Networked Collaboration Canvas: How can Service Design facilitate Networked Collaboration?

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Introduction

Whereas products and services are growing in complexity, industry needs to expand their networks to include expertise from other fields than their own. Consequently, innovation activities more and more take place in highly dynamic network environments, mixing people and parties, models, interests, and goals.

It can be said that these dynamic networks do not function as well as they should; in part, because companies need to reshape their organizations to effectively deal with the demands of these networks and processes. In part this is because new techniques are needed to determine and communicate end-user needs, and involve end-users themselves in different ways. Although techniques from experience design, product design and service design are promising; using these in practice for networked collaboration has proven difficult. The challenges are to understand and involve parties as a heterogeneous network rather than a set of isolated individuals. In an on-going research on Product Service System (PSS) development Henze, Mulder, Stappers, and Rezaei (2012) identified boundaries obstructing the implementation of PSS. In order to facilitate the clients' functioning by the provider, the latter needs to adapt the own organization to cross these boundaries. Moreover, this development poses challenges working with the (often short-lived) network of creative industry partners, which participate in the innovation/development phase for new services.

Networked Collaboration Canvas

In order to get a better grip on the networked nature of the new forms of inter-organisational collaborations a Networked Collaboration Canvas has been built elaborating upon Actor-Network Theory (Latour, 2005) and Boundary Objects (Star & Griesemer, 1989) addressing the interactions between actors and objects involved in PSS development (Henze, Mulder, & Stappers, 2013).

The Networked Collaboration Canvas covers the full life cycle of a human-centred development process, starting from understanding user needs through generating product

service propositions and developing these into implementations. The process is visualized as an accumulation of translations and transformations. Applying the Networked Collaboration Canvas starts with mapping boundaries occurring in human-centred development. It is needed to understand these boundaries in order to designate adequate boundary crossing methods, techniques and tools, the next step in the application of the canvas. The aim of the workshop is to discuss existing Service Design methods, techniques, and tools that should be on the palette of adequate methods, and challenges to develop new methods and tools.

After a short introduction on the Networked Collaboration Canvas the workshop participants will work collaboratively to map boundaries (a PSS development case is provided) using the Canvas. After this the participants will have an understanding of the boundaries occurring. The workshop continuous discussing what (Service Design) methods and tools could support crossing the boundaries. A moderate palette of methods and tools will be provided. Participants are invited to add on and remove from the palette, and discuss the need for new methods and tools.

The workshop invites both practitioners and academics in its discussion on what Service Design can add to networked collaboration and what directions are desirable for new Service Design methods and tools.

Workshop outcome

Participants learn to trace possible boundaries in their practice of networked collaboration, and how to cope with these boundaries. Possible new directions for future Service Design methods and tools will be identified. Workshop experiences, results and reflections will be published as an eBook and send to all workshop participants. A publication on the workshop will also appear, as a chapter in the forthcoming CRISP PSS 101 book. This book (expected to be published early 2015) is the result of the PSS101 project of which the Networked Collaboration Canvas is one of the results. Participants who apply the canvas in their own PSS development and networked collaborations are invited to submit a chapter on their experiences as well. The workshop is used as a further valorisation of the networked collaboration canvas; these findings are to be published in relevant journals and conference proceedings.

References

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