

HODI - Habitus of Design Inspiration

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ABSTRACT

Despite the need of involving users in design decisions, participants cannot always easily follow and contribute to design. Democratizing design decisions is not easy due to the missing connections between the background information and how this is reflected to design practice. Habitus of design inspiration (HODI) is a design presentation technique, presented with an example use process that deals with this issue. It visually connects design rationale to design artefact. HODI is useful to for both designer - designer and designer - non-designer communications. Making the sources visible and available for reflection can help better communication and co-design of the solutions and support documentation practices in design practices. It can be used for opening up ideas to both designer and non-designer communities, negotiating and debating design decisions and structuring and focussing discussions.

Author Keywords

Design rationale, design process, design technique,
Research Through Design

ACM Classification Keywords

H.5.m. Information interfaces and presentation (e.g., HCI):
Miscellaneous.

General Terms

Human Factors; Design; Measurement.

INTRODUCTION

HCI and design methods combine user and designer insights by using creative techniques (e.g. [4]). Design artefacts are accepted as ways for sharing and reflecting on the design ideas (e.g. sketch, prototypes)[6][3] and they bring user data closer to designers (e.g. [1]). However despite the need for standard documentation practices [5], the connection between the creative process and the initial data is often not documented [6]. The data and context are usually not explicitly visualized in the design artefacts [5]. Various techniques and understanding from participatory design concentrate on this issue, but until now there is no agreed way of capturing both data and design together. This

results in a loss of insights gathered from earlier background work, which might feed the design in later steps. In this paper, we introduce HODI, as a representational format for capturing design concepts and decisions and their relations to background (e.g. user data, designer's own background, technologies). We further show an example use process from our project. This work is intellectually inspired by Bourdieu's concept of *Habitus*, on how power relations and individual distinctions define our decisions [2], also creative ones of designers.

HODI-HABITUS OF DESIGN INSPIRATION

HODI grew out of our work on a senior's mobility project. From the perspective of the lead designer, we have documented the trajectories of our data (text and visuals from multiple studies, more than 30 seniors, and 6 experts) to their transformation into design artefacts (e.g. as features, functionalities, services or aesthetics components captured in sketches and prototypes of design concepts).

A HODI is comprised of a series of pages (HODI-layouts) for designers to share their reflexive process with other designers, experts, non-designers, etc. To our experience a HODI can best work by using 4 HODI-layouts in a series (see figure 1), and used if possible as part of an active discussion. It is still possible to use a single HODI-layout for presenting source data and design concept.

The basic elements in a HODI-layout are: *HODI-boxes* that are used for encapsulating design concept, design rationale and source data. Further we have *connection elements* e.g.: arrows that emphasize relations between source data, design rationale and concept. *Free spaces* are for documenting discussions and opinions. A label for each HODI-box indicates the source of information (e.g.: literature box, user research data box, technology box). Information (a keyword, a sentence, an inspiration) in a box can have standard qualitative reference to further documents, if wanted. We propose that this type of distinction between different data sources helps people to match design and design rationale more easily. People also have a common reference point for focused discussion.

HODI-Layouts and the process

In our example, we make step-wise use of HODI, layouts and their functions as explained in the following (also see figure1):

Layout1: In the middle, a design concept is introduced. The sides of the scenario are left free for new data. One can also use a sketch, or a prototype instead of a scenario. We used

this layout to get initial feedback on general issues of the design concept by using a UCD scenario with 1-2 pictures of the concept.

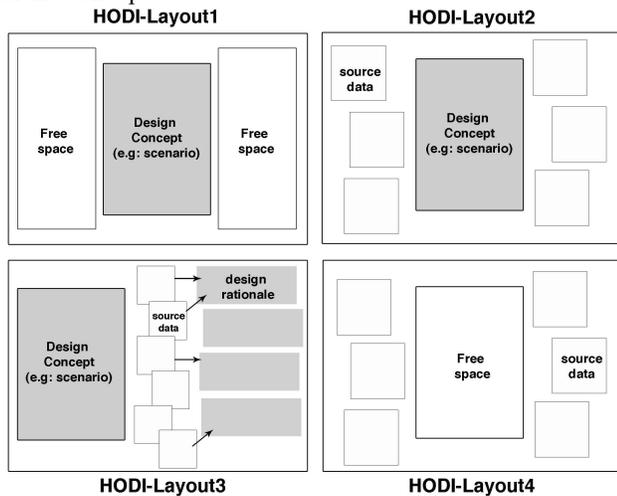


Figure 1. HODI-layouts,-elements and -boxes

Layout2: A layer of boxes is added on the sides, while keeping the initial design concept in the middle. Boxes carry source information about the background data. Here we asked our participants, if the data is understandable, if they see any connections between data and design, and if those relations seem correct. *Layout3:* New boxes are added to the content of layout 1 and 2, that show the designer's thinking based on the data (design rationale), including conflicts and connections of these decisions to the source data by using arrows. Here we have asked our participants to interpret the connections and discuss/critique those interpretations. *Layout4:* The last page has only source data boxes and leaves the design space free for the participant, so that s/he can create own ideas, exploring new connections to the source data.

Outcome

We propose that this presentation technique can extend both UCD and participatory design approaches. To explore this, we created 24 HODI pages for 6 design ideas and tested a co-design process using HODIs with 3 experts and 8 seniors. The resulting data illustrates the way in which HODI can be used by designers, experts or participants.

HODIs were used *by designers* (examining other's work) for defining design boundaries and extending designs within and beyond the boundaries. The elements are used as an internal validity check as to whether and how the concluding design is connected with data source. They brought the user closer to the designer and kept them there until last decisions were made.

Seniors used HODIs for criticizing source data. They used HODIs for grounding connections between design rationale

and concept. They used HODIs for learning new things (e.g: new technologies), opening up new situated discussions and a new design space. HODIs were used as reflection board, as the tensions between ideas, scenario and raw data could easily be detected through interview. They were used to discuss value tensions.

Moderators used HODIs for activating users, balancing and focusing moderation. HODIs were used as internal communication layers, when a design idea was discussed, to clarify why or why not that idea come through in the scope of this particular project, and what the reasons were for several tensions.

CONCLUSION

Our work is in an early stage and what we present is one way of visually capturing and reflecting on trajectories of data and design decisions in design presentations, and for use by designer and non-designer contributors. Making data, effort and transitions visible can have many forms. This is only one of them, to point to the importance of *making the invisible visible* and accountable in design. Here designers not only communicate the design but also how they interpret the data for design. We suggest they can get more insight from a broader audience, and the design process can be better documented by this way. Our future plan is to define fine details of the rationale, to balance uneven communications between people and design practitioners. By applying HODIs to different situations, we aim to explore the match between design and its rationale.

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