

Bulletin 9

EXTREME BRAINSTORM BRIEF

It is entirely acceptable if students base their projects on common assumptions, and aim to be useful to 'normal' people in a 'normal' context.

But during the design process it is often productive to consider extreme needs, desires and contexts: peripheral users, unusual desires, peripheral situations, and so on.

One reason is that, even if your ultimate design intention is not extreme, to consider extremes will stimulate your imagination.

The other reason is that, if no student considers extremes, a unique opportunity is lost. The mission of a university is to expand the boundaries of its disciplines – with a freedom which, given its inevitable constraints, is not often possible in professional practice. So the mission of our programme is to explore the future potential of interaction design.

This requires experiment: students must imagine, and then test, a hypothesis. And in design, as in science, it is often extreme hypotheses which generate the most significant results and reveal the most unexpected truths. Extreme hypotheses also tend to attract the interest and enthusiasm of the professions, media, and public.

We don't want your projects to be arbitrarily fantastic or subversive – or to avoid normality. But we hope they will be exhilarating, original, thought-provoking, and perhaps disturbing.

This exercise aims to 'kick-start' your design creativity and to consider more extreme hypotheses. You are not expected to develop the result in your final project, although you can if you wish. But it might stimulate your or another team's imagination.

Each design team must:

- 1 Choose 1 of the services proposed at the opportunity definition crit – but not one proposed by any of the team's members
- 2 Choose 1 user group from the following (or brainstorms another minority group): the blind, the ultra-rich, *barboni*, children under 5, Tibetan visitors, girls 9–13, nuns, rock stars, *pentiti*, foreign professors, detectives, lesbians over 60, extraterrestrials, time travellers
- 3 Choose 1 design aim from the following (or brainstorms another non-functional aim): fun, irony, polemic, the pleasure of doing something difficult, the sublime and/or poetic
- 4 In 1 hour, invent a service for your user group and design aim
- 5 In 30 minutes, prepare an informal presentation (paper or projected)
- 6 Display and describes your service to the class.