dashboard
User Guide

dashboard

involvement

DIY   ASSIST   CO-CREATE   MENU   PRESCRIBE

form

Communication   Environment

Product   Service   System

intention

Social   Ecological   Economic

There are no boundaries. Any more.

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About us

Mark Stevens is a writer, designer and researcher. In his professional career, he has worked across communications disciplines and has developed projects with, amongst others, IDEO, Interbrand and McCann Advertising.

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Acknowledgements

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Lots of gratitude goes out to our gorgeous Dashboard models: the brilliant engineer and designer **Krista Palen** and architect supremo **Karl Robert Johnson**. We are also very grateful to Toronto's Type Books, Swipe Books and the Drake Hotel. And finally a thank you to the rest of the 2007-2008 Institute Without Boundaries team. It wouldn't have been possible anywhere else.

About the Dashboard

The Design Dashboard was created at the Institute Without Boundaries in 2008. It was used to navigate a multifaceted project commissioned by the Government of Costa Rica. Asked to create models for the development of sustainable communities in the rapidly developing province of Guanacaste, the Dashboard provided a framework to address multiple clients and different levels of interaction, while demonstrating sensitivity to local cultures and communities. It is now being released to help designers (and others) tackle complex problems around the world.

About the Institute Without Boundaries

The Institute Without Boundaries was founded in 2003 by the School of Design at George Brown College, Toronto. It is a graduate program that emphasizes collaborative design in a studio environment. Each year a small group of students are selected to work together on real problems with real clients. With diverse backgrounds in design, the arts, science and business, they collaborate to research, design and realize social and environmental projects.

The Institute was launched as part of the **Massive Change** initiative. Developed with Bruce Mau Design, Massive Change explored design's potential to affect positive change globally. The project became a highly successful exhibition and bestselling book.

www.institutewithoutboundaries.com

Transparency. Co-creation. Undesign. Sustainable
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Biomimicary. Re-design. Emotional design. Desi
Democratic design. Snobjects. Usability. Quiet de
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behaviour. Exfomation design. Generalists. Design
Command design. Virtual design. Communication
perience design. Product design. Environmental
researcher. Service design. Storytelling. Spimes.

INTRODUCTION

IT'S THE NEW PLURALISM. THESE DAYS, DESIGN IS LIKE LOVE AND THE WEATHER: IT'S MANY DIFFERENT THINGS. AND THIS CAN BE DISCONCERTING. DIY DESIGN THREATENS TO SIDELINE THE PROFESSIONALS. USER AND CLIENT DEMANDS FOR CO-CREATION, AND A SEAT AT THE DRAFTING BOARD, REQUIRE VERY DIFFERENT SKILLS. AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY MAKES EVERYTHING LOOK SO DAMN EASY. EVERYONE'S A DESIGNER AND THEREFORE EQUAL EXCEPT FOR THE PROFESSIONALS WHO HAVE A HOST OF NEW EXPECTATIONS.

IT DIDN'T HAPPEN A MOMENT TOO SOON.

As the world's problems become ever more complex, there's a pressing need for new thinking. Global challenges cannot be solved by individuals acting alone. New interactions, processes and forms of co-operation are required.

This means taking down the boundaries between disciplines and removing the obstacles between d esigners and other professions. So let's celebrate the zeitgeist! As design mutates and expands, and as the boundaries tumble down, there's just more territory to explore and greater possibility than ever before. You just need a map and maybe a compass.

This publication is all about one such navigational aid: the Dashboard. To reflect our moment of shifting and morphing practices, it abandons hierarchies and pursues a system of possibility. It maps the territory but you still have to choose a path.

To help your exploration, this user guide provides an introduction to the Dashboard and its components. First familiarize yourself with the controls before taking the tutorial at the end of the manual. Bon voyage!

DESIGN DASHBOARD

THE DASHBOARD IS A PHYSICAL MANIFESTATION OF A DESIGN THEORY. CREATED AT THE INSTITUTE WITHOUT BOUNDARIES TO NEGOTIATE COMPLEX REAL-WORLD PROJECTS, IT IS BOTH A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND A PRACTICAL TOOL FOR THE CREATION OF DESIGN. AND LIKE ANY GOOD TECHNOLOGY, IT CAN BE USED IN MULTIPLE WAYS. IT CAN HELP CLASSIFY, REVISE AND GENERATE DESIGNS. THE DASHBOARD DEFINES DESIGN SPACE BUT DOESN'T GIVE DIRECTIONS. SO FIX YOUR POSITION, PICK A DESTINATION AND GO FOR A WANDER.

Pocket-sized Dashboard ensures that inspiration is always within reach.

GETTING STARTED

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE ACQUISITION OF YOUR NEW DASHBOARD 1.0.6. YOU ARE ABOUT TO ENTER A WORLD OF DESIGN CHALLENGES. TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR DASHBOARD, PLEASE READ THIS GUIDE TO UNDERSTAND THIS PRODUCT'S FEATURES AND CAPABILITIES.

Important notice

To avoid injury, read all operating instructions in this guide and safety information. Customer support is available at thedesigndashboard.com

Activating the Dashboard

The Dashboard does not require batteries or mains electricity. In addition you do not need a service provider or payment plan. No payments are required. The Dashboard is compatible with all existing design technology and software. There is no warrantee.

Release notes: Dashboard 1.0.6

This is a beta version. It is being released to the design community for testing and revision. Future releases will have more widgets, programs, indicators and functionality. See Customer Support at: thedesigndashboard.com for updates.

User

The Dashboard requires no specialized knowledge and is suitable for all ages.

About the Dashboard

The Dashboard defines design space. It runs different tools or applications that enable you to navigate complex design problems. These applications can be used singly or in combination. By interacting with the Dashboard and running the different applications (three included with this entry level model), projects transform and new possibilities will present themselves.

Dashboard at a glance
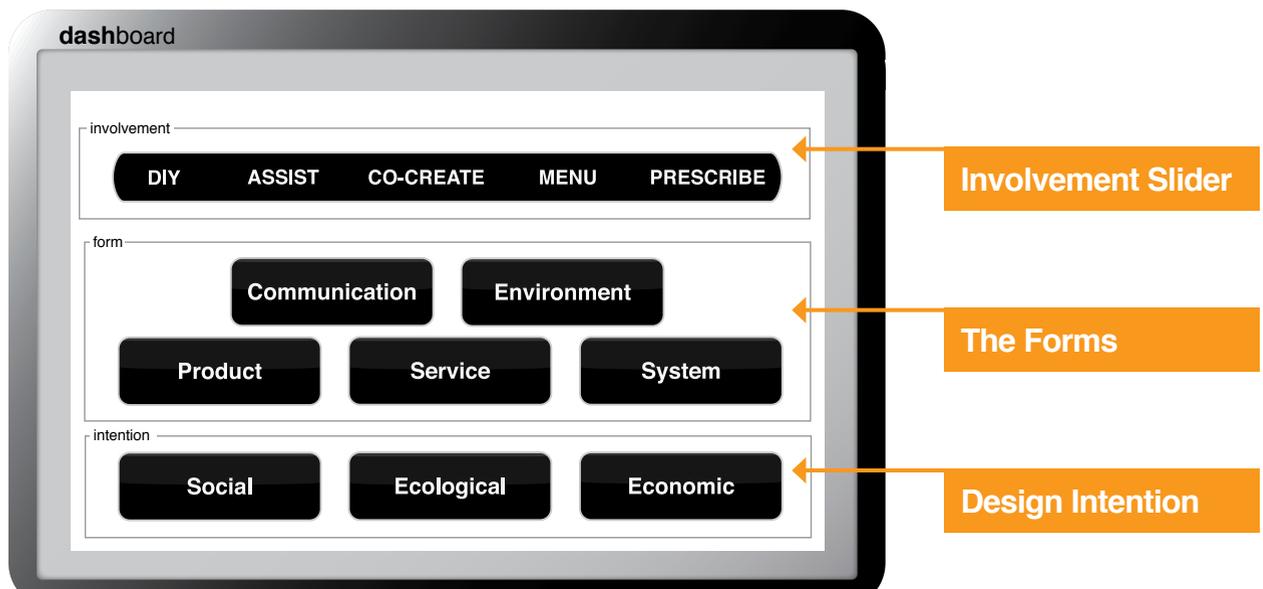
Dashboard applications

The following applications are available with the Dashboard:

|	
The Involvement Slider	Collaborate on different levels and devise appropriate design processes.
The Forms	Exceed design briefs by introducing unexpected design domains. Combine domains into powerful coalitions.
The Intention	Tackle complex problems. Add a new focus to an existing project.

INVOLVEMENT SLIDER

About the Involvement Slider

The Involvement Slider helps make a decision about how you are going to work. Each of the five positions on the Slider represents a different kind of interaction with the client/user. It works as a graduated scale, starting with DIY, in which the user designs without any direction, all the way to the prescribed position in which a complete solution is prepared. No position is inherently correct, they are simply different and more or less applicable depending on the context.
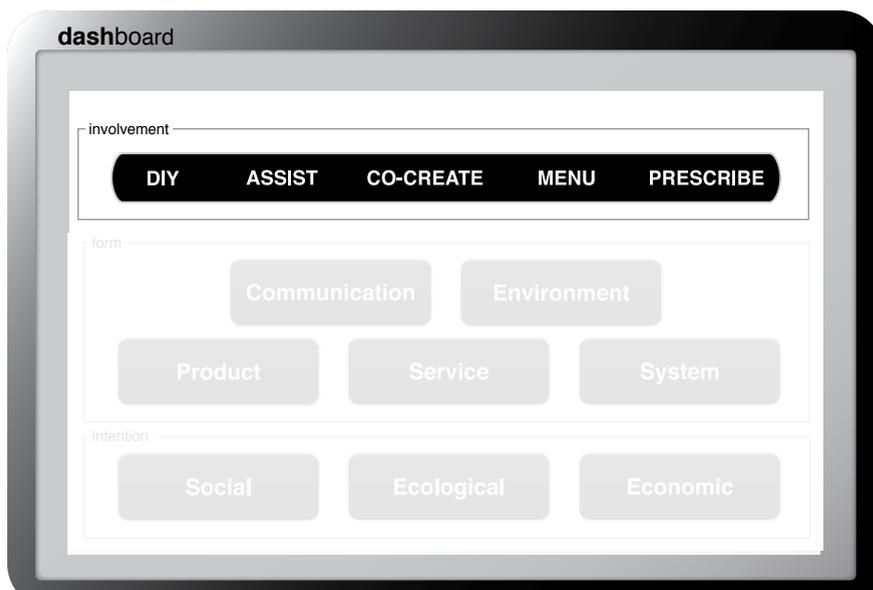

Classify, revise and generate designs with the Involvement Slider application.

Slider settings

The following positions are available on the Slider:

DIY	The user designs their own solutions.
Assist	The designer acts as a consultant, offering tools, ideas and advice.
Co-create	The user and designer create a system/forum in which both parties design together.
Menu	The designer provides options for the user to choose between.
Prescribe	The designer provides a complete solution.
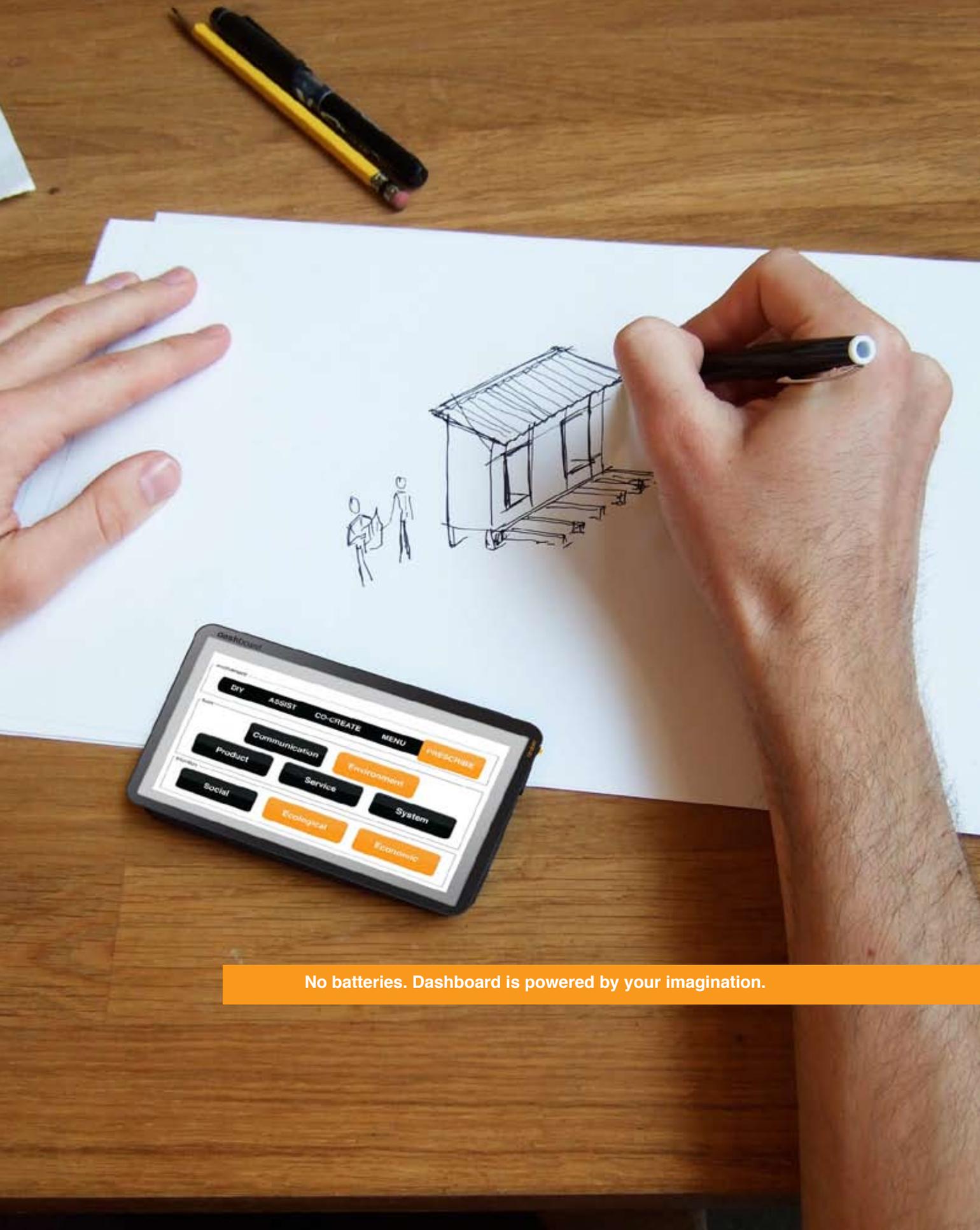
No batteries. Dashboard is powered by your imagination.

Using the Slider

The Slider enables the classification, revision and generation of designs. It is also a tool for the designer and client to reach agreement over a project's scope and process.

Classification
Use the Slider to understand the processes embodied in design solutions. Try to identify your own habitual positions as the first step to new explorations. Do you have a default setting in your work?

Revision
Use the Slider to revise established designs. By moving projects to a different point on the scale, they can transform entirely. Changing the Slider position for established products or services could re-energize and increase their reach and impact.

Generation
When devising new projects, use the Slider as a tool to generate ideas. Consider how an idea might change when moved to a new position. How would the form or function differ when working in an Assist or in Prescribed mode? How would the scale of a project change by making it a co-creation? Does it shrink or expand?

Scope
The Slider helps define and explore design processes. It is recommended that the designer and client use the Slider together and consider each different mode and the pros and cons that result. By considering the context, the appropriate position on the Slider can be found and a process agreed with the client.

Choosing the Prescribe position, for example, means that the designer needs to be extremely well informed about the problem. It is likely that a long research phase is therefore required for a successful outcome. Choosing a Co-create process might reduce research time but puts greater responsibility on the client to continually inform the design with contextual knowledge.

There are infinite possibilities for design processes, the Slider simply helps the designer understand what kind of behaviour might be appropriate and helps the client have clear expectations.

Select the appropriate Slider position.

How to act

Each position on the Slider represents a different kind of behaviour:

DIY	Observe and learn. Pay close attention to DIY designs and see how they might influence your work. You can also start in DIY mode and then move to another Slider position and actively design.
Assist	Know your place and be helpful. Working in Assist position means acting like a consultant or providing tools, so don't try to take control of a project but do share your experience and ideas.
Co-create	Respect your colleagues. This is a design process of equals. Co-creation requires sensitivity and diplomatic skills. You need to listen and keep each other informed at all times.
Menu	Be productive. You need to provide a range of solutions that represent a real choice for the user.
Prescribe	Know your facts. Designing without direct involvement requires a lot of upfront research.

Advanced users

Multi-position Projects
In a long-term relationship between a designer and client, it is likely that different slider positions are required for different projects. Knowing this demonstrates flexibilty and increases your value to the client. It is also possible to switch positions mid-process and discuss why this was necessary. Perhaps the designer was brought in to Assist and later is asked to operate as a Co-create. It's also possible to move projects along the Slider as it progresses, moving from position to position to achieve an appropriate level of interaction and resulting in a consequent change of behaviour.

Slider specifications

DIY

DIY design is the original mode of design. It existed before design became a profession and remains prevalent in all cultures today. So, despite an increased focus on this position, DIY design isn't a new threat to the design profession but a renewable source of inspiration that can be tapped.

DIY design exists in both the global and local cultures. On a local level, DIY is expressed through the craft traditions and the need to improvise solutions that are inexpensive and appropriate. It can articulate a simple functionalism or intricate decorative patterns of cultural value. These have often evolved gradually, with slow, deliberate changes that ensured they were relevant and appropriate to their context.

Globally, the rise of digital technology has made everyone a designer. Now anyone with a computer and the right software can produce posters, newsletters and websites that get the job done. And new consumer-friendly software and manufacturing technology will increasingly enable everyone to be a product designer or even a architect.

Through DIY design, the local and global cultures often find a way to negotiate. This can be a customization of mass-produced goods or a reuse of materials into new forms that are more appropriate to local needs, making this mode of design arguably sustainable. DIY design also offers other advantages, providing a sense of ownership that might be less pronounced in the other Slider positions, a sense of personal achievement in a successful design, and, because the components and processes are understood, it can easily be re-designed and improved for changing conditions.

So while DIY design might be disconcerting to professionals, instead of marginalizing these developments, capitalize on them. A close study of DIY design and its advantages for users can enrich your own practice. Ignoring it won't make it go away.

Assist

Operating in Assist mode retains many advantages of DIY design but allows for engagement in the design process. You need to maintain the sense of ownership and understanding that DIY design gives the client/user, while providing ideas, tools, advice and direction. It's a difficult balance. There is a danger that, in your eagerness to generate a good result, you'll misunderstand your role and attempt to take control. Designers working in the Assist position need to be constantly aware of their consultant role and ensure that their intervention is moving the project towards the goals of their collaborators, not their own agenda. A good way to operate as an Assist is to provide tools that help others design.

The Dashboard and its applications are one example of such a design tool. This approach enables involvement without control and offers the secondary advantage that you can study how the tool is used and adapted, making possible refinement and revision. The designer also has a useful role to play as educator in Assist mode and can provide educational workshops that empower others to design.

Co-create

True co-creation is rare. Much of what is currently described as co-creation is better understood as a more advanced form of market research, in which people can contribute ideas to an online suggestion box, participate in competitions or provide advice as a 'super user'. In each case, ideas are then filtered and new products and services can be created. While the benefits of this are clear, it is not true co-creation as the interaction is very limited. Neither is co-creation a form of customization, another major trend. With customization, users can combine pre-prepared elements to better meet their needs or enable personal expression. Again, there is no significant interaction.

From a design perspective, the designer and user/client are equal partners in Co-create mode. True co-creation is a collaboration. It is more like the co-creation seen in improvisational theatre in which the actors respond to each other's ideas and direction, building on momentum to arrive at unexpected places together.

A major benefit of working in Co-create mode is that the user/client can provide a great deal of contextual knowledge. This can shorten or remove the time required for research and ensure that the design concepts can be constantly related back to the real situation. Operating in Co-create mode (particularly when the participants are unfamiliar with each other) requires a clear process and agreed set of 'rules'. Both parties must understand what is expected and who has responsibility for which elements.

Menu

A menu can mean more than making a single choice. It can explore a range of options for different individuals, times, places, desires and needs. The Menu position is useful when there is insufficient information or when there are different needs to handle within a single design problem. It can therefore both be a series of solutions from which the client picks the most appropriate or a system in which different needs are being met.

Developing designs in Menu mode often allows for some forms of customization. IKEA furniture is one example of a limited form of customization though menu, as it offers the user different combinations of colours and finishes to the same product. A more advanced form would perhaps link the Menu and DIY positions (see Advanced Users) and enable the users to alter the product themselves.

The Menu position can also be useful in a design process. Offering clients a menu of options early in a design process helps to set scope and is a useful starting point before developing the design in another Slider position (see Advanced Users).

Prescribe

A prescribed solution is the default position for many designers. Although client/user contact is commonly built into any Prescribe process through research, briefing and reviews, it is the designer who drives the project and develops a single solution.

The Prescribe position is invaluable when specialized or technical knowledge is required. It is likely that some projects can only be successful in Prescribe mode. While the layman may have a feel for graphics or a user interface, they will usually lack the knowledge to be a useful participant in a major engineering or architectural project. Pursuing such projects through another Slider position could be detrimental or even hazardous.

The potential pitfalls to the Prescribe position are misunderstandings resulting from a poor initial briefing or bad communication between designer and client. Incorrect assumptions can snowball and become magnified in a final design. You should also note that the prescribed approach requires a deep practical expertise in one of the Domains (see below), a definite direction and an ability to see a potential end-state.Yet if you get it right, you have satisfaction of knowing it was all you.

THE FORMS

About the Forms

The Forms application helps decide what you are going to produce. It categorizes designs into products: services, systems, environments and communications. Many designs will clearly fit a single category though often they occupy multiple domains simultaneously.

Product: a physical or virtual object designed to meet a specific need, often mass produced.

Communication: a message embodied in digital or physical form for the purpose of dissemination.

Environment: a physical or virtual space.

System: a set of components forming a unified whole through protocols and relations.

Service: an activity or institution of exchange designed to produce results beneficial to the recipient.

dashboard

involvement

DIY   ASSIST   CO-CREATE   MENU   PRESCRIBE

form

Communication   Environment

Product   Service   System

intention

Social   Ecological   Economic

Using the Forms

The Forms enable the classification, revision and generation of designs. It is also a tool for the designer and client to reach agreement over a project's scope.

Classification
Use the Forms application to analyse the complexity of any design solution. How many Form indicators does it light up? Try to identify your own personal default Form(s) and consider how you might extend your reach.

Revision
Use the Forms to revise established designs. By pressing additional Form buttons, can you re-energize designs and increase their reach and impact?

Generation
Use the Forms application to generate ideas. Consider how a problem might be tackled though a non-traditional Form or what happens when multiple Forms engage simultaneously. Could a communication actually be better as a product or a system? Could a system be best supported though an environment?

Scope
Use the Form application to define and explore a project's scope with the client. Each Form can be then considered against the context and the required result, leading to a more creative open discussion.

Tranform and imagine designs by simply selecting different Forms.

Multi-form design

Pressing different Form buttons generates powerful coalitions of ideas. Some of the most successful recent designs are multi-Form; an approach that has built paradigm-shifting businesses. Just think about the other Forms that Apple Computer's products engage. Or how a company like Google might ultimately operate across all the Forms.

Multi-form design is something that non-commercial design should study with interest. Using the Dashboard charities could consider why they tend to restrict themselves to Communiation when the other Forms might extend their reach and effectiveness. As it's been repeatedly demonstrated in the commerical world that multi-Form design has distinct advantages, perhaps it time for the non-profit world to explore its potential? It's certainly something that the Dashboard designers are keen to see and is made possible through the Design Intention application included in Dashboard 1.0.6 (see below).

	Communication	Environment	Product	Service	System
iPod			✓	✓	✓
NikePlus		✓	✓	✓	✓
Star Wars	✓	✓	✓		✓
Google			✓	✓	✓
YouTube		✓		✓	✓
Camper		✓	✓		

Form specifications
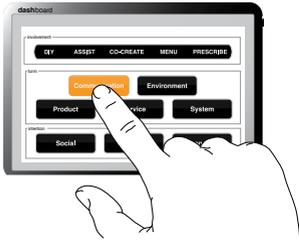
Communication

All designs, to some extent, can be understood as a piece of communication. All products, services and systems communicate to some extent by generating an emotional response. It's a fine and increasingly blurred line between Communication and other Forms. Yet there is a difference between the sensuous curve of a piece of consumer electronics and an overt communication like a movie or a poster for a rock show.

Working with the Communication Form requires being sensitive to these subtle differences. It's necessary to consider how a design might become a formal piece of communication such as a book or presentation, while being aware of the potential for other expressions made possible though a careful consideration of factors such as shape, colour, texture, language and mood.
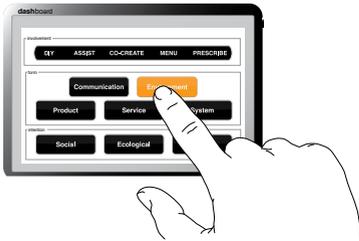
Environment

Established professions like architects, acoustical engineers, landscape architects, urban planners, lighting and exhibition designers are traditionally thought to own the Environment Form. Recently, however, the development of an experience economy has introduced new players, expectations and possibilities.

A consumer desire for more fulfilling experiences and a business interest in extending a brand experience is being reflected in new commercial spaces that express ideas, produce emotion and evoke memories. As people expect more from a brand than just a product, multidisciplinary teams are formed to create emotionally rich environments. The Prada Epicenter in New York, for example, was developed by more than 20 different companies led by Rem Koolhaas' Office for Metropolitan Architecture.

The Environmental Domain is simultaneously being extended through information technology and a desire for interaction. New digital immersive experiences, like web-based video games and online social experiences like Second Life, move environments beyond interior and exterior spaces and into virtual worlds.
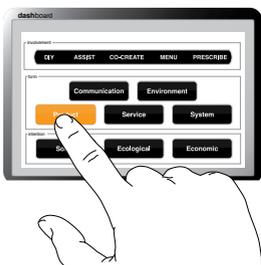
Product

As design mutates and transforms, product design isn't being left behind. The potential for rapid prototyping machines to develop into decentralized and local manufacturing centres promises a new level of product customization. At the same time, the field is being swept by concerns about environmental impact. Products are now not only expected to meet user requirements but societal concerns over recycling and safe disposal.

Ubiquitous computing and the connection of the physical objects through digital networks, mean that those working in the Product Form are increasingly asked to bridge the visceral and the virtual. Objects communicate with one another and the user to a greater extent than

ever before, and products are expected to be refreshed through automatic updates from the manufacturer. Even the most physical of products will live digital lives through RFID tagging and online communities and interest groups that build up around them. Coping with these developments and demands will move the designer into other Forms like Service and System.

Service

The increasing relevance of the service sector in developed economies has driven an increased focus on service design. Now each component of service design – planning, organization, infrastructure, communication and materials – is carefully considered and constantly refined. Service design together with system design (see below) is moving to the forefront of design. This will only increase, driven by a trend for cross-disciplinary collaboration and technological convergence, in which products are no longer isolated elements but linked by a network of services and experiences.

Learning from early examples like Kodak, which supported its film business with user-friendly cameras and film processing services, new businesses increasingly mix service, system and product design. Famously, by combining the iPod with the iTunes music store, Apple Computer provided its customers with a user-friendly experience and created two elements of a business that supported one another. Other sectors are keen to follow and are looking to designers to show the way.
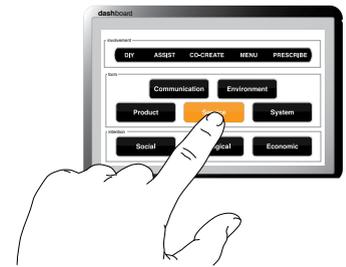
System

System design is found everywhere from global financial businesses like Visa International to the operating systems that run your computer. Everything seems to use increasingly complex systems and understanding and activating systems provide enormous opportunities for designers.

As with the Service mode, the System button is increasingly being selected together with other domains. Environments, products and communications are all being joined though systems to expand their reach and effectiveness and meet new user demands. Where one goes others follow, which makes those expert in systems design increasingly in demand.

While everyone suddenly seems to be hitting the System button, there are many precedents for system interaction with other Forms that repay careful study. Just think about the utility of a wristwatch without the system of time to give it meaning, or the how the system of railway timetables enables efficient transportation, or how much the fashion industry depends on a system of standard sizes.
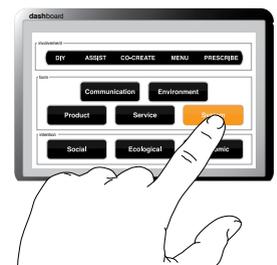
Advanced users

Once a design is established that works across Forms, it is possible to set different balances. You can first decide how many of the Forms should be switched on.

Star Wars is an interesting example because it already occupies most Forms, leaving only the Service Form to activate. So if George Lucas was to press the Service button, perhaps it results in a branded search engine. Rather than being asked whether you "feel lucky", as with Google, perhaps Yoda tells you to "use the force."

Dashboard 1.0.6 lets you set the level for each Form. So, staying with the Star Wars example, you might want to increase the Service Form level for Star Wars slightly, perhaps resulting a Star Wars credit card. Increase it still further and you have a whole range of Star Wars financial services from banking to insurance.

Adjusting the levels in this way allows for experimentation over time. This can either be a theoretical exploration, enabling you to imagine new incarnations of a design or it can drive implementation.

Once a design is revised by setting new Form levels, it can be introduced into the marketplace. If successful at these levels, it can remain in this setting or the volume can be turned up still higher. If it fails, it can be returned to its original position. Operating the Dashboard in this way lets you experiment and seek futher potential in any design whether it is Star Wars, a water purifier or novel organizational structure.
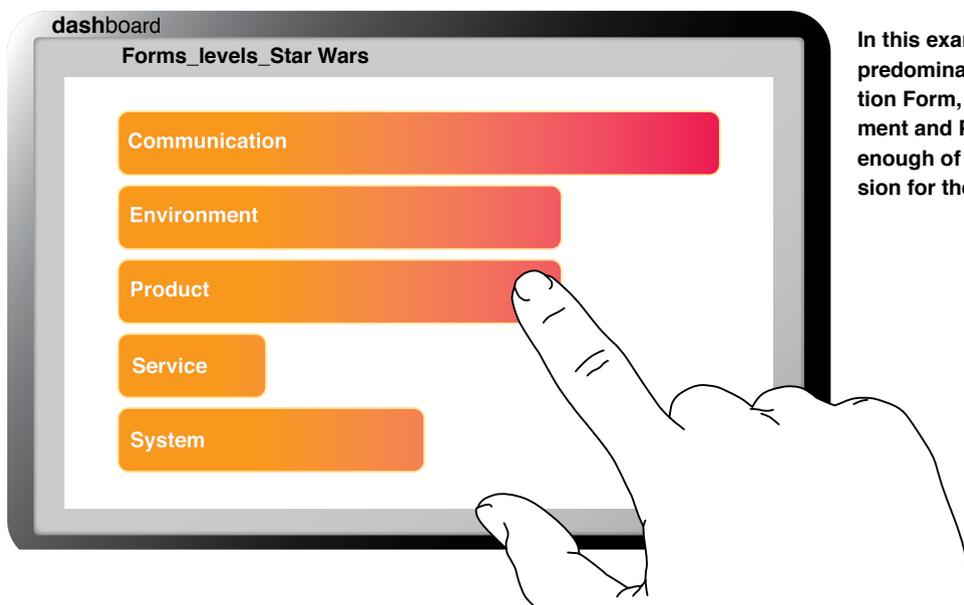
In this example, Star Wars remains predominantly in the Communication Form, supported by the Environment and Product Forms, while being enough of a System to ensure cohesion for the different elements.

DESIGN INTENTION

About the Intention application

There are three Intention modes available with Dashboard 1.0.6: Social, Ecological and Economic. All designs can be categorized though these three modes. Setting the Intentions lets you decide where your design will have inpact.

Social: forms of design intended to produce social interaction or enrich social experience.

Ecological: design intended to produce a positive impact on the environment.

Economic: design intended to produce an economic result.

dashboard

Forms_levels_Star Wars

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form

Communication   Environment

Product   Service   System

intention

| Social | Ecological | Economic |

Using the Intention application

The Intentions enable the classification, revision and generation of designs. It is also a tool for the designer and client to reach agreement over a project's scope.

Classification
While all designs will likely result in social, ecological and economic impacts, the Dashboard default setting is to classify through intention. In-house testing showed that most designs have their Intention set to produce economic impact, with social and ecological consequences an unintended byproduct, leaving plenty of room for designers to engage with complex ecological and social issues.

Revision
The Intention application offers the potential to reduce the environmental and social impact of existing designs. Consider how deliberately selecting the Ecological button in a product design might alter its nature or how a system be transformed via the Social button. In the UK, for example, training was provided by telecommunications companies for elderly people to use the SMS messaging system in mobile phones. While this clearly had economic potential, it was instigated to connect the older generation with young people familiar with this technology.

Generation
Using the Intention application early in the design process is the best way to achieve beneficial social and ecological results. While most design challenges are economic in nature, it is always worth considering the consequences of engaging the social and ecological modes. It might result in a paradigm-shifting design.

In a similar way, when working in Social or Ecological mode, it may be valuable to engage the economic mode. This might generate a result that is self-funding or more acceptable to a world where value is usually measured in profit.

Scope
The Intentions enable designers to have a conversation with a client/user on the consequences of any design project. Together they can try to predict any negative social or environmental impacts early and include their reduction or elimination in the design brief. Businesses in particular are often keen to generate positive publicity over these issues but, because they rarely are central to the business model, find it hard to implement. The Intention application provides the potential to include these as an integral part of any design at the outset.
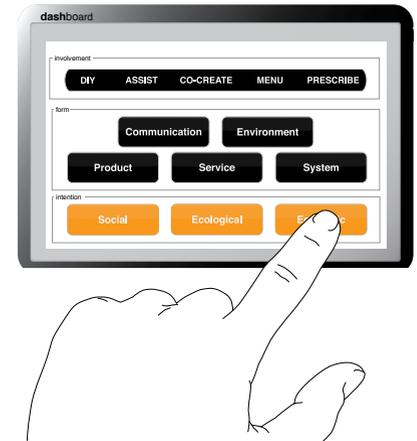
Select the appropriate Focus indicator.

Intention specifications

Social

Social design means many different things but the default setting for the Dashboard is the design of the social world. You can use the Dashboard to preserve, reinforce and adapt social structures. The Dashboard can also be used to create social structures where they don't already exist. Social design applies to the creation of organizational hierarchies, looser social groupings like bookclubs and more commercial enterprises like Facebook.
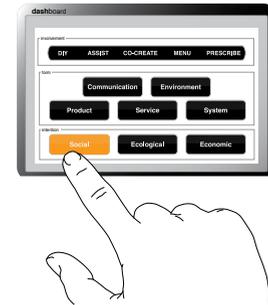
Ecological

Ecological design encompases traditional design activity in the natural world like landscape architecture but increasingly addresses how design is part of a larger ecological system. The necessity of sustainable design is demanding new skills and understanding from designers. Selecting the Ecological button requires designers to address this but also also take you further, towards regenerative design in which we seek to correct past environmental mistakes.
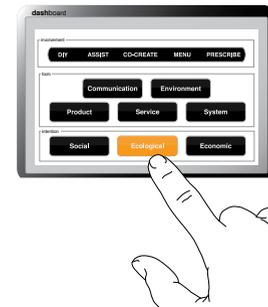
Economic

Most designs today are economic in nature. They are expected to both perform a function and produce a profit for the manufacturer. Unlike the other Intention options, the Economic is increasingly harder to select on its own. Businesses have already had to address social questions over their global manufacturing model in the 1990s and now have to consider Ecological questions as well. Increasingly it seems that selecting the Economic Intention button requires automatically selecting the other options. This functionality may be included in future versions of the Dashboard but right now, we leave it up to your conscience.
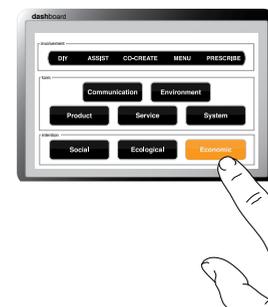
Advanced users

Setting Intention levels

In the same way as with the Form application, it is possible to set different levels for the three Intention modes. This makes it possible to gradually introduce a social or ecological focus into a design. This function is useful in the business world, where companies may be nervous about radically transforming their business model overnight. If successful, the volume can increase over time, potentially resulting in design solutions that might balance the three Intention modes.

Set the Intention level to a mid-point to achive environmental sustainability.

dashboard
Intention_levels

Social
Ecological
Economic
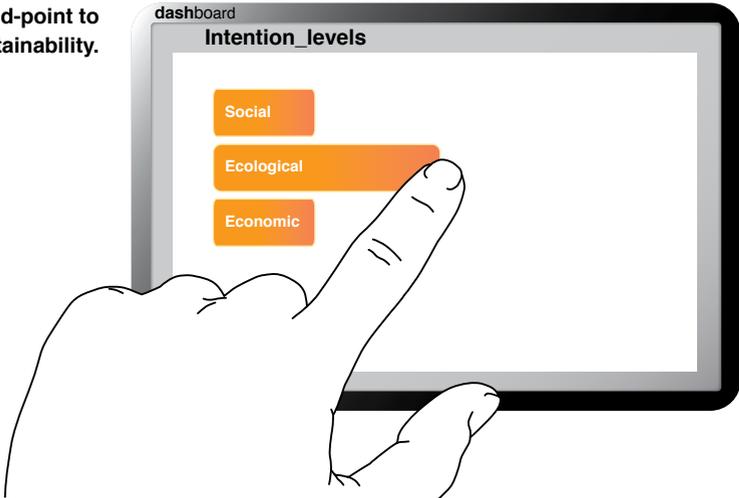
Increasing the Ecological Intention balance can take design beyond sustainability towards design that makes a positive impact on the environment.

dashboard
Intention_levels

Social
Ecological
Economic
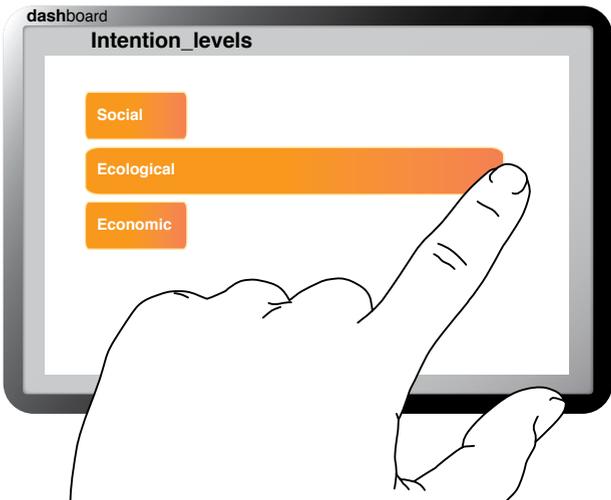
DASHBOARD ADVANCED USERS

Running multiple applications

The different applications can be run independently but the Dashboard becomes a more powerful tool when they are run simultaneously. Setting the Interaction, Form and Intention provides a complete design solution.

Once you have selected the desired options in the different applications, you can then either exercise your creativity on the restrictions you have just imposed on yourself or consider what might change by selecting additional options.

The Dashboard is a very powerful tool when dealing with design prescendents. Often you will be asked to improve on an existing design and the Dashboard enables you to quickly consider many options and often make more fundamental changes. First classify the existing design and engage other options. You will find that designs can transform completely in this way. Transforming existing designs is also a good way to get familiar with the Dashboard and is explored in greater detail in the Tutorial (see below).

Automatic creativity

Dashboard 1.0.6 comes with a new feature: the randomizer button. When creativity is low, simply select the randomizer to automatically generate positions on the Dashboard and then consider what this might be. If you don't like the results, press again. During in-house testing this was shown to be a useful brainstorming tool and a useful warm up exercise.
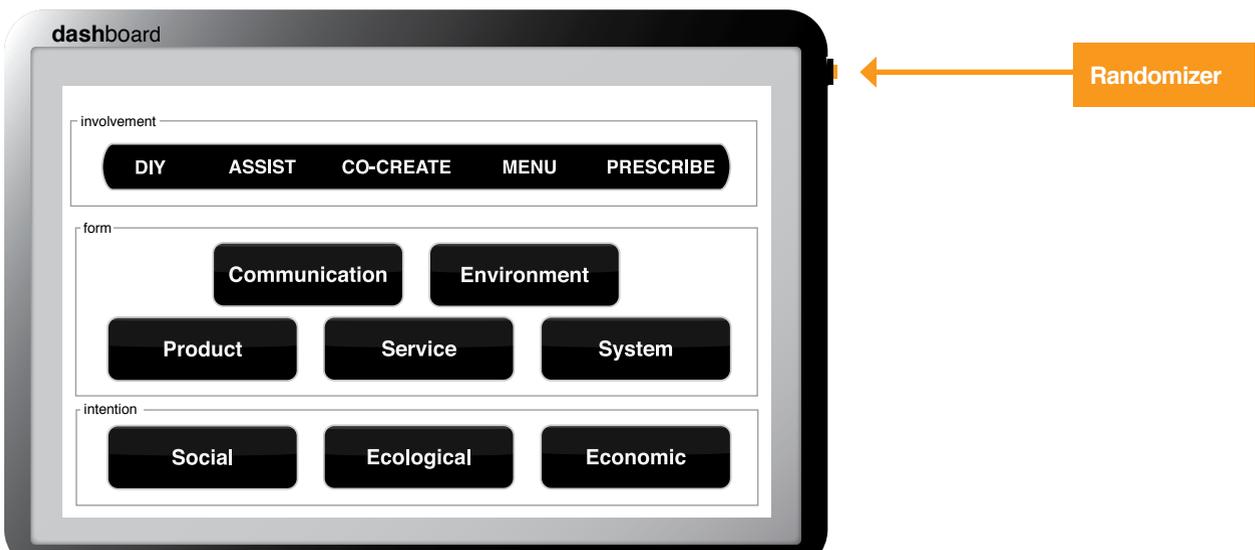
TUTORIAL

See the Dashboard in action as we explore its transformative power on well-known designs.

1. CAFE

Classify the design

The cafe is central to social life. It comes in a multitude of forms, from the grungy coffee bar populated by youthful folks with shiny laptops to sophisticated places with sharp lines and uniformed baristas that are suitable for high-powered business meetings. Yet whatever apparent outward form it takes, the Dashboard can uncover a structural uniformity:
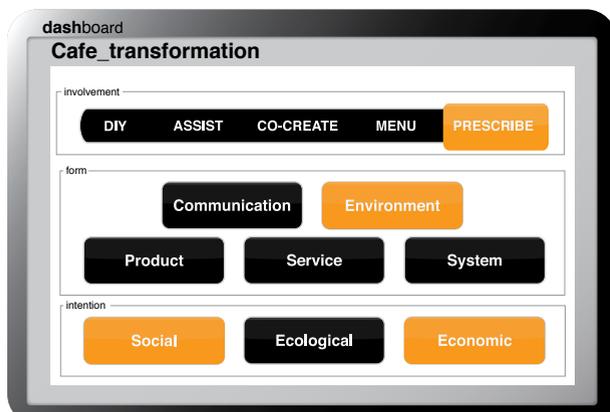
Take your Dashbaord and classify the cafe as shown above.

Transform the design

Once this underlying structure is laid bare, you can use the Dashboard to make a fundamental re-design. This will be more than any cosmetic re-design that updates the look and feel. It can change everything. So now select the Communication button from the Form application.
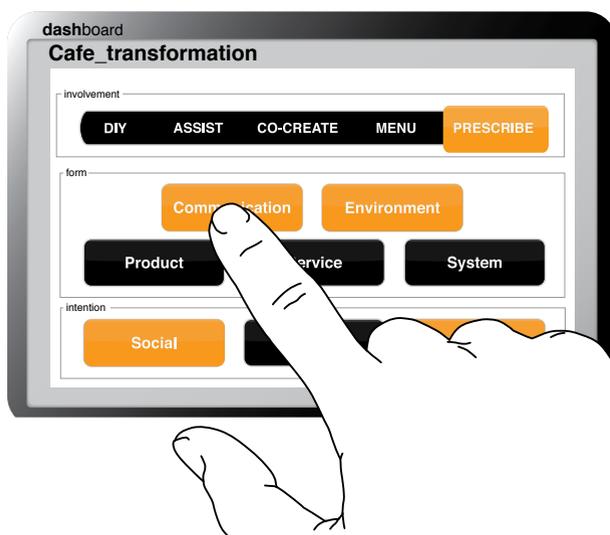
Select Communication Form.

Imagine the result: Free Cafe

The cafe offers free branded goods to customers along with free coffee and internet.

In this example the cafe has been transformed into a forum for branded goods. The concept is that everything offered in the cafe is free and the customers are used as a test market for new goods.

Everything in the cafe would be free: the coffee, the wireless internet and all kinds of products provided by marketeers eager to communicate to a trendy urban demographic. The menu would therefore change all the time as new products are tested and those that were sucessfull become available for purchase elsewhere.

Should this concept offend your environmental and social sensibilities, you can turn up the volume on the Social Intention and engage the ecological function. How would the cafe transform again? The Dashboard points in many directions, you choose the path.
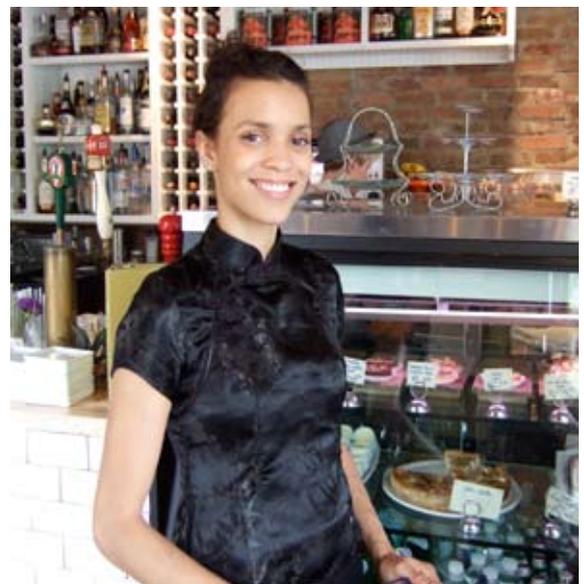

"Today's specials are a plankton krill sea burger, a cordon bleu breaded chicken creamsicle and a guilt-free soyzbitute double latte sweetened with carrot sugar."

Classify the design

What does every designer need apart from the Dashboard? That's right, a pocket notebook. Already available in a multitude of desirable forms, how could it possibly be transformed? We'll start by classifying the its basic design as shown below.
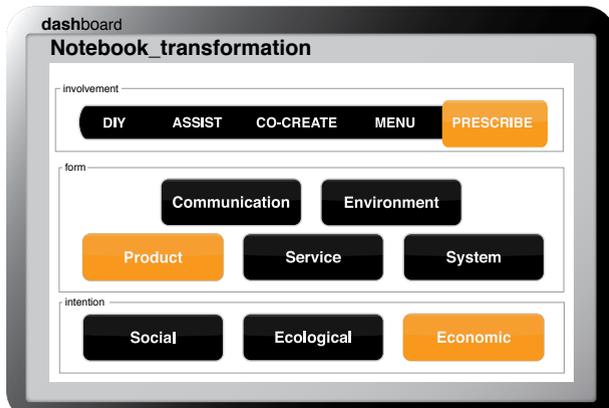
Transform the design

By moving the Involvement Slider down to Co-create and engaging the Service and System functions, we imagined a helping hand from a notebook manufacturer for designers who missed a drawing class or two.

Select Service Form.
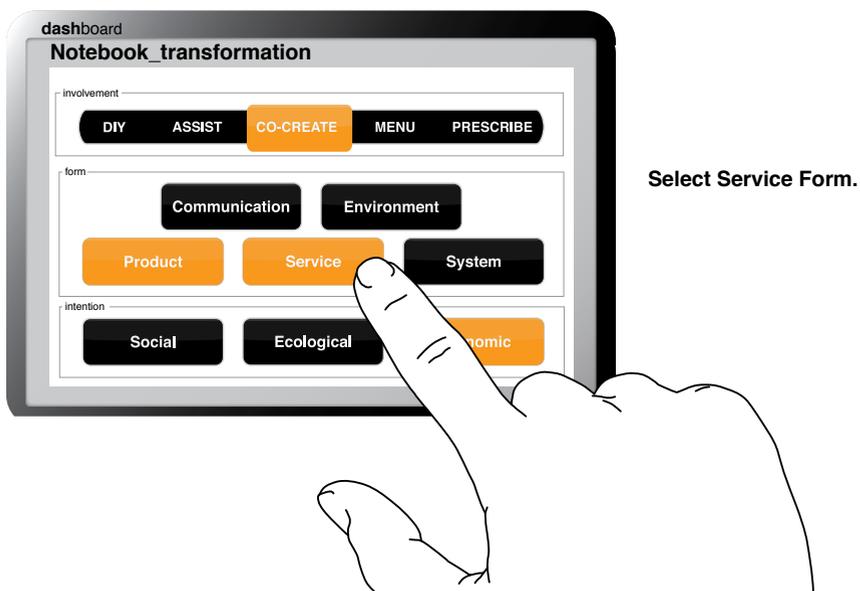
Imagine the result: Notebook Touch-up Service*

Our poor attempts at sketching a tree are in need of a helping hand.

Like old-fashioned film processing, we send our notebook to the manufacturer.

A new notebook is returned, images improved and colours corrected.

* NB. Not all ideas produced by Dashboard will be good.

3. BANKNOTE

Classify the design

Using the Dashboard, you can examine designs that are so successful and ubiquitous that they can go unnoticed as an actual design. The banknote is one such. Clearly economic in intention, the banknote is also a prescribed solution (there are severe penalities for DIY banknote design), a System, a Service and a Communication, as it is often used to reinforce national pride by depicting important historical figures.
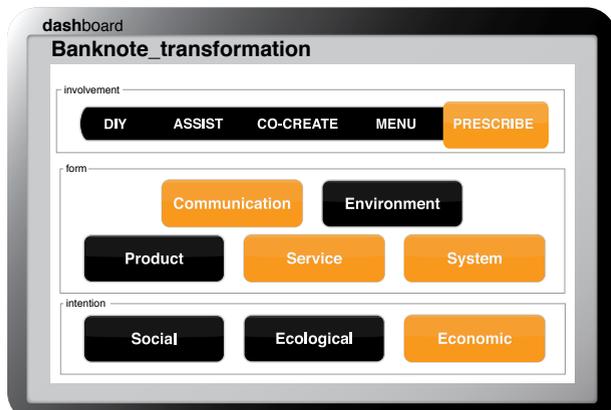
Take your Dashbaord and classify the banknote as shown above.

Transform the design

De-select the Communication button and instead engage the Product Form. In this case the transformation first uncovered a related design that was then transformed into a new design.
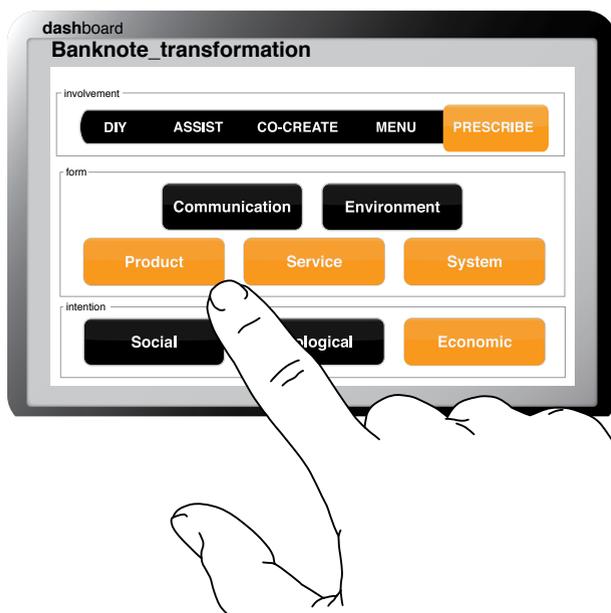

Select the Product Form.

# Imagine the result: Social Poker Chip
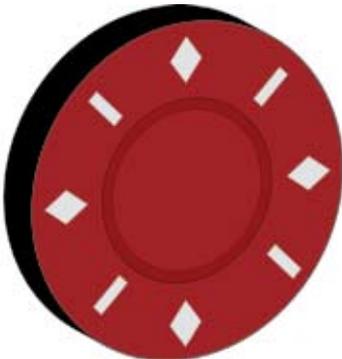
The poker chip is more convenient for casinos than cash, as they are easier to count and, being coloured, easy to identify.

You can now transform the design again to produce a more creative result. So now select the Social Intention button to create a poker chip with societal benefits.
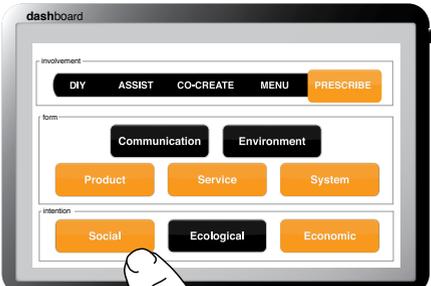
**Select the Social Intention button.**
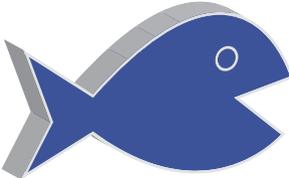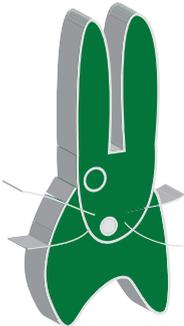
The poker chip is transformed into a child's lunch token redeemable at school canteens, restaurants and cafes. The chips are available for different food groups enabling parents to directly influence their child's dietary habits. The black token is exchanged for food of no nutritional value so kids still have some fun.

4. BOOKSTORE

Classify the design

Bookstores, once a feature of many high streets, are coming under threat from giant retail chains and online vendors. Independent bookstore owners are in need of a re-think. Can the Dashboard generate ideas to save these much loved businesses? First take your Dashboard and classify the bookstore as shown below.
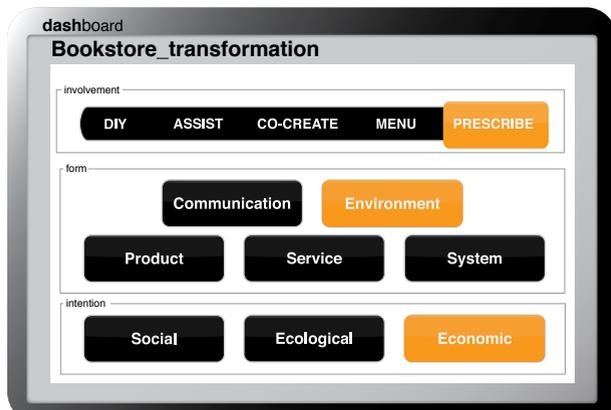
Transform the design

Consider how the bookstore can transform by selecting the the Service Form. While arguably bookstores do provide customer service, helping people find books and offering to order them, the Service Form level is turned down low enough not to register on the Dashboard. So now select and boost the Service Form level to see what happens.

Increase the Social Intention function.
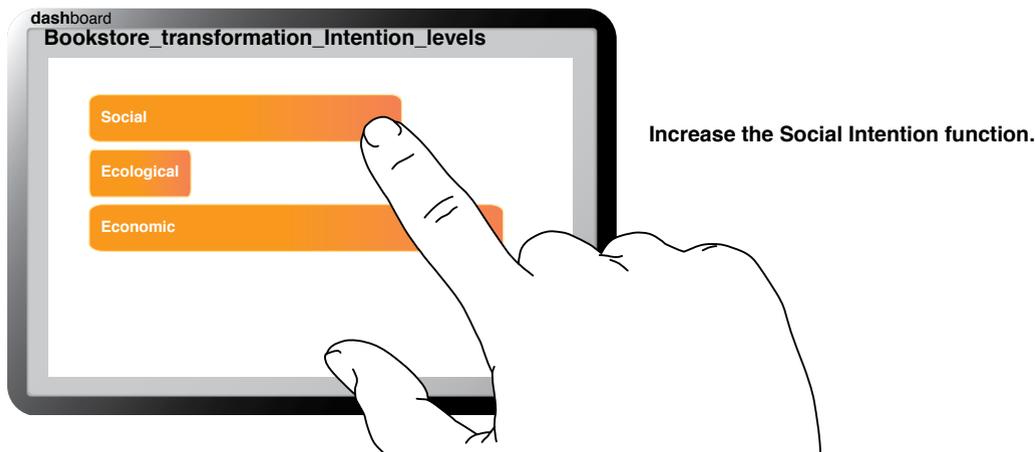
Imagine the result: Social Bookstore

A personal shelf is created for you in the bookstore that contains recommendations based on your previous purchases. This shelf is updated weekly to encourage repeat visits.

Jessica: just for you!
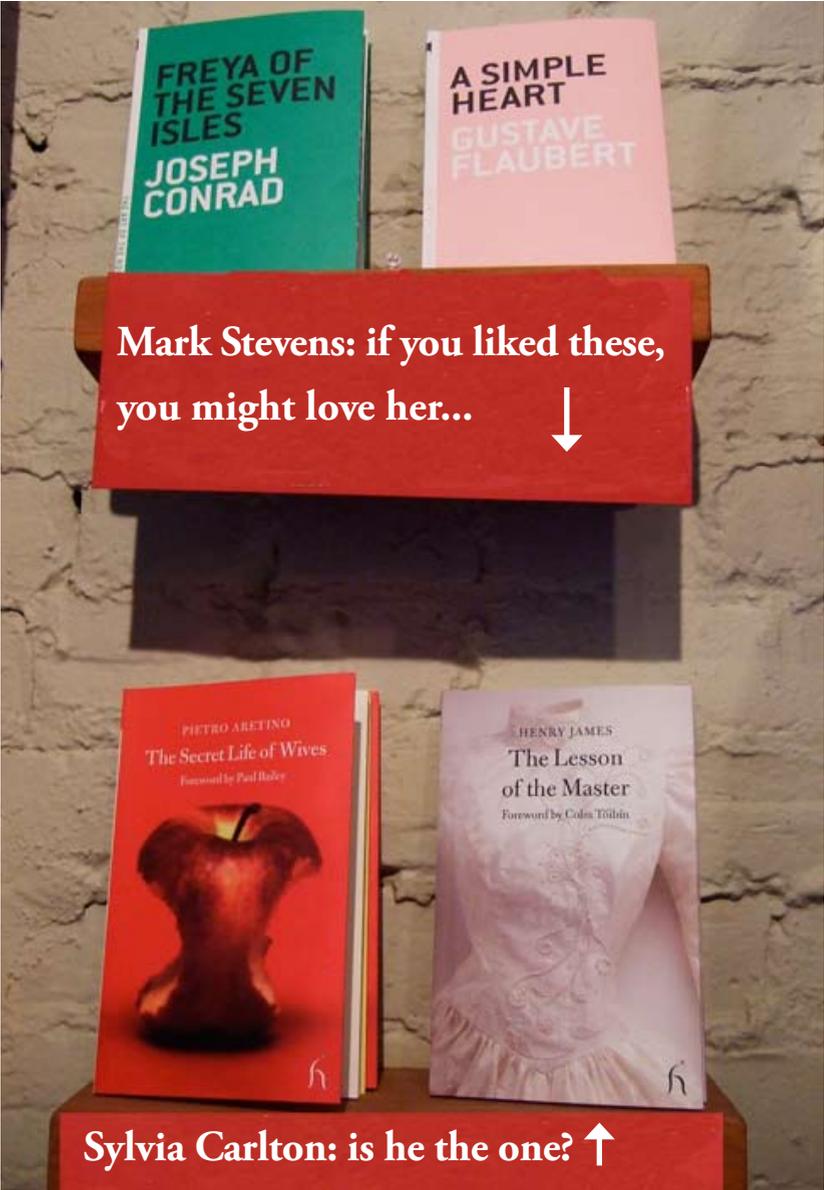
Based on your book choices the store provides a matchmaking service, putting you in contact with eligible people from your neighbourhood. If nothing else, you can at least talk about books you like during the date.

Mark Stevens: if you liked these, you might love her... ↓

Sylvia Carlton: is he the one? ↑

5. STAR WARS

Classify the design

Star Wars is powerful design that has multiple expressions. Classifying it with the Dashboard shows that it is a Prescribed Interaction, that lights up the Communication, Environment, Product and System Forms with an Economic Intention. First take your Dashboard and classify Star Wars as shown below.
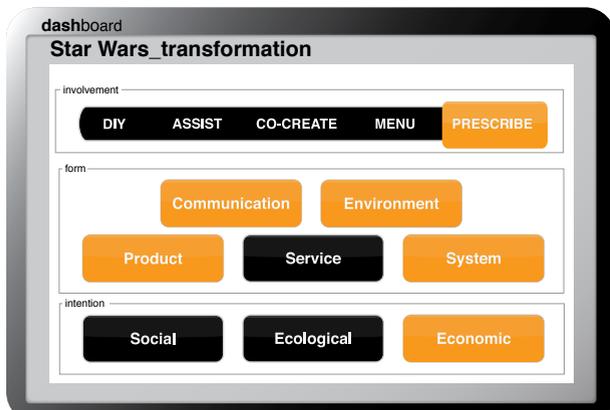
Transform the design

With so many Form buttons already selected, it only seems fair to create a Star Wars Service.

Select Service Form.
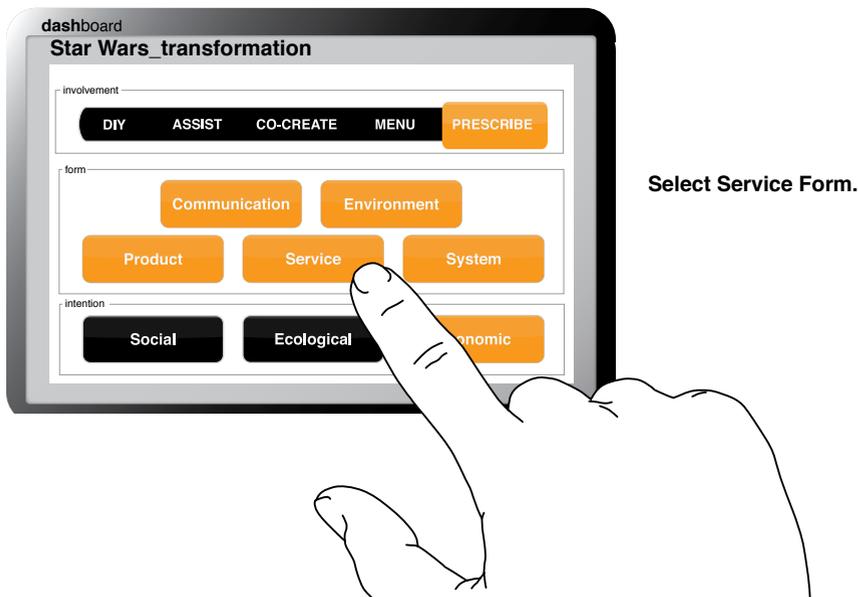
Imagine the result: Stormtrooper Security

Star Wars is so well-loved that creating services would be all too easy. Bank accounts with overdraft warnings from Darth Vader and savings encouragement from Yoda would likely be popular. Stormtrooper Security, pictured above, would perhaps be a hit with executives raised partly in the Star Wars universe.

TIPS AND TROUBLESHOOTING

Following the advice in this section can solve most problems with the Dashboard:

Q. I can't switch it on!
A. The Dashboard requires no power except for your imagination. Review the instructions in this manual, relax and let your mind drift.

Q. I can't switch it off!
A. Extended use of the Dashboard may become addictive. Sadly there's no off switch.

Q. My Slider application is stuck in Prescribed mode.
A. You might want to start gradually and work backward from the Prescribed position. Try to generate a menu next time.

Q. I specialize in a particular form of design and don't need any other Form modes.
A. All Form modes are optional, however you might like to extend your practice by engaging the System mode, which won't affect your area of expertise.

Q. My colleague just bought a Dashboard too, can we get them synched?
A. Set both Dashboards to Co-create and hope for the best.

Q. I can't get the service button to work.
A. Try it in combination with another Form.

Q. My client refuses to allow me to engage the Social and Ecological Focus buttons.
A. Try again, this time setting the levels down very low (see Focus/Advanced Users).

Q. My Dashboard is generating very strange results.
A. Not every combination of positions on the Dashboard is appropriate to a particular project. However don't delete results just because they are surprising.

Q. I can't get out of research mode.
A. Your Dashboard is probably set at Prescribe. Move the Slider to the left to get others' insight.

Q. Co-creation is impossible!
A. It is with that attitude.

Q. I engaged the Communication button together with Product and all I get are adverts.

A. Try exploring communication through shape, colour, texture and mood.

Q. The Dashboard generates so many ideas that I keep changing my colleagues' projects.

A. This was a common problem in testing. Move the Slider back to Assist for a while and the system should correct itself.

Q. I start working in Assist and then the Dashboard jumps ahead to Prescribed mode.
A. Trying new Slider positions often requires a period of readjustment. Please be patient.

Q. The user found my Dashboard and has changed all projects to DIY.
A. We apologise but recommend that you see this as an opportunity to observe and learn.

Q. My Dashboard keeps changing its settings each time I go back and measure a design.
A. Occasionally designs will change settings as their true nature unfolds over time.

Q. My economic focus levels keep slipping.
A. Future Dashboards will come in multi-language versions. Renew your passport and look for new opportunities.

Q. The user stole my Dashboard and won't give it back.
A. Everyone's a designer now, so you'll just have to live with it.

Q. I've found a form of design that the Dashboard can't classify.
A. We very much doubt that.

DIY Assist Co-create Menu Prescribe Communica
Ecological Economic DIY Assist Co-create Menu
Service System Social Ecological Economic DIY
Environment Product Service System Social Ecolog
Communication Environment Product Service Syste
Menu Prescribe Communication Environment Produ
Assist Co-create Menu Prescribe Communication Env
Economic DIY Assist Co-create Menu Prescribe Con
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AS DESIGN CONTINUES TO MUTATE AND EVOLVE, IT'S EASY TO GET LOST. SO LET THE DASHBOARD MAP THE TERRAIN. YOU ONLY HAVE TO CHOOSE A PATH.

Bon voyage!