

Basic
Interaction Design
05-650

M / W 1:30 – 4:30 pm
GHC 4301

T / Th 9:00 – 12:00 am
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A0: DESIGN MATRIX

One of the most common challenges of interaction design is overcoming the “killer-application” hurdle. That is, waiting until you are convinced you have the absolute perfect idea before introducing it to your colleagues. Opening yourself up to entertaining a wide and fanciful range of ideas early on in the design process can reap great rewards. However, you must also be able to rapidly think through and formulate a way of expressing such ideas to others so they can be understood, incorporated, or discarded. This exercise is designed to encourage rapid brainstorming of both good and bad ideas with multiple partners. It also helps rapidly explore a wide range of intersecting possibilities

BUILD 10 X 10 MATRIX

We will choose two axes for our design matrix. In our case we will quickly brainstorm a list of 10 objects associated with snow and cold weather. This is dependent on the participants but examples may include items such as jackets, boots, snow plow, ice scraper, snow shovel, skis, etc. These are recorded onto 10 sheets of paper and placed down the left hand column of a large wall (typically attached via pins or magnets). Next we brainstorm out 10 controls or techniques for controlling a signal. Again typical examples include knobs, buttons, dials, sliders, voice, pressure, temperature, squeeze, shake, etc. These 10 controls are written onto 10 sheets of paper and placed across the top of the matrix. The result is a matrix of 100 distinct potential object-control ideas. What might come out of brainstorming the intersection of these object-controls? A wealth of ideas from the pertinent to the absurd. For example, a voice control for a snow shovel or a shake control for an ice scraper?

SPEED RESEARCHING

In the spirit of Speed Dating we introduced the concept of Speed Researching. Speed Researching involves successive and rapid pairing of researchers for 10 minute intervals to collaboratively research a specific topic while inviting diverse interpretations and design explorations. With time an overriding pressure on the brainstorm, results of any kind are only reached through rapid open stream of conscious thoughts regardless of appropriateness, usefulness, or quality.

With the participants aligned in two rows facing each other, each research pair is first challenged to select an empty entry in the Design Matrix to brainstorm. After 30 seconds one of the pairs goes to the board and removes the matrix entry card they have chosen to design. For the next 10 minutes the group rapidly disuses the selected intersecting object-control concept and sketches out the resulting ideas on the provided card. At the end of the 10 minute interval the completed idea card is placed back into the Design Matrix and research partners along one side of the table slide down one position. As the cycle continues, each new pair again is faced with the 30 seconds to pick another intersection to respond to. Do individuals attempt to go for something new or a continuation of an area of interest (i.e. stay along a single column or row)? How do individuals negotiate the constantly shifting partners? Typically after 5-6 rounds the cycle is halted and the Design Matrix examined.