Open Design Spaces – Socially Crafting Interactive Experiences

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Abstract. Engaging end-users and user communities to take an active part in the co-creation, evolution, and appropriation of modern, interactive systems has become an increasingly important issue over the last years. Bringing together existing research and experiences as well as new challenges such as long-term, large-scale, or highly distributed stakeholders has led to the notion of Open Design Spaces (ODS) to frame and reflect current developments of distributed co-design. Several, formerly often separated strands of research covering different aspects of these challenges have emerged and led to a growing community of researchers and practitioners building on concepts such as Participatory Design, Meta-Design, and End-User Development. The 2nd International Workshop on Open Design Spaces (ODS 2010) focused particularly on social aspects and community co-creation in Open Design Spaces.

Preface

Active user communities can have an enormous creative potential for the development of interactive products. This becomes particularly obvious by recent achievements in the areas of digital and social media. Some examples for new forms of design collaboration are websites for customer-company exchange such as *GetSatisfaction* and *RedesignMe* or the appropriation of social networking platforms such as *Facebook* or *MySpace* to support user-designer communities. Examples are also the myriads of *mashups*, *apps*, and *plugins* that have been built by user communities in order to enrich the interactive experience with digital products and that sometimes even become inherent parts of the products themselves.

However, empowering user communities to engage in the development and evolution of interactive products and environments is usually a complex task that requires a deep understanding of the underlying socio-technical processes and interaction principles (Stevens 2009). We developed the notion of *Open Design Spaces* (Budweg et al. 2009) to address this challenge and to frame the growing research in this area.

Open Design Spaces (ODS) are environments for co-creation that encourage a continuous dialog between users and developers with the goal of transforming the traditionally separated spheres of design and use. User communities are regarded as co-designers who carry different interests and cultural backgrounds into the development of interactive products.

The ODS concept is related to Participatory Design (Schuler & Namioka 1993), Meta-Design (Fischer & Scharff 2000), Living Labs (Schaffers et al. 2009) and End-User Development (Mørch et al. 2004), but in particular addresses social aspects of distributed and community-driven co-design in interactive environments. ODS are characterized by transparency, ad-hoc collaboration, self-organization, social feedback, evolving ideas, and evolutionary development (Budweg et al. 2009). The aim of ODS is to foster the generation of novel ideas and the sharing of creative solutions to the benefit of the interactive product, its user community, and perceived experiences, having regard to the fact that participants are usually highly distributed and sometimes even hard to anticipate in advance.

The *2nd International Workshop on Open Design Spaces (ODS 2010)* focused specifically on the social aspects of Open Design Spaces. It addressed concepts and principles for successful co-design in online environments, the activation of large- and small-scale user communities and their integration in distributed design processes. The workshop took place at the *8th ACM Conference on Designing Interactive Systems (DIS 2010)* in Aarhus, Denmark, on 17 August 2010.

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