

Designing Presence

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Abstract. Experience design and engagement is evolving to become the design of presence with the supporting practices and tools of SenseMapping, CC-Align, Experience Vision and Scenario-Based Design Methods.

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1 Introduction

Experience design and engagement is evolving to be the design of presence. Presence is sensing the state of being in a specific space. Designing Presence is about connecting physical and mental states – creating sense, sensibility and coherence. Presence is relevance. Presence is bringing identity into context. Design of presence includes listening and leading by including the design of the organization and bringing about mutual benefit for the stakeholders it chooses to serve [1].

Designing Presence transcends and includes experience design and stakeholder engagement. Designing Presence as a practice is embodied in SenseMapping [2] (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Visual layout example of SenseMapping; one format.

SenseMapping provides a perspective to design products, systems and services that are fully human compatible; that strongly and openly – and subtly and suggestively – project presence. SenseMapping allows for the design of presence by considering and connecting all five human senses (seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, smelling) to human sensemaking (head, heart and gut - along with interests and values).

Designing Presence is supported by CC-Align research that discovers the connective tissue between the values and interests of customers and companies – and by

UserStrategic Experience (USE) and the Experience Vision design methodology that link design processes and customer experiences to business objectives.

2 User Strategic Experience (USE)

Design of Presence is positively correlated with the USE Model: User Strategic Experience [3], where the wants and needs of customers and stakeholders interlace with the business model and objectives of the business or organization. It is also positively correlated with Experience Vision providing a strong framework for experience design that supports business objectives, including the Scenario Based Design Method (SBDM) [4] (Fig. 2).

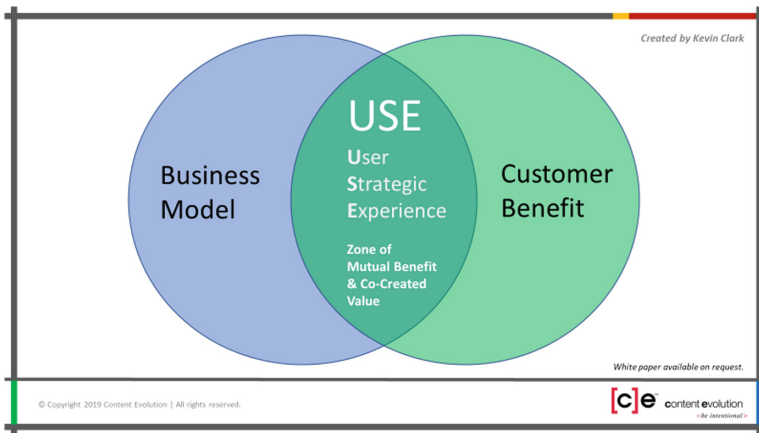


Fig. 2. USE: User Strategic Experience model for co-creating value.

The ability to describe internal and external alignment is critical for designing presence. The CC-Align [5].

Method developed by *Choiceflows* which is a contraction of the term “company-customer alignment”, is a way to benchmark current state of internal and external interests and values calibration. CC-Align then finds undiscovered opportunities for design and strategic interaction that is beneficial to the organization and those it serves. When repeated, it is a measurement for understanding and documenting improvement.

Evolutionary use cases include “sense-layering” for the IBM Merlin Center for next generation banking experiences [6] reimagining the global portfolio of 400 IBM Client Briefing Centers [7], and the emergence of multi-tract journey mapping first delivered at Toyota [8] and today in use by many Content Evolution and SenseMapping practice clients around the world.

3 The Merlin Center

The Merlin Center as described in a keynote article in CMO Magazine is a place designed to showcase retail banking in the future. Located in Stamford, Connecticut, the Merlin Center concept was created by the John Ryan Group to showcase architectural design possibilities for customer interaction, and IBM provided ideas and technologies to the table (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Visual excerpts from CMO Magazine article “Experience Preferred,” 2005.

Located in a nondescript warehouse location, the exterior of the Merlin Center gives no clue to what’s inside. IBM corporate strategic design is brought in to make the center an over-the-top memorable experience. The inside is already visually competent.

In fact, there is a piece of magic early in a visit that is worthy of the Disney Imagineers. When you start your briefing, you sit in a well-appointed executive conference room. You sit and listen to an overview of the banking industry, strategic trends – all being projected on a screen in the front of the room, animated with the obligatory PowerPoint charts.

Then, about 10 min into the briefing, the presenter says – “yet it would be better to see these trends come to life, wouldn’t it?” ...and with that a button is pushed on the lectern and what appeared to be a solid wall disappears into the ceiling – revealing a street scene complete with asphalt and streetlights – and across that street the bank of the future mocked up inside the warehouse. For people being briefed it has the desired “wow” effect and sets the stage for opening minds and hearts to what is possible.

So far, so good. The space looks great. There is a lot of tech you can see demonstrated, yet you can’t touch it yourself. The space doesn’t sound like anything, smell or taste like anything to support the core messages being delivered. IBM design is about to change that to amp-up that WOW.

We called what we did “SenseLayering” for the space. Adding layers of intentional sensory stimulus to the Merlin Center to make it more experiential and to increase the sense of flow where time disappears in purposeful engagement [9]. This is the genesis of the SenseMapping practice that would emerge almost a decade later and after the publication of my book Brandscendence: Three Essential Elements of Enduring Brands where all five human senses are discussed as core contributors to a fully engaging brand.

Rewind. Let’s walk into the Merlin Center from start after performing strategic SenseLayering augmented design. Now when you enter, in addition to seeing a competent and inviting space as a start transition from the warehouse exterior, you also

smell coffee and fresh cookies baking. An air oven near the entrance provides the welcoming aroma of baking – and the coffee area is moved from a back space to the front of the house.

We studied spas and found ways to redesign the washrooms to be more than functional. Flowers, lounge furniture, cloth wash towels, spring water dispensers – and an injected background scent of forest highlands during spring foliage development – earthy fresh with a dash of vanilla.

The bank of the future became more sensory competent. It was infused with fresh flowers and interior plantings at the entrance – and injected with a light yet bright citrus to awaken the senses. You could now touch a lot more of the exhibits in the center and use them yourself hands-on without a demonstrator.

The bank of the future also starts to sound like something. It is given life with street sounds when the wall disappears – and quiet sounds of clients in conversations with bankers and background sounds of machines in use, such as printers and copiers – keyboards clicking as phantom people type. The main greeting area now has light jazz playing softly in the background and the washrooms light classical.

It was as we say today about the SenseMapping process, a more “fully human” space in every sense. The new design of the Merlin Center invited people to be awakened, in a state of flow, and fully engaged and present. After the Merlin Center experience “Discovering your WOW!” is the name of a book of design inspirations I wrote with Ron Smith for internal use at IBM to guide the next generation of experiences for clients visiting the company’s portfolio of 400 Executive Briefing Centers around the world.

4 Toyota and Multi-track Journey Mapping

After working on the Merlin Center and global IBM Briefing Centers – and doing strategic work on the experience of strategic outsourcing clients – I graduate from IBM 30 years of service. I joined IBM early in life, so too early to simply accept retirement as a permanent state. In the next decade I start several companies, including Content Evolution and Choiceflows (Fig. 4).

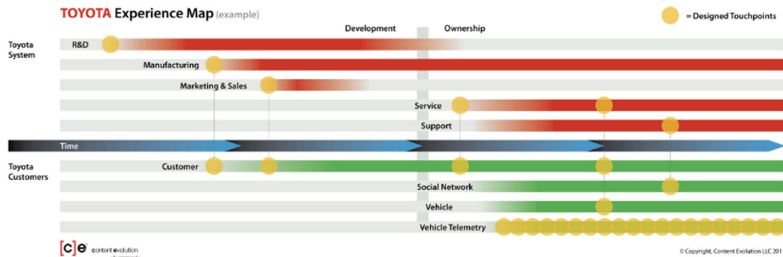


Fig. 4. Toyota multi-track journey map; connecting Toyota with its customers.

In the early days of Content Evolution, we provide our first multi-track journey map, pictured above. It is a first by showing connections both to the journey being taken by customers – and the journey being taken by key constituencies inside Toyota – and the connective tissue between inside and outside the business.

This is also a building block for SenseMapping that would manifest almost a decade later. SenseMapping is the process of and the toolkit for Designing Presence.

5 CC-Align

Customer-Company Alignment, or CC-Align, is a practice of *Choiceflows*, a Content Evolution member company. CC-Align provides a research methodology that discovers the values and interests – and intersections – of customers and the companies that serve them. CC-Align has roots going back to the 1980s with experiments performed by Dr. Jordan Louviere, COO of *Choiceflows* and one of the most cited researchers in the world with a Google Scholar h-index of 102 (placing him in the top 1% of all published researchers in the world) [10].

As graphically suggested in the Toyota model above, when company and customer activities are aligned for relevance, context and mutual benefit as described in Brandscendence [11] in detail – there is more intention in interaction and positive outcomes. CC-Align finds the connections, and the disconnects. In fact, the results of a CC-Align experiment deliver a grey-scale of fully aligned interactions to completely mis-aligned relationships.

CC-Align is a specific version of a choice experiment to investigate and discern these alignments and draws heavily on the Best-Worst Scaling methodology (BWS, also known as “CC-Diff” in the market research profession), invented by Dr. Louviere.

In one case CC-Align is used to determine alignment between sales representatives of a company and the customers they work with regularly. The CC-Align study determines the motivations and incentives are not creating a shared values and interest environment. By using the results of the CC-Align study and making changes in sales incentives and offers to customers, the business moves from number four to number two in the market – and is then acquired by the number one company in the category, greatly rewarding shareholders. This is a multi-dimensional research that supports presence design.

6 Experience Vision

The “Experience Vision: Vision Centered Design Method” is a comprehensive method which makes it possible to propose new and innovative products, systems and services that are currently unavailable, as well as proposing advances for those that currently exist [12]. It encompasses the entire HCD (Human Centered Design) process and presents a new vision with experiential value for both user and business from an HCD viewpoint (Fig. 5).

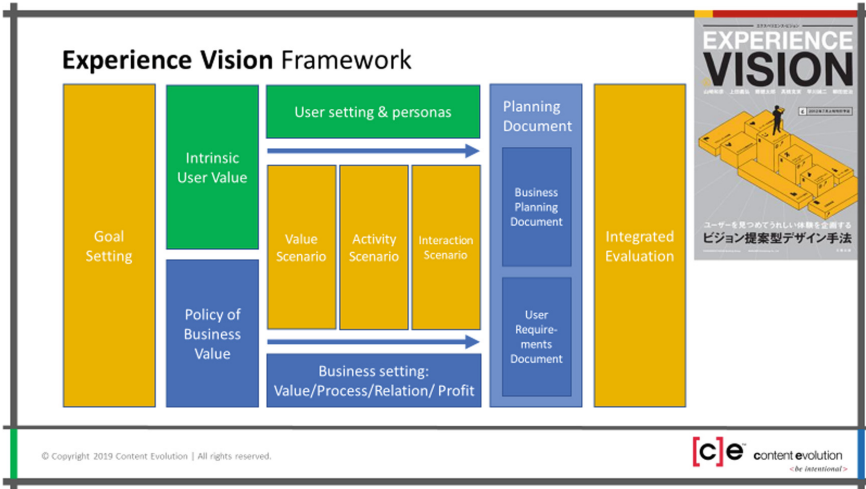


Fig. 5. Experience Vision framework adapted from the book Experience Vision.

The Experience Vision process includes eight formats developed as a practical design tools. They include Goal setting of the project, Intrinsic user value, Policy of business value, Persona, Value scenario, Activity scenario, Interaction scenario and Experience vision (summary). Case studies showed effectiveness and usefulness of the formats as a design tool for this method.

7 Design of Presence

Designing Presence using the SenseMapping methodology reveals the previously invisible fusion of physical world design including products, systems and services – user interaction and experience – and intentional connections with personal and shared values. SenseMapping coupled with Experience Vision and CC-Align create a Presence Design process for discovering, planning and making fully-human-compatible marketplace offerings.

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