

Supporting Design

by Elizabeth Gutierrez

Overview

- Supporting the design process
- Supporting designers
- Supporting design teams
- Different kinds of support

Supporting the design process

- Support is needed not only for individual tasks, but also for managing the production and coordination of the results and integrating them into a coherent whole.
- Support becomes more important when the project becomes larger and more people become involved.
- Examples:
 - Software support
 - Support for discussion with users
 - Support for guidance
 - Programming support
 - Project management support

Supporting designers

- Providing design support means providing help and assistance to the designers. It is important to consider not only what designers need to achieve, but also how they work.
- Things to keep in mind when considering the type of support a designer may need:
 - Designer experience & level of experience within the particular application domain
 - Previous known solutions
 - Problem decomposition
 - Alternative designs
 - Design simulation
 - Understanding the problem domain
 - Reasoning strategy

Supporting design teams

- Designers usually work in teams but often they will have their own tasks, so support for both individual and team work is important.
- A team structure introduces factors of communication and coordination that affect the kind of support that is appropriate.
- Effective communication requires access to each other and each other's ideas and partial designs, use of a common language, a way of tracking and recording ideas and decisions, etc. More importantly, it requires an environment that promotes ease of communication.
- Team design complicates the goal of involving the user in the design process, too.

Different kinds of support

Examples:

- Support for guidance
- Support for communicating and recording design decisions
- Software support