

Title: Applying User Centred Design to the Magic Lounge

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Abstract:

User centred design methodology has often been used within organisational contexts with greater or lesser success. This is despite the fact that applying user centred design methodology to the development of new systems for well-known and well-defined tasks does pose a series of challenges. However, when working on new technology with an unknown potential, which is not least the case in many research projects, there is an additional problem of getting a user driven design process started. Collaboration with users often works suboptimally during the early steps. Therefore, such projects tend to become technology-driven rather than user-driven at the outset.

We have experienced this problem in the Magic Lounge project where the intended user population is the general public. The project, as many other i3 projects, is attempting to develop a highly innovative system for which there are no existing use cases. This means that it is quite difficult for the members of the potential user group to envision how a future system could be used. Therefore, it seems that new methods and techniques are required to facilitate user participation in the early stages of system development within advanced research projects, particularly in task analysis and design. Our approach in the Magic Lounge project has been to design fully specific use cases or scenarios based on ideas from users as well as developers and then realise these in a video in order to create the most concrete and best possible basis for continued discussions with our users.

At the workshop we will show a short video (10 minutes duration), which was created to integrate the early design ideas of the members of the Magic Lounge user group and research team. Use of this video has assisted both the Magic Lounge users and developers to refine and extend their vision of the Magic Lounge system.