

# NON-DIRECTIVE EXPERIENCE DESIGN

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## ABSTRACT

How do we design ambiguous and non-directive interactive artefacts that offer multiple ways of engagement? This article presents the initial thoughts on the form-giving of tangible interactive

not solely focus on technology and task-solving. This invites interaction designers to work with new contexts where function is secondary to aesthetic experiences.

In this article, I wish to present the initial thoughts on designing for practices that are non-directive. Non-directive practices are practices that do not have a formal focus on performance or on achieving goals, but instead invites to enjoyable experiences that allow for

This article has been selected for a special issue of the online journal *Artifact*.

addressing their emotions and senses, rather than focusing on cognitive advances. The result was two exploratory interactive sensory pillows with a variety of different expressions and modes of interaction. We propose how design for non-directive practices can be framed by initial articulations of the desired experiences, emotions and senses, based on empathic insights of the users. From these, we suggest to experiment with various materials to explore potential forms for ambiguous designs that allow for a multiplicity of ways of interacting with them.

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, more attention towards the overall experience of interacting with technology has emerged (Hassenzahl 2011; McCarthy & Wright 2004; Petersen et al. 2004; Wright et al. 2008). New perspectives on the relationship between users and digital artefacts allow for a holistic focus on people's emotional, intellectual, and sensual engagement with digital products. Aesthetically oriented approaches to the design of digital technology allow for explorations on new design domains that do

instead aims at giving children with profound cognitive disabilities, non-directive experiences that engage their physical sensory systems for the purpose of well-being.

I propose a three-step approach to non-directive design. Initially, the desired experiences are articulated in a design programme. This design programme is manifested in various material experiments, as it will allow us to embrace ambiguity and aesthetic in the design process, rather than focusing on functionality. Finally, these explorations will lead to designs that are open to interpretation by the users.

## RELATED WORK

Interaction design is the process of shaping digital artefacts (Löwgren & Stolterman 2005, p.7). Vallgård (in press) explains this process as the practice of form-giving and argues for an understanding of the computer as a design material (Vallgård & J. Redström 2007). With the material turn, interaction designers can give form to interactive artefacts (and environments) with attention to its aesthetic expression. This allows for designing for experiences, rather than functionality. In the following, I will present relevant aspects to this article. I will elaborate on a material view on computers as well as on aesthetically oriented and experience design. Then, I give an overview the role of ethnography in interaction design. Lastly, I briefly introduce how ambiguity can be embraced in design.