Design Research & The Craft of Interactive Design

Design Research

Making the Invisible Visible:
models, diagrams and documents.

Design Research: A Hunt Statement

"I am going to research X so that I can do Y."

X is often an activity, and Y is usually a project goal or subject area.

Ex: I am going to research how civil engineers use PDAs on the job so that I can build a PDA for them.

Design Research: Patterns

Looking for patterns of recurring behavior or ideas

\# See or hear it once, it's a phenomenon

\# See or hear it twice, it's a coincidence or an emerging pattern

\# See it or hear it three times, it's a pattern

TAKE NOTES!

Design Research: Methods

Observations:
fly on the wall, shadowing, undercover

Interviews:
storytelling, role playing, unfocus groups (experts), extreme -user interviews (interactive TV product interviews a person who does not own a TV)

Activites:
collaging, drawing, modeling, journal

Design Research: Implications

Make sense of all the research: Design the data.

Cluster the data into meaningful chunks.

This data can be a check on what is being designed. Does the new product or service address all the design implications from the research?

Personas

Personas are a documented set of archtypical people involved with a product or a service to give designers a sense they are designing for specific people, and not just "the users."

Devise personas from observing and talking to users.

What are some sample personas from the SIUC web site?

Scenarios

Scenarios are prototypes built of words.

Stories about what it will be like to use the product or service once it has been made. The protagonists of these stories are the personas.

Ex: First-time use. What happens when the personas encounter the product or service for the first time? How do they know what to do and how to use the product or service?

Visualization – part 1

Sketches and Models

Storyboards

Task Analysis -list of activities the design must support

Task Flows -putting the tasks into a sensible order

Use Cases -a roughing out of the functionality of a product or service

Visualization – part 2

Mood Boards -collage to explore the emotional landscape of a product or service.

Wireframes -a set of documents to show the structure, information hierarchy, functionality, and content.

Prototypes: Paper, Interactive, and Physical

User Testing

Once you have a prototype, the product or service should be tested with users.

Just like design research, you go to the users, you talk to them, you write things down.