

XDS BRAND INSIGHTS

# Design & Packaging Trends 2023 Report

Color of  
the Year  
2023



# Hello

Here at XDS we wanted to take this time to look back at a busy 12 months before delving into another exciting year of projects. We have gathered expert opinions from industry leaders to give you a sense of where graphic design, technology and leading topics such as sustainability, food trends, technology (and more!) is headed in the year to come. We look forward to exploring new tools, techniques in 2023 and beyond and know it is one filled with countless opportunities and possibilities for you and your brand.



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# 2022

## What have we learnt?



# 1. Design Trends & Innovations that shaped 2022

## 2022, What have we learnt?

In response to the significant economic and cultural changes over the last few years, design aesthetics have begun shifting in big ways. As well as this, technology continues to influence and impact how we work. For us and anyone in the design industry, 2022 was an unforgettable year. Below, we'll explore why by taking a closer look at the following:

- **Top Visual Trends**
- **Top Technological Innovations**
- **Best Design Practices & Standards**

## Top Visual Trends

Each year we see different visual aesthetics come to the forefront and 2022 was no different.

<https://dribbble.com/resources/graphic-design-trends-2022>

Several different trends have emerged, and some are here to stay. 2022 marked a shift from the clean, well-defined designs of the last decade and a move to simpler, more organic aesthetics.



Retro and vintage styles have always influenced design with nostalgia having an apparent influence on design in 2022, we saw this in the blending of old and new typefaces, disruptive typography as well as countless throwbacks to the web as it was in the late '90s and early aughts. While late 2022 was defined by the emergence of AI in art and design we can see this being carried

One thing remains clear, though: in a post pandemic and somewhat chaotic world where shoppers have to focus more on spending wisely.

**Packaging design and how we communicate your messaging will only rise in importance.**



through to 2023 and beyond. Although animated presentations have been around for sometime, this year saw a significant uptick in dynamic visuals, particularly on marketing sites with product reveals.

## Top Technological Innovations

Much of design and tech are adjacent fields, putting the design industry on the bleeding edge. From advances in artificial intelligence to the future of the web, some of the year's biggest design innovations started in tech. The growth of collaboration tools such as Figma was reflected in Adobes acquiring of the software for a whopping \$20 billion, highlighting an importance in the future of collaborative design.

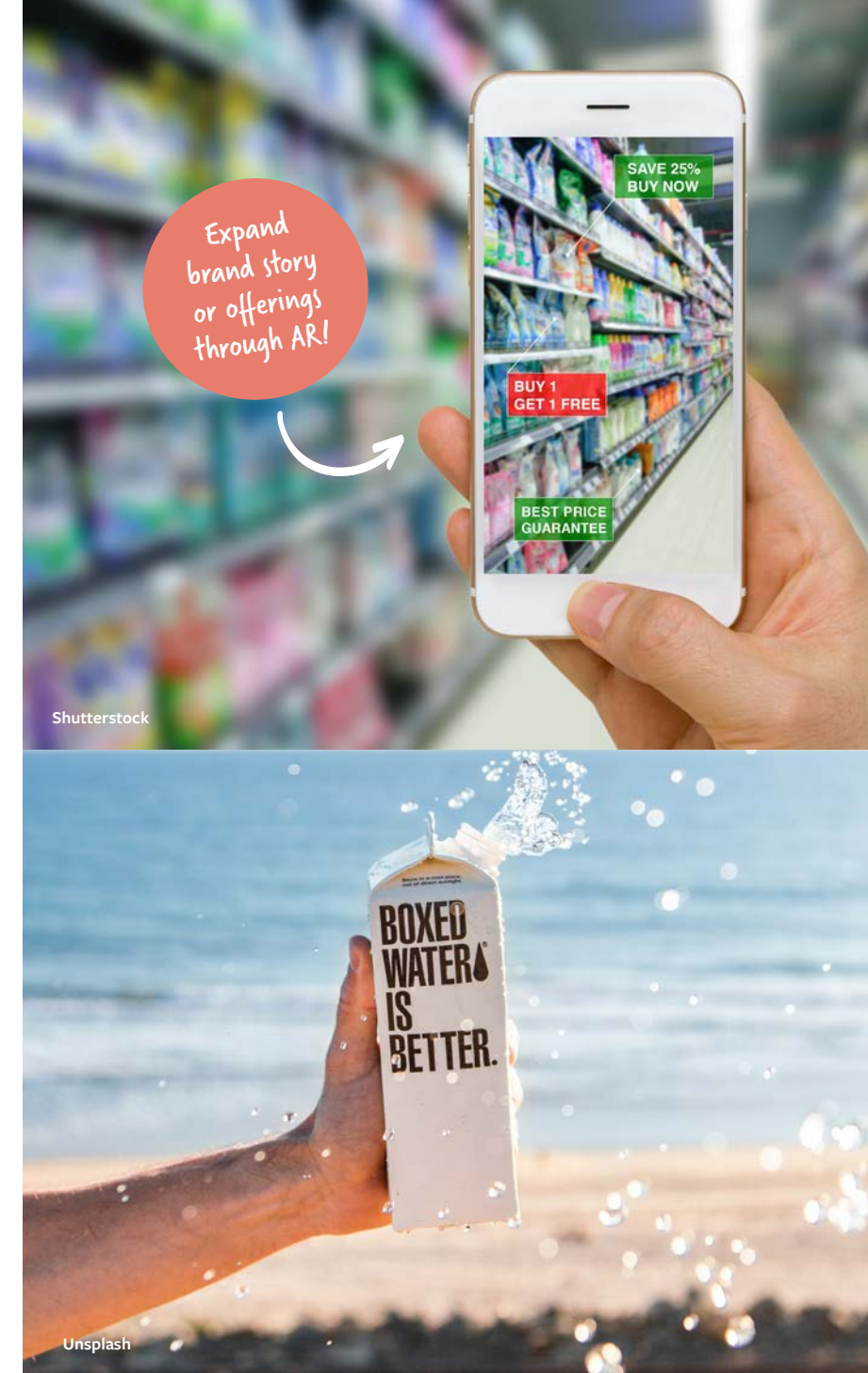
**AR offers more real estate than traditional packaging which allows us to tell your story without creating a busy design.**

More people are using their smartphones and tablets to access the internet, and this trend is only going to continue. This means that businesses need to focus on creating mobile-friendly websites and content.

## Best Design Practices & Standards

For many businesses, demonstrating and communicating sustainability in business practices is high on the list. Likewise looking to do their part, designers have pushed for more sustainability in their work. For us in XDS, this means making design choices that minimize material use and reduce waste, like choosing literal whitespace over color in a printed design or package design that uses recyclable materials. In the digital world, designers are pushing sustainability forward through UX and UI. For example, an app or website with a simplified interface requires less user engagement, resulting in less energy consumption. And this is but one of many low-impact design practices.

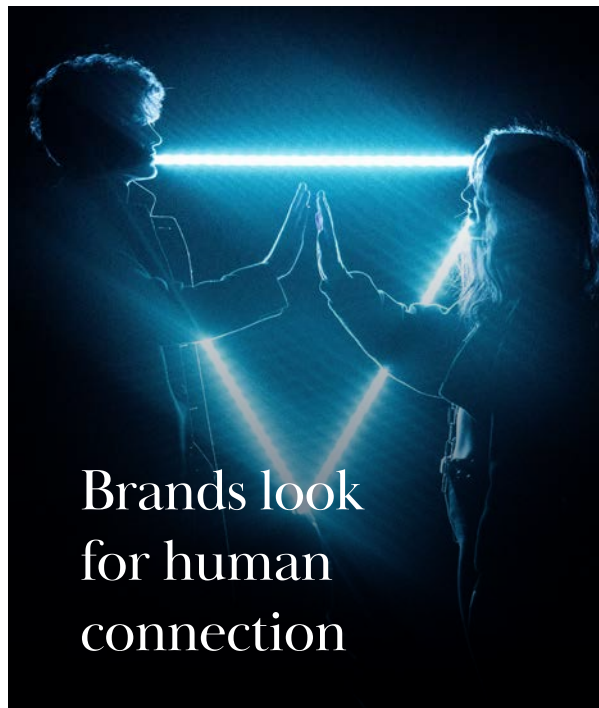
<https://www.entrepreneur.com/business-news/top-5-augmented-reality-trends-for-2022/412819>



## 2. 2023 Design Trends

### Design Tools

To reflect the growth in Artificial Intelligence and Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality we are likely to see more blended designs that bring the traditional and digital together in new and exciting ways.

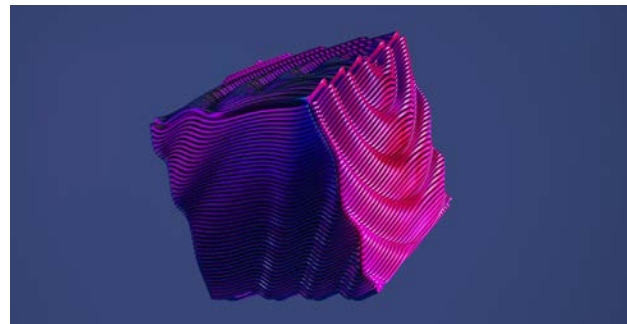


<https://www.creativeboom.com/features/biggest-trends-in-graphic-design-for-2023/>

In the chaotic, post-pandemic world we're entering in 2023, people will be craving connection and moments that make us smile. Some nice ways to achieve this is through story telling be it on or off pack and rich brand photography and considered copy writing.

### Designing for a hyper-reality

We have gone from designing primarily for print, with a focus moving to a blend of both print and digital. Now, it seems we're going through a further revolution with companies offer hyper-realistic and immersive brand experiences



"Although 3D design isn't new, we're likely to see a rise in the visual trend in the near future.



This is largely because new technologies make rendering complex 3D elements and textures on web pages easier than ever".

<https://www.adobe.com/express/learn/blog/graphic-design-trends>



## Sustainability-taking action

Sustainability has been discussed as a big trend over the past decade. But in 2023, there will be a renewed focus, urgency and a desire to follow through with practical solutions rather than green washing. As a result of growing customer interest in how products are manufactured, brands are striving to become more transparent.



## Stickermania

The past few years have shown us that emojis paint a thousand words. Emojis, GIFs and illustrations communicate something quickly in a way that words cannot. This has seen the revival of stickers which we feel can bring a fun, youthful energy to a brand.

## Light lifts

While it might not always be possible to do a complete brand refresh, it isn't always completely necessary either. Brands such as Kraft (pictured here) have done a 'light lift' or refresh of their much loved 'Mac & Cheese' product. Small refreshes can give a brand a much needed lift on shelf while still staying true to its brand essence.

## Back of packaging

The front of pack always takes the lead in attracting your potential customers. Still, the back packaging of your product is more than just information loaded with the ingredient and nutrient list. It can also be an effective marketing tool to promote your brand and build engagement around it!

## The back of the packaging is a perfect space to highlight your brand story and how your brand started,

You can highlight the product's benefits and any unique sources at the back of the packaging. It is a great place to flesh out all the extra details that help tell your brand story and in turn helps sell your product.

Expand brand story on BOP!



## 2. 2023 Design Trends

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### Data visualization

It can seem almost impossible to clearly communicate complicated data. Given the amount of information people are consuming constantly every day, it's a challenge to make sure your brand conveys what it needs to and stands out.

Skillful design can use or repackage information and tell a story in an elegant, easy-to-understand, and helpful way.

Besides simply grabbing the attention of consumers, data visualization is key to communicating authority and accountability without inundating consumers in pages and pages of data.

Instead of just presenting numbers, designers are turning the data into a real story with infographics and other visualizations.

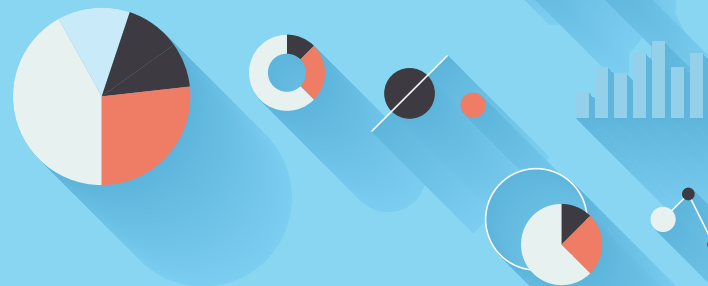
<https://www.adobe.com/express/learn/blog/graphic-design-trends>

With more advances in methods of data visualization to create a story and engage with the audience, many designers argue that the visual presentation is just as important as the information itself.

**Our brains are able  
to process visuals**

**60,000**

**times faster than text.**



## Welcome to the **Magentaverse**

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### What is Viva Magenta?

Pantone's Color of the Year, Viva Magenta 18-1750, vibrates with vim and vigor. It is a shade rooted in nature descending from the red family and expressive of a new signal of strength. Viva Magenta is brave and fearless, and a pulsating color whose exuberance promotes a joyous and optimistic celebration, writing a new narrative.

This year's Color of the Year is powerful and empowering. It is a new animated red that revels in pure joy, encouraging experimentation and self-expression without restraint, an electrifying, and a boundaryless shade that is manifesting as a stand-out statement. PANTONE 18-1750 Viva Magenta welcomes anyone and everyone with the same verve for life and rebellious spirit. It is a color that is audacious, full of wit and inclusive of all.

<https://www.pantone.com/color-of-the-year/2023>





**Color of  
the Year  
2023**

**Viva Magenta**  
18-1750

## 2. 2023 Design Trends

### Technology

Contactless, autonomous shopping and delivery will also be a huge trend for 2023. AI will make it easier for consumers to pay for and receive goods and services.

**The ‘Metaverse’ or a more immersive internet where we’ll be able to work, play, and socialize on a persistent platform continues to grow.**

Experts predict that the metaverse will add \$5 trillion to the global economy by 2030, and 2023 will be the year that defines the direction of the metaverse for the next decade. Augmented

<https://www.adobe.com/express/learn/blog/graphic-design-trends>

reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technology will continue to advance.



### Hand-drawn illustrations

Bringing designs to life through the use of bespoke illustrations is something we have always tried to encourage here XDS. We work with both our in house illustrators and other leading artists to create unique solutions for our clients that capture your audiences attention.

Utilizing illustrations in design is one way businesses are demonstrating their authenticity. In a landscape of sleek, clean, perfectly rendered,

Nearly

# 90%

of consumers say **authenticity is important** when they’re deciding which brands they support

Chris Do - CEO & Founder at The Futur



<https://www.cathyhogan.me>



and often indistinguishable graphics, hand-drawn illustrations help your designs stand out. People are more interested in custom art and visuals than stock images.

Personalization is highly prized in both the design and business worlds, and hand-drawn illustrations are among the most honest and authentic. They bring a familiar, down-to-earth look to your brand that is welcoming and comforting to consumers. Another advantage is that these illustrations can't be easily copied by competitors because they're unique to your business.

**“I, for one, think that it will never go out of style to see the ‘invisible hand’ that touches the work,”**

Chris Do  
CEO & Founder at The Futur

“I think there's something to it that instantly we connect and resonate with. Like, a human being

made this — not a machine, not a factory. Those imperfections can't be replaced by machines, and it seems to be the thing that separates one design firm from another and still commands a premium because human beings made this, and we recognize that.”



<https://www.katyaswan.com>

<https://www.adobe.com/express/learn/blog/graphic-design-trends>

## XDS Top Picks



There are so many top trends for the coming year so we have narrowed it down (in no particular order) to our top 5!

1. Dialling up your BOP!
2. Utilising new tech
3. Story telling
4. Bespoke illustration
5. Sustainability

Whatever the medium, trend or visual style we firmly believe that ensuring that your brands authenticity and purpose shines through is always the top priority.

**XDS Brand.**  
Part of TechM XDS

# 3. Marketing

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- Influencer marketing will evolve into a common marketing tactic.
- Video marketers will keep content short.
- Social media will become a customer service tool.
- More businesses will leverage SEO to concur search traffic.
- Mobile optimization will be even more important.
- More companies will prioritize social responsibility.
- Aligned marketing and sales teams will win.
- Experiential marketing could make a comeback.
- Inbound marketing will remain a best practice for growing brands.
- Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) will experience slow adoption in the marketing sphere.
- More brands will test out native ads.

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<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/marketing-trends>



Unsplash



Unsplash



## 4. 2023 Food & Consumer Trends

### Vitamin Seaweed

Getting our fair share of superfoods is still a top priority for many. 2023 will specifically be about ocean-based foods, like green algae, nori, and seaweed. Sea vegetables like kelp has secured spots on several trend lists.

### ‘Clean’ drinks

As people’s tastes change, the alcohol industry is poised to adapt and launch new products. Alcohol free spirits and drinks aren’t new but is a sector which is on the rise. There are plenty of options when it comes to non-alcoholic wine, beers, and spirits these days, and restaurants are offering more thoughtful and creative mocktail menus to satisfy this popular need.

### Wild flowers

We saw a baking boom during the pandemic

<https://www.realsimple.com/pinterest-food-trends-2023-6944445>

with everyone making sourdough, baking is in! More recently it seems, there is a movement to create something both edible and beautiful. Wild flowers have been used to decorate salads, cupcakes, cakes and it seems this trend is here to stay for 2023.



### Plant based

Plant-based foods feel like they’re more popular than ever these days with alternative pastas, meats, milks... the list goes on! With a global shift towards sustainability and growing emphasis on health & wellness we’re likely to see more plant based products coming to the forefront this year.



Seaweed salad

The growing emphasis on health and wellness is another trend that is likely to appear in the alcohol free industry.

40%  
of consumers plan to  
purchase plant-based  
meat products  
in 2023



Datassential's 2023 Food Trends

Unsplash



# 5. Sustainability

## Examining Materials

Sustainability isn't just a packaging design trend; it's a global movement to try and protect our environment. The general public are becoming more aware of their carbon footprint and are trying to go plastic free and be more conscious of every decision in order to create a more sustainable future. This push is being reflected in how we as an agency approach each job and in turn how our clients bring products to the market.

One way to accomplish this is by reducing packaging waste. The trend toward sustainability has created a massive anti-plastic movement with many brands swapping out their harmful, plastic packaging for more environmentally friendly materials that are biodegradable, recyclable, or reusable:

**Paper / Metal**  
**Glass / Cloth**  
**Wood / Pulp**



We can see a move from plastic to card where possible



Thinking outside the box!

## Secondary packaging as a new pressure point

The European Commissions proposal for a “Regulation of the European Parliament and Council on Packaging and Packaging Waste” looks at tackling our environmental issues in many different ways. One of which is our tendency to over-package. Proposed draft regulations state that starting in 2030, “each packaging unit will have to be reduced to its



Kit Kat Japan ditches outer plastic packaging for origami-friendly paper



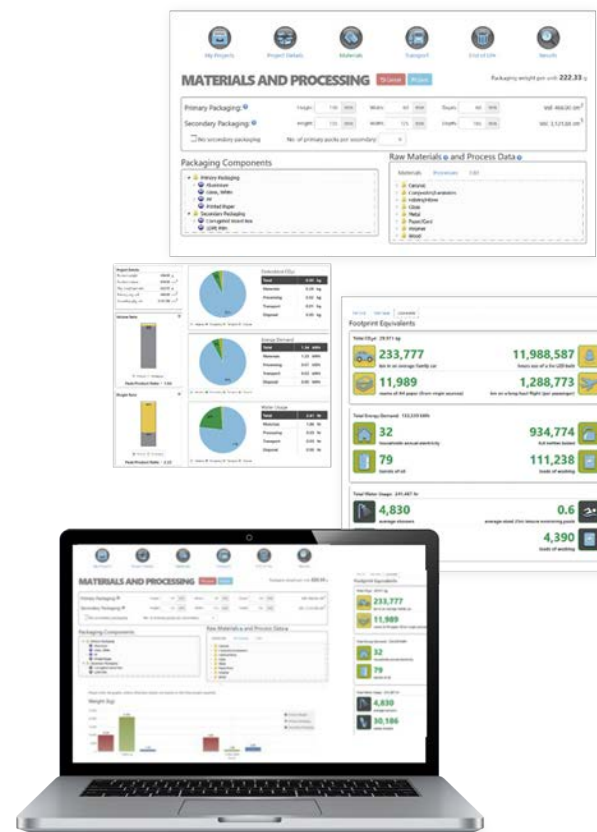


minimum size in terms of weight, volume and packaging layers, for example by limiting empty space.” Under these proposals, EU member states must reduce packaging waste per capita by 15% by 2040 vs. 2018.

Secondary packaging traditionally includes outer corrugated cartons, stretch and shrink film, cornerboards, and straps. But it might also include outer primary packaging like on-shelf paperboard cartons used for cosmetics such as face cream, health and beauty aids (HBA) such as toothpaste, and over-the-counter (OTC) items such as aspirin.

At XDS we are firmly invested in our clients growth and want to ensure that each project we work on is done so through a sustainable and environmental focused lens. We are committed to looking at packaging in more creative way than ever before. We leverage from our deep knowledge of packaging and supply chain to help our clients reduce their carbon footprint and improve their sustainability and overall environmental impact. We provide a consultancy service that can begin with a detailed health

audit/report of your packaging portfolio, with a view to optimising packaging / materials formats, weight, construction, size, materials, etc. The end focus being on the reduction of your carbon footprint and costs in the context of your supply chain.



The EU promotes a ‘circular economy’ model of production and consumption, which minimises the input of resources and the output of waste, greenhouse gas and air polluting emissions.

**This model relies on long-lasting design, maintenance, repair, re-use and recycling, which keeps resources in production and consumption for as long as possible.**



Repak.ie

## 6. Accessibility & Inclusive Design

While packaging must primarily be designed for the product it contains, the design also needs to pay attention to the person who will ultimately buy, open, and place the pack within their home. With around 15% of the global population living with some form of disability, considering how a varied array of impairments could affect one's interaction with packaging is an important in design criteria.

### Designing for everybody is not only a trend, but a necessity.

It should be present not only in your visuals, but also be part of your strategy and planning as well. In 2023 we can expect brands to increase diversity, inclusion and accessibility in their campaigns and use illustrations, icons and animations with a strong appeal towards this direction.

<https://packagingeurope.com/comment/how-ensuring-accessibility-improves-packaging-for-everyone/8968.article>  
<https://rockcontent.com/blog/graphic-design-trends/>  
<https://www.artworkflowhq.com/resources/graphic-design-trends-for-2023>

**Here are a few principles of inclusive design that will help you create a design that numerous users can use.**

- When approaching your design, actively look for areas of exclusion and use them to inspire fresh concepts and identify chances to come up with original, inclusive solutions. This understanding on how and why people are excluded will help designers develop specific initiatives toward becoming more inclusive.
- Exclusion can also occur only in specific circumstances. This is called situational exclusion and is different from ability-based exclusion.
- To ensure that you're fully catering to the needs of different communities and avoiding personal bias, ensure that you're involving people from those communities during the creative review process.



Following a successful trial, Kellogg's is permanently implementing a new "world-first" technology that enables consumers with sight loss to playback on-pack information via a smartphone.





Whatever the approach, experimentation with accessible design will always add value. As lawyer and human rights advocate Elise Roy said in her Ted Talk on the subject:

“When we design for disability first, we often stumble upon solutions that are not only inclusive but also are often better than when we design for the norm.”



## Embossed printing and QR codes

Visually impaired people rely on their other senses in order to interact with the world around them. They use senses such as touch and sound to interact with people and everything surrounding them. The same is true when interacting with packaging. For this reason, the best way to make the shopping experience more complete and accessible are embossed printing and audio messages from QR codes.



# Thank you

We hope you have enjoyed our snippet at what we believe is to come in 2023. We wanted to thank you for your continued business and look forward to diving into more creative projects for the coming year. Our team has been growing and up skilling in recent months and we are excited to bring you more innovative, original and sustainable design solutions over the coming months to help you build, grow and nurture your brand.

The XDS team.





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Part of TechM XDS

## Dublin, Ireland

Unit 1, Lyncon Court,  
IDA Business and Technology Park,  
Snugborough Road,  
Dublin,  
D15 N283

## New York, USA

114 W 26th Street  
Floor 2  
New York, NY 10001, USA

## Chicago, USA

620 N v Drive,  
Suite 805  
Chicago, IL 60654, USA

## London, UK

90/92 Pentonville Rd  
London N1 9HS  
United Kingdom

## Walkirch, Germany

Fabrik Sonntag 4b  
79183, Walkirch  
Germany

## Hyderabad, India

10 A, B, C & D 10th Floor,  
Vaishnavi Cynosure 2-48/5/6,  
Telecom Nagar Extension  
Gachibowli, Hyderabad, India

[www.xds-brand.com](http://www.xds-brand.com)