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# Design to Play

Conference Insights

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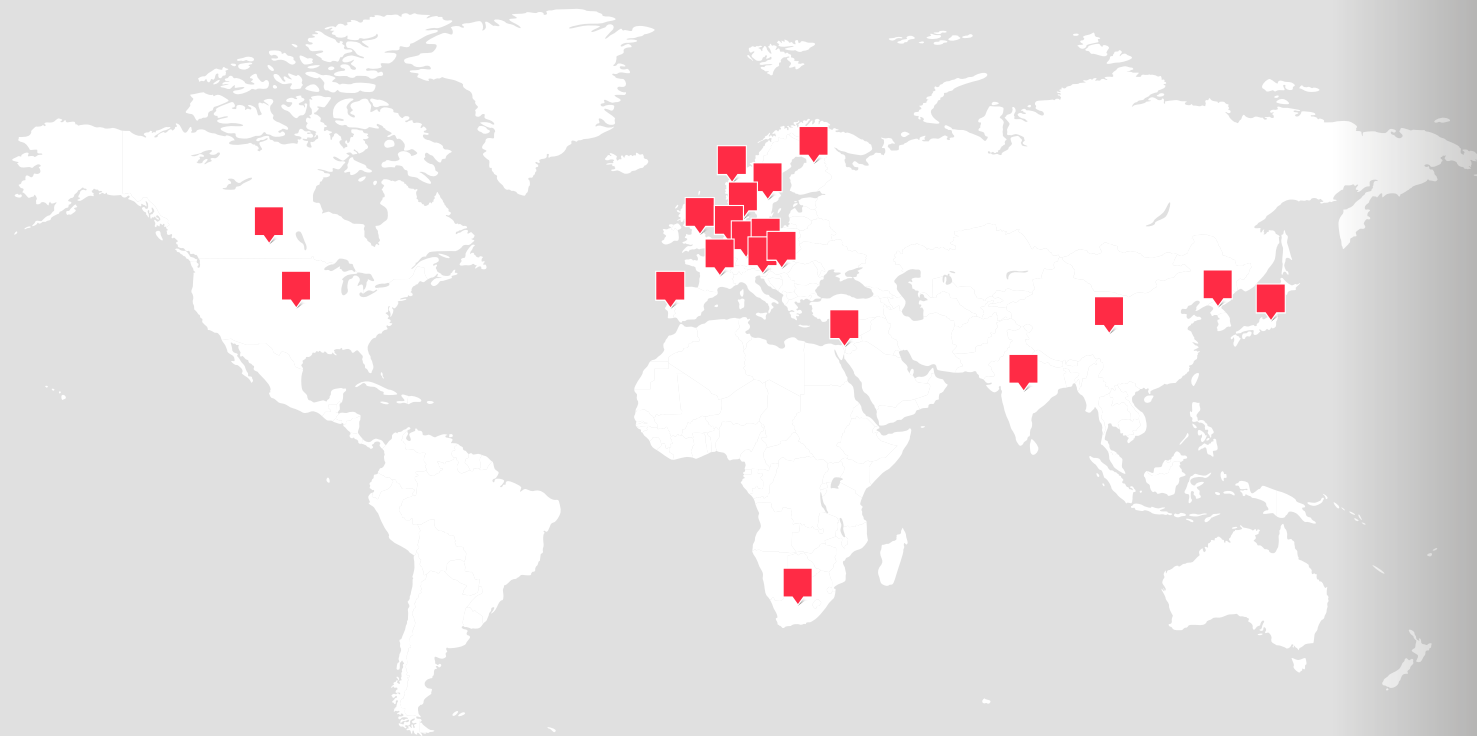
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# Design to Play

Conference Insights

International students  
from all over the world



Austria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, India, Israel, Japan, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, South Africa, South Korea, The Netherlands, USA

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# Companies Need Serious Play in order to get Serious Results

By Mette Strømgaard Dalby, Head of Culture and Communication,  
Kolding School of Design

At last year's DesignCamp, a representative from one of the major participating organisations stated that "The DesignCamp is an optimal way of working. It's not just a conference that you attend and then you go home. Because we work in integrated groups, we get maximum outcome." To Kolding School of Design this captures the essence of our international DesignCamp.

Here, international students learn how to work with each other on the design and innovation process, and they gain important insights from invited companies and organisations, because as we all know, some things are fine in theory but do not necessarily work in practice.

Time and again participating companies and organisations are surprised to see what happens when 'business as usual' is replaced with innovative thinking. And this is essential in a global age when competing on price alone makes a company extremely vulnerable to market fluctuation. LEAN and other cost-reducing processes do not suffice. It takes more. Indeed, the very definition of progress is not to repeat old patterns but to

break these and to advance. In the words of one of the world's leading innovative thinkers, Edward de Bono:

**As competition intensifies, the need for creative thinking increases. It is no longer enough to do the same thing better ... no longer enough to be efficient and solve problems.**

Kolding School of Design's international DesignCamp offers companies and organisations other options than 'doing the same thing better'. Our objective with the DesignCamp is to train the designers and innovators of tomorrow for a global job market. We achieve this by teaching and applying design methods in multi-cultural teams in close collaboration with companies who help us define real-life challenges to which the design students create possible solutions.

We want to produce radical innovation. In other words, we want to produce concepts which allow room for differences and present new paths. We also want to give companies, organisations and students the possibility to tackle concrete challenges as well as meta challenges. Finally,

Kolding School of Design believes that describing the proposed solutions on a piece of paper is not sufficient; instead, we use prototyping as a way of visualising and discovering new solutions. Because we know that a prototype says more than a thousand words and still remains open to new interpretations and adaptations. Words entrench, while a prototype acts as a catalyst for discussion and further development. Prototyping is serious play. Prototyping means to simulate to innovate. And indeed prototyping is one of the designer's core competences.

So welcome to the DesignCamp2013 on play and design. What better way to end than with the words of Walt Disney. He created a variety of much loved characters that appeal to young and old both, and this year, his business empire celebrates its 90th anniversary:

**Around here, however, we don't look backwards for very long. We keep moving forward, opening up new doors and doing new things, because we're curious... and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths.**

Michael Schrage

# YOU'RE NOT BEING SERIOUS UNLESS YOU PLAY

(IT'S RISKIER NOT TO PLAY)

# The Campfire Meal

The DesignCamp is internationally recognised for successfully establishing a space for companies, experts and design students to come together and engage in the creation of new concepts. This is our recipe.

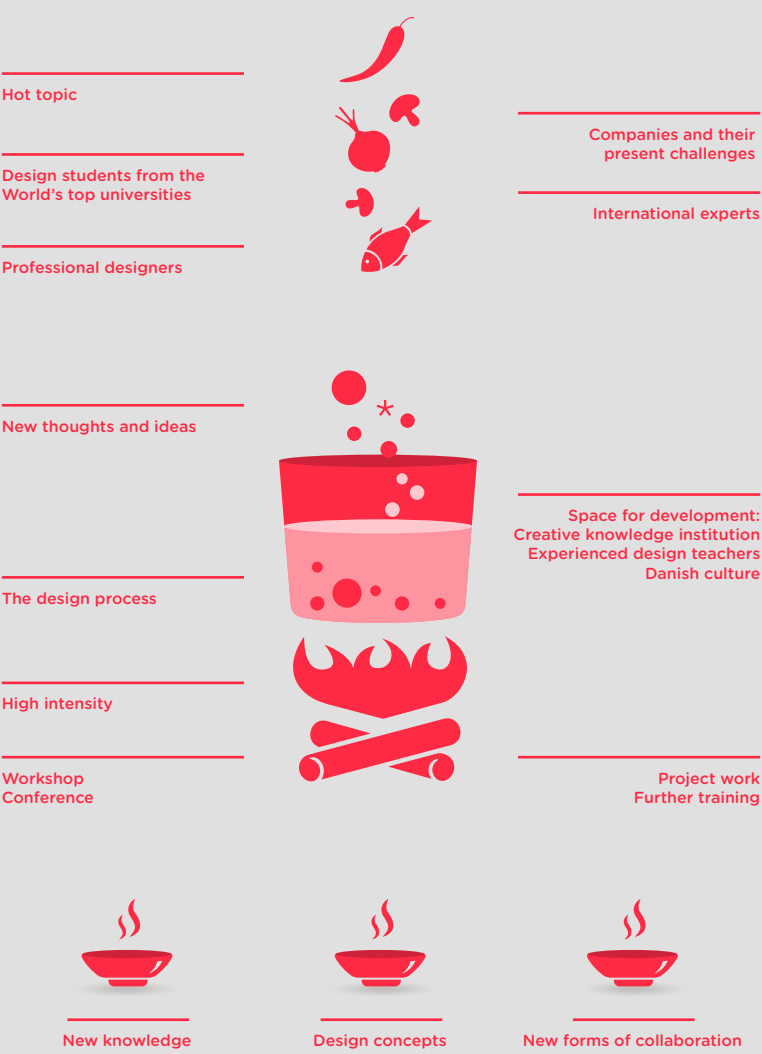
The DesignCamp revolves around a current topic that relates to design. It brings together international experts, experienced designers, companies and design students from the World's leading universities to exchange and develop new knowledge around specific challenges.

Different ingredients are mixed together inside an ideal space for creative development where specific challenges that face the partner companies undergo an intense design process facilitated by experienced design teachers. The design process applies methods for collaboration,

design methods for gathering and recapitulating knowledge, and methods for ideation and concept development. The international encounter, the unique Danish culture and the creative setting at Kolding School of Design constitute the perfect starting point for innovation.

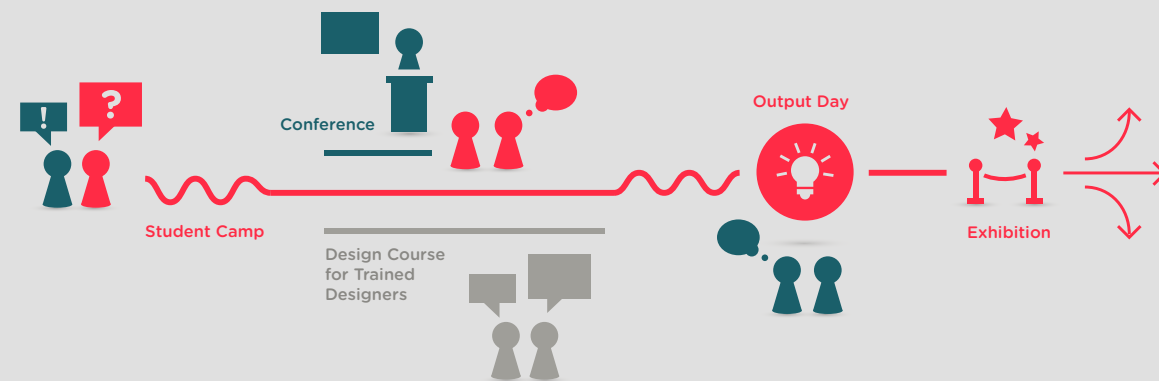
The design process is kindled by a two-day conference and workshop after which the professional designers start their further training programme and design students become immersed in their projects. After 11 days of intense work, the results of the Camp are ready to be presented.

And the outcome is multifarious. A number of companies begin working directly with the concepts. New business opportunities appear. Design methods become integrated in the companies. New forms of collaborations emerge. Companies hand-pick students to complete assignments or internships. New knowledge is shared with the rest of the World through articles and via students, and the design profession evolves. Dinner is served!



**DesignCamp**  
Since 2009, the DesignCamp has evolved into an international development platform creating design concepts for its partner companies and new knowledge for the design profession based on global, societal challenges.

# Camp Design



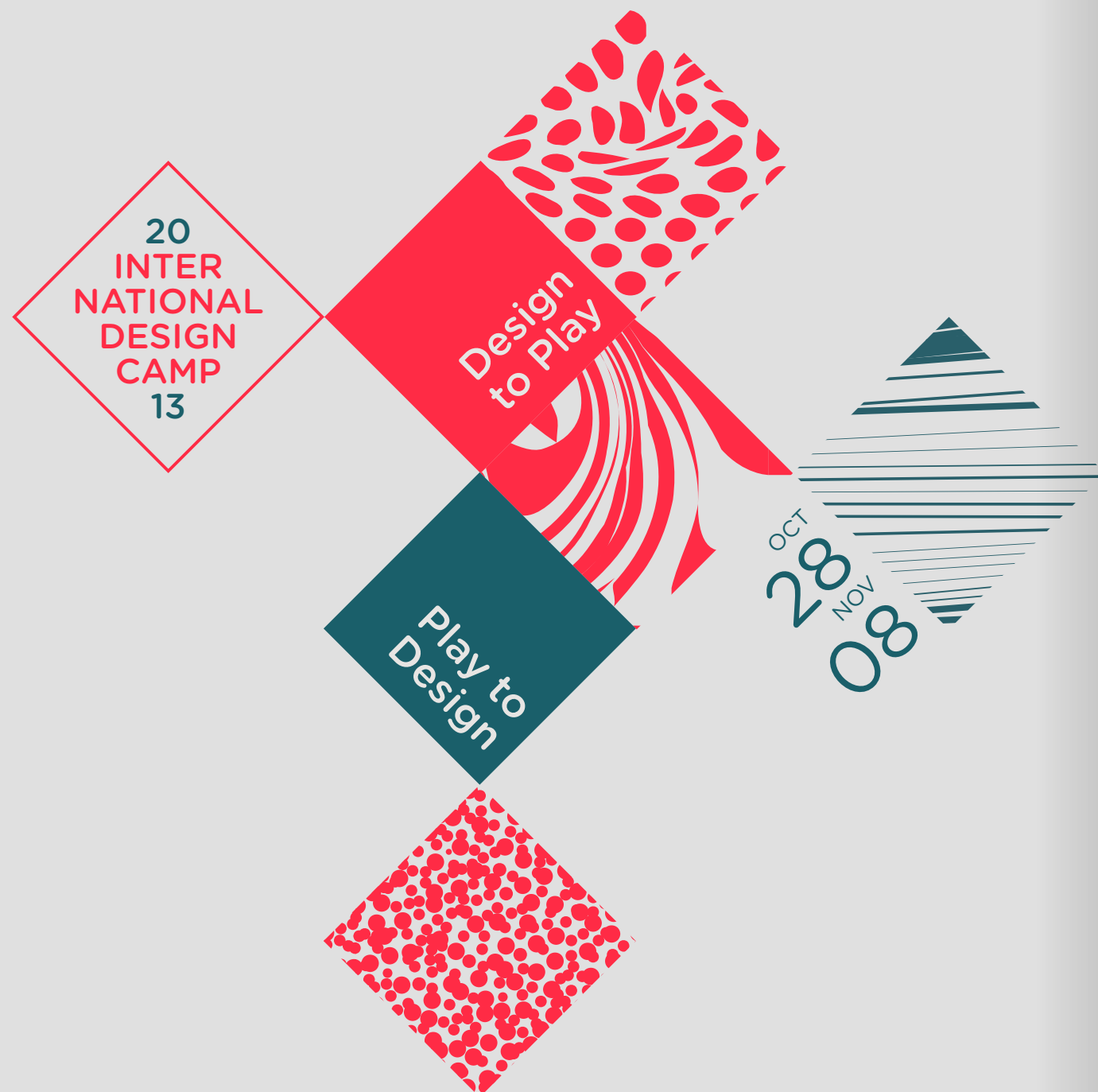
**WE ARE INCREDIBLY GRATEFUL FOR HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH KOLDING SCHOOL OF DESIGN ON THE DESIGNCAMP2013. IT'S AN HONOUR TO WORK WITH WORLD-CLASS DESIGN STUDENTS AND A SCHOOL THAT IS COMPARABLE WITH THE BEST DESIGN SCHOOLS IN THE WORLD.**

Anne Flemmert,  
LEGO Future Lab

## DESIGNCAMP

The DesignCamp comprises a number of events carefully planned and coordinated to generate maximum outcome.





# Design & Play

The DesignCamp2013 sets out to explore play within the context of design in order to investigate and develop design methods for integrating play in companies, processes, products and services.

Play makes us happy and it energises us. When children play, it's not just a game. They create a prototype of the world around them and explore it, socially and with their senses. And they cannot not play. Not because playing is easy but because playing is hard! Playing holds a challenge that children are attracted to and which they cannot ignore; a motivation that springs from the essence of play and ensures that the child will continue to evolve through play.

Still, do we bear in mind that grown-ups can gain from play as well? That indeed we need play to escape reality; to open up and dare do things differently? To be innovative and generate

new ideas? To trust that when we feel good about playing, something good will come from it – even though we might not know in advance what that is? Whether we are children, grown-ups, designers, companies, students, or researchers we need play in our lives because essentially, it is in our human nature to be playful – even if we have forgotten.

The DesignCamp2013 focuses on why we need play. Not just in our families and in our spare time but also in our work lives, the processes that we contribute to, the products we use, the services we use, and indeed all of the experiences that define everyday life.

Mette Erenskjold Kristensen,  
Viking Life Saving Equipment

**I'VE LEARNED  
THAT YOU CAN USE  
PLAY TO TRIGGER  
CREATIVE THOUGHTS  
BUT YOU CAN ALSO  
USE PLAY WHEN  
MAKING MAJOR  
AND STRATEGIC  
DECISIONS**

# Play - to Create and to Live

By Ann Charlotte Thorsted

**Play represents a fundamental link between what we do and who we are as people.**

**Researcher at Aalborg University, Ann Charlotte Thorsted, explains the dichotomy of play as a creative power and a basic human life phenomenon.**

Play is about learning and human development. At least, this is the short account of the way most people perceive the concept of play. Play as a fun, eventful, imaginative and joyous activity, which helps the child develop and become a valuable asset to the people it interacts with and the surrounding society. Yet, there is more to play. Play is also about being present in life, living life, exploring life and rejoicing in life.

So, on the one hand we are able to talk about play as a creative power – play to design – where play serves as the catalyst for our functional world, for creative and innovative designs, and thus as the launching pad for inventiveness and the creation of original solutions. On the other hand, something else happens to us during the act of playing as we experience how play itself can challenge and change us at an existential level. Play as a valuable and universal life phe-

nomenon that is not exclusively linked to childhood but a basic phenomenon in everyone's life – regardless of age, gender, culture or religion.

We do not just play in order to create something; a new product or a new design. During those moments, when we are really captured by play, life itself comes into play. This is why it is important that we not only talk about play to design but also articulate design to play as an indication of the dichotomy of play. Play as a sovereign life-expression which grabs us and makes us experience the essence of life itself through a loving, trusting and self-forgetful relation to the people we play with. An indulgence similar to the one that helps us experience creativity and reach the level of deep commitment in what we do. Hence, play can be characterised as a fundamental link between what we do (play to design) and who we are as people (design to play).



## PLAY IS ALSO ABOUT BEING PRESENT IN LIFE, LIVING LIFE, EXPLORING LIFE AND REJOICING IN LIFE

Ann Charlotte Thorsted

# The iPhone: Anatomy of Play Value in Design

By Alexander Manu



Strategic Innovation Practitioner and International Lecturer Alexander Manu proposes that corporations do not design products or services anymore: they design behaviour spaces. A Behaviour Space is a construct that combines the attributes of a compelling experience with the characteristics of play value. It is play value that maintains the engagement in the experience, and it is play that ultimately gives value to the experience itself.

During the Q&A session of the July 2011 Research In Motion (makers of the Blackberry) Shareholders Meeting, one investor commanded everyone's attention by giving the following declaration: 'You're letting Apple and Android eat your lunch, and those are not business devices, those are kids' games.'

Unwittingly, this investor hit the nail on the head: The iPhone and the Android are kids' games, they are invitations to behaviour, and this is precisely why they were so immediately successful. These devices are fun to interact with, they are pleasurable and playful; they are no longer just products but play behaviour spaces.

The iPhone was a shift in what users find of value in a mobile device, and introduced new sources of value at the level of user experience. This was a shift of value from security as a feature, to fun, pleasure and discovery as an attitude. This is a value metric in which hardware, beauty, functionality, usability and application customization all play equally relevant parts, in creating an experience that has but

one headline: Pleasure. The iPhone is pleasure objectified. Where does the pleasure in play come from? It comes from the exercising of our freedom; it comes from the excitement of exploration, and from the thrill of discovery.

The iPhone pioneered the transformation of a piece of technology into a behavioural object, something that invites playful use, directs the user and responds to his or hers actions. In the iPhone, play builds a bridge between pleasure and purpose. The iPhone is not a tool, and it is not a toy. The iPhone is an invitation to bring play into 'serious' life, reuniting the accomplishment of goal-oriented tasks, with the experimentation and self-expression of play. It is a device for exploration, surprise and delight. Play for purpose. The recognition that there are times in which we need to take everything less seriously, allow ourselves to possibility, and to enjoy the journey.

What I am proposing is that corporations do not design products or services anymore: they design behaviour spaces. Behaviour Space is any set of

behavioural characteristics and their required media – products, systems, substances, energy – which form part of a set of actions directed toward a similar goal. Behaviour space is a multidimensional construct that includes time, rhythm, motion, attention, retention, a variety of stimuli and a variety of responses. In a behaviour space Play Value is essential in achieving satisfaction in the engagement between users and products or services. Play value is the relationship between physical and mental features – stimuli – of a product or system, elements that achieve a relationship with the user, a relationship described as fun, challenging, non-frustrating, absorbing and rewarding. The compelling mix of these elements prompts repeat play value. Repeat play value is the reason we keep engaging with YouTube, Facebook, Google, Twitter, iPhones and more. These compelling products and services are all behaviour spaces, providing experiences that are fun, challenging, rewarding, absorbing and non-frustrating. They succeed precisely because they never hide this fact.



30 OCT  
CONFERENCE DAY

# A DAY OF PLAY AND INSPIRATION

GRAPHIC RECORDING

IT HAS TRULY BEEN AN  
EYE-OPENING EXPERIENCE.  
THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS  
THAT WE ARE GOING TO  
TAKE AWAY FROM THIS  
EXPERIENCE AND USE.

Torben Rohde,  
Scandic City Aarhus

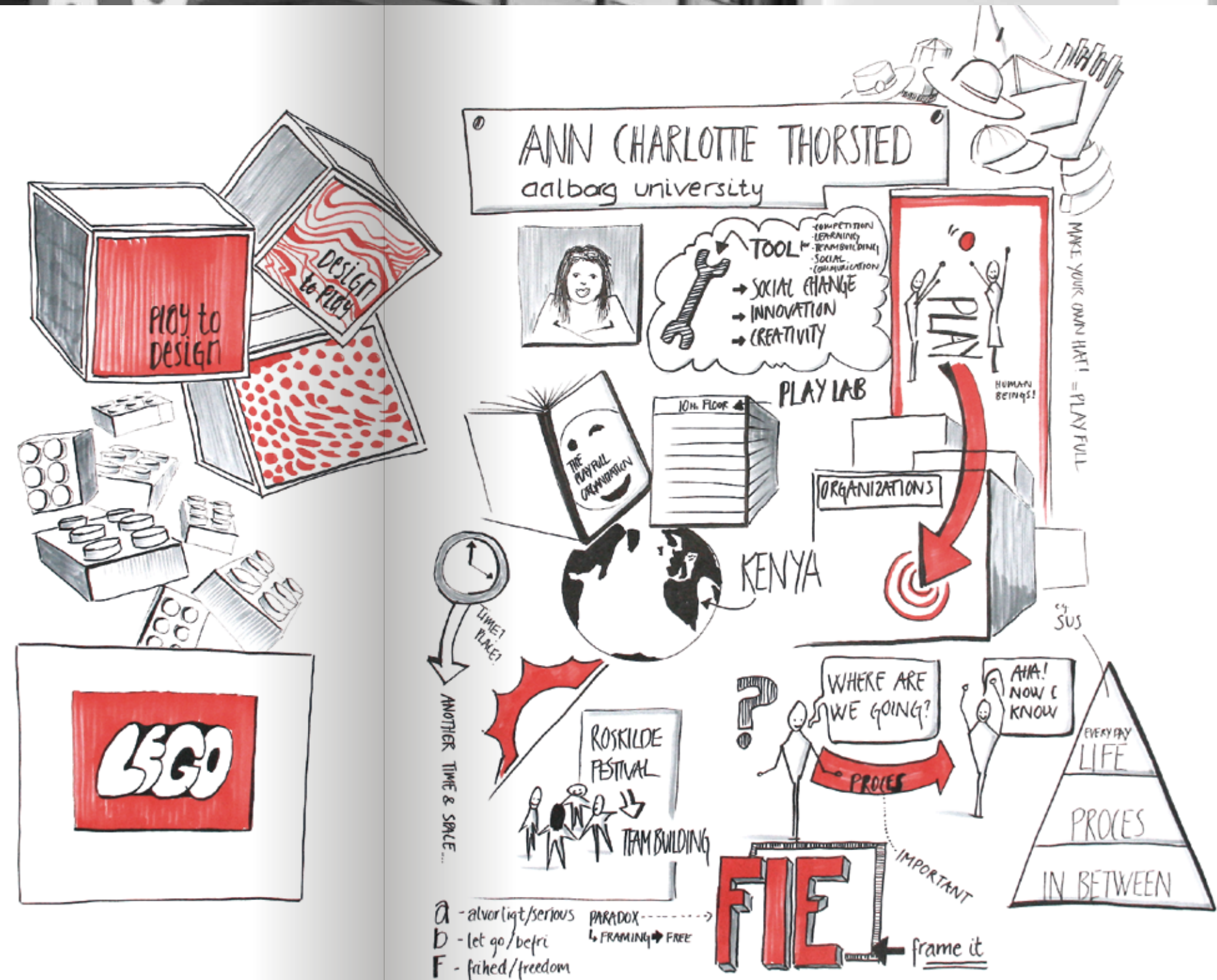


## Conference Day



## Graphic Recording Conference Day

by Christel Maria Jantzen, Visuel Optur









**THIS CONFERENCE HAS BEEN A SUPER EXPERIENCE AND A BOOST OF INSPIRATION! IT HAS REMINDED ME THAT I NEED TO DARE LIBERATE MYSELF AND PLAY - THE DESIGN PROCESSES THAT I ENGAGE IN ON A DAILY BASIS WILL BECOME THE BETTER FOR IT.**

Maja Skall, Bestseller

**PLAY CAN GENERATE SOLUTIONS THAT YOUR INTELLECT CANNOT BECAUSE WHEN YOU PLAY YOU LET GO OF EVERYTHING ELSE AND IGNORE THE BARRIERS**

Dorthe T. La Cour, Viking Life Saving Equipment

**WE RECENTLY LAUNCHED THE SUB-BRAND B&O PLAY, AND I FEEL WE HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO KEEP EXPLORING WHAT WE MEAN BY PLAY. PLAY SHOULD BE MEANINGFUL. YOU SHOULD USE PLAY TO GET MOVING AND CHALLENGE YOURSELF. THAT'S WHY I'M HERE.**

Jørgen Daucke, B&O





# Designing for Awesome LEGO Play

By Anne Flemmert Jensen

**The LEGO Group is in the business of inventing play experiences that help children grow, develop and be creative. But play is changeable and dynamic, and has to be re-invented in order to stay awesome and addictive to kids in the future. Anne Flemmert Jensen, Insight Director at Future Lab, addresses how LEGO designs new successful play formulas, and how notions of play are incorporated in the LEGO work culture.**

When Ole Kirk Kristiansen invented the LEGO System Brick in the 1950s, he did not just invent another toy; he invented a 'system of play'; a system that grew into becoming an icon for contemporary notions of creativity & play.

Until this day, these notions of what play is and should be are still deeply ingrained in the LEGO Values, Culture and DNA. We are in the business of play. And play is an important pre-requisite for life-long learning & development. It is a state of mind that frees us as human beings and allows us to be creative, open-minded and explorative.

Innovation leadership in a company with such a strong heritage is all about designing new recipes for awesome, addictive, and desirable LEGO Play.

One crucial key to designing such a successful recipe is to stick with one very clear core or 'play promise'. The trick is then to unfold the different complexities within that core in exactly the right combinations. Wanting a play experience to do everything at the same time makes it confusing and distasteful. A second crucial key is to make sure that the play experience has sufficient longevity. We aim to design immersive play experiences that have both a creative flow and a play flow. A third crucial key is that the play experience 'speaks' to kids across the world. A cool play experience is not the same today as it was just a few years ago. The 'business of play' is under transformation. Play is expanding into spheres that were traditionally separate from play. Think about how play is expanding

onto the digital platforms. Think about how it is expanding across generations and into our education and work spheres. In order to keep being relevant to kids, we need to keep rethinking and reinventing what 'system of play' is and can be, and put it into new contexts relevant for kids today and in the future.

As mentioned, notions of play are also deeply ingrained in our work culture. In our front-end innovation departments, we subscribe very consciously to elements inherent in play when we design new concept ideas. First of all, play is all about entering a mode where you throw off constraint. This mode opens up for greater freedom, exploration, fluidity, interactivity, and creativity. Such an atmosphere doesn't just exist but has to be created using various forms of techniques, methods, and environments. The participants must be aware, that they are now entering a mode of thinking and interaction where new ideas are encouraged, supported and built on; that we provide a safe ground to try out new and sometimes risky ideas. Secondly, play usually takes place in the interaction between people. The best and most transformative ideas usually arise from a collective effort. And our innovation processes are always interaction based. Thirdly, a good play experience often provides clear frames for the play. This can be in terms of a particular theme, a set of rules, inherent characteristics of the object, an externally generated flow, etc. Creativity doesn't just flourish and grow out of nothing; the best creative ideas come out of providing the participants with clear frames within which to generate ideas.

# The Need for Play is Needed Everywhere

By Jens Rottbøll



**When the creative industry makes business plans they seem to forget the creative processes. Why is corporate business more open to playful processes than the creative industry? asks Jens Rottbøll, Partner in Trivium.**

The need for play in business has never been bigger than it is right now in the midst of an economic crisis – not knowing for sure whether it is behind us, or if we still have to experience a larger decrease in our economy. Yet, the need for play in the creative industry is even bigger.

I'm still wondering why the creative industry tends to make use of last millennium's methodologies to develop their businesses – saving their creativity only for product development!

Educated as an artist (guitarist) from the Conservatory of Rhythmic Music in Copenhagen, then working in the music business i.e. as CEO and artistic director of VEGA, the concert venue in Copenhagen awarded as one of top 3 venues in Europe, I know the processes of creating, performing and promoting music. And over the years, I have worked with designers, architects, musicians, painters, music festivals, music organisations and colleges

(Højskoler). Likewise, I have spent more than a decade in corporate business working with B&O, Stadium, Index, DONG Energy, NOVO Nordisk, IC Company, the Danish Defence, and many others

And throughout my long work life one pattern emerges: Corporate business tends to be far more open to play than the creative industry! How come?

My personal observation is that people from the creative industries tend to seek basic well-known business processes when it comes to developing their business. They are usually not educated in creating a strong business for themselves. Business plans are not a big part of curriculum in the majority of creative schools in Denmark, and therefore they look for classic processes for business improvement, which is much better than not looking at all of course. But in my opinion they neglect a huge potential; a great source of either business development or just any kind of development by playing.

If you want to develop – you must get into a learning mode – and the best way to get into a learning mode is by playing! Play fighting saves a lot of money! This applies in any industry.

Because of the economic crisis, the private sector has a strong need for business development. So, private companies seek any methodology

that can possibly improve their bottom line, and generally I find, they are more open to “doing things in a new and different way” – provided it creates results.

For more than a decade I have used process designs based on the methodology LEGO®SERIOUSPLAY® to create growth in corporate business. The tool was presented in the workshop on the 30th of October at Kolding School of Design.

The benefits of using this tool for creating growth are many, and it could be used far more in the creative industries than it is today. The basic principles for the tool are as follows:

- No development without involvement. The method ensures a very robust co-creation process that allows far more good ideas to emerge during the development process.
- Let your fingers help your brain. Brain Science shows that there are a lot of connections from your fingers to your brain. By using your fingers in an active building process, you access a larger part of your brain and thereby a larger part of your embedded knowledge.
- Break you patterns. By building you create new patterns for the neurons in your brain. If you don't use a tool for this, you limit your brain to

repeating old habits (the old neural patterns in our brain that we all create to survive a busy day. It's the brain's way to save energy).

- Play with the future – no real consequences. This is the core of playing – the play fighting part. The ability to play out an emerging future and examine possibilities, barriers, leadership behaviours, etc. without there being any real consequences. This forms your behaviour towards the future without any risk.
- Create a strong and compelling strategic story and tell it. Since ancient times, strong and compelling storytelling has been a major ingredient in most cultures around the world. This has always been the strength of the creative business as many in the corporate business still seem to love “Death by power points”. Why not use this for the money making part of Art's business?

Play and be inspired!

# Play to Design – Playful Make-Believe

By Marieke Amalieh Bülow



**Leaving off old habits and mind-sets and opening up to new ways of thinking. This is the real challenge according to Design Consultant Marieke Bülow. She is part of the D2i – design to innovate team, which specialises in teaching companies how to apply design methods and elements of play in support of their strategy.**

One of our core competences as designers is our ability to visualise futures that do not yet exist. Designers are trained to be 'in the open' and are able to give form to the intermediate results that we encounter in the process and present not one but several suggestions for a final solution.

This requires certain conditions which very much resemble the framework you create when entering the world of play. You have to be able to be in the moment; sense and collaborate with the people around you. You have to be positive and open in order not to kill the very imagination and energy that enables you to be vigilant for the newly visible. In other words, you have to be prepared to 'play along'.

The ability to play along is not a special talent only bestowed on a few fortunate people; it is a fundamental quality entailed in all people, which we can develop and sophisticate. Yet, the designer is aware of the importance of maintaining this skill because of its vital significance when we set out to create new solutions – when we set out to design.

In D2i we specialise in conveying the competences and tools that the designer uses and how these can create value in support of a company strategy. Our design consultants are trained designers who have created competency development tools, typically in the form of workshops, which we offer to companies. This is a practical way for non-designers to test and experience design tools such as for instance ideation.

Ideation is one of the tools used to generate all new ideas. Therefore, setting the right frame is particularly important when applying this specific tool. Ideation works best when the ideas are born through play. So, you have to add elements of play in order to 'force' the rational mind to open up and embrace the possibilities rather than set up barriers in defence of that which already exists.

And actually, the real challenge is this: to leave off old habits and mind-sets and really be open to new ways of thinking. A good way to open up is by brainstorming on a series of non-related words and then making 'impossible

combinations'; for instance 'ballerina shrimp' or 'cocktail warrior'. Next, you come up with ideas for these impossibilities, and because our rational mind knows that these are in fact impossibilities, it lets go and we allow ourselves to play.

Another approach is 'trip up' where you either remove core elements or add new (and perhaps irrelevant) ones; for instance that the Internet was never invented or that the ideas must be directed at a whole new target group.

By adding elements of play we help the brain open up and envision ideas that have never been seen before. This is a core component in the designer's skill set, and one that companies can use to become better at developing new strategies, products and services which are of value to the company, the users and the world at large.



IF YOU WANT TO DEVELOP - YOU MUST GET INTO A LEARNING MODE - AND THE BEST WAY TO GET INTO A LEARNING MODE IS BY PLAYING! PLAY FIGHTING SAVES A LOT OF MONEY! THIS APPLIES IN ANY INDUSTRY

Jens Rottbøll

TODAY, WHAT IS NEW IS THE ROLE WE APPOINT TO PLAY AND THE DEGREE OF FREEDOM WE DARE TO GIVE IT AS A LIFE PHENOMENON WITHIN A PROFESSIONAL CONTEXT AS AN ORGANISATION

Ann Charlotte Thorsted

CREATE A SAFE GROUND FOR EXPERIMENTATION WHERE PEOPLE ARE NOT AFRAID TO COME UP WITH RISKY IDEAS

Anne Flemmert

YOU SHOULD ALWAYS FOCUS ON CREATING NEW VALUE. AND IF YOU DEFINE VALUE AS MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD, PROFIT WILL AUTOMATICALLY FOLLOW

Alexander Manu



# Exploring and exploiting experimentation for enterprise innovation: A 5X5X5 Approach

By Michael Schrage

The 5X5X5 X-team approach is a rapid innovation methodology emphasizing 'lightweight, high-impact' business experimentation. Research Fellow at MIT and Thought Leader on Innovation Michael Schrage explains the methodology.

Increasingly competitive global markets have made innovation a top-management imperative. When cost-cutting efforts hit diminishing returns, investments to add new value enjoy more serious consideration. Consultants, advisors and assorted management gurus are called upon for innovation insights. New tools and technologies are considered to renew or redefine innovation processes. Firms revisit the fundamentals of their innovation culture and practices.

While executives declare a greater willingness to innovate, their concerns over costs and risks remain. They're skeptical of 'innovation transformations' that might undermine key customer and partner relationships. They're cynical about 'innovation incrementalism' that promises new value creation on the margins. More firms want to be more innovative about being more innovative. They want to

quickly and cheaply tap their people's collective expertise while preserving top management's strategic innovation prerogatives. In effect, they seek to strike a better balance between bottom-up innovation efforts and top-down strategic imperatives.

**'5X5X5': RAPID INNOVATION METHODOLOGY THIS DESIRE HAS MADE MANY FIRMS MORE RECEPTIVE TO EXPLORING NOVEL INNOVATION METHODOLOGIES.**

The 5X5X5 X-team approach is a rapid innovation methodology emphasizing 'lightweight, high-impact' business experimentation. 'Lightweight' means surprisingly inexpensive in terms of organizational time, money and resources; 'high impact' means the proposed experiments test business hypotheses the firm's management deeply cares about. Combining 'lightweight' and 'high impact' inherently commands organizational curiosity,

attention and respect. The lean and agile nature of the experiments assure they generate actionable insights remarkably fast. They're less 'proofs of concept' than invitations to quickly take the next innovation steps.

The methodology has been effectively used by global enterprises ranging from European conglomerates to Brazilian media giants to Australian financial services firms to American consumer products companies. What began as a quasi-academic 'gimmick' to goad students and companies away from their infatuation with 'good ideas' became a distinctive innovation option. The appeal comes not only from the 5X5X5's emphasis on speed and low-cost but its explicit effort to align the firm's improvisational talent with top management's articulated vision. The 5X5X5 is designed to leverage a firm's cultural and organizational diversity to inspire experimental in-

genuity. The 5X5X5 methodology has worked well in organizations that love to play with ideas as well as firms that, frankly, would rather draw innovation inspiration from outside consultants. More collaborative firms have welcomed 5X5X5s as a culturally compatible innovation approach while top-down, quasi-autocratic leaderships have cautiously embraced 5X5X5s as a safely cost-effective diversification of their innovation spend.

The central purpose of the 5X5X5 is to create vibrant internal markets of business hypotheses and experiments portfolios for the enterprise. Rivalry and competition complement collaborations and cooperation. The goal is to explicitly link lean and agile experimentation to lean and agile innovation. Simple experiments lead to strategic initiatives and impact. Experiments portfolios offer top management options to not only explore disruptive opportunities but also better manage innovation risk. While the experiments and the business hypotheses they test are valuable, the methodology is also a source of human capital formation. To paraphrase the pioneering French industrial sociologist LaPlay, "The most important product of the experiment isn't the data, it's the experimenter." Aligning experimentation with innovation is important. But expanding the boundaries of human capability and creativity around innovation and experimentation is even more important.

**5X5X5: DESIGN AND CONSTRAINTS**  
The 5X5X5 design is simple and straightforward. A minimum of 5 teams of 5 people are given no more

than 5 days to come up with a portfolio of 5 'business experiments' that should take no longer than 5 weeks to run and cost no more than 5000 euro to conduct. Each experiment should have a 'business case' attached explaining how running that experiment gives tremendous insight into a possible 5 million euro savings or 5 million euro growth opportunity for the firm.

There's nothing magical about the number '5'. The point is insisting upon experimental ingenuity within defined constraints. The purpose of these constraints is obvious: individuals and organizations should come up with experiments offering high-impact potential at great speed and low cost. The constraints are less important than the ingenuity they inspire. The issue isn't whether the euro (or dollar) budget for a proposed experiment exceed 5,000 or if runtime could be done over two weekends instead of 35 days, it's pushing a small group of people to think 'inside the box.'

But the 5X5X5 is an unusual and very special box – one that's provocatively shaped and made from innovative materials. This box is designed to make disruptive innovation not just possible but probable. Should the 5X5X5 teams do suitably clever jobs of thinking inside this box, they'll come up with portfolios of experiments with the potential and power to transform their organization's innovation culture - if that is what the organization wants.

In larger firms, some twenty-five to thirtyfive 'high-potential' managers and workersfrom across the organization have identified that 'top man-

agement' wants participating in the X-teams exercise. This ordinarily gives 5 to 7 X-teams. They're briefed – with examples, a framework and suggested process options – on what their deliverables should look like. As a rule, participants get no special compensation – although travel expenses, etc. and appropriate time allowances help assure adequate collaboration with colleagues.

The big motivational and organizational lure is that each X-team will present its portfolio to top management. Ideally, this means the CEO, a C-suite colleague or three and, perhaps, a non-executive director and 'prestige' outsider. These X-teams are fully aware that they are 'competing' with their colleagues to come up with the best possible portfolios to present before their bosses. Rivalry has proven an effective mechanism for focusing team attention, energy and ingenuity on experimental designs most likely to impress their superiors. Occasionally, presentations are made before top P&L executives of business groups – the de facto CEOs of the key business units. The 5X5X5 doesn't work unless participants are confident their work is being taken seriously by people with the power to either fund the experiments or advance the presenters' careers.

**5X5X5 PORTFOLIOS: WINDOWS INTO ENTERPRISE CULTURE**  
Simple statistics assure the odds are in favor of truly impressive experiments. Five teams times five portfolios equals 25 experiments - six teams times five portfolios equals 30 experiments - and those numbers help guarantee affirmative outcomes.



While half the proposed experiments - with redundancy and overlap - will be below the median, the structure of the 5X5X5 human capital marketplace means that 10% to 20% of the experimental ideas will be first-rate. There are always - without exception - at least three to four experiments that make top management sit up straight, eyes widen (or narrow, depending on temperament) and incredulously ask, "We can do that!?"

Mais, oui - for roughly 5,000 euro 5 weeks and a willingness to proceed. Every firm should hope - and reasonably expect - that 25 or more of its most talented people in collaboratively creative competition with each other should be able to come up with at least three or four truly startling concepts. If they can't, that's important information for top management to know. The absence of innovative experimental proposals is as important for the C-suite to understand as their presence.

More often than not, however, portfolio presentations produce a top-tier of world-class experiments. Just below the elite creme de la creme is a layer of another three or four business hypotheses that either individual team members love and seek to champion and/or hold unexpected appeal for a particular business unit that can't wait to try them out. (An 'ugly duckling' experiment that captures the fancy of a well-regarded enterprise intrapreneur is not uncommon. They see - or think they see - something that elevates the merely 'decent' experiment into a 'this could be the start of something big.')

**The beauty of well-designed 5X5X5s is that organizations can't help but learn from them. Portfolios become lenses and windows into enterprise culture and priorities.**

For example, if 22 of 25 experiments focus on customers or clients, then why aren't participants proposing innovative experiments with key suppliers and partners? If portfolio focus emphasizes diversification opportunities, are the 5X5X5 people paying enough attention to organic growth with existing customers? The experiments that aren't being proposed may be as useful and revealing to top management - and the 5X5X5 participants - as the ones that are.

This is a major reason why portfolio concepts are so valuable. It's not enough to come up with 5 individually impressive experiments. How X-teams think through and articulate their focus and philosophy of experimentation is equally significant. Why these experiments? **What does this portfolio say about which innovation opportunities should be identified and explored inside the firm?**

The willingness to ask simple questions is essential. The 5X5X5 offers a fast, cheap and ingenious method for innovators to safely revisit - and test - business fundamentals. Simple questions about customer segmentation, sales, pricing, design, performance and language successfully inspire high-impact hypotheses. Simplicity invites ingenuity.

Getting talented and ambitious people to take disciplined approaches

to these issues is valuable. X-teams pushed to rigorously think beyond 'business plans' and 'proposals' into portfolio rationales of experiments makes people rethink the relationship between words and deeds. By making rapidly 'business hypotheses' the 'schwerpunkt' of innovation design, firms can create a better balance between action and analysis. This frequently represents an important cultural value for business innovators. After all, no one can get an MBA from an elite school without performing reams of analysis. But **remarkably few world-class business schools make rapid experimentation and test a curricular requirement.**

Of course, this broad overview minimizes many of the organizational elements that give richness and flavor to the enterprise experience. For example, many firms put zero constraints on the portfolios they're asking from their people. X-teams are encouraged to create 'portfolios-without-boundaries' - that is, hypotheses and experiments addressing any issue they deem important. Nothing - price, new media, new materials, new customers, new technologies, new sales tactics - is off limits. Anything goes.

Other firms want to place further constraints on the 5X5X5 constraints. Their experiments portfolios need to address particular business concerns. For example, the future role of customers, suppliers or Web 2.0 or emerging markets. In other words, top management wants experimentation that aligns with innovation along particular dimensions. Their X-teams have explicit missions or briefs. Their 5X5X5

# TOMORROW'S DESIGN RESEARCH AGENDA IS **METAPLAY**: HOW DO WE PLAY WITH PLAY?

Michael Schrage



focus is producing portfolios around specific challenges or themes:

- How should we use new media better?
- How can we better collaborate with key suppliers?
- What experiments should we be doing with our best customers?
- How can we better segment our customers and clients?
- Can we wrap new services around our products?
- How can we make customer support centers innovation platforms?

**RIISING TO THE INNOVATION CHALLENGE**

Anecdotally, the creative differences between ‘open’ 5X5X5 X-team briefs and targeted themes appear minimal. Both offer the capacity for disruptive surprise. Both require teams to display a chemistry or esprit in order to succeed. Both develop a collaborate prowess for hypothesizing and experimental design.

Both demand the ability to fluently and persuasively present before top management. Arguably the most significant difference I've observed is that ‘open’ briefs give top management a broader view into how their most talented people view innovation opportunities and risk. What thematic briefs gain in specificity, they lose in strategic scope and sweep. Thematic X-teams are beholden to management priorities in a way that ‘open’ teams are not.

While the 5X5X5’s professional development value may have the most important impact on enterprise

capability, that shouldn’t overshadow its power to influence the firm’s sense of its innovation cultures and processes. Virtually no participants – and certainly no top managements – considered the exercise to be a poor or mediocre use of time. To the contrary, the overwhelming majority of participants observe that it yields disproportionate value for time. The professional development aspect is a key ingredient but the reality is that the methodology gives top management a relatively inexpensive way to see how ‘innovative’ and ‘creative’ its people can be. Devising business experiments portfolios and presentations on demand lets the C-suite see how its people rise - or fail to rise - to the innovation challenge. Instead of being an intellectual or academic exercise, the 5X5s turn out to be ‘reality checks’ for organizations that say they want to be more innovative. For many

organizations, it’s painfully clear that the conservatism and risk-aversion of top management - not the lowcost with and high-speed ingenuity of their most talented people - is the real innovation constraint.

Successful 5X5s make people more effective innovators. More effective innovators mean more effective innovations. Even moderately successful 5X5 experiences attract broader attention. The 5X5 is a viral innovation methodology. It’s infectiously innovative X-teams and top managements that see 5X5 presentations as the start of healthier and more agile innovation cultures behave differently. Successful innovation requires a commitment to action. As Schumpter remarked, “Innovation is less an act of intellect than an act of will.” Wanting it – wanting to turn hypotheses into experiments into innovation – is an act of will.

Michael Schrage

**SIMPLE  
EXPERIMENTS  
LEAD TO STRATEGIC  
INITIATIVES AND  
IMPACT**

**Students**

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Robert Werner, Emily Carr University, Canada  
Megan Czaja, Pratt Institute, USA  
Nadine Folk, Pratt Institute, USA  
Jacob Theodore Horowitz, Case Western University, USA  
Seshmitha Vedachalam, Case Western University, USA  
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Tanya Smit, Greenside Design Center, South Africa  
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# AMAZING EXCITING HARD INTERNATIONAL PLAYFUL

Anne Dieste,  
Pforzheim University

## Eat & Play Colourful Bean Hummus

By Mette Thrane Frandsen  
Food Designer and Canteen Manager, Kolding School of Design

### BASIC HUMMUS

400 grams of white beans  
5 bay leaves  
1 tablespoon of tahini  
1 chili  
2 garlic cloves  
salt

Soak the beans overnight.

Bring the beans to a boil and skim the foam off. Add the bay leaves, 1 tablespoon of salt, 1 chili, and perhaps some herbs and let the beans simmer for 1 hour.

When the beans are tender and creamy throughout, remove them from the stove and cool them.

**Be sure to save the water.**

Blend the beans with the tahini, chili and garlic and add some of the boiled water that you saved until you get the texture you want. Season with salt and chili.

Play with the hummus by adding different colours.

- 1: add 4 beetroots during cooking
- 2: add parsley, spinach and basil during blending
- 3: add 2 tablespoons of turmeric to the hummus when it is ready

Bake a delicious white bread and play with the colours of the bread. Divide the dough into portions and add e.g. spinach, beetroots, squid ink and corn flour. Play with the dough by braiding it, twisting it, cutting it into shapes, or whatever your imagination tells you.

Enjoy!

# Play to Design

## Partners

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Local partners from all over the region  
of Southern Denmark - and more





# Play to Design

Between 28 October and 8 November 2013 international experts, hand-picked international design students, companies and experienced designers gathered at Kolding School of Design to attend the International DesignCamp2013 'Design to Play / Play to Design'. Their objective was to explore play within the context of design in order to investigate and develop design methods for integrating play in companies, processes, products and services.

The Camp Conference on 30 October took place from 9 in the morning until 9 in the evening and presented talks by Danish and international speakers and focused on why human beings play and why play is a necessity. The Conference also included a series of open workshops that allowed the participants to test methods for play.

Playful elements spiced up the whole day – even when it came to the food – and ended with a sensory experience that challenged and tested play in relation to other cultures.

The International DesignCamp2013 was organised by Kolding School of Design and D2i - design to innovate in collaboration with the LEGO Group.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING  
– HOPE TO SEE YOU NEXT YEAR

Read more on  
[designcamp2013.dskd.dk](http://designcamp2013.dskd.dk)

