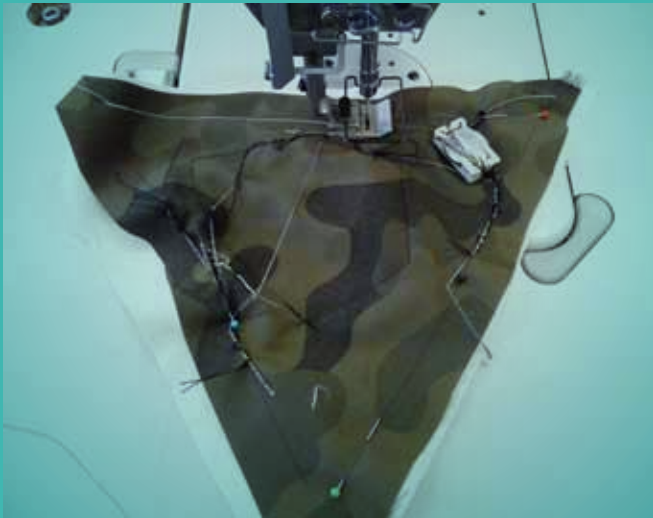


Boundary objects can take many different shapes, ranging from making a sketch together to using puppets and small prototypes.



Boundary objects facilitate interactions between people. Images and physical objects are tools designers create and use to establish a shared context.



LOW-HANGING FRUIT

Making use of early research results in a workshop for practice.

Marie de Vos

Impatient to gain some early insights from the PSS101 project, the industry partners organised a “low-hanging fruit” workshop to pick some early results. This workshop resulted in two areas to explore further: value models and tools for communication.

One way to get to grips with the complexity common in multiple stakeholder projects is the production of stakeholder maps. These maps give an overview of everyone involved in the project and the relationships between them. We noticed, however that besides knowing who is involved, it is at least as important to know why they are involved. This is vital information as what stakeholders are trying to achieve within the project influences their behaviour and decisions.

Thus it is valuable to visualise the value of stakeholder relations and interactions in both the current situation and possible future scenarios. The parties involved use this visualisation to evaluate and discuss possible opportunities for the future. Earlier approaches to represent the values between relations were often too complex. We are currently exploring how to make such a value model more accessible.

In complex projects, communication is crucial but it is often difficult, even within a single company, to communicate across ‘silos’ of different disciplines. As the complexity increases, with people from different backgrounds, different companies, differing organisational cultures, different languages, all placed in a network of shifting interests, the necessity for effective communication becomes ever greater. Difficult though communication

may be, there is great value in differences of interpretation, as these offer a better understanding of each other's position. The question then becomes how and where to find a shared language to help discuss these interpretations. One tool which could be of value is the visual language of film. STBY has successfully used film in many multi-stakeholder projects with large, often global, organisations using an approach called 'Design Documentaries'. These films inform and inspire multidisciplinary teams with stories from the everyday lives of those who will later use or deliver the PSS that these teams are working on. Several PSS101 industry partners are interested in this approach because they see the value of filmed stories in communication between stakeholders and disciplines, but have difficulties using film effectively in PSS development.

The benefits of the experiments in these areas are twofold. On the one hand, they provide industry partners with tools to work and experiment with, at least two years before the final framework will be ready to use. On the other hand, our experiments are of great value to the scientific partners, who can incorporate them in the development of the framework: everyone benefits!

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p4

INTRODUCING DESIGNERS TO THE BOARD

The "zipper" image depicted on p4 is another example of a boundary object. Using visuals, stakeholders are confronted with implicit issues they are struggling with. The visuals make these issues explicit and serve as a tool to cross boundaries that restrict interaction.

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT STEP

Jeroen van Erp

How to deal with cross-media retail strategies, multi-channel publishing challenges, smart sex toys and intelligent lawn mowers?



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- Board member of the Design & Emotion Society