
PDP

Bas Bakx, s123612

B2.1

Vision

As the owner of my favourite shoe brand Floris van Bommel kindly wrote on the sole of my shoes:

"I like to make nice shoes."

I too like to make nice things, what I don't like is explain why they are nice. While it is valuable to discuss design and its interpretation, I consider a design failed if it doesn't evoke immediate response from its users. This makes it vital for me to keep an open mind to interpretations of my and anyone else's work. I try to look further than a user's preferences; I design to make people realise what they want, not to make what people realise they want. As the late Steve Jobs said:

"You can't just ask customers what they want and then try to give that to them.

By the time you get it built, they'll want something new."

When I create I focus on details and context, any design choice should be justified, it should have a reason behind it, an opinion, a story. I design the same way I would write a book, piece by piece, justified and expressive. This makes it impossible for me to separate form and function, I like to lead a design back to its roots to make it nothing more and nothing less than it should be. This results in an inherent preference for minimalism and artistic properties.

Identity

I don't believe in design fashion. While most certainly there are observable trends I disagree that they should be interpreted as a fundamental factor to design, they just highlight one facet of design that the zeitgeist seems to be most interested in. Design should change the world in every thinkable way, not follow it. When famous designer Dieter Rams was asked about consumer research at Braun he simply answered with:

"Never. We wanted to change the world."

Of course this expression calls the reader to implement some nuances, but at heart it is nothing short of the genius in its simplicity. At the surface it looks so simple, just a sentence, but it means so much more than a literal interpretation.

For me design is much more than an "in and out" thing, good design is timeless by being pure and minimalistic. In being timeless I consider context to be one of the most important factors; I believe an object communicates as much with its environment as with its user. Design has a purpose and should fulfil it, but should never be shaped without reason.

Self-Directed and Continuous Learning

Take responsibility for and give direction to your own personal development, based on a continuous process of self-reflection and out of curiosity for future developments in technology and society.

I consider this one of the most important competencies in this entire study. We are being educated to develop ourselves for future development, making a self-directed mindset vital.

Like every semester this competency will get a lot of attention, whether I'm going to do an individual or group project.

My goal will be to direct myself through another project but with less focus on a four-man group, without losing contact with students who work with the same project description as me. I want to develop my professional attitude by working together with others without being forced to study, ideally finding a real client. The project report should show a tight interaction with other students.

Descriptive and Mathematical Modeling

Being able to create and apply descriptive and mathematical models by using formal and mathematical tools, in order to justify design decisions and support the design of complex, highly dynamic and intelligent systems.

For this competency I have already done a lot in my B1.1 and B1.2. Calculus and physics and modelling were dedicated to it. So was my assignment discrete interaction design.

While this competency has less focus this semester retaking Calculus will again take a lot of time.

To develop DMM I will retake calculus and pass the exam.

Integrating Technology

Being competent in integrating technology means being able to explore, visualise, create and demonstrate innovative concepts and experiences using technology, as well as analysing the technical and economic feasibility of complex designs in which technology is integrated. Moreover, one needs to understand scientific writings and be able to communicate with engineers and researchers of another discipline.

Last semester I learned the importance of creating, I focussed on making iterations of a prototype to quickly develop a feel for what my project will become and what I need to make it successful.

To continue to build upon this competency I wish to create at least two functional prototypes of my project before the end of the semester. I would hate to have the final prototype be the only iteration of a concept. The final prototype should also be a solid working device, maybe not production-ready, but definitely more than MDF, duct-tape, an Arduino and a breadboard.

Ideas and Concepts

Develop visions, innovative ideas and concepts through creativity techniques, experimentations and the translation of research.

I consider this competency amongst my best developed. I love to ideate, to forget about constraints and just let myself go, preferably while others do the same around me. Creating new ideas really does work best in a group setting and while being surrounded by anything inspiring.

I consider myself pretty well developed within this competency, and therefore want to build upon it by including others. I want to play a leading role in brainstorming. Especially including non-id students, in which bachelor college will provide a solution.

Form and Senses

Experience and develop through doing and abstraction, aesthetical (physical) languages that connect thought and interactive form, in order to communicate specific properties of the design concept.

This is a competency very near to my heart, the more I realise what I find important in (industrial) design, the more this competency seems to get relevant.

To develop it I want to create more, I want to be that guy that's always fiddling with stuff and creating cool things out of unexpected materials. I want this competency to change my way of seeing materials around me.

To develop, I am taking the assignment Making/Materials, which will focus on how physical things around us are actually manufactured. I want to learn about, use and reflect on at least 3 radically different manufacturing methods than the ones I'm familiar with.

User Focus and Perspective

Understand human characteristics, goals and needs, the context of use, and create empathy with users throughout the design process. Design user-system interaction for user experiences

This competency had my full attention last semester, I realised my lacking development in it but now I think it has become well embedded in my design thinking.

Even though I think I did some valuable usertests last semester, they were not reliable as a real life healthcare project requires hundreds of users, eliminating all outside variables. I also learned to be critical at in what point of a concept's development period a user test can be useful and will be taking this into consideration.

I want to present do a usertest with the final or near-final prototype of this project and make it into a professional video which can be presented alongside my final project.

Social Cultural Awareness

The focus of our education at ID is on designing intelligent systems, products and related services for social and societal transformation. Therefore, you need to learn to drive the design process from an awareness and understanding of developments in society, envision your designs in society, place the development of systems in a broader perspective, and take position in and evaluate the impact and mediating role of a system, product or service on society

I think I have gotten a fairly decent historical design perspective throughout the past semesters, I know I still have trouble placing my ideas into a true international societal context.

I know I'm going to develop some concepts next year, I want at least one of the elaborated ones to not be focussed on Europeans for once, I want to push my borders, pun intended.

The most straight forward way to develop this competency for me will be to visit the Dutch Design Week, take notes and pictures and reflect on them. But also to visit design and art exhibitions to look for things that inspire me and put what I want to do in words and context.

Designing Business Processes

Bringing new products to users in a global market of a dynamic international industrial context requires knowledge of industrial business processes.

A competency that is very important in order to be successful. I always find it very hard to integrate into a project however.

Next semester I will attend the USE learning line "Technological Entrepreneurship" which will be invaluable.

Next to this I want to set a goal, I want to professionally include a real company into my project this semester.

Design and Research Processes

Master the design process and the research process, and adjust these processes to the demands of the task at hand.

This is a permanently relevant competency. I always enjoy orienting myself in a new subject, though I prefer to limit myself to a limited research period.

I want to centralise the design process in my next project and document it well. My project, as well as the bachelor college course Design will allow me to go through multiple design and research cycles in a single semester.

The only way to develop this competency is by doing it, trying it out and finding out what works best for me. Because of a project, assignments and bachelor college: I will be able to go through many design cycles from start to finish. All I can do is document them and find out what works best for me.

Teamwork and Communication

Work together towards a common goal using all strengths within a team and communicate opinions, ideas, information and results clearly and convincingly.

B2.1 is an individual project so besides the assignments this competency will become less central.

Because I get a lot of inspirations out of others, my challenge will be to never lose contact with other students in my next project. Instead of singling myself out doing, for example, literature research, I can also ask the people closest to me who are the most ready to help for advice. I also want to include at least 2 experts, following the realisation that I cannot know or deal with everything in a project, I need to learn to let go and trust other people to deal with important parts of a project. Instead of driving my own opinion I want to understand other opinions to provide good, valuable and collaborative results.

Study Contract

I did not pass all my bachelor college courses, specifically I did not pass Calculus. It was a very hectic start of a new study and I underestimated the workload of it which caused me to get behind. Even though I had 100% scores on all online tests and good scores on the homework that had to be handed in I ultimately did not get a passing grade on the final exam. Because of this I believe I do have the skills to pass calculus, just not the ability to apply all of them in an exam.

The only thing I can do is try again, retake calculus and relearn all material. I have a lot of motivation to finish calculus, mainly because it might otherwise interfere with the internship I want to do next year.