

Dan Saffer

Presentation & Workshop Redux

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Dan Saffer

- Interaction designer
- Founder and principal of Kicker Studio, a design consultancy for consumer electronics, devices and interactive environments
- Before that, was Experience Design Director at Adaptive Path
- Author of ***Designing Gestural Interfaces*** and ***Designing for Interaction***

Imagine I asked you to
design a product.

Maybe a website.

For sharing medical
information.

The product is for the blind.

And the deaf.

Could you do it?

Where would you start?

***Designing from the
Inside-Out: Behaviour
as the Engine
of Product Design***

Users experience products from the outside-in, namely from the interface and the physical form.

In other words, as far as users are concerned, **the interface is the product.**

But.

The best products are usually
not those that are designed
with only the outside in mind.



Those delight briefly. But prolonged use turns delight to anger and disgust. They are quickly discarded, replaced, and forgotten.

They are the junk food of products.

However, it is easier to focus on form than behaviour.

It is equally easy to focus on the technology that makes the product possible.

Because it is easier to talk or demonstrate or even think about how a product looks than it is to design how it will **work**.

This isn't to say we should ignore aesthetics or technology, because that would be foolish.

The best products are designed from the inside-out.

Meaning, everything flows from **behaviour.**

Behaviour

- How the product acts (feedback)
- The tasks the product allows users to do
- Maximising the abilities of the product
- A focus on actions it (you) want to engender through use

To design the best products.
focus on behaviour as the
starting point.

But then we've got this problem.

If The Interface is The Product,
how do we design from the inside out?

***Step 1: Behaviour
as Design Strategy***

Differentiators have traditionally been *features*.

But we can make behaviour the differentiator. In not only how the product behaves, but the behaviour it engenders.

Behaviour is one defence against feature-itis.

People love features.

We enjoy comparing features
and choosing the product
with the most features.

Companies love features, too.
It gives them something to easily market and allows them to simply replicate what their competitors are doing without having to come up with real differentiators.

It's easy to replicate features.
But it is hard to copy how features
behave if care is taken to design
them well.

And that should be our
design strategy.

***Step 2: Behaviour
as Design Research***

Stop looking for people's goals and preferences, start looking for what they do and why they do it.

Look at their

Motivations

Expectations

Actions

Translating goals or (worse) preferences into a design will probably lead to something terrible.



***Step 3: Behaviour
as Product Structure***

How does the system behave when users engage with it?

What is the *feedback* like?

The same feature can feel completely different based on how it responds and how it is accessed.

Transitions matter.

What activities does the product need to support?

Especially figure out what is the core activity. This will determine the product's **Buddha Nature**.

The core activity also determines the **Hero Task**.

What behaviour do you want
to encourage? Discourage?

It is hard to change learned behaviour. Once people get used to do something one way, especially if they do it very regularly, it is hard to get them to change.

It is often easier to change the *non-human parts of the system* than it is to change human behaviour.

Start from the behaviour, and then figure out what should control it: the physical form, UI elements on a screen, or even gestures in space.

For users, the interface is the system, and they don't care which discipline(s) designed it, only that it looks good and works well.

This is how we overcome the interface/inside-out paradox.

Behaviour drives the form and the mechanics.

**So was Dan saying form
follows function?**

Somewhat. But don't quote him.

“We’re often not making things better, we’re just making things different.”

Peter Saville

Go make things better.

***Ideation &
Design Principles:
Ye Olde Design
Workshoppe***

Design principles

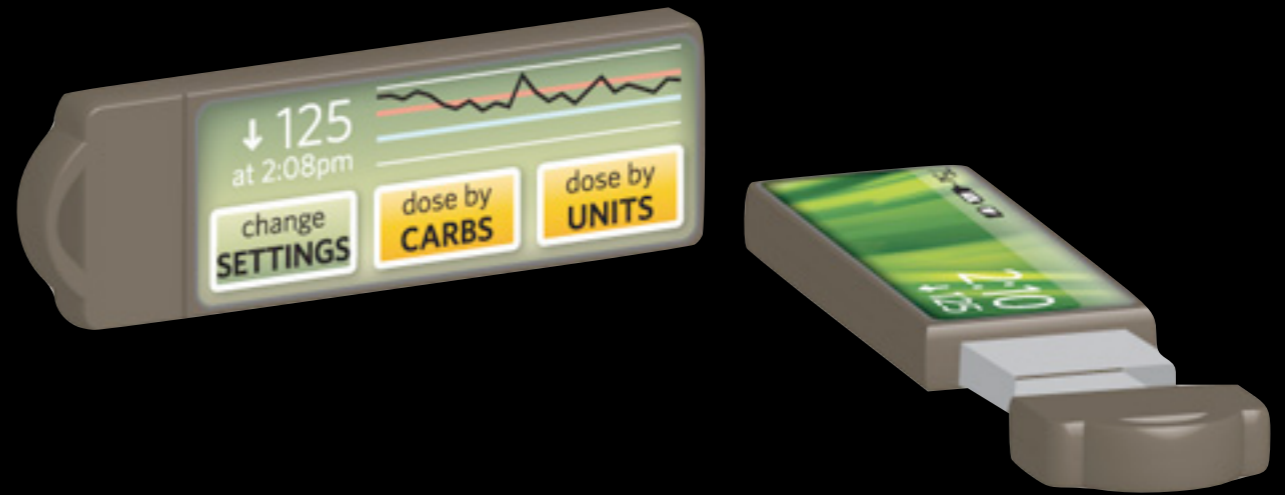
Why design principles

- Help pick the right concept
- Help make design decisions
- Can be longer lasting than product itself
- Help find the Buddha Nature of a product

Design principles

- Based on design research
- Short
- Memorable
- Cross-feature
- Specific (no “Easy to Use”)
- Differentiators taken together
- Non-conflicting

Charmr



- Wear it during sex
- Make better use of data
- Easy to learn and teach/No numbers
- Less stuff
- Keep diabetics in control
- Keep diabetics motivated

Brainstorming

Brainstorming rules

- No bad ideas, no criticism
- Stay focused: Stray ideas into “parking lot”
- Don’t spend a lot of time on any one idea
- Use the whole room
- No multitasking (i.e. phones/laptops/etc. OFF)
- Start with a warm-up exercise

Brainstorming sprints

- Fixed time limit
- Quantity, quantity, quantity
- Reward quantity, not quality!
- Breaks (even small ones) between sessions
- Drawing, dammit. This is design!
- Focus on pain points and opportunities

Brainstorming Techniques I

Brainwriting

Each person writes down or sketches the beginning of an idea silently on a piece of paper. This could be as simple as a single word or a shape.

After three minutes, the person passes the paper to his neighbour, who continues the idea. This repeats around the circle until it gets all the way back around to its originator.

Break the rules

Rather than ignore the project's constraints, you list them out and one-by-one proceed to figure out how to break them.

Force fit

Distil the problem down to two words that are in opposition, then put those words together into a phrase. For example, “intense peace.” Then ruminate on what exists in the world that embodies that phrase, then try to apply it to the project for inspiration. Nature and art often work well for this.

Poetry

Reduce the problem down to a haiku or bento poem. Such a small form makes you figure out what are the most important parts of the problem.

***Brainstorming
Techniques II***

Questioning

Start with a very general concept and keep asking two questions: how and why. For example, “We are going to build a social networking site.” Why? “So record collectors can exchange albums.” How? “By uploading their rare albums.” How? Etc.

Swiping

Swiping is stealing the best ideas from another field or domain. It starts by abstracting your problem (“This is about finding something small”) and asking what other products or fields have ways of doing the abstraction.

Laddering

Laddering means either moving “up” to a level of abstraction (“What is this problem an example of?”) or moving “down” to something concrete (“What is an example of this problem?”).

Bizarro World

Pretend you wanted to make the opposite product or the opposite outcome. Invert everything: what is good is bad, what is desirable isn't, etc.

What happens next?

Clustering concepts

- Cluster similar concepts around activities, characteristics, metaphors, etc.
- Name the clusters
- Consider collapsing similar concepts or stringing together concepts
- Do an initial sorting of concepts

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- Cluster similar concepts around activities, characteristics, metaphors, etc.
- Name the clusters
- Consider collapsing similar concepts or stringing together concepts
- Do an initial sorting of concepts
- Evaluate concepts against design principles

Thank you

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