

Personal Emotional Mobility of the Future The Paradigm after the Next Car

Personal Mobility denotes a broad range of "vehicle" capabilities that enrich the lives of people everywhere. However, in the future, it is important that designers further grasp our emotional engagement with them. If sustainable-shared transportation systems for private or public use are to gain wider acceptance, they must be approachable, usable, and enjoyable. The business model for the future of Personal Mobility will depend on the desirability of these products, not merely their ubiquity. And desirability encompasses strong emotional components.

Our future timeframe is ca. 2050, a world in which some demographic characteristics and context are significantly different. Cities currently under pressure to find local solutions to transportation problems will be highly stressed in 2050 if nothing changes. Yet, huge zones of scarcely populated areas in the world must still be supported with affordable mobility. In addition, there will be a greater percentage of aged citizenry, inhomogeneous gender distribution, cultural enfranchisement, and the immediacy of climate, energy and resource issues. All such points will be a part of the designers' brief in the future and the basis of our challenge today.

There will be many stakeholders in the "ecosystem" of Future Personal Emotional Mobility. The better their agendas are met the more likely the system will prove successful. Governments want control and a healthy source of revenue. Citizens want equality and freedom. Consumers want the best price-performance ratio. Industries want profitable business models that protect their complex investments and intellectual capital. Workers want assured occupation. Obviously, everyone wants a positive climate of economic growth with a fair distribution of wealth. World-over mobility systems are expected to have a minimum negative environmental impact on our planet, while promoting the best use of its resources. And we might all have a bit of fun as well!

In the search for the emotional approach to the components of such a complex system we are able to explore the contribution design makes to our lives. Students are given experience in challenging our settled notions and dogmas in regards to this issue.

The first task students are assigned is the creation of a semantic model of their Personal Emotional Mobility System as a pyramid; starting at the top with a basic and fundamental goal they wish to achieve, filling the successive layers below with ever more detailed descriptions of what such goal entails. The granularity should increase as the pyramid base gets wider; however, all relative ideas and concepts must be contained in the more succinct descriptions of the layers above.

In the next phase, sketches or storyboards of what these worlds could look like, or examples taken from the world of today supportive of argument plausibility will replace the semantic content. Maintaining a holism of the ideas is important, and we will be presenting our work in mid-process reviews to ensure that the "Top Down" logic remains intact.

The purpose of this pyramidal logic structure is to promote a wider understanding of the inter-relationships of our ideas at both a higher and lower meta-level of description. The students will be tasked with evaluating a scenario in which their lowest meta-level ideas belong to other pyramids of intention, which may even include pyramids of students. Furthermore, they are to observe the implications that insight allows in supporting designs.



The final task involves creating a proposal for the implied design "brief", which can be extracted from one portion of the pyramid base, while accompanying designs of the effects this concept would have were it contained in another pyramid of intent.

Our discussions and critique will focus on the depth of understanding the student expresses in finding the role that emotional content plays in their construct. Particular attention will be placed on the enhancement of design plausibility in the future context. The role that the student's artwork plays will be evaluated on how well it supports this communication.