Workshop Proposal: Supporting Design Studio Culture in HCI
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Position Paper

1. Implications for Solving the Case of the *Virtual* Design Studio Culture

In defining a virtual design studio culture (from now I will call it a VDSC) as "highly material" we seem to move away from the centrality enjoyed today by virtual settings such as blogs, wikis, and any similar spaces where interaction happens mostly through text. As we then look into other virtual cultures where a rich array of media is used, —successfully or not—it seems reasonable to imagine that many of the challenges they face are shared with a VDSC. One example could be a virtual classroom that attempts to emulate the richness of interaction occurring sometimes in a physical classroom [1]. Thus, solving the case for a successful VDSC seems to imply the following:

  a. A successful VDSC should study other similar virtual cultures and barrow elements from them to the extent that these are successful.

  b. If there were no other successful virtual cultures similar to a VDSC, solving the case for the VDSC implies solving a key problem applicable to many other virtual cultures.

2. Survivability of a Business-Bounded Design Studio Culture or How to Create Design Holes by Perforating the Bowels of Ancestral Applications.

Within the so called corporate world, a design group under a business unit cannot be seen as an atelier where each member freely follows his or her artistical aspirations. The exception could be the brief zero gravity flight experienced by some at the peak of the dot-com era of the late 90s.

Instead, designers attempting to create design work in these conditions risk ending up as just creative dogs who fed on corporate goals and feature lists egest design specifications to be taken to a production line.

How can the idea of design studio culture be sold and then sustained under these circumstances?

Defending our ideas in one language while instantiating them in another is neither a trivial task. But is it possible?

Yes.

I think.

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[1] http://www.blaxxuntechnologies.com/en/markets-education.html