

Human-Computer Interaction Design

Project 5.B Sustainability & Futuring

Tuesday November 3rd 2009

Eli Blevis, Associate Professor of Informatics
John Hill, Associate Instructor
Heiko Maiwand, Associate Instructor
Kevin Makice, Associate Instructor
Katie O'Donnell, Associate Instructor
Kathleen Surfus, Associate Instructor

Project

The term “Futuring” is due to Tony Fry [see: Fry, T. (2009). *Design Futuring: Sustainability, Ethics, and New Practice*. Oxford, New York: Berg]. It denotes the idea that designing may be understood to be an act that is deeply implicated in the choice of sustainable futures over unsustainable ones. Use the design research you did for Project 5.A to motivate and inspire a new concept related to sustainability and futuring and which considers the use of digital materials and interactivity. You may use the design research of other students also to help inspire your concept, provided only that you properly attribute. Illustrate and explain your concept—there is a fair bit of latitude about how you do this. Note that clarity and production values matter.

Format:

Your project must be presented on a **single landscape mode page in pdf format**, for both the initial rough first iteration and the final form completed project. You may include auxiliary files of other media types, as instructed in class. Upload your work to oncourse, as instructed in class. Be certain to reference all of your sources accurately and completely.

The example on the page that follows gives an idea of what a design research project could look like for the purposes of this class assignment. The example is by no means the most ideal project—yours should not be longer, but it can be more compelling and interesting than the example. **Neither the sketch nor final examples should be taken as best examples.**

DUE Wednesday November 4th no later than 23:59:

An initial rough **SKETCH** first iteration of your ideas for how you will complete this project.

DUE Tuesday November 10th no later than 11:15:

A **FINAL** form completed project.

choices

reusable things
recyclable things

OPPORTUNITY

SPACE:

Consumer Labels for
Origins, Carbon Footprint,
End of Service Options, ...

disposable things

pay-for-disposal systems

hidden

revealed

predetermination



BIGGER LABELS = BETTER CHOICES		
GOVERNMENT REQUIRED WARNINGS Use of this product is harmful to the environment. Consider Alternatives.		
ALTERNATIVES Consider using refillable more durable containers using local water sources. Consider reusing and refilling this container using local water sources.		
	DISTANCE TO THIS MARKET	300 Miles
	DISPOSAL	6 KG CO2 PER KG
	RECYCLE	3.5 KG CO2 PER KG
ALTERNATIVES		
	REUSE & REFILL	
	CONSIDER MORE DURABLE CONTAINERS	
	USE LOCAL WATER SOURCES	

Product Labeling to Promote Transparent and Sustainable Consumer Choices

A clear and transparent system of labeling products may allow for more sustainable choices about our collective future. Such a system would likely need to be federally mandated in order to serve the interests of the public, not unlike warning labels on potentially harmful products such as cigarettes, alcohol, pharmaceuticals, and so forth. The labels could be used on all products, not just harmful ones in order to promote the use of products that promote sustainable lifestyles, as well as discouraging the use of products that induce unsustainable lifestyles.

Digital technologies play a role here in tracking the data to be displayed on these labels. For example, since the distance to market varies depending on the particular market, the labeling on this product needs to vary accordingly. This may be accomplished with a number of different technologies: local printing of labels; e-ink displays when and if such displays become common, reusable, and not harmful in-and-of-themselves; bar-code readers which display the label information on a separate device, and; possibly others.

Primary Attributions

The concept of “Futuring” is due to **Tony Fry**: Fry, T. (2009). **Design Futuring: Sustainability, Ethics, and New Practice**. Oxford, New York: Berg.

The idea of clearer labeling is inspired in part by a workshop position paper: [Visible Sustainability: Carbon Label 2.0](http://elainehuang.com/CHI-2009/position-papers.html). **Daniela Busse, Wenbo Wang** (SAP Labs) presented at CHI 2009: <http://elainehuang.com/CHI-2009/position-papers.html> @ 11.2.09 and see also: Huang, E. M., Blevis, E., Mankoff, J., Nathan, L. P., and Tomlinson, B. 2009. Defining the role of HCI in the challenges of sustainability. In *Proceedings of the 27th international Conference Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (Boston, MA, USA, April 04 - 09, 2009). CHI EA '09. ACM, New York, NY, 4827-4830. DOI= <http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/1520340.1520751>

Secondary Attributions

The figures for CO2 emissions of disposal and recycling of plastics come from here: <http://timeforchange.org/plastic-bags-and-plastic-bottles-CO2-emissions> @ 11.2.09

Some very compelling photographs about the effects of products like plastic bottles are here: <http://www.chrisjordan.com/> @ 11.2.09