

Think positive – designing and understanding enjoyable interactive media experiences

Marc Hassenzahl
Folkwang University
Campus University of Duisburg-Essen
Universitätsstraße 12, 45141 Essen
+49 (0) 201 183-4482
marc.hassenzahl@folkwang-
hochschule.de

Susanne Sperring
iDTV Lab, MediaCity
Åbo Akademi University
P.B. 311, 65101 Vaasa, Finland
+358 (0)6 324 7405

susanne.sperring@abo.fi

Annika Wiklund-Engblom
iDTV Lab, MediaCity
Åbo Akademi University
P.B. 311, 65101 Vaasa, Finland
+358 (0)50 322 3458

annika.wiklund-engblom@abo.fi

ABSTRACT

Vendors, producers, and designers of interactive products and content become increasingly aware and interested in the notion of *Experience*. Experience-oriented design is a particular approach, which differs from others with respect to its strong focus on the needs and emotions of people and the positive aspects of product use. This workshop's objective is to take an experience-oriented perspective on the current practices in the design of iTV, related cross- and interactive media. We collect, share and discuss design ideas and solutions, which claim to be successful in enhancing the Experience. We will answer the two central questions of "What is experience?" and "How do we create it?" rather by a joint analysis and reflection of existing projects, their strengths and weaknesses (i.e., bottom-up) than by referring to abstract theoretical and methodological concepts (top-down). By that, we hope for insights into experience-oriented design in the iTV domain. These insights will be grounded on the expertise of people working in the field and are brought about by sharing and a guided reflection on their practices and concepts.

1. INTRODUCTION

Recently *Experience* became a buzzword not only in the context of practical and academic Human-Computer Interaction (as "User Experience", see [1]), but also in environments such as electronic games (e.g., [4]), and interactive television (iTV, e.g., [3]). Vendors, producers, or designers become increasingly interested in understanding and adequately addressing the experiences people have while using or consuming their products (e.g., shows, games, software, music, services).

An experience-oriented approach to design differs from other approaches (e.g., usability engineering, technology-oriented approaches) by stressing the *holistic*, *subjective*, and *positive* [2].

Holistic. Experience-oriented design aims for an appropriate balance between functional/usability issues (task-related aspects) and issues, such as beauty, challenge, stimulation, or self-expression. It also understands basic human needs, values and motivations, such as a need for novelty and change or social exchange, as the starting point of any creation/design activity (as opposed to starting from available technology or tasks).

Subjective. Experience-oriented design embraces the "subjective." It is interested in the way, people perceive, experience, judge, feel about the products they use or consume. Those "subjective

constructions" matter for at least two reasons: first, they will guide the future behavior of an individual ("SO bad. I will never do this again!"); second, they will be communicated to others ("have you heard about the latest show"). In other words, it does not matter how good a product is "objectively" or from an expert point of view. Any "quality" must be "experienced" to have impact.

Positive. Many design-approaches focus on barriers, problems, frustration, stress, and their removal. While removal of the negative will always remain an important aspect of product design, experience-oriented approaches stress the importance of positive outcomes of product use or consumption, such as positive emotions (e.g., joy, pride, excitement) or simply "value". This stems from the insight that "positive" may not necessarily equate to "absence of the negative." So far, much attention has been devoted to the negative, that is, the usability of, for example, iTV products and services. Certainly, there is more about a positive iTV experience than the absence of usability problems.

This workshop's objective is to take an experience-oriented perspective on the current practices in the design of iTV, related cross- and interactive media. We aim at collecting, sharing, and discussing design ideas and solutions, which claim to be successful in enhancing the Experience. By that, we seek to understand better the experiences people have when consuming content; interacting with it, sharing it, and creating mashups. What benefits do people get from iTV and related new forms of media? What are the ends, the active media consumer wants to achieve? In addition, by identifying successful cases, we hope to make explicit some of the methods and underlying principles of good experience-oriented design in the iTV domain. In other words, we want to identify best practices and lessons learned, and how these can be generalized as guidelines for creating positive user experiences with iTV and related crossmedia solutions.

2. WORKSHOP

The workshop is primarily aimed at designers/producers/creators of iTV products (services, content, applications) either with an industrial or academic background. It takes a bottom-up approach to answer two central questions: "What is experience?" and "How do we create it?" Instead of invoking and imposing theories and models of experience-oriented design (top-down), we try to answer both questions by sharing and discussing examples of experience-oriented projects (bottom-up). By that, we hope to

create a common understanding of experience-oriented design for iTV. This understanding is supposed to be "better" due to its clear grounding in the practices, experiences, skills, and the knowledge of people working in the iTV domain.

Accordingly, participants submitted a brief *project description*, giving an overview of the product itself, why it is supposed to be a good example for experience-oriented design, its status (concept, prototype, product), the methods employed within the design process and potential indicators of the product's success. We set up a web page at www.ux-research.org providing the details of the workshop and further information. Participants were selected on the basis of a clear statement why their project qualifies as experience-oriented design.

The workshop itself consists of three parts:

What have you done? Each participant (or group) gives a brief overview of their project. This is meant as input for all further discussions.

What is Experience? Participants (small groups of max. 5) discuss the similarity and differences in their understanding of experience embedded in and expressed by their product. What kind of experience did they want to create, where does that particular understanding of experience come from? etc. Each small group is required to produce a conceptual "map" showing the similarities and differences in their understanding. These will be presented to the plenum and further integrated. The result is an overview of shared and alternative concepts of experience in the iTV domain.

What made the success? In a second round, participants (small groups of max. 5) will discuss their approaches (i.e., methods) to create a good experience. They will create a "map" of usual and unusual methods, experiences with this methods, etc. After presentation and further integration, the result is an overview of experience-oriented methods in the iTV domain.

Overall, the workshop is a guided reflection of concepts and methods used by the participants in their daily design work.

3. PARTICIPANTS AND PROJECTS

We accepted seven projects for the workshop to enable and fuel an intensive discussion. They are diverse and cover ground, ranging from interactive experimental movies to utilitarian media player software; from content to technology. In the following, we describe each project briefly (presented in alphabetical order of the author). More details are available at www.ux-research.org.

3.1 Vocomedia (Regina Bernhaupt)

Vocomedia is an interaction concept for the living room allowing users to simply "individualize" their iTV services. By using a six-key navigation combined with a fingerprint reader and a so called "look-there" user interface metaphor, Vocomedia lays a basis for an easy to use interactive TV service by at the same time providing a measurable positive user experience (in terms of "hedonic quality"). Vocomedia will be deployed in the near future by a European Telco/IPTV provider.

3.2 XDOMO (Massimo Deriu)

XDOMO aims at the integration of internet and television technologies (crossmedia) by linking television content with web

services and vice versa. The starting point is that integration of internet and television implies that digital objects may migrate between both worlds. This involves rethinking a digital television appliance in terms of a complex system of interconnected components, which cooperate to merge the features of the two worlds without any forced changes of their own respective structure.

3.3 Transparency (Carlos Caires)

Transparency is a cinematographic project to study the potential (and limits) of an interactive filmic narrative. To create a narrative, the spectator can combine a series of 20 autonomous scenes around the themes of treachery, jealousy, narcissism, pain, love and sex. Transparency is an installation, which features a particular input device (a transparent cube) to support the spectator in develop the story.

3.4 A player for video content in social media environments (Monique de Haas)

A user centred design-approach was used to build an embeddable video player for making available Dutch Public Broadcasting (DPB) Video Content in social media environments. The task was to create a player that "seduced" people to prefer it to already broadly available alternatives. We achieved this by embedding features deeply rooted in the particular requirements of social media (exchange, social search, recommendation).

3.5 Hotel Media-Center System (Jan Hess, Torben Wiedenhoefer)

A Hotel Media-Center System (HMS) offers a variety of services to guests of several hotel chains. Empirical studies and expert reviews to optimize the system. Enjoyment encompassed ease-of-use (e.g., ease of setting the alarm clock) as well as more hedonic, non-utilitarian aspects, such as animations or the aesthetics of sound feedback.

3.6 My experiencelapland.tv (Mikko Manninen, Anthony Okuogume, Ari Alm, Antti Haase, Eero Leppänen)

Mopaali is Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences' flagship for developing web media, social media and cross media instruments. Experiencelapland.tv (elvtv), an interactive web television channels, is one of the Mopaali's pilot applications. Eltv allows for prospective experience of a potential tour through Lapland through available videos. After a real tour, travellers are encouraged to upload own videos to document and share their experience.

3.7 The Space Trainees (Simon Staffans, Anders Wik)

The Space Trainees is a cross media edutainment about language learning targeted at children from eight to twelve years. It started out as a showcase for MHP-interactivity and developed into a cross media edutainment show. This was possible through thorough testing and evaluation and a cross-disciplinary approach to concept development. The show is in production for the Finnish Broadcasting Company.

4. ORGANIZERS

Marc Hassenzahl is Professor for "Ergonomics and User Experience in Design" at the Folkwang University in Essen. He is particularly interested in the positive affective and motivational aspects of interactive technologies – in short: User Experience. He is founding and active board member of the German Usability Professionals' Association.

Susanne Sperring holds an MA in sociology, BA in humanistic sciences, and is a doctoral student at Åbo Akademi University. She is the Manager at iDTV Lab, MediaCity, Åbo Akademi University, Vaasa, Finland.

Annika Wiklund-Engblom is a developmental psychologist, IT-pedagogue, and a doctoral student in the Research School for Media (Åbo Akademi University). She is the Research Coordinator at iDTV Lab, MediaCity, Åbo Akademi University, Vaasa, Finland.

5. REFERENCES

- [1] Hassenzahl, M., Law, E., & Hvannberg, E. 2006. User Experience - Towards a unified view [editorial]. In E. Law, E. Hvannberg, & M. Hassenzahl (Eds.), Proceedings of the workshop "User Experience – Towards a unified view" in conjunction with NordiCHI' 06, October, Oslo. Available online <http://www.cost294.org/>.
- [2] Hassenzahl, M. & Tractinsky, N. 2006. User Experience - a research agenda [Editorial]. Behavior & Information Technology, 25, 91-97.
- [3] Roibás, A. C., Geerts, D., Furtado, E., & Calvi, L. 2006. Investigating new user experience challenges in iTV: mobility & sociability. In Proceedings of the CHI 2006 Conference on Human Factors in Computing. Extended abstracts. ACM Press, New York, 1659-1662.
- [4] Tychsen, A., Newman, K., Brolund, T., & Hitchens, M. (2008). Cross-format analysis of the gaming experience in multi-player role playing games. In Situated Play - Proceedings of the DiGRA 2007, Tokyo. University of Tokyo, 49-47.