

Proceedings of NordDesign 2014 Conference

Edited by

Miko Laakso

Kalevi Ekman



Publisher:

Aalto Design Factory

Aalto University

Betonimiehenkuja 5

00076 Aalto

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ISBN 978-1-904670-58-2

ISBN 978-1-904670-59-9

Preface

In the area of innovation, design and product development we quite often seem to know that something works in practice, but might lack understanding on the theoretical foundations. Many of the topical issues related to design, development, and innovation that seem to be regarded as “common knowledge” within the industry, are insufficiently founded from the theoretical perspective. On the other hand, results of academic research are not often efficiently disseminated to the industry practitioners. Lately, it has been argued, that design research has often failed in building a sustainable discourse between research and practice with some even calling for new research paradigms. Lack of research and understanding on some of the crucial topical issues and insufficient connection between the industry and academia are likely to provide poor grounds for developing the tools, methods and approaches in a sustainable manner as well as for the education of future design professionals.

Thus the NordDesign 2014 call for papers was announced for evidence-based academic work on topical issues on design, development, and innovation that strengthen both our theoretical understanding, and the connection between theory and practice.

The 10th biannual NordDesign Conference – Creating Together – took place in Espoo, Finland on 27-29 August 2014. The conference was organized in partnership with Design Society by Aalto University Design Factory and the Department of Engineering Design and Production along with the International Design Business Management Program and the Innovation Management Institute. To celebrate the 10th NordDesign conference, an opportunity was provided to take part to the event at almost exactly the opposite side of the world. Parallel to the main event in Finland, a one-day satellite conference was organized at Swinburne Design Factory, Melbourne, Australia.

In the Introduction of the first NordDesign 1996 Proceedings it was stated: “The lack of a regular, suitably scaled international forum was felt to be clear and thus NordDesign responds to a clearly recognized need. We hope that NordDesign seminars will fill the existing gap between small national seminars and the largest international conferences and thus grow to be a functional forum for international contacts and successful research cooperation.” In 2001 NordDesign was formally linked to the Design Society as the Special Interest Group NordDesign, and today NordDesign is a Design Society endorsed conference.

The Nordic approach to design and product development is based on cooperation between industry and academia. The cooperation between industry, research and education is close and informal. The organizers of NordDesign 2014 see this as a very important advantage in global competition and want to build on this tradition to further advance the cooperation and co-creation between academia and industry.

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The conference is organized by Aalto University Design Factory and The Department of Engineering Design and Production in collaboration with contributors from the International Design Business Management Program and the Innovation Management Institute at Aalto.

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