



There are two aspects of design that will be taken into consideration here: **1) designing programmes**—designs that programme *for* solutions (Karl Gerstner); **2) designing affordances**—designs for environmental *availability* (the latter developed by heeding resident principles, Norman Potter).

These two are obverse sides of a “strip”: in *maker spaces* (Sarah Davies) these sides turn on themselves incessantly like a Möbius-strip. By doing so, the maker-movement develops cohesive group-dynamics, that in one aspect are democratic, in an other aspect exclusionary (gender, ethnic).

Part of the problem with maker-spaces could be the *hacking*: if so, what can be achieved by developing a complex and cohesive notion of plug-ins, and bring the work of design into the realm of *hybridity*? A less gadgety approach to how we work with trouble-shooting in complex spaces.



This flyer-series about how we *connect*. Plug-ins are here conceived as *modular* inter-media that facilitate *learning* and *doing*. In the present scope *plug-ins* may be digital implements, but not necessarily. The emphasis is instead placed on the *hybridity* of arrangements that qualify as plug-ins.

The iPad is an *example*: because it is equipped with *bidirectional* cameras, it is spatially *more* versatile—from the outset—*than* a laptop. Because it has both a front and back, it readily articulates as a *readable* spatial object. With a goose-neck mount (e.g., of the *Linocell*-make) it also becomes *ambient*.

Ambient means that it can pivot 360° around its own axis, and also turn 360° with the goose-neck: which means that its motility articulates a 360° sphere. And that—contrary to a screen placed frontally before a human being—the iPad can articulate full *static* and *dynamic* object-properties.

Which means that—from a design point of view—it is a body: **1**) it can be located in space; **2**) it is immersive. The latter is a property of ambient space: **1**) we are learning how the iPad works (readable); **2**) we are conjointly learning and acting *with* the iPad in an environment (ambient).

The iPad therefore lends itself to the *embodiment* of digital technology: but it is *not* alone—and *that* is rather the point. In the present example of a simple arrangement involving an iPad, it is *not* the iPad in isolation that does the job, but the iPad in combination with a *goose-neck* mount.

And next to the Linocell goose-neck, the *table* on which it is fixed. However close, this is not a traditional form-function design proposal; since there is *no given problem* to which this arrangement is a solution. Rather it is an arrangements that programmes for solutions (a Gerstner-programme).

Here the idea is that the iPad, the goose-neck and the table are plugged in with each other—just as the Logitech and iPad are plugged in with each other when I use the iPad as a *laptop*—the point being the arrangements of artefacts that are plugged in with each other, in this way, yield *controls*.

It is striking how often one sees an iPad plugged in with other implements as a *controller*: it is used to monitor and manage operations going on *alongside* it. So, in this sense, it is a champion of MM (mixed media) where the issue is really to have an additional *body* available (rather *than* a mind).

For instance, when used as *conveyor* in a hybrid gathering—where half the audience are present *on site*, while the other half is located *elsewhere* (connecting with a video-conferencing service)—the adequacy of the arrangement will be proved by its ability to solve emergent problems.

A the problem-solution pairs are *emergent*, the model applicable is the ecosphere: and what interests us is correspondingly the *affordances* of the implements that are plugged in with each other, as the indication of how they work as *programmes*: the configuration of *space*, *time* and *category*.