

## Design for Experiencing: New Tools.

### The big picture:

The article is about the last frontier of design: experience. After everything has been done concerning visual communication and usability issues designers are facing a challenge of designing the actual experiences of using a certain product or a service.

### The contribution of the article:

The article discusses the development in user centred design and -research and applied social sciences, how they have influenced each other and continue influencing and what that brings along. It talks about tools and methods of gathering user data and different benefits achieved with those. Focus is on the emerging (back then) participatory design approach and on its challenges and possibilities. The aim of this approach is to understand users' experiences (past, present and potential) as deeply as possible in order to be able to establish empathy with them that can then be used as input for design ideation. Kind of returning to designing for one's self when knowing what it would feel like for the user.

While acknowledging that accessing experiences of others is rather tricky and requires at least three sorts of data (say, think, make) to be handled at the same time the article manages to express such a complex issue in a quite simple and understandable manner. It does this by describing the tools, methods and the process of this design approach.

Especially valuable in this article is the description of the means for gaining access to different levels of experience ranging from asking people what they want to say that reveals what people what they can express in words, to what they make which will reveal what people think and know. This provides a perception of peoples' experiences that cannot be described with words. For this the writers propose a new design language, Make Tools, which serve both the designer and the user. (They are essentially design probes in the making at the time of writing of this article) This new design language enables the user to play a role in the design process and thus the designer to conceive user generated products.

### Thought(s):

The article states that the need for this new design language and collective generation of ideas arises from people being willing to participate actively in design processes in order to influence on what they want, when they want it and how. They do this because they realise their collective influential force that comes from networking. In the future this will probably orientate design onto designing systems for participation rather than ready-made goods for consumption.

### Constructive points:

The article provides a nice view of likely future orientation of design saying that the actual design work will develop closer to design research, up to the point of becoming intertwined. While this all seems a bit blurry the proposed new tools rely on visual literacy and begin to bring it in balance with verbal literacy and their future developments will bring clarity to the work.

### Critical Points:

The descriptions of the actual tools are still quite vague, but we have to bear in mind that this was an initial article on the issue so it is necessary to go for other sources as well. For example the Design Probes.