USING GAMES TO RAISE AWARENESS. HOW TO CO-DESIGN SERIOUS MINI-GAMES?

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SERIOUS GAMES

Complex games

Casual games

Criticism: too trivial to be educational
SOLUTION?

- Platform of mini-games (Frazer, Argles and Wills, 2007)
  - One game per goal = didactic unit
  - Different angles

- Blended learning approach
  - Eye opener, stop and think-effect
  - Additional to a pedagogical package

- Promising tool for raising awareness
  - “Short, simple, flexible and memorable” (Sayers, 2006)
  - Ability to attract a broad public of both gamers and non-gamers
AIM OF THE STUDY

- Develop a design method to build a game platform to raise awareness

Case: Advertising Literacy

- Youngsters important target group for advertisers
- New advertising formats:
  - No clear boundary between media and advertising content
  - Difficult to understand commercial intent

➢ Need for awareness raising!
Co-design as Design Method

- Co-design?
  - Act of designing together
  - Collective creativity throughout design process (Sanders and Stappers, 2008)

- Involvement stakeholders
  - Get to know opinions, beliefs, needs and preferences
  - Benefits (knowledge, skills)
  - Create support
INFORMANT DESIGN (SCAIFE ET AL., 1997)

Benefits

- Stakeholders = specialized inputs
- Inclusion co-design determined by project manager
- Possible to include large group of stakeholders
- Short design period

Four phases

- Phase 1: Problem definition
- Phase 2: Identification product requirements
- Phase 3: Developing and testing low-tech prototypes
- Phase 4: Testing high-tech prototypes
INFORMANT DESIGN

- Original informant design
  - No early brainstorm or co-design sessions (before product design)
  - Interviews in phase 1: to map the needs of the target group

- However, early brainstorming sessions enable the integration of ideas, game preferences and game characteristics in early design phases (All et al., 2013)
INFORMANT DESIGN ➔ INFORMANT GAME DESIGN

- **Phase 1:** Problem definition
- **Phase 2:** Identification product requirements ➔ + brainstorming session with stakeholders
- **Phase 3:** Developing and testing low-tech prototypes ➔ Design game scenario + feedback
- **Phase 4:** Testing high-tech prototypes ➔ Alpha game + usability testing
INFORMANT GAME DESIGN

Definition domain

- Academic research (academic experts, industry experts)
  - definition learning goals, target audience

Brainstorming and definition requirements

- Development team: translation into system requirements and game scenarios
- Academic experts: content, practical requirements
- Industry experts: content
- Pedagogical experts: content, didactic requirements
- Youngsters: character and world design, game mechanics

Design game scenario + feedback

- Development team: development game scenarios and game world
- Academic experts: feedback content + design content game
- Industry experts: feedback content
- Pedagogical experts: feedback content, practical requirements
- Youngsters: feedback content, game mechanics, characters

Alpha game + usability testing

- Development team: feedback game content and testing bugs
- Youngsters: feedback game mechanics, content

Final game version
PHASE 1: IDENTIFICATION STAKEHOLDERS

- Youngsters
- Educational experts
- Industry experts
- Game designers
- Academics
Phase 1: Domain definition

- Previous research (Cauberghe et al., 2012)
- Who?
  - 11 marketers and 2 youth experts were interviewed
  - 503 youngsters (12-21) completed a survey
- Results?
  - Advertising literacy and especially the critical attitude of youngsters between 12 and 16 is low for online advertising formats
Phase 2: Brainstorming Session and Definition Requirements

- **Who?**
  - Interview with experts (N = 8)
  - Brainstorming with youngsters (N = 109)

- **Results?**
  - coded and analyzed
**Phase 2: Results Brainstorming Target Group**

Focus on game characteristics

### Game World
- Mall: 4
- City: 12
- Fantasy: 6
- War: 2
- Space: 0
- Abstract: 2

### Avatar
- Human: 16
- Animal: 4
- Other: 6

### Use of Ads in Game
- Shoot: 0
- Recognize: 2
- Connect product and …: 4
- Advergame: 12
- Guess the brand: 6
- No advertising present: 10

### Game Type
- Adventure game: 4
- Casual game: 8
- Race game: 2
- Shooter game: 6
- Simulation game: 9
- Race game: 0
**Phase 2: Results Brainstorming Experts**

- Need to produce ‘stop and think’-effect, e.g. ‘Where is Wally?’
- Not too pedantic
- Focus on online advertising
- Importance of ethics
- Motivational tool, eye-opener
- Should open discussion, debate topics
- Short, online, easy to use in class

**Focus on game content and practical requirements**
Phase 2: Definition Requirements

- City game world
- Different human avatars (choice + name)
- Realistic
- Motivational, stop and think

- Short
- Easy accessible, free
- Can be played on laptop and tablet
- ....
- City game world
- Human character
- Stop and think
- Entertainment

- Where is Wally?
- Realistic
- Focus online
PHASE 3: DESIGN GAME SCENARIO + TESTING

- Requirements ➔ translated into game scenario’s by game development team
- Testing game scenario’s
- Who?
  - Review experts: interview (N = 5)
  - Review youngsters: questionnaire (N = 109)
Phase 3: Results testing

Youngsters
- Content (fun or boring?)
- Game mechanics (scoring system, character type, navigation, game type, game world, …)

Experts
- Content (realistic, type of advertising, use of advertising strategies, …)
- Difficulty level

Omission game that was negatively reviewed by both experts and youngsters
PHASE 4: DEVELOPMENT ALPHA VERSION

Review experts (content)

Review youngsters (content and mechanics)

Analysis game developers (content and mechanics)

Determination adjustments scenarios and development alpha version
**Phase 4: Development Alpha Version + Testing**

- **Testing alpha version**
  - Only small changes possible
  - Primarily usability

- **Who?**
  - Only target audience (youngsters) \((N = 8)\)
  - Think aloud method
Phase 4: Results testing

- Speed (Skate game)
- Scoring system (Count the Ads)
- Use of bonuses
- ...
**CONCLUSION**

- Informant design ensures involvement different stakeholders in a flexible manner

- Stakeholder input
  - Experts: focused on the content
  - Target audience: focused on the game mechanics and characteristics

- Important guidelines
  - Clearly define the central topic of the game ➔ determines stakeholders
  - Clearly define the central learning goal (small, concrete targets) ➔ spine of the game
  - Brainstorming **before** scenario development
Curious for the result?

http://reclamewijs.ugent.be

Skate Game

Count the Ads
Profile Crush

Quiz
klara.vangeit@ugent.be
veroline.cauberghe@ugent.be
liselot.hudders@ugent.be
marijke.deveirman@ugent.be