In some industries, copying is common and extensive. Most literature on the topic focuses on legal issues and interprets copying as a problem. To better understand the copying phenomenon, this study investigates the relationship between copying and design processes in five case companies in a copying-intensive industry. The findings reveal that unlike design processes, copying processes lack early conceptual activities. Furthermore, resources and contact with the end market are found to be prerequisites for professional and strategic design processes, whereas a lack of these better suits copying processes, especially in industries with low product variety and limited design problems.

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