vice versa. However, there are differences in terms of the specific extrinsic and intrinsic motivating factors preferred by the different generation groups. Specifically, Gen Z respondents display a preference for non-monetary rewards and positively value the possibility to improve their creative skills during a contest, while Gen Y and Gen X respondents prefer monetary rewards and are typically attracted by the possibility to perform tasks that they would not perform in their jobs. The findings of this study have direct implications for the design of crowdsourcing contests and the communication of their features in order to attract specific age groups of graphic designers.

Keywords: Crowdsourcing contest, potential participants, graphic designer, motivation, inhibitors.

Summary

1.	Introduction	4
2.	Literature review and theoretical background	8
2.1	<i>Co-creation and Open Innovation</i>	8
2.2	<i>Crowdsourcing</i>	11
2.3	<i>Theoretical framework and propositions</i>	18
2.3.1	Figure 1	19
2.3.2	Table 1.....	19
3	Methodology	20
3.1	<i>Methodological choice</i>	20
3.2	<i>Data sources and procedure</i>	21
3.3	<i>Data analysis</i>	21
3.4	<i>Research ethics</i>	22
4	Results	23
4.1	<i>Informants' thoughts regarding crowdsourcing contests</i> Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.	
4.2	<i>Motivational factors to partake in crowdsourcing contests</i>	24
4.2.1	Extrinsic motivating factors.....	24
4.2.2	Intrinsic motivating factors.....	26
4.3	<i>Barriers and factors that hinder informants' participation</i>	31
4.3.1	External inhibiting factors	31
4.3.2	Internal inhibiting factors	35
4.4	<i>Differences between the Gen Z, Gen Y, and Gen X respondents</i>	38
5	Discussion.....	41
5.1	<i>Theoretical contribution</i>	46
5.2	<i>Practical contribution</i>	47
5.3	<i>Limitations & future research</i>	48
6	Bibliography	50
7	Appendices.....	58

1. Introduction

Nowadays, consumers can actively participate in diverse forms of firm innovations, which is referred to as “co-creation” (Hoyer et al. 2010). Out of the different existing types of innovations, *open innovation* is the widest. Open innovation is described as a paradigm shift that allows companies to leverage internal ideas (e.g., from employees) as well as external ideas (e.g., from consumers) in order to advance their technologies (Chesbrough, 2003).

One particular manifestation of open innovations is *crowdsourcing*, which refers to the act of outsourcing a certain task to a large group of people outside of one’s organization (Sloane, 2011). This is mostly done through an open public call for responses (Howe, 2006; Sloane, 2011). In other words, crowdsourcing is a company’s decision to let a large group of people, which are referred to as solvers, conduct a function that was previously performed by their employees (Howe, 2006). Hence, unlike open innovation itself, crowdsourcing activities solely leverage contributions from people that are not part of the organization, whereas open innovation makes use of both internal and external sources. An example of a company implementing crowdsourcing initiatives is Threadless. Threadless is an online T-shirt company that employs crowdsourcing competitions for choosing the new T-shirt designs to produce. First, the members of this community submit and rate others’ submissions, then the company chooses the best-rated designs, produces them, and rewards the respective designers with money and Threadless vouchers (Brabham, 2010).

Although there are crowdsourcing activities in which people actively participated in firm-generated competitions, most companies fail to attract participants that are really interested in their co-creation initiatives (Fuller et al. 2011). For instance, Ebner et al.’s study (2009) shows that 68% of the user group members from the community of the SAP University Competence Center (UCC) do not present an idea in the ideation contests that are organized. This makes them essentially potential participants rather than actual participants, highlighting the need for an understanding of potential participants’ motivations to partake (actively). Thus, the omnipresence and rapid growth of crowdsourcing contests, in which millions of dollars are invested (Segev, 2019), make it worth understanding how to attract potential participants that are interested and motivated. In this vein, a vast amount of research has been conducted investigating the key triggers for people to participate in co-creation competitions (e.g., Pinto and Dos Santos, 2018; Füller, 2006; Constantinides et al., 2015). This has, for instance, been done by studying participants’ intrinsic (e.g., feeling of autonomy) as well as extrinsic (e.g.,

monetary gain) motivations to participate. Yet, the primary inherent reasons for participants attending such co-creation activities have mainly been summarized as participants' quest for feelings of *competence*, *autonomy*, and *enjoyment* (Dahl and Moreau, 2007; Füller et al., 2011). This, in turn, could affect people's decision to participate in co-creation contests.

However, Füller et al. (2011) stated that most research has mainly focused on the investigation of participants' experiences but not on the additional motivational factors that would trigger potential participants to attend co-creation activities. In this regard, potential participants are referred to as people who have an interest and competence in the specific field but who have not participated yet.

While most studies have essentially focused on researching the motivation of people who already participated in co-creation competitions, the prospective motivations of potential participants to take part in such competitions remain almost unexplored. Unlike existing participants, potential participants, despite having the required interest and competence in the specific field of the competition, have still not participated in the contest. As suggested by Füller et al. (2011), future studies should research the motives for non-participants to engage in such competitions. This is an existing research gap, that the current study will attempt to cover by fundamentally focusing on the motivations of potential participants, leaving space for an exploratory qualitative investigation. This is to say that although the motivation of participants has been largely investigated, there is a lack of studies implementing a qualitative approach, regarding the motivating and inhibiting factors for potential participants' intent to participate, with a focus on potential participants rather than actual participants.

Few studies (e.g. Zheng et al., 2011) explored the motivations behind the potential participants' participation in crowdsourcing contests by mainly administering surveys; hence, the current study will emphasize on an exploratory qualitative research by conducting in-depth interviews with potential participants. Thus, the qualitative data of this current study will supplement the existing findings on the matter by exploring potential participants' motivations rather than testing existing statistical relationships.

It is important to mention that the current study will explore the motivations and the perceived inhibitors of potential participants to partake in crowdsourcing contests by focusing solely on graphic designers, a group that previous studies have fallen short to emphasize on. This choice is made because numerous crowdsourcing platforms are typically used for contests in which a

designing task is required, which is an essential task performed by graphic designers (e.g., designing a brand logo) (Segev, 2019). Furthermore, designers deal with broadly undefined problems, rather than well-defined ones (Cross, 2004), which is in line with broadly designed co-creation contests where the emphasis lies on creativity.

While studies investigating people's motivation to participate in co-creation activities have focused on consumers, designers, and people that were generally interested in designing activities (e.g., Dahl & Moreau, 2007; Füller et al., 2011), this study will fundamentally focus on crowdsourcing contests and a specific group of potential participants, namely graphic designers. Given the specificity of this group, the results from extant studies might not be fully translated into the new graphic design context, a theoretical gap that this additionally study aims to cover. This is also supported by findings from Neghina et al. (2017) who argue that any service context is characterized by specific sets of expectations that shape the motivations of crowdsourcing participants, resulting in different motivations from one context to another.

The attitude towards performing a certain behavior is an antecedent to one's behavioral intention, which in turn may result in performing the given behavior. However, in this process, some internal (to the individual) and external factors may interfere, simplifying or inhibiting the performance of behavior (Ajzen, 1985). In fact, "no study exists that would explicitly define the inhibiting factors to co-creation in the Internet-based platforms" (Chepurna & Criado, 2018, p.445). As acknowledged by the authors, the motivations and inhibitions for potential participants to partake in co-creation contests should be studied in a new context, which this study will do by focusing on graphic designers and crowdsourcing contests. This further underlines the theoretical contributions of this current research.

Hence, the aim of this study is primarily to investigate the underlying factors that influence potential participants' attitudes towards participation and, in turn, their intention to participate in crowdsourcing contests. Therefore, the research question of interest is the following:

What are the underlying perceived reasons that influence potential participants' willingness to participate in crowdsourcing contests?

In order to address the aforementioned research question, it is important to investigate two core aspects. First, the motivational factors that positively affect potential participants' attitudes. Secondly, the factors that generate negative attitudes toward the contribution behavior and that,

in turn, may inhibit potential participants' participation. In doing so, differences between three groups of respondents will be analyzed in order to investigate the role of interviewees' generation on motivations to participate in crowdsourcing contests. The chosen groups of respondents are selected through generation criteria, in fact, potential participants participating in the interviews will be Gen X, Gen Y (commonly known as millennials), and Gen Z graphic designers. This is because previous research claimed that there might be differences in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of workers that are related to their age and/or their generation (e.g. Catania & Randall, 2013; Montana & Lenaghan, 1999; Bristow et al., 2011.). Although these studies focused on workers rather than solvers, working to provide solutions that could be rewarded can be considered a form of work (Segev, 2019). Thus, findings from the job context might find application even in the context of crowdsourcing contests.

Although the role of age as a factor capable to influence people's motivation has been widely investigated (e.g. Catania & Randall, 2013; Montana & Lenaghan, 1999; Bristow et al., 2011), to my knowledge, no research focused on the understanding of its linkage with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in the context of crowdsourcing contests. However, although age is expected to have an influence on the motivation of respondents, results from previous research differ from one another in terms of their conclusions (e.g. De Lange et al., 2011; Kooij et al. 2008; Kooij et al., 2011; Catania & Randall, 2013; Montana & Lenaghan, 1999; Bristow et al., 2011). Hence, the results of the current research might differ from what has already been found in the literature on the motivation of workers, especially in the light of the findings from Neghina et al. (2017) which claim the motivation of participants in co-creation activities to be determined by the service context.

Next to covering the existing knowledge gap, this research also has practical implications. By understanding the underlying reasons that would motivate potential participants to participate in crowdsourcing contests, contest creators can design their competitions in ways that would fulfill potential participants' evoked motives. This would likely turn potential participants into actual participants. By doing so, companies can crowdsource a larger as well as a more motivated set of solvers. This, in turn, would not only positively affect the quantity but also the quality of the participants' generated contributions (Füller et al., 2011). Furthermore, the understanding of whether and how the age profiles of potential participants are related to their motivations to attend crowdsourcing contests would be an additional benefit for contest organizers. In fact, this would enable seekers to better know when to leverage intrinsic rather

than extrinsic factors, and vice versa, in order to attract specific segments of potential participants based on their generation.

The remainder of this paper is divided as follows. First, relevant literature linked to the current study will be reviewed; key concepts will be explained and defined. The literature review will be followed by an explanation of the current study's research design, in which the methodological choice will be justified. Hereafter, the results of the research will be presented. Then, the conclusions to the research question will be formulated, based on which theoretical and practical recommendations will be provided. Finally, the limitations of the study will be acknowledged and future research avenues will be suggested.

2. Literature review and theoretical background

2.1 Co-creation and Open Innovation

Co-creation is described as a collaborative process of value creation undertaken by firms and consumers (Bolton & Saxena-Iyer, 2009); this happens due to consumers' sense of *empowerment* which makes them yearn to have a larger role in the process of value creation. This sense of empowerment rises over the new technologies of today's market which allow consumers to break into enormous quantities of information, and to communicate with each other and with firms worldwide (Ernst, Hoyer, Krafft, & Soll, 2010).

Different advantages related to the implementation of co-creational processes can be found in the literature. Companies, for instance, have the chance to create value with their network partners on a long-term basis (Djelassi et al., 2013). Moreover, Poetz and Schreier (2012) have shown that, through the involvement of consumers in their ideation activities, firms can generate ideas that score higher in terms of novelty and customer benefit. In the same vein, in the case of contests that are characterized by the chance of winning economic prizes, the firm could benefit even from a broader source of solvers who have different skills and knowledge. This is generally considered a determinant of contest quality since this, in turn, could generate a vast amount of contributions (Chen et al., 2021). Furthermore, the involvement of consumers in new product development processes may improve the quality of products and improve acceptance by the market (Business Wire, 2001). Regarding these advantages that firms could

benefit from, it is worth understanding how to stimulate the intention to participate of interested and skilled potential solvers.

Beyond the existing advantages of co-creation processes, there are some risks that are related to the poor design and management of these co-creation activities. Although involving consumers in co-creational processes may empower them, issues may arise due to the low control. Similarly, the risk of generating negative feelings, such as exploitation, may occur (Djelassi & Decoopman, 2013; Gebert, 2014). These feelings, especially exploitation, can even be stronger when participants are, unlike expected, not rewarded for their efforts (Brabham, 2008).

One of the broadest forms of co-creation is *open innovation*. Open innovation is described as a paradigm shift that allows companies to leverage both internal and external ideas with the aim of advancing their technologies. An open innovation process makes use of the knowledge present in the market to provide value to the firm. In order to do so, this knowledge search should not happen only within the company. Hence, also external contributions need to be leveraged. (Chesbrough, 2003).

There are many factors that have enabled firms to implement open innovation processes. To begin with, changes in the working environments where employees, for social and economic reasons, do not search for a lifetime job but collect experiences, allow the implementation of open innovation. Nowadays, skilled workers do not want to be bounded with a single employer, which is why companies need to access talented people in alternative ways. Moreover, globalization has enabled the delegation and division of tasks. In addition to that, due to new and improved institutions that regulate the marketplace, companies have the chance to purchase and sell ideas. Lastly, the digitalization process allows people to work and collaborate across geographical distances (Dahlander et al., 2010). As result nowadays around 60% of companies adopt different types of hybrid innovation strategies where customers are involved (Argyres & Silverman, 2004).

The main idea behind the concept of openness is that organizations cannot efficiently innovate by themselves anymore. On the contrary, organizations need to cope with multiple partners and stakeholders to acquire ideas and resources to face competitors (Chesbrough, 2003; Laursen & Salter, 2006). Furthermore, firms' openness to innovation can be categorized into two strategies, namely outbound and inbound, which can be further segmented into four different

approaches: *revealing*; *selling*; *sourcing*; *acquiring*. On the one hand, *revealing* and *selling*, are outbound strategies and refer to an innovation process where internal resources of a company are made available to the external environment, for free, or through a pecuniary exchange. On the other hand, *sourcing* and *acquiring*, are inbound strategies and aim to enhance a company's knowledge through external sources that can either be acquired for free or paid. The kind of openness that is treated in the current study (crowdsourcing contests) falls within the category of *sourcing*, the inbound innovation strategy that refers to how firms can make use of external sources of innovation for free (Dahlander et al. 2010).

Motivations for participating in Open innovation and co-creation initiatives

The reasons for which active participants may attend co-creation activities are manifold. These motivations can predominantly be categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Intrinsic motivations consist of a person's need or desire to feel competent and self-determinant in a particular field. The tendency to prefer certain fields of interest over others may be based on the profession or the hobbies of a consumer (Deci, 1975). Henceforth, co-creation activities can fulfill these needs and desires, since consumers, based on their personal preferences, may choose which initiative to adhere to and thus which task to perform (Zwartjes, 2011). These needs such as the feeling of competence and self-determination, are also identifiable in the pyramid of needs by Maslow (1987), under the categories of self-esteem and self-actualization.

In this vein, *competence*, *autonomy*, and *task enjoyment*, identified by Dahl and Moreau (2007), can be considered intrinsic motivations for participation. The concept of *competence* is related to the satisfaction that comes from successfully completing a creative project (Füller et al., 2011). Moreover, participants use a process of self-efficacy judgment to evaluate their own performance. Hence, on the one hand, this could generate feelings of perceived competence and satisfaction when the individual performance is comparable with the relevant standards. On the other hand, it can generate dissatisfaction (perceive inefficacy) when the standards are not reached (Bandura, 1977). The enjoyment derived from freely choosing the process and/or design of a creative task refers to the feeling of *autonomy*. This feeling can be stimulated by not exerting excessive control on the participants, and by giving space to individuality (Füller et al., 2011). The concept of *task enjoyment* refers to a common characteristic of individuals, which is the enjoyment of performing creative activities that can be considered intrinsically interesting, challenging, and involving (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). In fact, participants will come up with creative solutions only when they consider the task fun and intrinsically enjoyable

(Amabile, 1993). Furthermore, Füller et al. (2011) considered the co-creation experience as a second-order factor that is explained by the three aforementioned factors (*autonomy, competence, and task enjoyment*) and that, in turn, determines the number and quality of contributions. This in turn triggers further interest in co-creation activities.

Moreover, a *sense of community* within these activities was found to have a concrete influence on the overall perception of co-creation experiences (Füller et al., 2011). These findings are complemented by Hanine and Steils' work (2019) which emphasizes the importance that *social recognition* has for participants, providing participants with the feeling of being part of the company's community. This is further supported by Maslow's theory that identifies people's yearning for love and belongingness, such as the need of being part of a social group (Maslow, 1987).

Besides the intrinsic motivations, the literature also identifies extrinsic motivations, such as external regulation (Decy & Ryan, 2000). The external regulation can be thought of in terms of a motivation that influences one's behavior. These motivations can take diverse forms like for instance money, giveaways, and acknowledgment, among others. Hars and Ou (2002) argue that participants of co-creation activities might partake with the purpose of showing their mastery and abilities in order to gain recognition. These kinds of incentives are often used in co-creation activities to attract participants (Zwartjes, 2011). Regardless of the effectiveness of these incentives, previous studies have found external regulations to limit participants' sense of freedom (Deci et al., 1999) which in turn decreases the perception of autonomy, a significant intrinsic motivation for participation (Decy & Ryan, 2000).

2.2 Crowdsourcing

The type of co-creation of focal interest in this work is *crowdsourcing*, intended as a user-driven innovation that aims to capture the intelligence held by the crowd (Chanal & Caron-Fasan, 2010; Schenk & Guittard, 2011). Howe (2006) defines *crowdsourcing* as a company's decision to let a large group of people, called solvers, perform a function that was previously conducted by the company's employees. This requires an open call to potential solvers willing to provide their contributions. The literature recognizes different types of crowdsourcing, which can be distinguished by their frequency of usage, type of content, degree of novelty (Burger-Helmchen & Pénin, 2011), as well as selective or integrative crowdsourcing operations (Schenk & Guittard, 2011). An integrative crowdsourcing activity puts together complementary inputs

collected from the crowd, while in selective activities the crowd provides diverse solution proposals from which the company may choose the best (Djelassi et al. 2013).

The current work focuses on selective *crowdsourcing* activities and more specifically on *crowdsourcing contests*. Crowdsourcing contests are initiatives organized by companies (seekers/sponsors) on platforms where tasks that need to be performed are presented to potential solvers. These contests can be organized either by the seekers themselves or through third-party platforms (Jeppesen & Frederiksen, 2006). The tasks are usually described in simple words and have a specific deadline and a potential reward that the participants can win. Once all the participants have put forward their proposals, the sponsor provides feedback and chooses its perceived best solution (Segev, 2019).

In the last years, millions of people have been participating in crowdsourcing contests and millions of dollars have been invested to reward the winners of such contests (Segev, 2019); hence, this makes it worth understanding what are the factors that attract and inhibit potential participants. One of the first and most famous platforms that regularly hosts open innovation and crowdsourcing contests is “InnoCentive”. The platform has access to a vast crowd of solvers that differ from one another in competencies and business fields; thus, several companies outsource their innovation processes there. As result, in 2010 the platform hosted more than a thousand contests/challenges, providing rewards for a total of more than 5 million dollars (Zheng et al., 2011). To sum up, crowdsourcing contests serve as means to raise innovation while making use of sources of creativity and knowledge that are external to the company (Majchrzak & Malhotra, 2013). Hence, it is crucial for companies to attract a large number of solvers because this might increase the volume and the diversity of the solution proposals (Terwiesch & Xu, 2008).

Motivators in crowdsourcing

Several studies on crowdsourcing highlight that, similarly to co-creation initiatives, participants can be either intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to partake in crowdsourcing contests (e.g. Brabham, 2010; Füller, 2010; Lakhani et al., 2007; Leimeister et al., 2009). With this regard, Zheng et al. (2011) investigated solvers’ motives to participate in crowdsourcing contests distinguishing the motivations as intrinsic or extrinsic, according to the definitions provided by Deci and Ryan’s works (e.g. Deci, 1975; Deci & Ryan, 1985). On the one hand, the extrinsic motivations considered by Zheng et al. (2011) are monetary gains and improved

reputation, or recognition. On the other hand, intrinsic motivations are directly linked to the contest's task attributes, being influenced by factors such as autonomy, variety, tacitness, and analyzability.

The concept of autonomy applied to the job context is defined as “the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out”(Hackman & Oldham, 1980, p.72). However, in the context of crowdsourcing contests, task autonomy refers to solvers' independence and freedom to solve the required task and is considered an antecedent of intrinsic motivation (Zheng et al., 2011; Deci, 1975). This definition is in line with the one of Dahl and Moreau (2007) used by Füller et al. (2011) in the context of co-creation contests.

Variety is described as the degree to which several skills and different activities are required to be performed by the solver in order to complete the task. That said, high levels of contest variety are associated with an enhanced intrinsic motivation (Zheng et al., 2011).

The concept of tacitness is defined by the authors as “the degree of the difficulty of transferring the knowledge required to solve the contest between the contest sponsor and the contest solver” (Zheng et al., 2011, p.64). When a high level of tacit knowledge is required to perform a task this may increase the intrinsic motivation of the solver because of its challenging nature. Indeed, according to the self-determination theory, the fulfillment of a challenging task can satisfy one's need for feeling competent and this, in turn, can enhance intrinsic motivation (Amabile et al., 1994; Deci, 1975). Hence, the concept of competence discussed by Füller et al. (2011) finds application also in crowdsourcing contests.

Finally, analyzability is described by Zheng et al. (2011) as a dimension of task complexity and refers to the extent to which a solver can access information regarding the complexity and the actions that need to be performed to solve the task. A high level of contest's analyzability is positively associated with intrinsic motivation because it reduces the discrepancy between the information required and possessed by the solver (Zheng et al., 2011). In fact, even though an initial level of complexity may increase intrinsic motivation due to its challenging nature (Wood, 1986), overall complexity in crowdsourcing contests has a negative effect on intrinsic motivation. This is because high levels of complexity produce a cognitive overload that may discourage the solvers to perform the task (Zheng et al., 2011).

These findings are, to a large extent, in line with what has been found by Brabham (2010) in his study. The author highlights that the motivation for people to participate in competitions can be explained essentially by four motivators: the economic reward; the opportunity to improve creative skills; the chance to start working as freelancers; and the love for that community (Brabham, 2010). Similar findings were yielded by Brabham (2008) and can be thought of in terms of extrinsic motivation, for what concerns economic rewards, and intrinsic motivation, for the remaining aforementioned motivators. Moreover, these findings are also partially comparable to the ones identified by Lakhani et al. (2008). Indeed, respondents that participated in Innocentive competitions manifested interest in the monetary rewards and valued positively the opportunity to improve their creative skills (Lakhani et al. 2008).

On the whole, the literature identifies numerous motivators that explain solvers' participation in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, as in the case of co-creation and creative contests. However, "there is no definitive set of motivators that works for all crowdsourcing cases" (Brabham, 2010, p.1139). For instance, studies like the Star Wreck case (Lietsala & Joutsen, 2007) evidenced that the opportunity to make money was not a motivator for participation in the contest; meanwhile, Zare et al. (2019) consider tangible benefits, such as monetary incentives or personal rewards, to be important drivers of participation in co-creation activities at large.

In this regard, other studies pointed out that the prominence of the motives that drive consumers to participate in co-creation activities at large is contextually determined and thus not generalizable across different contexts (Neghina et al., 2017). These findings emerged from a study that investigated how the motivation to participate in co-creation activities differs depending also on the degree of participants' professionalism (Neghina et al., 2017). This is explained through the lens of the expectancy theory by Vroom (1964) which illustrates that people assess the attractiveness of an option by evaluating the desirability of the possible outcome. Consequently, consumers consciously choose from alternatives, aiming to generate the best value for themselves. In this vein, Neghina et al. (2017) further argue that any service context is characterized by specific expectations that are the result of explicit and implicit rules, processes, and rituals that are specific to the service context. Hence, participants choose to partake in co-creation activities based on expectations that are shaped by the specific service context (Neghina et al., 2017).

Since any service context is characterized by specific sets of expectations and, in turn, motives for participating in co-creation activities at large (Neghina et al., 2017), it is expected that potential participants of crowdsourcing contests in the service context of graphic design will hold expectations and consequently motivations to partake that are specific of that context. Hence, the results of this research may be not generalizable and different from what can be found when investigating groups of respondents that belong to a different service context.

In summary, intrinsic (e.g. autonomy, competence, task enjoyment, improvement of creative skills, ...) and extrinsic (e.g. rewards, acknowledgments, giveaways) motivations are the key triggers for participants to take part in co-creation activities, as well as in crowdsourcing contests, which leads to the first proposition.

P1: Senses of autonomy, competence, task enjoyment, and other intrinsic motivations, as well as extrinsic motivations, are supposed to positively influence potential participants' willingness to participate in crowdsourcing contests.

Besides the role of the service context, age is another factor that motivational studies argue to be linked to the prominence of intrinsic or extrinsic motivation (e.g. Catania & Randall, 2013; Montana & Lenaghan, 1999; Bristow et al., 2011). The numerous studies present in the literature are inconsistent in terms of definitive findings, in fact, there are opposing viewpoints that claim age to be unrelated to the motivational factors that drive employees to work (e.g. Giancola, 2006; Wong et al., 2008). However, the latest reviews found some relations between age and motivation (e.g. De Lange et al., 2011; Kooij et al. 2008; Kooij et al., 2011) and Catania & Randall's study (2013) suggest that age should be negatively correlated with extrinsic work motivations and positively or uncorrelated with intrinsic work motivation. In other words, younger workers are more motivated by extrinsic factors contrary to older ones. In this vein, Montana and Lenaghan (1999) claimed that differences in motivation can be found when looking at distinct generations. Indeed, the authors found Gen X and Gen Y people to share the same motivators and that these differ from the ones of Baby Boomers (Baby Boomers are defined as the generation of people born right after the second world war, so between the years 1946 and 1964), which is an older generation. Furthermore, Bristow et al. (2011) have found motivational differences also between Gen X and Gen Y, further highlighting that the work motivation might differ by age group. Gen Z, a neglected group when it comes to crowdsourcing research, is the latest age cohort entering the labor market and will progressively fill up tomorrow's work environment. This generation (Gen Z) is represented by people born

from 1997 to 2013, it is the newest cohort to enter the labor market and presents new patterns of behaviors that differ from Millennials (Gen Y), although sharing with them many traits (Schroth, 2019). That said, people born between 1980 and 1996 are labeled as Gen Y or Millennials and represent the generation born during the Internet explosion. Taking a further step back in the years, there is Gen X which is represented by those who were born from 1966 to 1980 (Dimock, 2019).

To sum up, based on the premise that older generations should value extrinsic motivators as less important contrary to younger ones (Catania and Randall, 2013), the current study will identify the differences and commonalities between the three following groups: Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z.

Although the aforementioned motivational studies focused on workers rather than solvers, working to provide solutions that could be rewarded can be considered a form of work (Segev, 2019). Hence, bringing these findings to the context of crowdsourcing contests leads to the following proposition.

P2: Differences between the three generations of respondents (Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z) are expected to be found in terms of their respective dominant motivations. Specifically, young generations (Gen Y and Z) are more likely to consider extrinsic motivation as more important in order to partake in crowdsourcing contests than the older generation (Gen X).

Attitudes and Inhibitors

The literature defines attitudes as internal and overall judgments toward a person or an object that regards how much he or she likes or dislikes it (Hoyer et al., 2018). They persist over time and can reflect a person's evaluation of a certain person or object based on the associations that are linked to it (Hoyer et al., 2018). Hence, the attitude toward an event or an action will not be based on one specific aspect of it (e.g. the required task to perform in a crowdsourcing contest) but will depend on an entire set of associations held by the person (Hoyer et al., 2018). In fact, attitudes can be influenced by direct experiences or even by a set of associations toward an action or a person. That said, attitudes are crucial because "they guide our thoughts, influence our feelings and affect our behavior" (Hoyer et al., 2018, p.128). In other words, attitudes guide us in deciding whether a certain behavior is positive or negative (Hoyer et al., 2018). Furthermore, having a positive attitude toward a specific behavior enhances the intention of an

individual to perform it. Thus, a positive attitude toward a specific behavior enhances the intention of an individual to perform it; making attitude a significant antecedent of intention (Armitage & Conner, 2001).

This is supported by the theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (1985) which builds upon the theory of reasoned actions. According to these two theories, one's attempt to perform a behavior is determined by one's intention which on its part is explained by the attitude toward the specific behavior. Moreover, the attitude toward the action is the result of two different attitudes, namely the attitude toward a successful attempt and the attitude toward an unsuccessful one. Each of these attitudes is, in turn, the result of two distinct person's evaluations. The person's evaluation of the outcome associated with certain behavior and the person's assessment of the likelihood that the outcome will be produced by performing the given behavior. In other words, a person will evaluate the probabilities of possible positive and negative outcomes associated with certain behavior. Hence, a person will attempt to perform the behavior if the gains of success are greater than the loss of failure (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen, 1985). However, the intention may change over time due to the presence of factors that can be either internal or external to the individuals. Internal factors refer to a person's set of characteristics such as willpower; while external factors rely on the environment and/or other people (Ajzen, 1985).

Building on the aforementioned theories, Chepurna and Criado (2018), through their qualitative study, found nine different factors that inhibit customers to share their ideas in co-creation activities. These are organized by internal and external inhibiting factors. The internal inhibitors consisted of six factors: lack of trust, intended as a consumer's lack of trust toward the company; technology anxiety, intended as a situation in which users do not feel comfortable with the technological interface that they are asked to use; no shared values with the brand; skepticism; inertia; and technology perceived ease of use. When it comes to the external inhibitors, three factors were identified, namely: task layout, which refers to his explanation and degree of difficulty; absence of offline meetings; and personal availability of the respondents, which refers to a lack of time to participate in co-creation activities (Chepurna & Criado, 2018).

In this vein, Illahi et al.'s study (2019) analyzed the inhibiting factors for participating in competitive crowdsourcing software development (crowdsourcing contests for software developers). The study focused on potential participants and found five different inhibitors: a

perceived lack of expertise by the potential participants; a lack of time due to the main job; a preference for other means of earning money (e.g. Freelancing); the belief of not being rewarded for the efforts necessary to produce a solution; and finally, a small percentage of respondents who were not aware of what is a crowdsourcing contest. However, out of these five factors, only the lack of expertise and time are relevant, constituting respectively 38% and 35% of the total answers. Thus, the lack of time fits into the category of external inhibitors, corresponding to the subcategory named “personal availability of respondents”; following this criterion the perceived lack of expertise might fit in the same category (external inhibitors) due to its possible connection with the degree of difficulty of the task.

Hence, inhibiting factors are held responsible for generating negative attitudes and, as a consequence, the non-participation of customers in co-creation initiatives. Based on the diverse inhibitors the following proposition arises.

P3: Diverse internal and external inhibiting factors are expected to negatively affect potential participants’ willingness to participate in crowdsourcing contests.

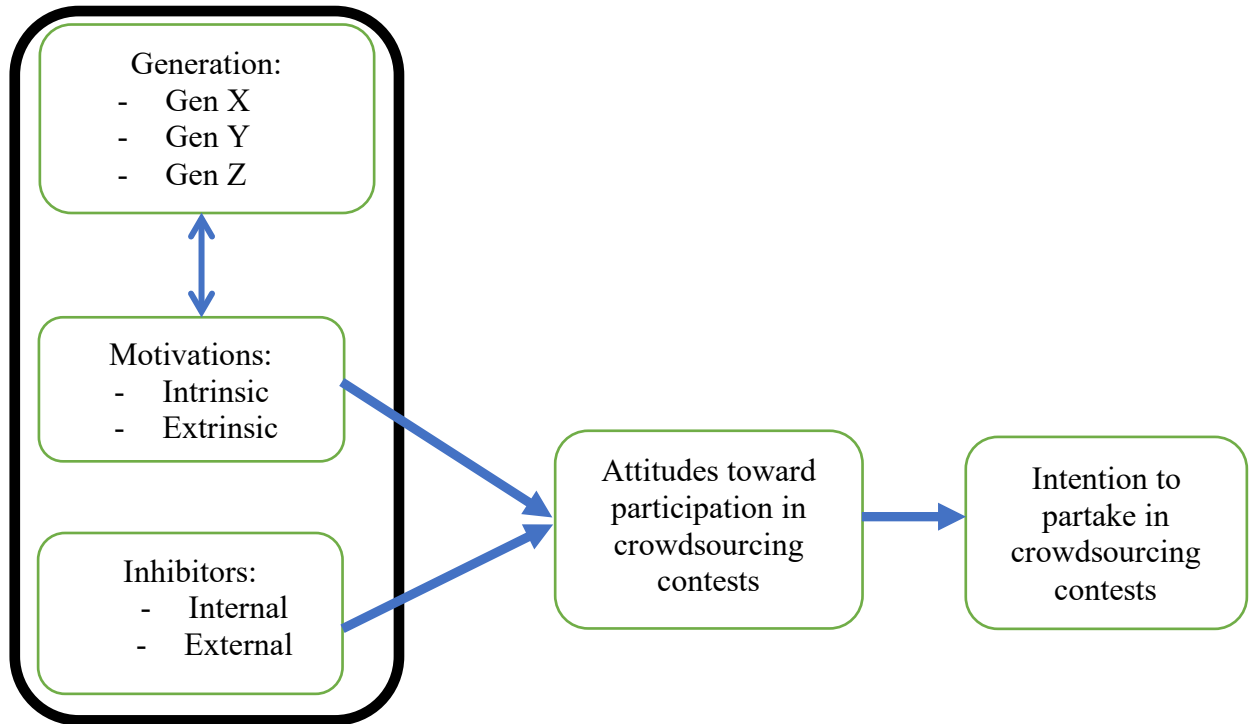
2.3 Theoretical framework and propositions

Theoretical framework

The current research will investigate the main motivations and inhibitors for participation in crowdsourcing activities since these factors shape attitudes and consequently the intention of potential participants to partake. The potential participants are graphic designers selected with a generation criterion, this is done with the aim of finding differences in their primary motivations for participating. For this purpose, the respondents will be of three distinct groups. Gen X, Gen Y (Millennials), and Gen Z.

Hence, the focus of this Master thesis project is on the factors included in the black rectangular box of the theoretical framework (Figure 1).

Figure 1



In table 1 a recap of the three aforementioned propositions is presented.

Table 1

P1	Senses of autonomy, competence, task enjoyment, and other intrinsic motivations, as well as extrinsic motivations, are supposed to positively influence potential participants' willingness to participate in crowdsourcing contests.
P2	Differences between the three generations of respondents (Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z) are expected to be found in terms of their respective dominant motivations. Specifically, young generations are more likely to consider extrinsic motivation as more important in order to partake in crowdsourcing contests than older generations.
P3	P3: Diverse internal and external inhibiting factors are expected to negatively affect potential participants' willingness to participate in crowdsourcing contests.

3 Methodology

In this section of the thesis, the research design of the thesis is described. First, the methodological choice for conducting qualitative research is justified. Then, the data source is identified. In the data analysis section, the data analysis strategy is elaborated upon. Finally, the last section addresses the research ethics of the study.

3.1 Methodological choice

As suggested by Lopez et al. (2017) qualitative studies can enrich the exploration of the reasons behind co-creation which the present research builds upon. Most researches have mainly focused on the investigation of participants' experiences; in fact, Füller et al. (2011) while addressing their study's limitations, suggest exploring other business contexts and, specifically, the sphere of non-participants. Their study quantitatively focused on the factors that influence the future attendance, the number, and the quality of contributions of designers in co-creation contests. Moreover, as individuals, people engage in communications that are similar to interviews on a daily basis. Thus, when exploring people's experiences, beliefs or identities it is ideal to use qualitative interviews (Mann, 2011). In addition to that, Chepurna and Criado (2018) suggest replicating their qualitative study in a different context, regarding the newness of their research.

Henceforth, this work made use of a qualitative approach to investigate motivations and inhibitors because they shape potential participants' attitudes toward crowdsourcing contests and, in turn, the intention to partake. Specifically, nine in-depth semi-structured interviews were administered to the selected respondents. In this way, although these were pre-planned, the open-ended questions gave the opportunity to respondents to elaborate their answers without being limited by a rigid structure, as in the case of structured interviews (Alsawii, 2014). The interviews provide insights regarding why potential participants, namely graphic designers, have not engaged in crowdsourcing contests yet. Based on McCracken (1988), when conducting long interviews, eight is an appropriate number of respondents for qualitative research projects; hence, the selected number of respondents (nine) should be apt for the current study.

The interview guide developed for this thesis can be found in Appendix A.

3.2 Data sources and procedure

The interviewees of this study consist of 9 graphic designers who have never participated in a crowdsourcing contest, within a field in which they have competence or knowledge, but who expressed interest toward these initiatives. The purposefully selected respondents will be three of each group: Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z, ensuring equality of the group sizes. This was specifically done in order to explore proposition number two. The respondents were first contacted by email or phone message; then, they were informed about the main topic of the research and its fundamental questions. Finally, the informants were invited to attend an interview. All the interviews were held on Zoom, because of participants' locations and availabilities. Before starting the interviews, the respondents' consent was ensured to record the interviews; then, the answers were recorded and subsequently transcribed.

3.3 Data analysis

The questions (see Appendix) asked to the respondents were developed on the basis of the concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, which are explained in the second chapter, and are based on the inhibiting factors identified by Chepurna and Criado (2018) and Illahi et al. (2019). The contents of the interviews were transcribed, read multiple times, and finally coded (e.g., categorized for concepts) for the analysis. The informants' responses were coded based on the concepts of intrinsic as well as extrinsic motivations and inhibitors identified in the extant literature (e.g. see Chepurna & Criado, 2018; Fuller et al. 2011), in order to identify motivations and inhibitors that shape the attitude and, in turn, the intention to perform the required behavior (Ajzen, 1985).

Common patterns and main differences in respondents' answers were identified, highlighted, and examined. This was done by comparing respondents' answers for generation groups (Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z) since differences in terms of the relevance of extrinsic motivations were expected to be found.

3.4 Research ethics

In order to follow the university's code of academic integrity, anonymity and confidentiality were assured to the respondents. For this reason, limited demographic information of the respondents is presented in this study. All the informants were previously informed that they were free to choose whether to answer any questions. Furthermore, the respondents had the freedom to interrupt and end the interview at any time. Before starting to conduct the interviews, it was asked the participants for their consent to audio record the interviews, indicating that without their consent these would not be recorded. In addition to that, it was communicated to the informants that the interview would be transcribed and accessible to no one besides the researcher and his supervisors. Ultimately, it was assured to the respondents that the audio records of the interviews would be treated with confidentiality and used solely for the purpose of this study.

4 Results

4.1 General perceptions of potential participants

From the interviews, different opinions regarding crowdsourcing contests at large emerged from the informants' answers.

The main thoughts of the respondents can be summarized by reporting that most of them consider crowdsourcing contests as “an opportunity for a company to get fresh ideas.” (Informant 2, female, Gen X) that “gives designers the opportunity to share their thoughts, designs, and ideas” (Informant 1, female, Gen Z) indicating that it is “a great idea” because when working in the same place for a long time there is the feeling of being “brainwashed” (Informant 4, female, Gen Y).

However approximately half of the respondents questioned the fairness of this practice, arguing that it is “smart because companies do not have to pay a lot of money” to get designs that normally would be paid when requesting them to design companies (e.g. Informant 6, female, Gen Y). They also stated this is like “almost making someone work for free” (Informant 9, female, Gen Z), which in turn feels as if “people are being exploited for their talent” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y). It was referred to contests as “a smart construction for companies” (Informant 8, female, Gen X), emphasizing that companies could really benefit from the amount of work obtained through these activities while the participants are unsure of whether their effort will be rewarded in some way.

Besides this diffuse thought, another theme emerged from the interviews, specifically in the ones conducted with Gen X respondents. Indeed, two out of the three informants stated that “these competitions should be places attended by younger professionals, rather than by experienced professionals, so they can make some experience” (Informant 2, female, Gen X) and that “it’s a great way for the young designers that are still in school or are just starting up, to explore this world” (Informant 8, female, Gen X). This could show that Gen X, or older graphic designers consider contests merely as activities in which younger professionals could make practice and therefore improve their skills. Which might be a first indication why older generations are reluctant to participate in such contests, leaving them for the younger generations.

4.2 Motivational factors to partake in crowdsourcing contests

Based on the interviews, different motivational factors that could make the respondents take part in crowdsourcing contests have been identified and categorized.

4.2.1 Extrinsic motivating factors

Public acknowledgement and job opportunities

To begin with, a predominant motivating factor to partake in crowdsourcing contests mentioned by the totality of the respondents is the possibility to be acknowledged publicly (e.g. being shared in networks with a big audience as creators of a design or winners of the competition) by the company that organizes a contest. This seems to be one of the main, if not the most important, factor that would attract potential participants to participate in design contests because this would allow designers to get in touch with a broader audience of clients and professionals. As one of the respondents put it:

“I think it’d be awesome because apart from the fact that you’re winning also you’d have a workpiece that would be, most of the times, exposed to a big audience. So an audience bigger than the one that you’d have in your own platforms” (Informant 9, female, Gen Z).

This seems to be even more important for younger graphic designers (Gen Z) that are about to start their career and are looking for job opportunities or want to improve their CV/Portfolio. As some informants explained:

“Oh well, the acknowledgment is the first reason for which I would join (...) if it’s a big company, like Toyota, an internship or an acknowledgment from them might be important for my future career (...) Maybe it’s not that company to hire you but with a good reference for your work you might get an opportunity somewhere else” (Informant 3, male, gen Z)

“it’d be nice to share that a product was designed in a competition by this person (...) it would be nice to share it in the designers’ network so that other companies might notice you and decide to employ you.” (Informant 1, female, Gen Z).

In the same vein, among the various reasons mentioned by respondents, there is also the possibility to get in touch with other professionals with the aim of obtaining new job connections (e.g. Informant 7, male, Gen Y; Informant 2, female, Gen X) and/or employment opportunities like an internship or a regular job (e.g. Informant 3, male, Gen Z). Four informants mentioned this opportunity as a motivating factor for participation, considering it an important

condition and explaining that a job opportunity “could be the best thing that could happen in these contests” (Informant 3, male, Gen Z). In this vein, some respondents mentioned that if there is not a possibility for future collaboration with the company after participating in the contest they would not join in the first place (e.g. Informant 5, male, Gen X).

Receiving a participation award (e.g. an acknowledgment or a small prize)

Closely linked to the monetary reward factor, another that seems to be considered important by the majority of the respondents is receiving a small reward or an acknowledgment as a way to compensate for their efforts, even when their solutions are not chosen by the company as the winning ones. As one of the informants puts it:

“I think that’d be a really good way to make me want to be part of a contest”. (Informant 9, female, Gen Z).

This is because for the respondent it would be important to “get something back” (Informant 1, female, Gen Z) from the contest, after having worked for the company. Hence, receiving a participation award would compensate for it.

Some of the respondents explain that they would expect to be reached out by the company in any way, even without receiving a reward, saying that they would like to receive a message (e.g. Informant 4, female, Gen X), because they would want “some explanation” (Informant 2, female, Gen X) and this would mean for them that the company has appreciated the effort and has dedicated some time to express gratitude for it (e.g. Informant 2, female, Gen X).

Moreover, one respondent argues that receiving a small reward for participating would be fair and would motivate him to work harder on the solution, explaining that “everybody would do the best for the company” (Informant 5, male, Gen X) if they would be sure of receiving something.

Some respondents further argued that “for competing there should also be a reward” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y), saying that they would consider it a necessary condition for participation.

In this regard, the informants have shown different opinions regarding the necessity of a base prize for participating, saying also that “it would be nice but not necessary” (Informant 6, female, Gen Y) because “it is your choice to participate” (Informant 6, female, Gen Y).

Overall, eight out of nine respondents, with the only exception of a Gen Z respondent, expressed favorable thoughts regarding this possibility and seven of them set it as an important condition for participating in crowdsourcing contests.

Obtaining economically valuable rewards

Within the reward aspect one crucial type of rewards was monetary awards. In fact, six of the nine respondents, equally distributed in each generation group, mentioned some kind of financial or economically valuable reward (e.g. free products, discounts, access to courses/seminars/webinars) as one of the factors that attracts them when considering participating in a contest. In this vein, the users substantiated their claims by saying that normally “seminars are very expensive” and that “it would be nice if designers could access them” (Informant 1, female, Gen Z). Similarly, the respondents expressed that monetary rewards could be used to select webinars or courses that would fit their interests (e.g. Informant 7, male, Gen Y).

Moreover, the respondents highlight that monetary prizes could be spent in any way “without being bound with the company like in the case of vouchers” (Informant 2, female, Gen X) and that a monetary reward is “more practical” (Informant 8, female, Gen X), indicating that the monetary rewards provided by companies can be used freely by the participants. Hence, there is no restriction on how to use/spend the given reward.

4.2.2 Intrinsic motivating factors

Fulfillment of a sense of competence

One of the main factors that almost the totality of respondents indicated as important for their participation is a self-perception of competence during the activities conducted. Specifically, all the informants with the only exception of one Gen X interviewee referred to it.

Firstly, the informants mentioned that they would be more interested in activities in which they believe to be knowledgeable and skilled, explaining that being able to complete a task would make them feel “proud” (e.g. Informant 4, female, Gen Y). In fact, this sense of competence has been linked with the fulfillment of challenging tasks that would give the respondents the opportunity to show their value (e.g. Informant 3, male, Gen Z), affirming that “it’s more satisfying to complete it (a challenging task)” (Informant 3, male, Gen Z) and that “all designers have to challenge themselves” (Informant 1, female, Gen Z).

Additionally, this factor seems to be really important since many interviewees stated that if they would suspect to be unable to deliver a good design or a solution that could potentially win the contest, they would not participate. As many informants emphasized:

“I would participate if I know that I can do well. If I really think that I will be able to succeed in any way. If I’d think that is something that I’m not really good at I’d be very selective. If I’d decide to participate, I think that I’d try to make it at my best”
(Informant 9, female, Gen Z)

“I need to be able to perform it in the best way (...), I wouldn’t feel good with myself to deliver something that is mediocre.”
(Informant 3, male, Gen Z)

“Especially when there’s a winning element into it I’d only participate if I’d feel confident in my abilities to actually win.”
(Informant 7, male, Gen Y)

The possibility to work freely and independently from others

A factor indicated by six respondents as a motivation to partake in crowdsourcing contests is the possibility to work autonomously mainly in terms of time, location, and process. In fact, on the one hand, some informants consider it important to have the possibility to include their own “sense of style” (e.g. Informant 7, male, Gen Y) and would like to be “free” (Informant 6, female, Gen Y) in terms of what and how to create a design (e.g. Informant 1, female, Gen Z). They argue that without this freedom in the creation process there is the risk that the solutions produced will be all very similar, limiting the variety of the designs (e.g. Informant 2, female, Gen X). As some of the informants put it:

“I think I’d like to be free. I like to design and I think that when I’m not free I don’t work well. I need maybe a few words and I need to know the corporate identity (...) I want to see the things that they like so I have an idea of the style that I could use for my design”(Informant 6, female, Gen Y)

“I’d like also to have some kind of freedom in terms of what and how I create the project” (Informant 1, female, Gen Z)

“I think that the second scenario (more freedom) is really important because in the first case there’s the danger that you don’t feel any freedom and in the end, everyone delivers almost the same product” (Informant 2, female, Gen X)

On the other hand, another aspect of autonomy that emerged throughout the interviews is related to the nature of online contests. Indeed, an informant says that nowadays “everything now is online”, hence she claimed that it is “perfect” (Informant 4, female, Gen Y) to conduct a contest online because it allows participants to apply from anywhere in the world (e.g. Informant 4, female, Gen Y). This underlines the flexibility of such contests in today’s times. For instance, one interviewee mentioned that she would choose online interactions for any kind of discussion needed in a contest because it is “more practical” (Informant 9, female, Gen Z). Another

respondent mentioned that, being a freelancer, he is used to “working solo” (e.g. informant 7, male, Gen Y) and that he would not want to participate in contests in which there is the need to cooperate with other participants, like in the case of workshops, because he appreciates the freedom to decide on his own how and when to work and that “having to work in a group would necessarily complicate things” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y). The same respondent also added that he appreciates that these contests take place entirely online and have limited interactions with the company. This is because, according to him, reading the requirements would be sufficient, and having to talk with members of the company would complicate the process, hindering his participation intention.

Task enjoyment and esteem for the brand

Liking the brand that promotes the contest or the kind of task that is asked to be performed appears to be really important for the respondents since all of them argued that they would be motivated to work only for companies that they esteem and on projects that they would enjoy doing. On the one hand, some of them indicated as the most important thing working on tasks that they normally enjoy studying or performing because are considered “appealing” (Informant 4, female, Gen Y) or “interesting” (Informant 2, female, gen X); these are normally tasks on which they consider themselves experts or very passionate. The informants also argued that if the task would be “enjoyable” they would join in a contest even in the case of a complex demand, overcoming a concern that was mentioned as an obstacle to their participation: time.

As some informants put it:

“I would be more interested in projects of logo design and branding because these are the things that I like studying the most” (I1)

“if I would enjoy it then I wouldn't mind it being complex. If I'd like the whole idea of the project I would join even if it's complex” (I1)

On the other hand, some informants acknowledged that the company that initiates the crowdsourcing contest plays a pivotal role in influencing their willingness for participation. This means that for the participants, a contest organized by a well perceived brand of their liking would motivate them more to take part in the contest. Similarly, the reason why a company initiates such a contest is considered fundamental for potential participants in order to decide whether to give their contribution in a contest (e.g. Informant 5, male, Gen X). This, emphasizes the importance of the motive behind the open call to designers made by the company. Indeed,

potential participants want to understand whether the contest is organized because the company lacks resources or because it considers contests as a cost-saving option (e.g. Informant 5, male, Gen X). As they put it:

“If it’s a company that appeals to me or it’s people that work with the same things that I like, like music or films or animations, then yeah (...) I’m much more in constant exposure to things that are on social media, and things that I like so it would be easier for me to participate in a contest from one of these fields that I see every day instead of a random company that of which I barely heard about.” (Informant 9, female, Gen Z)

“let’s say for example that there’s a large corporation which is very influential or you like them, love them then, of course, you’d feel even more proud if your design would win (...) for me that would a very large contributing factor” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y)

“I think that the most important thing is that I like the company. So I’d need to know what they do, how they do it, and why they’re asking for designs with a contest” (Informant 5, male, Gen X)

One informant further sets task enjoyment as a condition for participation for a specific case in which the potential reward monetary reward is considered low or unlikely to be won. Indeed, the informant explained that when doing “something almost for free” (Informant 1, female, Gen Z) the task should be at least interesting in order to partake.

Possibility to practice and/or improve creative skills

Another intrinsic motivation for participating mentioned by six out of nine respondents is the possibility to practice and improve their creative skills through the contest. Indeed, many informants argued that they would join in crowdsourcing contests to practice tasks that they normally would not do in their job, providing them a sense of novelty by exploring new experiences. As some informants put it:

“I think to be able to do a job that would not come to you in a natural way because at work (in the office) you always move between a certain kind of tasks. So I would do it to build up my experience (...) like building up my experience by trying new way of working” (Informant 2, female, Gen X)

“Because being out of your comfort zone is better because you can learn more and more. Even making mistakes, if it’s complicated, you can learn a lot” (Informant 4, female, Gen Y)

“Mmm, I’d like to design logos and maybe work with 3D designs (...), it would be completely new and for this I’d like to try it (...) I’d try things that normally I wouldn’t do because when a client pays you, you have to make sure that you are able to give him what he asks” (Informant 1, female, Gen Z)

Other respondents identified the feedback, provided by the company after the submission of the solution, as the main instructive tool present in these contests, saying that is “the best in which you can learn something” (Informant 3, male, Gen Z). They argued that receiving feedback on the design is fundamental because any feedback, regardless of being positive or negative, is considered a tool for personal growth (e.g. Informant 4, female, Gen Y). Moreover, the informants claimed that they would seek an explanation regarding why their design has or has not been chosen as the winning solution; hence, feedback would be necessary both to help them understand how to improve and to provide the explanation sought. As one informant stated:

“You want some explanation, so it’s nice to receive feedback because you can learn from it” (Informant 2, female, Gen X)

Finally, one respondent identified the network of professionals present in these contests as the main source of knowledge from which “pooling the resources” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y), explaining that he would largely benefit, in terms of knowledge, from the connection with other professionals. As he explained:

“I think that most of the fun would be getting to know the other people and their network, and learning from their expertise saying “hey I saw the logo that you uploaded, it’s awesome! How did you do that?”, so pooling the resources from the network of such events would benefit me the most. (...) you can also earn something either relationship-wise or knowledge-wise” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y)

High analyzability of the task

The last motivating factor identified in the interview process consists in the presence of clear requirements of the contest. This factor was mentioned by eight of the nine respondents as an essential element that needs to be present in crowdsourcing contests in order to consider joining. Several informants explained that the clarity of requirements is fundamental for some kinds of designs, explaining that graphic design is also about creating products that need to function in order to be produced and sold, (e.g. Informant 8, female, Gen X), highlighting the importance of the design’s functionality. They argued that graphic design “is not like art”, instead it is about realizing designs with specific characteristics that are needed by clients, hence they would need clear instructions. As some informants stated:

“I’d rather have a clear brief (...)” I want you to tell me the exact sizes, the market in which you want to sell it, and so on because all these facts are important to me to make a design that would be successful. If I don’t have a clear context it’s too vague” (I9)

“When you design for others they need specific things, right? So I think that’s why I’d need more instructions (...) and I’d need to know them before to start” (I4)

“I think it’s good in design if the company tells you what they want as much as possible (...) I think that boundaries are important when you’re working for a company. If they don’t define well what they want then it’s very wide and there’s too much room for interpretation (...) it’s not for yourself. It’s not like art, graphic design is about making something for something (functional)” (18)

In the same vein, some respondents referred to the importance of “a clear brief” provided by the company as a way to avoid working on a design that is not in line with what the company would want and “to have a clear way of where to go” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y). In other words, the respondents consider it a way to reduce uncertainties. As they explained:

“Basically, I’d like to have clear instructions, enough information about the project, and to know exactly what the company needs so I can be more productive and precise with what I create.” (Informant 1, female, Gen Z)

“If I’d be participating in one of these contests I think the key would be having something that is very straightforward, with a very good brief. So something easy to understand (...) with a good brief” (Informant 9, female, Gen Z)

“It must have specific information (requirements) so I can take a good direction when I start. In this way, you don’t spend too much time working on something that later you find to be useless” (Informant 2, female, Gen X)

4.3 Barriers and factors that hinder informants’ participation

Besides the aforementioned motivational factors, there are numerous characteristics of contests that the respondents indicated as factors that would hinder or inhibit their participation intention. These factors are categorized as external, meaning that they are determined by the contest organizer, the nature of the task, or variables that are not directly controllable by respondents (e.g. lack of time) and internal, hence ascribable to preferences or beliefs of the respondents.

4.3.1 External inhibiting factors

a) Task or contest layout mismatch

Perceived lack of expertise or high complexity of the task

One of the most prominent factors indicated as a cause of non-participation by six of the nine informants (three Gen Y, two Gen Z, and one Gen X) is related to the degree of complexity of the task to be performed and the respondents’ perceived lack of expertise. The majority of the respondents emphasized that if they would have the perception of not being fully expert in the activity that needs to be performed, they would prefer to not participate, saying that if the task is too complex they would consider it as “an obstacle” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y). The informants’ answers displayed mainly two reasons for which they consider complexity as an

“obstacle”. The first is that they would have the perception of being working on something that would not result in a winning solution, having the perception of losing their time. As these respondents explained:

“I would not spend my time on something that I think I can’t achieve.” (Informant 8, female, Gen X)

“If I know that is too hard and that is going to cost me a lot of time for something that may or may not give me a little reward then I don’t know it wouldn’t feel enough for competing.” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y)

The second reason is that the respondents would not join in a contest crowded with many participants if these are potentially more experts than them. Indeed, they would perceive to have fewer chances of winning, and hence they would feel discouraged. As they put it:

“If it’s something about a more general design where so many people from all over the world might participate and are more expert than me, then I’d prefer to not participate” (Informant 9, female, gen Z)

“When I don’t have the feeling that I could do something better than the others then I think “ oh it’s too complex for me, let’s someone else do it”. Yeah, someone that would be better at it” (Informant 6, female, Gen Y)

Finally, one respondent also mentioned that if the designs posted on the platform are visible by any participants or if the feedback provided by the company is public this could discourage her from participating. The respondent explained that this is because she would estimate what is the winning potential of the other participants’ solutions and she would self-evaluate her ability to create a solution with the same standards, adding that when that is not the case she would not participate (Informant 6, female, Gen Y).

A scarce or vague explanation of the task

Another external inhibiting factor related to the task or contest layout is the lack of clarity of the requirements. Although this was explicitly mentioned only by two out of the nine respondents, it is worth mentioning since all the respondents claimed the importance of having “clear instructions” as a motivating factor for taking part in crowdsourcing contests. Moreover, one informant explicitly stated that she considered joining in some crowdsourcing contests and actively looked for them on a platform but found the instructions to be “not really clear” since “the texts were huge and did not say much at the same time” (Informant 9, female, Gen Z). In other words, vague instructions discouraged her from participating. As she explained:

“I’m less open to participate in these contests’ platforms, you know like Innocentive (...) I don’t find them very clear. Even the websites are difficult to understand. For example, I looked into Innocentive, and (...) the thing is that sometimes is not really clear. And, at least for me, when I see that something is not clear I prefer to pass (...) The times that I’ve been thinking to apply

to one, the texts were huge and didn't say much at the same time. Let's say that the brief is not clear" (Informant 9, female, Gen Z)

b) Absence of offline meetings or the impossibility to have a voice interaction

All the respondents, with just one exception, expressed a strong preference for offline meetings as means to discuss aspects related to the task or the contest at large. Indeed, many informants defined the online environment and online meetings as “cold” (e.g. Informant 5, male, Gen X; Informant 4, female, Gen Y), saying also that with face-to-face interactions they would feel “more connected” (Informant 5, male, Gen X) with an interlocutor.

On the one hand, almost all of the respondents explained that having the possibility to choose, they would prefer to have offline meetings with the contest organizer as a way to discuss the requirements of the contest before getting started or illustrating their design, once created. Additionally, two Gen X informants expressed a preference for offline meetings when having to meet people for the first time, while saying that “for the following contact moments” (Informant 2, female, Gen X) online meetings would be a practical way to ask for clarifications.

As the respondents explained it:

“Normally for a first briefing I'd like to meet in person the client so it's easier to understand what they're looking for and to clarify the requirements (...) For the following contact moments, I think that online meetings are fine because they help you to have clarifications” (Informant 2, female, Gen X)

“Yes, for a first approach (offline meetings). Later is fine also with online meetings because you have already met that person” (Informant 5, male, Gen X)

“I prefer offline meetings because you can speak to the person that is right in front of you and you can use a lot of tools to show your work. You can use paper sheets, a laptop, or a tablet to illustrate your work more easily than when you have to do a screen-sharing(...) ideally it'd be the best for me.” (Informant 3, male, Gen Z)

On the other hand, half of them said that, although normally they would prefer offline meetings for the aforementioned reasons, in the case of crowdsourcing contests an online meeting (e.g. Zoom Calls) would be a good solution to solve their uncertainties related to the requirements for the task. They believe that an online meeting would give them the opportunity to “have a conversation that feels face-to-face” (Informant 8, female, Gen X) and that it would be strongly preferred to email or chat messages as means to ask for clarifications.

Therefore, a lack of meetings, both offline or online, that would give respondents the opportunity to have a voice and visive interaction with the seeker might be considered a factor that would hinder potential participants' intention to partake in crowdsourcing contests.

c) Lack of time

Another external inhibiting factor mentioned by six of the nine respondents is the lack of time to dedicate to crowdsourcing initiatives. This factor seems to be particularly relevant for the informants that mentioned it, indeed it was claimed that “time is everything” (Informant 4, female, Gen Y) and some respondents explained that “the real obstacle it’s not complexity” but the time that needs to be dedicated to a complex task (Informant 2, female, Gen X).

Many informants imputed the lack of time to their main occupation, either a job or the university, and argued that because of that they would consider joining only in contests that are not particularly complex and thus demanding in terms of time. As they phrase it:

“I don’t have a lot of free time (...) so if it’s very complex and I can see that from the beginning I’d say no because of the time” (Informant 4, female, Gen Y)

“Mmm, time? Mainly because of my job (...) until now I had enough work to do (...) especially in the past years but now I think that I could join one of these contests if I’ll find one that I like.” (Informant 2, female, Gen X)

“if it would ask me too much time I think I’d pass because my time is very limited” (Informant 9, female, Gen Z)

In this vein, a respondent stated that she would participate in a contest only if she could work on it during the weekend rather than after her work shift (e.g. Informant 9, female, Gen Z).

d) Inability to find contests in which to participate

Finally, a factor that was mentioned by five out of nine respondents as one of the causes of their current status as non-participants is being unable to find contests in which to partake.

In fact, on the one hand, some respondents mentioned that they were “not aware of any competition” (Informant 1, female, Gen Z) because they did not know where to look for contests (e.g. Informant 7, male, Gen Y) or because they have “just vaguely heard about it” (Informant 8, female, Gen X). In this regard, an informant indicated that as the primary reason for which he has not participated yet in a contest. As he puts it:

“I actually didn’t really know any contest in which I could have participated (...) the primary reason for which I have not competed yet is that I don’t know where they are or where I can find them” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y)

On the other hand, two informants explained that they were aware of contests at large and platforms on which to find them but they did not find any contest considered interesting or in line with their field of expertise (e.g. Informant 4, female, Gen Y; Informant 3, male, Gen Z). Indeed, informant 3 believes that in his field of expertise (the automotive sector) there are not

many contests because “the number of brands is not that high compared to the graphic world where a lot of brands need graphics”, hinting at the fact that he would not participate in any designing contest but only in the ones that would be in line with his field of studies or passion.

4.3.2 Internal inhibiting factors

a) Lack of shared values with the company

One of the principal internal inhibiting factors identified by six informants, two in each generation group, is a lack of shared values between the potential solver and the brand that promotes the contest. As anticipated in the motivational factors section the respondents seem to be strongly motivated to work on tasks that they would enjoy or for companies that they esteem. That said, the informants indicated that not having values in common with the brand promoting the contest is or would be a factor responsible for their non-participation. The informants considered the reputation of the company that promotes the contest to be very important, saying that “it plays a big part” because the designer would feel “bounded with the organization” (Informant 5, male, Gen X). Having shared values with the company is considered essential in order to participate in its contests. Indeed, some respondents explained that they “would not feel motivated” (Informant 9, female, gen Z) or “inspired” (Informant 1, female, Gen Z) to work for producing a design that would be destined for a company with which they do not share any value. This in turn, according to informant 2, would result in having difficulties in thinking of potential solutions. As some informants explained:

“I think that’s everything, right? If the company doesn’t fit your values, why would you be interested in making something for them?” (14)

“I need to have something in common with the company. I need to like it in some way. I think that if I don’t really like it or my interests are far from theirs, sometimes I make something but my designs are not as good as when I work on something that I like. Mmm I can’t put the same passion and effort into it if I don’t like it” (16)

“It matters a lot. I have to like the company, the project, and the products so I can work on it (...) else I wouldn’t be really inspired” (11)

b) Preference for other means of earning money or using personal free time

It is worth mentioning that the majority of respondents, specifically seven out of nine, have a preference for other means of earning money or using their personal free time. In fact, on the one hand, most of the informants argued that they would prefer to work on projects that would

“pay (off)” (Informant 1, female, Gen Z), for instance by means of a freelance job, because the potential reward in crowdsourcing contests is uncertain. As some respondents explained:

“why would you enter a competition when you could just work for people and being paid anyway? While with a contest you’d work without knowing if you’ll get chosen or not.” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y)

“If you have to work on projects that actually pay you then you give priority to these projects and you will not give priority to contests that may or may not make you earn some money.” (Informant 1, female, Gen Z)

“you’re taking part of your free time to work essentially. You’re working and you want to be rewarded for it, so if I’d see that is something that I’m not a full expert about it then I’d prefer to pass because I’d prefer to work on something that would give me money for reward or anything like my freelance jobs” (Informant 9, female, Gen Z)

On the other hand, other respondents would rather dedicate their limited free time to other activities that are not necessarily remunerated. For instance, some of them explained that they would prefer to spend their time studying or practicing hobbies instead of participating in contests (e.g. Informant 8, female, Gen X; Informant 3, male, Gen Z). As this informant puts it:

“recently I got ill for working too much ... so I’d rather go outside than staying behind the computer after work. Mmm I wouldn’t participate right now, maybe in the future” (Informant 8, female, Gen X)

Moreover, the informants that manifested a preference for other means of making money stressed the fact that designing for these contests is considered a form of work that would cost them time, the main difference being the fact that the reward is not sure (e.g. Informant 9, female, Gen Z). Hence, they would think about participating in a crowdsourcing contest only if they would consider it “worth it” (Informant 9, female, Gen Z), in the sense of being something that is possible to accomplish and that is remunerated well. This leads to the following perceived inhibiting factor.

c) The belief of not being rewarded enough

It is interesting to notice that six out of the nine respondents stressed the fact that in their opinion online design contests at large provide rewards that cannot be considered enough compared to the amount of work needed. On the one hand, two of them argued that designers should receive some sort of reward or acknowledgment for their participation, even when they would not be chosen as winners because it represents an investment of their time and this is considered valuable. Indeed, not being compensated somehow by the company for the work done is described by an informant as “frustrating” (Informant 8, female, Gen X). As one of the respondents explained:

“If people work a lot of hours for these competitions they should be rewarded somehow” (Informant 2, female, Gen X)

On the second hand, the rest of the respondents stressed the importance of the main prize of crowdsourcing contests, saying that “serious designers” would not do the contest (e.g. Informant 6, female, Gen Y) without a proper reward. They explained that the sole acknowledgment “would definitely not be enough” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y) and that their work “is much more expensive” than an acknowledgment or of a small prize (Informant 9, female, Gen Z). One respondent even mentioned that if she would perceive the reward as insufficient or inappropriate for the work that is required by a contest she would “think twice to buy products or services from them (the company) in the future” because that would make her feel “invaluable” (informant 9, female, Gen Z).

Hence, a reward that is perceived as low or unattractive could make the potential participants lose interest in taking part in a contest. As some respondents explained:

“So let’s say they (company) ask to do a project that requires you to work for multiple weeks or a week and then the reward is a discount coupon then I’d say: Oh fuck no! Hahahah. So I’d say it depends on if the reward is worth my effort” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y)

“I found a lot of contests in which the reward was very low, especially on social media, and I think that means not taking us (designers) seriously (...) you have to study what’s the company identity and consider so much stuff before creating the design then it’s not worth it. I think that any serious professional knows how to do what they ask but then he doesn’t do it because they (company) don’t deserve it.” (Informant 6, female, Gen Y)

“if it would make me feel a bit “hick” when a company names the reward, saying for example that your work is valued 5 pounds, I’d find it a bit cheeky and I’d think twice to buy products or services from them in the future. Because it’d make me feel a bit invaluable, you know not taking into consideration my work” (Informant 9, female, Gen Z)

d) Lack of trust in the brand, skepticism, and ethics or legal concerns

The last inhibiting factor identified through the interview process is an aggregate of skepticism toward contests, lack of trust in the brand, and ethics or legal concerns held by some respondents. In this regard, five out of nine informants questioned the ethics of crowdsourcing contests, imputing to “big brands” the guilt of making people work “almost for free” (e.g. Informant 9, female, Gen Z). They questioned the fairness of the practice (e.g. Informant 8, female, Gen X), saying also that it is “cheeky” (Informant 9, female, Gen Z) and that it seems that designers are “exploited for their talent” (Informant 7, male, Gen Y). As these respondents explained:

“I think that for these companies it’d be too easy to pick up good solutions if a lot of experienced graphic designers would join, so you would get high standards without really paying for them” (Informant 2, female, Gen X)

“when the contest is from a big company that I think has a lot of money I don’t feel like helping them because they have enough money to pay professionals for their work, so they could ask design studios where every person that is working for them would be paid” (Informant 5, male, Gen X)

Another concern raised by the informants is that they either perceive the terms and conditions of contests as “not good for designers” (Informant 5, male, Gen X) or they consider their understanding as crucial for participating. This is because the respondents are worried that their design could be used for a purpose different from the one declared or because they think that want to understand whether the company asks to fully give up on property rights. As one informant explained:

“I’d say that is important to have a very good understanding of the terms and conditions. I know that they ask you to give up on your property rights because the artwork is going to be used exclusively by the company, but I’m worried that the company would not tell me exactly what my design is going to be used for (...) if I don’t have the possibility to really understand that and you just promise me a small reward to give up on my property rights then I’d not. But if the terms and conditions are clear and the reward is fair enough to give up these rights then is ok.” (Informant 9, female, Gen Z)

One last thing highlighted by an informant is that a lack of trust in the brand would be a factor that would determine her non-participation in a contest. In this regard, the informant explained that she would need to trust the company in order to create a design for it because she believes that in the market there are companies that put misleading information on products’ packagings (Informant 2, female, Gen X).

4.4 Differences between the Gen Z, Gen Y, and Gen X respondents

Few motivational differences, in terms of extrinsic over intrinsic motivating factors, between the respondents can be directly attributed to their respective generations.

Specifically, it was expected that younger generations, such as Gen Z, would be more motivated by extrinsic factors compared to older generations, like Gen Y and Gen X. However, in terms of motivating factors the only significant differences that can be noticed are related to the preference for specific kinds of extrinsic rewards rather than for extrinsic over intrinsic motivators or vice versa. In fact, all the informants when asked about what would be the main source of interest in crowdsourcing contests mentioned an extrinsic factor, although all of them referred to some intrinsic motivating factors as fundamental conditions for their participation (e.g. the enjoyment of the task).

In this regard, the three Gen Z respondents indicated that the most attractive factor of a contest was the chance to be acknowledged by the seeker or having their work publicly exhibited, guaranteeing the reach of new professional contacts and job opportunities. Indeed, improving

the CV, by either including in it an acknowledgment from the contest organizer or by claiming ownership of the winning design, seems to be really important for Gen Z respondents. Moreover, all the Gen Z respondents, with one exception, expressed a preference for non-monetary prizes as rewards for the possible win. In fact, they explained that in the case of winning the contest they would prefer either to start an internship (or a regular job) with the brand organizing the contest to give their career a boost or to have free access to instructive material, such as webinars or specialized courses, to increase their competences.

It is interesting to notice that these informants are unemployed, being students and occasional freelancers.

There are some overlaps between participants' choices of an extrinsic reward. In fact, although informant 7 (Gen Y) argued that he would prefer to receive a monetary prize as a reward, he explained that in that way he could choose autonomously which webinars or courses to attend or buy. Displaying an interest in means for improving competencies through crowdsourcing contests, similarly to most Gen Z respondents. Also, informant 4 (Gen Y) considered improving her portfolio and exhibiting her designs to the world as more important than a monetary reward, saying that in that way she could easily look for a job, although she mentioned being already employed.

In this vein also informant 5 (Gen X) argued that he would not partake in a contest just for the monetary prize and that he would prefer to be acknowledged to make his name or his company's name "bigger", although he believes that it is fair that the winner would get a great amount of money.

That said, overall all Gen Y and Gen X informants considered monetary prizes really important, stressing the fact that it would be either more practical or fair because that would compensate for their investment of time.

A difference between the three generations can be also found when looking at their intrinsic motivations for taking part. In fact, on the one hand, Gen Z and Gen Y respondents, displaying similar answers, highlighted their will of learning and expand their working skills (e.g. I1, I3, I4, I7). On the second hand, Gen X informants stressed the fact that they would partake in crowdsourcing contests mostly to conduct tasks that they normally would not do in their job (e.g. Informant 2, female, Gen X) or even that they would participate in contests out of curiosity (e.g. Informant 8, female, Gen X) because these would be new experiences.

Moreover, as anticipated in the first section of the current chapter, the majority of Gen X respondents consider crowdsourcing contests as places that are or should be attended mainly by younger professionals rather than by experienced ones (themselves), stressing the fact that contests would be a good opportunity “to make some experience” (Informant 2, female, Gen X) needed for the future career of young participants.

One last difference that can be noticed is that the totality of Gen X raised some ethics (or legal) concerns, expressed some skepticism, or questioned the fairness of the reward system of crowdsourcing contests. Meanwhile, Gen Z and Gen Y respondents, with one exception per group (I9 and I7), were not concerned about property rights and the fairness of the practice, looking more interested in the potential benefits achievable through crowdsourcing contests.

5 Discussion

The current study has yielded several interesting empirical findings on potential participants' perceptions regarding factors that can motivate or inhibit them to partake in crowdsourcing contests. To begin with, the findings of this qualitative research reveal several types of factors considered motivating and essential by potential participants, namely graphic designers, to partake in crowdsourcing design contests. These are categorized as extrinsic and intrinsic motivators.

Among the motivating factors considered extrinsic, there are economically valuable rewards, public acknowledgments, participation awards, and job opportunities. By economically valuable rewards we refer to monetary prizes and any sort of products, services, or discounts provided to the winner of a contest. While public acknowledgment refers to any form of online and offline mention provided by the company to the participant chosen as the winner of a contest. Participation awards are intended as rewards of different kinds (e.g. voucher, discount, a small amount of money) or acknowledgment provided to most if not all participants of a contest, rather than just to the winner of the contest, as a form of appreciation of their efforts. The last extrinsic motivating factor mentioned by respondents is having a job opportunity with the brand that organizes the contest or getting to know professionals with whom they might potentially collaborate in the future.

These types of motivating factors that emerged from the current study are mostly in line with Brabham's (2008 & 2010) and Zheng et al.'s (2011) studies on motivation and task design in crowdsourcing contests. Indeed, Zheng et al. (2011), based on Decy and Ryan's (2000) work, defined extrinsic motivation as "the motivation to work for something apart from and external to the work itself" and categorized extrinsic motivations for participation as monetary gains or improved reputation, or recognition. In the same vein, Brabham (2008) and Brabham (2010) when referring to extrinsic motivations of participants for taking part in crowdsourcing contests did it by indicating economic rewards and the possibility to start working as freelancers.

Moreover, this research highlights that for the specific generation group of Gen Z graphic designers some extrinsic rewards, like a public acknowledgment provided by the company, the exhibition of their design to a broad audience, or a job opportunity, are considered the most important extrinsic motivating factors. In fact, these means of reward are preferred to monetary rewards by the majority of the Gen Z interviewees. Meanwhile, older generation groups, like

Gen Y and Gen X, displayed a preference for monetary prizes among all the different kinds of extrinsic rewards, and considered them important for participating in crowdsourcing.

These findings are supported by previous studies from Zare et al. (2019) which claimed that tangible benefits, like monetary incentives and personal rewards, are important drivers of participation in co-creation activities at large. Indeed, all the respondents considered important for participating a specific sort of extrinsic reward, although with the evidenced differences between generation groups. However, the fact that older generation indicated money as one of the main attractive factors for choosing to partake in crowdsourcing contests contradicts what was found by Lietsala and Joutsen (2007). In fact, the authors affirmed that the opportunity to make money was not a motivator for participation in contests.

Meanwhile, within the motivating factors categorized as intrinsic, we find several respondents' desires: feeling competent, being independent in their working processes, conducting an enjoyable task, designing for a brand that is esteemed, experimenting and improving their skills, and finally having a good understanding of the task that is asked by the company that promotes the contest.

These findings are in line with extant literature on co-creation contests by Dahl and Moreau (2007) and Zheng et al. (2011) studies. In fact, the aforementioned motivating factors are comparable with the sense of competence, autonomy, and task enjoyment identified by Dahl and Moreau (2007) and described by Fuller et al. (2011) as the main drivers of participation in co-creation contests. Meanwhile, among the intrinsic motivating factors identified by Zheng et al. (2011), there are also other two concepts. The first is the analyzability of the task, which is essentially the clarity of requirements, the higher the clarity the higher the intrinsic motivation. The second is variety, which is described as the degree to which different skills and actions are required to be performed to complete the task, specifically, the higher the variety of a task the higher the intrinsic motivation (Zheng et al. 2011). In this regard, the willingness to practice new tasks and to improve creative skills expressed by the respondents can be compared to the concept of variety; while the clarity of requirements mentioned by informants as a motivating factor is in line with the concept of analyzability.

Hence, the first proposition is supported by the current findings and can be integrated as follows.

P1: The analyzability of the task, the possibility to experiment and learn during the contest, and senses of autonomy, competence, and task enjoyment, as well as economically valuable rewards, public

acknowledgments, participation awards, and job opportunities, positively influence potential participants' willingness to participate in crowdsourcing contests.

Besides the different motivating factors, the respondents mentioned several elements of a contest that would hinder their willingness to participate. Among these, we can find three inhibitors that are related to the nature of the task or contest and that, for this reason, are considered external inhibiting factors: the task or contest layout mismatch, the absence of offline meetings or the impossibility to have voice interactions with the contest organizer, the lack of time, and the inability to find a contest in which to participate. The task or contest layout mismatch has a twofold meaning: the respondent's perceived lack of expertise due to the high complexity of the task, and the scarce explanation of the task. Most of the external inhibitors mentioned by the informants are in line with what was found by Chepurna and Criado (2018) findings with only a few differences. In this regard, one of these factors is only partially in line with the findings of Chepurna and Criado (2018) since they identified as an external inhibiting factor just the absence of offline meetings. However, building on this, some respondents of the current study mentioned as an inhibiting factor also the impossibility to have voice interactions, intended mainly as Zoom calls, with the contest organizer with the aim of clarifying some doubts related to the development of the required task. This further highlights the respondents' need for interpersonal interaction through face-to-face conversations or tools that allow reproducing a face-to-face conversation, for instance, video call apps.

Additionally, other factors dependent on the personal characteristics of the respondents were mentioned by the informants and can be considered internal inhibitors. Out of these, we find the lack of shared values with the company promoting the contest, a preference for other means of making money, the belief of not being rewarded enough, and a lack of trust in the brand, skepticism, or ethics-legal concerns. These factors are partially in line with Chepurna and Criado's (2018) findings, indeed out of the six internal inhibitors identified by the authors we find the lack of trust in the company, the lack of shared values with the company, and skepticism. The remaining inhibiting factors identified in the current study are comparable with what was found by Illahi et al. (2019). Indeed, Illahi et al. (2019) identified as inhibiting factors the preferences for other means of making money (e.g. freelancing) and the belief of not being rewarded for the efforts necessary to produce a solution. Besides that, the authors identified other inhibiting factors, namely: the perceived lack of expertise by the potential participants; a lack of time due to the main job; and the lack of respondents' awareness of crowdsourcing

contests in which to take part. However, Illahi et al. (2019) claimed that out of the five inhibiting factors identified by them only the perceived lack of expertise and the lack of time were considered relevant since the other factors were mentioned only by a small percentage of the respondents of their study. Contrarily, from the present study emerged that the belief of not being rewarded enough and the preference for other means of earning money are relevant and are indicated by the informants either as causes of their current non-participation or as possible causes of their future non-participation. These two inhibiting factors, together with skepticism and ethics concerns, arise from the informants' perception or fear to be exploited by the company that organizes the contest. This is in line with Brabham's (2008) study which highlights that feelings like exploitation can be perceived when participants are, unlike expected, not rewarded for their efforts.

Hence, the third proposition is supported by the current findings and can be integrated as follows.

P3: Several internal (task or contest layout mismatch, absence of offline meetings or impossibility to have voice interactions with the contest organizer, lack of time, and inability to find a contest in which to participate) and external (lack of shared values with the company promoting the contest, preference for other means of making money, belief of not being rewarded enough, and lack of trust in the brand, skepticism, or ethics-legal concerns) inhibiting factors negatively affect potential participants' willingness to participate in crowdsourcing contests.

For what concerns the motivational differences between the three-generation groups of respondents, it was expected that younger generations, like Gen Z, would be more motivated by extrinsic factors compared to older generations, like Gen Y and Gen X. However, the interviews revealed that none of the three groups was more or less extrinsically motivated than the others. In fact, the respondents considered equally important extrinsic motivating factors, for instance, rewards or public acknowledgments, and intrinsic ones, such as feeling competent or having the possibility to improve creative skills, in order to partake in crowdsourcing contests.

This finding contradicts what was found in the literature by Catania and Randall's study (2013). Indeed, their study suggested that age should be negatively correlated with extrinsic work motivations and positively or uncorrelated with intrinsic work motivations. With this regard, the results present in the literature on this topic are controversial. In fact, there are few studies (e.g. Giancola, 2006; Wong et al., 2008) that claimed that age is unrelated to the motivational

factors that drive employees to work. This, considering the participation in crowdsourcing contests as a form of work (e.g. Segev, 2019), seems to suggest that the motivation of potential participants of crowdsourcing contests is unrelated to their age and, in turn, their generation.

Nevertheless, Montana and Lenaghan's (1999) study claimed that motivational differences are related to age, like in the case of Gen X and Gen Y with Baby Boomers, but found Gen X and Gen Y to share the same set of motivators. Meanwhile, Bristow et al. (2011) found motivational differences between various generations, among these even Gen X and Gen Y.

Thus, their findings are partially in line with what was found in the current master thesis. In fact, the current study shows that motivational differences between the three generations exist, although not, unlike expected, in terms of intrinsic over extrinsic motivations. Among the most prominent differences displayed by the informants of this study, we find Gen Z to differ from Gen Y and Gen X in terms of preferences for specific kinds of extrinsic rewards, such as public acknowledgment and job opportunities; meanwhile, overall Gen Y and Gen X preferred monetary prizes.

Moreover, the interviewees displayed minor differences also in terms of their intrinsic motivations to participate. In fact, besides the motivating factors shared by any generation group, like senses of autonomy, competence, task enjoyment, and a good analyzability of the task, Gen Z and Gen Y respondents shared similar intrinsic motivating factors that differed from Gen X informants. The former, highlighted as a motivating factor the possibility to learn and expand creative skills throughout crowdsourcing contests; while the latter indicated the curiosity toward new activities and the possibility to work on tasks that the informants could not do in their jobs as motivating factors.

Hereafter, the second proposition is rejected and reformulated as follows.

P2: Differences between the three generations of respondents (Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z) were found in terms of their respective preferences for specific kinds of extrinsic rewards. Specifically, Gen Z respondents considered more important non-monetary rewards, like a public acknowledgment or a job possibility, in order to partake in crowdsourcing contests; while Gen Y and Gen X informants are more motivated to partake in contests by monetary prizes.

Furthermore, the majority of Gen X respondents considered crowdsourcing design contests as places that should be attended by young professionals rather than experienced ones and looked at contests with skepticism.

5.1 Theoretical contribution

With the exploratory qualitative study reported in this paper, this research contributes to the extant body of literature on crowdsourcing contests by focusing on a specific group of potential participants, graphic designers. The results of this research have valuable theoretical implications for our understanding of what are the underlying reasons for participation and the perceived inhibiting factors of potential participants, and how these might differ based on the generation taken into consideration. Indeed, this work illustrates most prominent intrinsic motivating factors mentioned by graphic designers and what are the specific kinds of extrinsic rewards that would be preferred by potential participants are in order to partake in crowdsourcing contests.

Moreover, there is limited existing research that investigates the inhibiting factors perceived by crowdsourcing participants. In this regard, Chepurna and Criado (2018), because of the newness of their research, suggested replicating their study in a different context, which the current research did. The current study integrated Chepurna and Criado's (2018) findings on inhibiting factors with Illahi et al.'s (2019) ones. Furthermore, it also highlights the importance of some inhibiting factors that were mentioned in these studies but that were not considered relevant.

In addition to that, motivational studies are contradictory in terms of their results regarding whether workers are more intrinsically or extrinsically motivated depending on their age.

Considering the participation in crowdsourcing contests as a form of work (e.g. Segev, 2019), the relation between potential participants' generations and their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to partake in contests remained unclear and unknown as existing studies did not explicitly research it.

Hence, this investigation, which to the best of my knowledge is the first study to openly and empirically explore the underlying motivation and inhibitions for participation in crowdsourcing contests with this specific generational comparison, adds to this field of studies by having highlighted the preferences for specific extrinsic rewards and some differences in term of intrinsic motivation to partake in crowdsourcing contests based on the respective respondents' generation.

5.2 Practical contribution

Based on the findings of this study, the following practical crowdsourcing contest design guidelines to attract potential participants to partake can be provided. Having understood the underlying reasons that would motivate or hinder potential participants to participate in crowdsourcing contests, contest creators can design their competitions in ways that would fulfill potential participants' evoked motives. In doing so companies can crowdsource a larger as well as a more motivated set of solvers, generating both a greater quantity and quality of contributions (Fuller et al. 2011). First, the main extrinsic motivating factors, besides money, mentioned by the potential participants were public acknowledgment, being credited for the contribution with the aim of improving one's personal CV, receiving participation awards, and having job opportunities as a form of reward. Hence, contest organizers could introduce or emphasize the presence of one of these elements as a way to attract potential participants and convert them into actual participants. Specifically, it would be highly beneficial to introduce participation awards destined to be given to any participant. This is because many respondents displayed skepticism related to ethical concerns and questioned the fairness of the practice, highlighting that the company would largely benefit from contests while the participants that are not selected as winners are not rewarded properly for their efforts.

Moreover, contest organizers should try to design contests in ways that make the participants feel challenged, although without exceeding with the degree of complexity because this could discourage them from participating due to the time required to complete the task, as explained by some informants. Another aspect of fundamental importance highlighted by all the informants is the clarity of the requirements. In fact, this can be considered as a factor that is both a motivator and an inhibitor of participation, depending on how clear the requirements are to the potential participants. Thus, contest organizers should focus on explaining precisely the requirements of the task by also guaranteeing to participants the possibility to reach them out in order to ask for clarifications. Possibly this contact moment between participants and contest organizers should take place through video calls since the informants expressed a need for an interaction that feels "personal", thus chats or emails are not recommended for this purpose.

Furthermore, the understanding of the relation between the age profiles of potential participants and their motivations to attend crowdsourcing contests is an additional benefit for contest organizers. In fact, this could enable seekers to better understand which contest features to emphasize in order to attract specific age groups of graphic designers. Specifically, it would be effective to set, as prizes for winning, internships or working experiences to add in the personal CV of the participants when aiming to attract young professionals, such as Gen Z. Meanwhile, to attract older and more experienced professionals, such as Gen Y and Gen X, it would be beneficial to leverage on monetary prizes while communicating the presence of participation awards. This is because employed graphic designers seem to value more their personal time and are used to being compensated somehow for the investment of their time.

5.3 Limitations & future research

Although the current study makes notable contributions that pave the way for timely research on crowdsourcing contests, it is not without limitations. The limitations of this study, however, open future research avenues. Firstly, the results of this research build on a comparatively small sample size of 9 potential participants, representing each generation with 3 respondents, which inhibits the generalizability of this research. Hence, future studies can replicate the current study by increasing the sample size of the informants, through which further potential motivations and inhibiting factors for participation can arise. Likewise, the core findings of this study (see propositions) can also be tested in a large-scale quantitative study, to verify whether these results hold true for a bigger sample of graphic designers who have not engaged yet in crowdsourcing design contests. Specifically, the youngest generation considered in this work (Gen Z) seems to be characterized by the most remarkable differences.

Similarly, this study besides making a generational comparison did not consider particular demographic variables, which limits the generalizability of the results to this specific demographic group. Hence, this research calls for a comparative study for potential participants of different genders or cultural backgrounds, which could provide a broader view of the factors that drive graphic designers' participation in crowdsourcing contests by discovering differences and even commonalities between the different groups of people. For instance, the results may differ in other cultures such as Japan in which female workers tend to value extrinsic factors more than intrinsic motivators and vice versa for men (Worthley et al. 2009). In the same vein,

this study did not differentiate between specific tasks to be performed throughout crowdsourcing contests, but it generalizes the results on all types of design tasks. Thus, future studies may explore the underlying motives and inhibitors to engage in crowdsourcing contests for different kinds of design tasks (e.g. logo design, product design).

In addition, a limitation of this qualitative research consists in considering generational groups that, based on their definition, are really broad, considering a temporal arch of almost twenty years for each generation. Indeed, respondents of two distinct generations that are close to the same limit of the intervals considered might have more commonalities than differences.

In this vein, this study did not specifically investigate how the underlying motives and perceived inhibiting factors differ between employed graphic designers and graphic design students. However, as was mentioned in the results chapter, among Gen Z respondents unemployed graphic designers displayed many similarities in terms of their motivations for taking part in crowdsourcing contests. Hence, future studies could investigate the role of this distinction on the potential participants' motives to partake in contests.

Finally, the present study's results are merely derived from the conducted interviews, which again limits the generalizability of the study's results.

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7 Appendices

Appendix A

Interview guide

Introduction

First of all thank you so much for taking time out and agreeing to participate in this research. Just to remind you again, everything that you will say will remain confidential and anonymous and the information will just be used for the thesis' purposes. This means that no external party will have access to this information. Do not hesitate to be open and whenever you feel uncomfortable with a question, feel free to not answer it. Moreover, if you may have any questions during the interview, feel free to interrupt and ask them right away. As I informed you beforehand, the aim of this study is to deeply understand the motivations and factors that may prompt or prevent potential participants to take part in crowdsourcing design contests. So, if you do not have any questions right away, let's get started.

General questions

- *When were you born?*
- *What is your nationality?*
- *What is your profession and background of studies?*
- *How do you spend most of your free time?*
- *What do you think of a company that asks consumers to propose ideas or complete solutions for their product or services? E.g. submit your design for the next packaging of a product (Why? / Could you elaborate on that?)*
- *How do you expect these activities to be? Why?*

A) Motivations

- 1) *Why would you be interested in participating in crowdsourcing contests?*
- 2) *What would motivate you more in order to engage in a crowdsourcing contest?*
- 3) *Is there any specific field in which you would like to give your contribution? Why?*

a1) Intrinsic

- 4) *Would you participate only when you think to be able to perform the specified task or would you try anyway? Why?*
- 5) *In crowdsourcing contests there is the possibility to receive feedback after the proposal's submission in order to further improve it, what do you think of it?*
- 6) *Would you rather have a set of instructions to follow in order to complete the task or develop the proposal based on your understanding? Could you explain this in more detail?*
- 7) *Would you rather have to focus on a smaller, and relatively simpler, task or on a more comprehensive and demanding project? Why? Can you elaborate on that?*
- 8) *How would it make you feel to complete successfully the task required? Why?*
- 9) *Are there other characteristics of the task that would matter to you in order to perform what is asked by the company? Could you elaborate on that?*

a2) Extrinsic

- 10) *What is the importance of the possible reward or acknowledgment by the company in order to participate in a contest? Why?*
- 11) *What kind of reward would you like to receive? Why would you prefer this among others?*
- 12) *Do you expect to be rewarded anyhow or just in case of a successful contribution? Why?*
- 13) *How would you feel if your submission would be chosen and implemented by the company? Do you expect the company to give you the credit for it?*

B) Inhibitors

- 14) *Is there any specific reason for which you have not participated yet in crowdsourcing contests? Could you elaborate on that?*

b1) Internal

- 15) *What do you think of submitting your proposal through an online platform? Would there be a way to propose your contribution that you would prefer more?*
- 16) *How does your relationship with the company, or its reputation, affect your willingness to participate in its contests? In which sense?*

b2) External

- 17) *How much of your time does your job take away from you? Does this affect your participation intention significantly or is it a minor aspect in this sense?*
- 18) *What do you think of offline and online meetings when there is the need to discuss something? Do you prefer one over the other? Why?*
- 19) *What is your opinion on task complexity in these contests? Is it something that would motivate you to participate or discourage you? Why?*

With that we have reached the end of our interview. Thanks a lot for having found the time for this interview with me, I really appreciate that. Again, I cannot emphasize enough that everything that we talked about today will remain anonymous and confidential and the use of the information gathered is only for the purpose of the thesis. In case you have any further questions or want to add any new information, do not hesitate to contact me anytime. Again, a massive thank you for your participation, it is very much appreciated.

Appendix B: Respondents' segmentation

Respondent n°	Duration	Profession	Sex	Nationality	Generation
1	43'	Student-freelancer	Female	Greek	Gen Z (1997)
2	39'	Full-time worker	Female	Dutch	Gen X (1964)
3	33'	Student-freelancer	Male	Italian	Gen Z (1999)
4	27'	Full-time worker	Female	Mexican	Gen Y (1984)
5	46'	Full-time worker	Male	Dutch	Gen X (1963)
6	35'	Full-time worker	Female	Dutch	Gen Y (1984)
7	33'	Full-time worker	Male	Dutch	Gen Y (1995)
8	36'	Part-time worker	Female	Dutch	Gen X (1970)
9	34'	Full-time worker	Female	Venezuelan	Gen Z (1997)

Appendix D: Coding scheme

Colors attributed to the diverse aspects/themes:

Table 1: Types of Intrinsic motivational factors mentioned by respondents

Fulfillment of a sense of Competence	Yellow
Autonomy	Green
Task enjoyment (enjoyment of the task and/or esteem-love feelings for the brand)	Turquoise
Possibility to practice with different types of design and/or improve creative skills	Aqua green
High analyzability of the task	<u>Underlined purple</u>

Table 2: Types of Extrinsic motivational factors mentioned by respondents

Economically valuable rewards (e.g. money, free products, discounts, access to courses/seminars/webinars/...)	Dark green
Public acknowledgment	Dark yellow
Participation awards	Bordeaux
Job opportunity (e.g. internship, regular job, possibility to get in contact with other professionals)	<u>Underlined light blue</u>

Table 3: Types of external inhibiting factors mentioned by respondents

Task or Contest layout related (lack of clarity, degree of difficulty, perceived lack of expertise, uninteresting task, specific characteristic of the contest)	Pink
Lack of time	Gray
Absence of offline meetings or “talking meetings” in general	Red
Being unaware of contests in which to participate/ Scarce number of contests	Dark Blue

Table 4: Types of internal inhibiting factors mentioned by respondents

Lack of shared values with the brand	Dark gray
Belief of not being rewarded enough/ preference for other means of making money/building up a career/spending free time.	Blue
Lack of trust in the brand, skepticism or ethics/ legal concerns	<u>Underlined orange</u>

Additional:

- Other contextual factor inductively mentioned by informants: **“Bold”** & “Underlined”

Appendix E: Interview quotes categorization of Gen Z’s respondents

General thoughts regarding crowdsourcing contests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“Well, it’s a nice idea and a nice opportunity both for designers and for the company. That is because it gives designers the opportunity to share their thoughts, designs, and ideas”</i>(11) - <i>“From the company’s side is good because it has many different options, so I think there are many positive aspects.”</i> (11) - <i>“I think that is a good thing because, in general, the job of a designer is not just designing something that is beautiful but things that are needed by someone and this gives designers the opportunity to do it”</i> (13) - <i>“I find it very interesting. I think is a really good way to find new ideas but at the same time (...) sometimes I find it a bit cheeky. Because proposing ideas is really good but the cheeky part is asking a lot of designers to do that but just one is going to be rewarded (...) is almost making someone work for free.”</i> (19)
Type of motivating factor	<p>1. Extrinsic</p> <p>1.1 Economically valuable rewards (e.g. Monetary gains, free products, discounts, access to courses/seminars/webinar, ...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“the thing that I’d like to receive the most is free access to design seminars (...) normally these seminars are very expensive, so it’d be nice if designers could access them.”</i> (11) - <i>“The primary thing I think it’d be the reward”</i> (19) - <i>“I would say that a fair prize is what matters.”</i> (19) - <i>“it’s either money or licensing. You know, instead of getting the money you could have a percentage out of the sales of that product that you designed”</i> (19)

- *“If I think that you pay me enough (...)I wouldn't expect to get credit for that, but the prize needs to be good. I mean you (company) would have to pay for my rights in some way.” (19)*

1.2 Public acknowledgement and job opportunities

- *“I'd like if the company would share designers' works with the network, so if this specific company can't hire me maybe it could recommend me to others.” (11)*
- *“It would be nice. At least not on the packaging of something but maybe it'd be nice to share that a product was designed in a competition by this person (...) it would be nice to share it in the designers' network so that other companies might notice you and decide to employ you.” (11)*
- *“Oh well, the acknowledgment is the first reason for which I would join (...) if it's a big company, like Toyota, an internship or an acknowledgment from them might be important for my future career (...) Maybe it's not that company to hire you but with a good reference for your work you might get an opportunity somewhere else” (13)*
- *“then for the second one I'd say the exposure (...) a high exposure of my work, so if it'd be seen by many many people, for example on socials, that'd motivate me”(19)*
- *“I would say again the exposure that a company could give me. If it'd be really high, maybe because the company is very famous, I'd do it just because of that” (19)*
- *“I think it'd be awesome because apart from the fact that you're winning also you'd have a workpiece that would be, most of the times, exposed to a big audience. So an audience bigger than the one that you'd have in your own platforms” (19)*
- *“I would expect credit if the prize is not big enough” (19)*
- *“in general, I think that there should be an important reward because (...) if the contest doesn't give you the possibility to learn something, through an internship, a stage, or an experience inside the company then is not so exciting” (13)*
- *“I'd prefer to start working for a big company rather than winning a few hundred euro.” (13)*
- *“for the reasons that I was telling you. So to find a job opportunity that would increase my experience because I still have much to learn, after all, I am primarily a university student (...) if I make a good design then (...) I want to be involved somehow with the company.” (13)*
- *“Because if the company sees the potential in these product concepts you could start working with the company, maybe with an internship. And I think that this could be the best thing that could happen in these contests” (13)*
- *“Mmm, an internship or maybe a smaller working experience (...)I mean, receiving money is okay but it's not the most important thing especially now that I'm still a student (...) For example, if one contest offers just the possibility to win 3000 euros it's nothing compared to an internship with the company, financially and for the career” (13)*
- *“an easy contest probably the company won't give you the chance to start an internship if you win it and this is what I aim for.” (13)*

1.3 Participation awards (e.g. receiving an acknowledgment or a small prize as a reward for the efforts)

- *"I'd like if there was a prize provided by the company for the participation"* (11)
- *"It is very important because you feel that you get something just because you tried. It feels like you get something back and that you didn't just work for nothing."* (11)
- *"I expect that the company would reward not all the designers but at least the bests. Maybe the best 20 or the best 30 and if I'm not within these then I don't mind if I'm not rewarded because I see that others have done better than what I did"* (11)
- *"I think that just the fact of being taken into consideration (...) would be very important. That would make me feel somehow rewarded as well (...)I'm talking about something that you send me if you think that my design has been actually a good application, maybe saying "hey we looked at your design and we're taking it into consideration for this stage" even though if it's not going to win but at least to show that you considered my work as valuable"* (19)
- *"I think that'd be a really good way to make me want to be part of a contest. If I'd see that there are multiple rewards or different rewards, even if it's not the big prize that you aim for. If I'd see for example that they give vouchers to spend on the whole website (...) I would participate"* (19)

2. Intrinsic

2.1 Fulfillment of a sense of competence

- *"It's challenging and I think all designers have to challenge themselves, so this is a good opportunity in this sense."* (11)
- *I would be more interested in projects of logo design and branding because (...) and I think that I'm good at them"* (11)
- *"I think it would be more challenging and I think that is good to challenge yourself when you work in a creative industry"* (11)
- *"I would acknowledge that I met their expectations and I'd be very satisfied. It would be a proof for me that, indeed, I understood the concept and I gave to the client what he wanted and this is a big success for a designer."*(11)
- *"I need to be able to perform it in the best way (...), I wouldn't feel good with myself to deliver something that is mediocre."* (13)
- *"I prefer to work on a big project that involves a lot of elements inside and that really gives me the opportunity to show my value, it's more satisfying to complete it"* (13)
- *"I would feel very satisfied about the experience, of course. Especially if the project was very complex and demanding"* (13)
- *"I wouldn't be satisfied to receive some kind of reward knowing that my project wasn't good enough or just average"* (13)
- *"It'd be amazing. I think that would be the best thing that a student or a freelancer designer could get from one of these experiences. It'd be like a reward itself"* (13)
- *"I would participate if I know that I can do well. If I really think that I will be able to succeed in any way. If I'd think that is something that I'm not really good at"* (19)
- *"I'd be very selective if I'd decide to participate and I think that I'd try to make it at my best"* (19)

- *“if it’s something that I might like, like an art contest or an illustration contest that is my field, things that I’ve studied for years and I’ve been doing for a long time I’d participate” (I9)*

2.2 Autonomy

- *“I would be interested more in food and beverage because I think that you have the opportunity to be way more creative because of the kind of the products” (I1)*
- *“I’d like also to have some kind of freedom in terms of what and how I create the project, but I would definitely like to have clear instructions.” (I1)*
- *“something easy to understand and that would let me use my imagination and creativity to really create something new” (I9)*
- *“I think for discussing something about the contest I’d go one hundred percent online! I think is more practical” (I9)*

2.3 Task enjoyment, feelings of esteem/love for the brand

- *“I would be more interested in projects of logo design and branding because these are the things that I like studying the most” (I1)*
- *“if you don’t get paid then you have to be interested in what you are doing, otherwise, you don’t find a reason to do it (...) when you do something almost for free you have to be inspired and like what you do. So if the project is really interesting, inspires me, makes me feel that I’d like to create something, and I have ideas to share then I would definitely join no matter what.” (I1)*
- *“if I would enjoy it then I wouldn’t mind it being complex. If I’d like the whole idea of the project I would join even if it’s complex” (I1)*
- *“I think that these types of experiences may be fun if you like the object that you have to design” (I3)*
- *“If I like the company I wouldn’t miss the chance to collaborate with it or to work on a project for it. I’d be happy about it, especially if maybe I’m a fan of this company since I was a child, so this brand gives me a lot of emotions when I think of it” (I3)*
- *“I would say music or illustration are the ones in which I’m generally more interested (...) So yes, these are the things for which I’d apply in the future” (I9)*
- *“If it’s a company that appeals to me or it’s people that work with the same things that I like, like music or films or animations, then yeah (...) I’m much more in constant exposure to things that are on social media, and things that I like so it would be easier for me to participate in a contest from one of these fields that I see every day instead of a random company that of which I barely heard about.” (I9)*

2.4 Possibility to practice and/or improve creative skills (e.g. by receiving feedback, practicing or sharing knowledge with other participants)

- *“It’s very helpful for designers to get feedback on their work. It’s also very constructive because if they give detailed feedback, telling you exactly why your product is not good enough or what are they looking for, a designer can improve his work” (I1)*

“I would be satisfied because I learn something anytime that I challenge myself” (I1)

“Mmm, I’d like to design logos and maybe work with 3D designs (...), it would be completely new and for this I’d like to try it (...) I’d try things that

	<p><i>normally I wouldn't do because when a client pays you, you have to make sure that you are able to give him what he asks" (11)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>"I think that these contests give you the chance to practice in realizing products based on the client's needs" (13)</i> - <i>"having a concrete opportunity to learn something during or after the contest" (13)</i> - <i>"It's the best in which you can learn something. When you receive feedback from someone that is more experienced and has worked for years this can help you a lot (...) because every company has a different way of thinking and working" (13)</i> <p>2.5 High analyzability of the task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>"basically I'd like to have clear instructions, enough information about the project, and to know exactly what the company needs so I can be more productive and precise with what I create." (11)</i> - <i>"it's nice when you see the people from the company and they explain to you what is the concept, explain to you the industry features and what they want to communicate to their customers" (11)</i> - <i>" (...) I wouldn't mind it being complex. If I'd like the whole idea of the project I would join even if it's complex, but I'd like to have even clearer instructions or requirements for these kinds of tasks."(11)</i> - <i>"I need to have solid points on which to work around (...)I'd prefer to have detailed instructions, so I can be sure about how to get started (...) maybe this is because in my case the functionality of the products, or the things that I normally project, matters a lot" (13)</i> - <i>"Maybe the most important thing that I'd like to find in a contest is a good briefing with the company. So they can clarify some aspects of it" (13)</i> - <i>"If I'd be participating in one of these contests I think the key would be having something that is very straightforward, with a very good brief. So something easy to understand (...) with a good brief" (19)</i> - <i>"I'd rather have a clear brief (...)" I want you to tell me the exact sizes, the market in which you want to sell it, and so on because all these facts are important to me to make a design that would be successful. If I don't have a clear context it's too vague" (19)</i> -
<p>Type of Inhibiting factor</p>	<p>1. External</p> <p>1.1 Task or contest layout mismatch:</p> <p>1.1.1 Perceived lack of expertise or high complexity of the task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>"because I'm still a beginner and I'm not that confident to participate yet. I think that you have to feel the confidence and feel capable to design what they ask for, also I think that I'd feel responsible when sharing something in a network like this. You don't want to hand in something that has low quality" (11)</i> - <i>"If I see that there are too many steps, many things, and also a bit confusing I'd pass" (19)</i> - <i>"If it's something about a more general design where so many people from all over the world might participate and are more expert than me, then I'd prefer to not participate" (19)</i> <p>1.1.2 Scarce or vague explanation of the task</p>

- *“you’d think okay this person is asking me to work for free for something that he’s not even sure about it. That’s the thing that would really not make me participate” (19)*
- *I’m less open to participate in these contests’ platforms, you know like Innocentive (...)I don’t find them very clear. Even the websites are difficult to understand. For example, I looked into Innocentive and (...) the thing is that sometimes is not really clear. And, at least for me, when I see that something is not clear I prefer to pass (...) The times that I’ve been thinking to apply to one, the texts were huge and didn’t say much at the same time. Let’s say that the brief is not clear”(19)*

1.1.3 Specific characteristics of the task

1.2 Absence of offline meetings/ impossibility to have a voice interaction

- *“I would like it to organize a physical meeting with designers, you know, to let the designers talk to each other but also to present the project and the requirements (...) I think that personal communication in a physical environment would be very great and I would definitely want to join” (11)*
- *“Maybe having an online meeting before to start working (...). It’d be easier because you can ask them instead of sending them emails” (11)*
- *“I don’t think it’s the best because you don’t see who receives the design and you don’t know who exactly is going to evaluate your work.” (13)*
- *“I prefer offline meetings because you can speak to the person that is right in front of you and you can use a lot of tools to show your work. You can use paper sheets, a laptop, or a tablet to illustrate your work more easily than when you have to do a screen-sharing(...) ideally it’d be the best for me.” (13)*
- *“The problem is when is not very clear and you don’t have any way to contact them to ask for clarifications” (19)*

1.3 Lack of time

- *“it has a big influence on my participation in such contests. Because often I don’t have much time to think about extra projects, sometimes I’m done with classes but I have to work on the deliveries (projects) for the next week” (13)*
- *“In the first place, I have to study for the university so I can’t spend much time on a complex task” (13)*
- *“if it would ask me too much time I think I’d pass because my time is very limited” (19)*
- *“If I’d see that the deadline of a contest is before my weekend and I don’t have the previous weekend to work on it then I would not do it because I wouldn’t have the time for it. I wouldn’t work on it during the week, you know because I have the freelance job to do after my work shifts (...) I wouldn’t feel very comfortable to do it when I don’t have much time. I would like to take some time to see, think and prepare my application” (19)*
- *“If it’s something that is very complex, very difficult to achieve, and maybe I think it takes too much time I would say I pass” (19)*

1.4 Being unaware of contest in which to participate

- *“(…) because I wasn’t aware of any competition in which I could have participated” (11)*
- *“because in my field of interest basically there aren’t a lot of contests (...) Here there aren’t a lot of contests because the number of brands that is not that high compared to the graphic (...) You know, asking to design a car or one car concept is really different. (...) there are a lot of sections and a lot of*

people inside the company work together to design the single elements,(...) So it's not that easy to create contests because you would be alone in doing these things." (13)

1.5 Uninteresting task

2. Internal

2.1 Lack of shared values with (or interest for) the company

- *"It matters a lot. I have to like the company, the project, and the products so I can work on it (...) else I wouldn't be really inspired" (11)*
- *"Sometimes I cannot manage my free time because I don't have it" (11)*
- *"for example, if it's something like Colgate, Gas companies or something like that I'd not go for that because I wouldn't feel motivated enough." (19)*

2.2 Preference for other means of making money

- *"If you have to work on projects that actually pay you then you give priority to these projects and you will not give priority to contests that may or may not make you earn some money." (11)*
- *"So I can say that I'd like to work on a "complex" project but not right now because my priority is to finish the master" (13)*
- *"I work 9 to 5 every day during the week and I also do freelance jobs so I'd participate if I'd think it's worth it" (19)*
- *"you're taking part of your free time to work essentially. You're working and you want to be rewarded for it, so if I'd see that is something that I'm not a full expert about it then I'd prefer to pass because I'd prefer to work on something that would give me money for reward or anything like my freelance jobs" (19)*

2.3 Belief of not being rewarded enough

- *"Designers lot of times are exposed to these kinds of requests where people ask you "Oh can you help me with this? Can you help with that?"; basically people asking you to work for free." (19)*
- *"I've seen these contests, mainly on socials (...) and I think that my work, that work is much more expensive than that. I think some of these people who organize contests should have a better idea of the price of the work and should remunerate people accordingly. You should know what's the price of the thing that you're asking for, I think that is one of the most important things" (19)*
- *"if it would make me feel a bit "hick" when a company names the reward, saying for example that your work is valued 5 pounds, I'd find it a bit cheeky and I'd think twice to buy products or services from them in the future. Because it'd make me feel a bit invaluable, you know not taking into consideration my work" (19)*

2.4 Lack of trust for the brand, skepticism and ethics or legal concerns

- *"the cheeky part is asking a lot of designers to do that but just one is going to be rewarded (...)is almost making someone work for free. Because if you think about it a company collect all these designs or different ideas and normally it would have to pay a really high prize for these designs, but they're actually just paying for one" (19)*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“I’d say that is important to have a very good understanding of the terms and conditions. I know that they ask you to give up on your property rights because the artwork is going to be used exclusively by the company, but I’m worried that the company would not tell me exactly what my design is going to be used for (...) if I don’t have the possibility to really understand that and you just promise me a small reward to give up on my property rights then I’d not. But if the terms and conditions are clear and the reward is fair enough to give up these rights then is ok.” (19)</i>
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Appendix F: Interview quotes categorization of Gen Y’s (Millennials) respondents

<p>General thoughts regarding crowdsourcing contests</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“I think that’s a great idea because, you know, when you work in the same place all the time you feel kind of brainwashed. So probably when you look for new ideas, concepts, and different points of view it’s a good thing” (14)</i> - <i>“I think it might be fun. I’m not sure of how it could be but I guess fun” (14)</i> - <i>“I do think that having a competition in which innovation is, you know, the main driver that’d definitely stimulate some interesting results. But the other side it feels also like that people are being exploited for their talent” (17)</i> <p><i>“ I think it’s smart. Yes, most of the time they can get a lot of designs with these contests so it’s smart because they don’t have to pay a lot of money, compared to when they asked to design companies.” (16)</i></p>
<p>Type of motivating factor</p>	<p>1 Extrinsic</p> <p>1.1 Economically valuable rewards (e.g. Monetary gains, free products, discounts, access to courses/seminars/webinar, ...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“I think a monetary reward would be good. Because with a monetary reward you can also choose your own webinars, your own training course in a way that if fits”(17)</i> - <i>“I think as the main reward for winning that would be money, plain and simple!” (17)</i> - <i>“But if you can get a nice amount of money or a product then you can consider it (...) when it’s like this is fun because you can get something that you made and that normally you wouldn’t just buy” (16)</i> - <i>“I think that (money) is the main thing together with having a nice portfolio, but mmm now I’m not looking for a job because I have one so I’d say that money is the most important” (16)</i> <p>1.2 Public acknowledgment and job opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“ If I’m participating in one I’d like my name to be there (on the product), you know, so people can see my creations (...) I think that if you have something like that in your portfolio you can easily look for a job” (14)</i> - <i>“The recognition and probably the satisfaction of what I told you, so having the project in your portfolio and saying “this is a project I made and it was rewarded because it was the best”, I think it gives you a lot. So yes, it’d be important for me” (14)</i>

- *“For example, in a packaging contest if you are making the label of a can and the company would sell the product and put your name on it with something like “designed by” it’d be just perfect” (14)*
- *“It would be a bit strange if they wouldn’t acknowledge your work, I would be very mad if I’d win and they’d just give me the money without saying anything about my work to the world. As a creator you always want credit for your work, of course.” (17)*
- *“it’s also good for the designers if they win, it’s good for the CV” (16)*
- *“(…) and if it’s something good for the portfolio. So if you can say: oh that’s mine, I did it! Then it’s good for your CV” (16)*
- *“when you are younger and you’re looking for a job you care more about improving your portfolio (…) Before I was always trying to show my work experiences and skills.” (16)*
- *“when they already rewarded you with something good, like money or products, it’s fine. I think that maybe because I already have a job I don’t care that much of having my name on a product or something that I designed, but it would be nice” (16)*
- *“maybe getting to know someone with whom you might cooperate in the future” (17)*

1.3 Participation awards (e.g. receiving an acknowledgment or a small prize as a reward for the efforts)

- *“I think I’d like to be rewarded because that means that you did something and that they appreciate that, right? I told you, even just a diploma that says “thank you it was good”, so that it makes you feel that you did it for a reason and not just for doing it” (14)*
- *“but it really depends, even receiving a diploma would be fine (…) even with a small voucher” (14)*
- *“Even if it’s not a reward, I’d like to receive a message” (14)*
- *“But for competing there should also be a reward I feel, you know it doesn’t have to be some large and extensive amount of money but even having access to online courses or knowledge”(17)*
- *“It would be nice if there would be but I don’t expect that. I mean it’d be nice but not necessary, it’s your choice to participate and if your design is not that good, well you tried” (16)*

2 Intrinsic

2.1 Fulfillment of a sense of competence

- *“because probably I’d do it only if I’m good at the thing, let’s say that it’s safer (…)mostly I’d just do it if I knew how to” (14)*
- *“I think I’d be satisfied. Like when you take an exam, even though you don’t know yet if you will pass it or not or if you will get a good grade, you feel relieved because you did it”(14)*
- *“Super proud I think. I’d proud of myself and of my work” (14)*
- *“especially when there’s a winning element into it I’d only participate if I’d feel confident in my abilities to actually win.” (17)*
- *“I would feel some sense of satisfaction probably. You know, cause it’s something I created and to me everything I create has some sort of love in it.*

So (...) that would probably give me some sense of satisfaction, definitely”
(17)

- *“you know winning is not necessarily winning the money per se, which is of course good, but this would give also some sort of satisfaction for seeing my work being displayed to the world”* (17)
- *“I think that at my age now, I’d do it if I think that I can do it”* (16)
- *“it depends on if you’re confident about your design, if you really think that you made a nice work and that you could win then probably you are happier”* (16)

2.2 Autonomy

- *“I think it’s cool because everything now is online so it’s perfect (...) I like the fact that you can apply from anywhere in the world”* (14)
- *“for me it’d interesting if it’d be (...) a contest in which you can also include your own sense of style”* (17)
- *“I think that there also has be some space for creativity, otherwise that’s not going to be very different from what other people will create. There has to be some room for interpretation”*(17)
- *“I would only do solo works, no group works. Being a creative freelancer I really value my own personal process, you know, and having to work in group would necessarily complicate things and I wouldn’t want to do that. Having my own freedom to decide how and when I’d work on it is very important for me”* (17)
- *“I work solo for most of the time and especially for a contest I just believe that you have to work by yourself and not really relying on group meetings.”* (17)
- *“I love online platforms because you have the freedom to choose when you’re going to upload it and I think it’s way easier than sending it by email or something like that.”* (17)
- *“I think I’d like to be free. I like to design and I think that when I’m not free I don’t work well. I need maybe a few words and I need to know the corporate identity (...) I want to see the things that they like so I have an idea of the style that I could use for my design”*(16)
- *“I think it’s okay. I mean is the easiest way to send and receive designs, no?”* (16)
- *“I think that for me that’d be an obstacle, you know. They could just post the requirements on the website or on a webpage, for me that would make thing unnecessarily complicated and would hinder my participation in contests like that”* (17) (regarding the possibility of meeting the contest organizer)
-

2.3 Task enjoyment, feelings of esteem/love for the brand

- *“It has to be appealing if I’m going to participate, else I would not”* (14)
- *“doing the things that I’m into (...)probably doing something that is interesting for me and that is very appealing to do”* (14)
- *“I really love taking and editing pictures, so probably something in this direction. You know, it is artistic in some way”* (14)
- *“I know that if I’m interested I can find the time”* (14)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“Well, it’s my main field of profession and I get the most energies out of it.”(17)</i> - <i>“let’s say for example that there’s a large corporation which is very influential or you like them, love them then of course you’d feel even more proud if you’re design would win (...) for me that would a very large contributing factor”(17)</i> - <i>“I need to have a feeling about it (...) if it’s about beauty or fashion I like it, so I have to like the company’s style or what they do” (16)</i> - <i>“designing doesn’t take always much time, maybe you are inspired and you can create something good even in 15 minutes. I think that having a nice idea and liking the company are the main things.” (16)</i> <p>2.4 Possibility to practice and/or improve creative skills (e.g. by receiving feedback, practicing or sharing knowledge with other participants)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“I think that’s perfect because every feedback even if it’s bad or good it’s always good for your personal growth, you can learn a lot from it. So I think it’s super nice to receive it” (14)</i> - <i>“Because being out of your comfort zone is better because you can learn more and more. Even making mistakes, if it’s complicated, you can learn a lot” (14)</i> - <i>“let’s say that if I’d have the time I’d like to make a complex project because of the personal growth, learning, and all that stuff”(14)</i> - <i>“I think getting in touch with people, with a network.(...) I think that most of the fun would be getting to know the other people and their network, and learning from their expertise saying “hey I saw the logo that you uploaded, it’s awesome! How did you do that?”, so pooling the resources from the network of such events would benefit me the most. So (...) you can also earn something either relationship wise or knowledge wise” (17)</i> - <i>“Having a relatively complex task I would actually feel more challenged, I’d like that because you also want to use and test your skills”(17)</i> <p>2.5 High analyzability of the task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“I think I’d like to have a lot of instructions (...) when you design for others they need specific things, right? So I think that’s why I’d need more instructions (...) and I’d need to know them before to start” (14)</i> - <i>“I think I’d like to have a clear description of the requirements (...) to have a clear way of where to go” (17)</i> -
<p>Type of Inhibiting factor</p>	<p>1 External</p> <p>1.1 Task or contest layout mismatch:</p> <p>1.1.1 Perceived lack of expertise or high complexity of the task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“because I don’t have a lot of free time so I think that complexity might be something that won’t let me and make me want to do it (...)in my situation, complexity is an obstacle” (14)</i> - <i>“I think that I would only participate if I think I’d meet the requirements (...) otherwise I’d feel like I’m just wasting my time because probably I won’t meet the expectations anyway” (17)</i> - <i>“I think that competitions should be mainly about fun, especially when it’s creative; meanwhile with a selection process it really sounds like a job, I think it should be lighter than that” (17)</i>

- *“If I know that is too hard and that is gonna cost me a lot of time for something that may or may not give me a little reward then I don’t know it wouldn’t feel enough for competing.” (17)*
- *“on the other hand if the task is going to be too complex then that’d be an obstacle” (17)*
- *“for example, I’m not the best at making movies so I think that there are people that are better than me, so why would I start?” (16)*
- *“when I don’t have the feeling that I could do something better than the others then I think “ oh it’s too complex for me, let’s someone else do it”. Yeah, someone that would be better at it” (16)*
- *“also if you see that the company gives feedback to another designer you think “oh ok, maybe he is going to win” so I wouldn’t be motivated to make or change a design because I think that he (who received public feedback from the company) is already on the run to win”(16)*
- *“even if you don’t see the company reacting to the designs you can tell who could win and if you are able to do something better, similar, or worse. So I’d decide if I want to spend my time on the project also by looking at that”. (16)*

1.1.2 Scarce or vague explanation of the task

1.2 Absence of offline meetings/ impossibility to have a voice interaction

- *“I’d prefer offline meetings, face to face (...)You feel like more connected to the people even though you don’t really know them. Online is a bit more cold” (14)*
- *“online, I mean it’d be easier to organize but I’d like to talk with a video chat not text chat or a normal call, so you can see each other and you can look into someone’s eyes” (16)*

1.3 Lack of time

- *“I think it does because time is everything (...)let’s say that not having much time makes me even more selective, I should be super interested to participate” (14).*
- *“I don’t have a lot of free time (...) so if it’s very complex and I can see that from the beginning I’d say no because of the time” (14)*
- *because of time, especially because I have to work 4/5 days a week so I’m limited in my time already, I’d say that I’d a “small school project”. something that I could easily do when I have an hour to spend. (17)*
- *“Because you have way less time to spend of your free time in your hobbies and everything so yeah. I’d only participate in small contests, in which I wouldn’t have to work for days.” (17)*

1.4 Being unaware of contest in which to participate/uninteresting task

- *“Mainly because I haven’t found interesting contests but I haven’t looked much for them” (14)*
- *“I actually didn’t really know any contest in which I could have participated (...) the primary reason for which I have not competed yet is that I don’t know where they are or where I can find them”(17)*

- *“if it’s about graphic design if I don’t like the specific topic then I’d not participate.” (14)*

2 Internal

2.1 Lack of shared values with (or interest for) the company

- *“I think that’s everything, right? If the company doesn’t fit your values, why would you be interested in making something for them?” (14)*
- *“I like some stuff, and stuff like “motors” are not my thing. I know that’s a kind of design that I don’t like to make” (16)*
- *“I need to have something in common with the company. I need to like it in some way. I think that if I don’t really like it or my interests are far from theirs, sometimes I make something but my designs are not as good as when I work on something that I like. Mmm I can’t put the same passion and effort into it if I don’t like it”(16)*

2.2 Preference for other means of making money

- *“I don’t really see the point of participating in a contest myself (...) why would you enter a competition when you could just work for people and being paid anyway? While with a contest you’d work without knowing if you’ll get chosen or not.” (17)*
- *“something that I could do easily so I can win something without stressing too much. I already have a lot of big projects in my job “hahahah”.” (16)*

2.3 Belief of not being rewarded enough

- *“So let’s say they (company) ask to do a project that requires you to work for multiple weeks or a week and then the reward is a discount coupon then I’d say: Oh fuck no! Hahahah. So I’d say it depends on if the reward is worth my effort”(17)*
- *“So a mention or some sort of acknowledgment would definitely not be enough” (17)*
- *“I think that when they give little money as a reward the serious designers wouldn’t do the contest, only the beginners would” (16)*
- *“I found a lot of contests in which the reward was very low, especially on social media, and I think that means not taking us (designers) seriously (...) you have to study what’s the company identity and consider so much stuff before creating the design then it’s not worth it. I think that any serious professional knows how to do what they ask but then he doesn’t do it because they (company) don’t deserve it.” (16)*

2.4 Lack of trust for the brand, skepticism and ethics or legal concerns

- *“it feels also like that people are being exploited for their talent” (17)*
- *“I think that the goal of a company should be innovation and not profit-oriented. Because otherwise (...) it’s like saying “hey here’s this free labour that everybody did and we’re going to select them so that one person will be rewarded for all this work”. Everyone in some sense should be rewarded for their efforts.” (17)*
- *“I think in general receiving feedback is good but (...) I feel a bit conflicted by that because on the one hand you want to improve and grow your skills but on the other hand, it feels a bit weird that a company says “hey we like it*

	<p><i>but could you please make it more like this and this?” and then it doesn’t mean that you’ll win anyway.” (17)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“I’m quite curious about them but still a bit reluctant as I was telling you before (...)I just know that large companies do it with the crowdsourcing of course but again I wonder why they don’t just pay a professional to do so.” (17)</i> - <i>“in contests you are working for them but you don’t know if you are going to win. If they’d give me feedback they’d give me the feeling like: oh maybe I will win! So I’d do a new design but you may not win” (16)</i>
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Appendix G: Interview quotes categorization of Gen X’s respondents

<p>General thoughts regarding crowdsourcing contests</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“In general I think that it’s a good way for young graphic designers or graphic design students to make some experience (...) I think that it’s a good way for students to develop different products and an opportunity for a company to get fresh ideas.” (12)</i> - <i>“I also think that is a nice opportunity for starting companies”</i> - <i>“I think that these competitions should be places attended by younger professionals, rather than by experienced professionals, so they can make some experience” (12)</i> - <i>“Well, I don’t mind that. For me is ok, when a company works like that it’s fine because there are people that want to participate in these contests, maybe because of money or for other reasons. Because I think that even if there is a reward of little money participating is up to them (participants), they don’t have to do it.” (15)</i> - <i>“I think it’s a double thing. It’s a smart “construction” for a company because it can go global, so people all over the world can participate so it can really choose from a wide group of designers. The other side is that you (as a participant) have to put in a lot of work for maybe nothing, you don’t know what is your reward.”(18)</i> - <i>“I think it’s a great way for the young designers that are still in school, or are just starting up, to explore this world”(18)</i> - <i>“I’m partially interested. Mmm, I’d like to explore them because I’m curious about it works but I don’t know if I would continue to do them after having tried” (18)</i>
<p>Type of motivating factor</p>	<p>1. Extrinsic</p>

1.1 Economically valuable rewards (e.g. Monetary gains, free products, discounts, access to courses/seminars/webinar, ...)

- *“well I think money (...)you can spend money as you want, without being bound with the company like in the case of vouchers or even worse with discount codes that force you to spend other money if you want to use them” (12)*
- *“I think money it’s fare. I think it’s more practical, so you can decide what to do with them” (18)*

1.2 Public acknowledgement and job opportunities

- *“Especially if they (company) would mention you as the creator in a professional network like LinkedIn, so if other professionals could see your talent they might want to work with you”(12)*
- *“It wouldn’t be money in the first place. I think mentioning my name or writing on social media that I won the contest, so something that would help me to make my name or my company’s name bigger. That would help” (15)*
- *“I think it’d be nice if, when the contest is over, the company would post on its website who is the winner and other participants that put effort in it and made good designs” (18)*
- *“that’s cool when you see someone and you think: oh that’s my shirt. So that’s also a motivation I think.” (18)*
- *“So I would do it to (...) get in touch with other groups of clients” (12)*
- *“For me it’d be more important to know what’s next. So if I meet this company and they like me, they like my designs what happens next? Would they work with me in the future or is it only one time? So if they’d give me 200\$ and bye-bye, I wouldn’t do it” (15)*

1.3 Participation awards (e.g. receiving an acknowledgment or a small prize as a reward for the efforts)

- *“You want some explanation, so it’s nice to receive feedback because (...) it makes you feel that they appreciated your efforts and they have dedicated some time to you” (12)*
- *“I think that there should be some sort of a base prize granted to everyone who submitted a solution (...) so you’d feel compensated for the investment of your time that you have dedicated to the process (...) but probably that shouldn’t be the case when the solution is really not in line with what is asked by the company” (12)*
- *“if they’d want to go further with me, with a second round (improving a design proposal), I should be supported (...) to go further because at every step is more time of work on it” (15)*
- *“I think it’s fair if everybody gets something, I think that everybody would do the best for the company. It doesn’t have to be much money but at least they’d get something” (15)*
- *“Yes, definitely! I think that the company should do it. It’s about appreciating your work, and I think that that’s what most people want. People want to feel that their work is appreciated and I think that companies, big and small ones, they should give you something back. It might be anything, even just a few words.” (15)*
- *“I think that’s good! From my experience I can tell that a design is never that good on the first try. So you always have to talk with your clients after the first draft, so they can tell you “oh I want this like that but also this” and so on. It’s always a process” (18)*

- *“I think it’d be a motivation for me, but also for people in general, to get not a big reward but at least a small reward like a voucher from the company. Just a small thing from the company as an acknowledgment for the work done (...) So giving something to the people that made some good solutions” (18)*

2. Intrinsic

2.1 Fulfillment of a sense of competence

- *“I think that I would try anyway if I would think that maybe I could deliver a big part of it (...) there’s the possibility that my idea of the product has a good potential and is in the direction that the company is looking for” (12)*
- *“I think that I would be very satisfied because I have completed the job so I proved to myself to be able to do it” (12)*
- *“it’d be very nice! Not only for the money but also because it’d be used, so I’d think that I made something useful”(12)*
- *“if they’d give me feedback and they’d want another design it means for me that they saw something in my first design. So there’s something good because if it’s only bad I think that they wouldn’t react to it, they would just go on”(15)*
- *“maybe if I’d have an idea that would make me say: oh maybe I should try to participate! Because I’d think that I could win” (18)*
- *“generally I’d like to do something challenging” (18)*

2.2 Autonomy

- *“I think that the second scenario (more freedom) is really important because in the first case there’s the danger that you don’t feel any freedom and in the end, everyone delivers almost the same product” (12)*

2.3 Task enjoyment, feelings of esteem/love for the brand

- *“but when you are working on something that you like doing that it doesn’t matter anymore if it’s small or big because is the process and the company that promotes the job that matter” (12)*
- *“I think that if it’s interesting this would motivate me to do it even when it’s complicated” (12)*
- *“I think that the most important thing is that I like the company. So I’d need to know what they do, how they do it, and why they’re asking for designs with a contest” (15)*
- *“I like to play a lot of sports. So it’d be nice to help maybe a small team with something. But also something about education, because I’m already working in it and I like it since many many years” (15)*
- *“for me it’d be important to have a real reason to do the contest. For example, I’d help a football club that doesn’t have a lot of money because I like that world” (15)*
- *“when I like the company, the way they work, their products are interesting, or their vision is interesting that would make me do it” (15)*
- *“I think it depends also on who ask the design, if it’s for a social project, or for a poor music band or an artist or something for the environment than it’s different because these are things that I value. I’d like the cause, so I’d be more satisfied to complete the design” (18)*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>"I like making infographics, so visual story telling on paper or digital (...) So if that was asked I'd like to do it (...) I do it for my work and I really like it"</i> (18) - <i>"It depends on the subject and the company. If I would really like it I may do it even when it's complex."</i> (18) <p>2.4 Possibility to practice and/or improve creative skills (e.g. by receiving feedback, practicing or sharing knowledge with other participants)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>"I think to be able to do a job that wouldn't come to you in a natural way because at work (in the office) you always move between a certain kinds of tasks. So I would do it to build up my experience (...) like building up my experience by trying new way of working"</i> (12) - <i>"You want some explanation, so it's nice to receive feedback because you can learn from it"</i> (12) - <i>"I'm not really experienced in it so I think that would be a motivation for me to enter in a new context"</i> (18) <p>2.5 High analyzability of the task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>"It must have specific information (requirements) so I can take a good direction when I start. In this way, you don't spend too much time working on something that later you find to be useless"</i> (12) - <i>"I think that for me is better to follow the instructions (...)I'd say that the most important thing is to have good instructions"</i> (15) - <i>"I think it's good in design if the company tells you what they want as much as possible (...)I think that boundaries are important when you're working for a company. If they don't define well what they want then it's very wide and there's too much room for interpretation (...) it's not for yourself. It's not like art, graphic design is about making something for something (functional)"</i> (18)
Type of Inhibiting factor	<p>1. External</p> <p>1.1 Task or contest layout mismatch:</p> <p>1.1.1 Perceived lack of expertise or high complexity of the task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>"I'd not spend my time on something that I think I can't achieve."</i> (18) <p>1.1.2 Scarce or vague explanation of the task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>"You have to feel what's the meaning behind the instructions. I think that what I design is not just my design but is a combination of what the clients asks and the way I translate into something"</i> (15) <p>1.2 Absence of offline meetings/ impossibility to have a voice interaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>"I think it's good to upload the work online but it'd be nice if at the end of the contest there would be a presentation of the best solution. I don't know, maybe the top ten? So they could explain the criteria used to judge them"</i> (12) - <i>"Normally for a first briefing I'd like to meet in person the client so it's easier to understand what they're looking for and to clarify the requirements (...) For the following contact moments, I think that online meetings are fine because they help you to have clarifications"</i> (12) - <i>"I like very much the interaction. I think that when I talk to people in one way or the other, instead of just texting a question, I understand better the context. It's possible to work without it but is not really what I like"</i> (15) - <i>"more than just sending the design for me it'd help to meet a few people from the company. If you explain the design well you're part of the design, is</i>

something that comes really close to your heart. In my job I don't like to meet just the design, I like to meet the maker of the designer too" (15)

- *"Yes, for a first approach (offline meetings). Later is fine also with online meetings because you have already met that person" (15)*
- *"I think it's more cold as an environment (online meetings)" (15)*
- *"that in case of designing something I'd like to tell in person what I meant with the design. Like I said before is always a process! So I think that the possibility to talk with someone would be a great plus"(18)*
- *"I'd like to have a conversation that feels face-to-face, I think that a Zoom call it's enough" (18)*

1.3 Lack of time or time concerns

- *"By now I'd like more to focus on a little project. Because of the time that I've been working by now (...) the little project takes you away less time (...) a big project requires some "tension" and I don't think to have it by now if it's after work. When my shift is done I'm tired" (12)*
- *"Mmm, time? Mainly because of my job (...) until now I had enough work to do (...) especially in the past years but now I think that I could join one of these contests if I'll find one that I like." (12)*
- *"The real obstacle it's not complexity but the time that you need to dedicate to a complex task" (12)*
- *"It was fun but I didn't participate because the job already took me away so much time." (18)*
- *"If I think about the time needed (...) I'd go for the simpler contest" (18)*

1.4 Being unaware of contest in which to participate

- *"I just vaguely heard about it. I heard about it from my students because a few years ago there was a website where you could do T-shirt design and some t-shirts were produced" (18)*

1.5 Uninteresting task

2. Internal

2.1 Lack of shared values with (or interest for) the company

- *"It matters a lot (the reputation of /relationship with the company). It plays a big part because then you are bound with the organization in a certain way. For example, once there was a military company that asked us to design products for them. And it was far more difficult to think about possible solutions because I don't understand that kind of world." (12)*
- *"it's also about feelings and values" (12)*
- *"I have to understand why people make that product, and what is their goal with it." (15)*

2.2 Preference for other means of making money or using the personal free time

- *"that is not exactly the way in which I like to work. Because I don't like competing too much, normally I'd rather talk with people and ask questions, for instance asking why they want the design and what's their goal. That's for me very important"(15)*
- *"I already have a busy job so I don't know if I would like to spend more time behind the computer" (18)*

- *"I'm used at getting paid for my work"(18)*
- *"recently I got ill for working too much ... so I'd rather go outside than staying behind the computer after work. Mmm I wouldn't participate right now, maybe in the future" (18)*

2.3 Belief of not being rewarded enough

- *. If people work a lot of hours for these competitions they should be rewarded somehow" (12)*
- *"if I would be the company I would pay a good amount of money" (15)*
- *"I think that when you make a logo is very hard to say how much it is worth, you really don't know. So I think that when the company uses it, it should pay the winner for every year that they will use the logo. So the longer they use it the more they should pay the designer." (15)*
- *"They're important (reward and acknowledgment) because it's frustrating when you spend time on a design and then nothing." (18)*

2.4 Lack of trust for the brand, skepticism and ethics or legal concerns

- *"I think that for these companies it'd be too easy to pick up good solutions if a lot of experienced graphic designers would join, so you would get high standards without really paying for them" (12)*
- *"In the world where we are working, there are a lot of untruths also. For example, sometimes you are helping to design packaging for products and maybe you know that on these packaging there are information that don't match with the actual product"(12)*
- *"If it's a big big brand and I think that it just wants to save money I wouldn't (...) Is more a social thing for me, I'd have to understand why they do a contest to see if that is for me. If the reason for which they're doing it (the contest) is just that it'd cost them a lot of money then I wouldn't do the contest" (15)*
- *"I think simpler because designing is always a lot of work and time so I don't think that is good to ask a lot of people to work that much" (15)*
- *"the reason why I'm very skeptical of participating in these contests. I think that the rules are not very good for designers, they're good for the company. For me, this is not ideal." (15)*
- *"when the contest is from a big company that I think has a lot of money I don't feel like helping them because they have enough money to pay professionals for their work, so they could ask design studios where every person that is working for them would be paid"(15)*
- *"The other side is that you (as a participant) have to put in a lot of work for maybe nothing, you don't know what is your reward (...) I'm questioning if it's fare..."(18)*
- *"But if it's a big company I think that they should pay their employees to do what they ask in these contests." (18)*

