

DAI 627 Virtual Worlds Design – Spring, 2009
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FINAL PROJECT SPECIFICATION v1.0

CONCEPT DESIGN PROPOSAL & RESEARCH

Task: To research, develop a concept, experiment with the concept, and do first-version DESIGN PROPOSAL documents for an original virtual world or an original virtual world application (e.g. activity, club, game, learning resource, etc). Concept design must incorporate research and structured experimentation, and include visual aids (minimally sketches, maximally digital illustrations) and text to communicate what is proposed, based on the outline, below. If you are doing an original virtual world APPLICATION, e.g. a game, you must use the same outline, but address each item in terms of the “subset” of your application and, if relevant, what virtual world attribute or features your application relies upon.

A. Concept Design Proposal

1. Title
2. The Big Idea – concept summarized in 5 words
3. Target member – who is your core customer and why? Time to spend? Technical limitations?
4. Value Proposition – what does your “target” care about and need?
5. World Design Feature Categories:
 - a. Self – Appearance, Expression, Communication, Connection to Others, Persona and Reputation
Describe in detail and visual design
 - b. Place – World Story, Navigation, Purpose, Ownership, Creativity and Expression, Impact
Description and visual design
 - c. Purpose – Express, Connect, Create, Shop, Play, Explore, Learn, Socialize, Make Money
Describe - must relate very directly to the target.
 - d. Fun Things To Do – Imagine, Games, Vehicles, Learn, Sports, Pets, Quests, Movies, Invent, etc.
Description and visual design in concrete terms.
 - e. Society – Rules, Economy, Government, Judicial System, Safety System
6. World Design Plan – Visual Designs (minimally detailed sketches, maximally finished prototype illustrations). Depending on your concept, provide map, example location design, diagram of locations and relations to each other, examples of building design, object design, general avatar look, etc.
7. Interface Components – In-world and Graphical User Interface (e.g. menus, etc) visual designs communicating overall look and feel as well as how the primary components function. Text descriptions, sketches and/or prototype illustrations, sketches showing operation of GUI components, etc. For Applications, also provide detailed flow-charts showing how it works.
8. Out-World Components – Identify, describe, and offer at least sample design sketches for the Web-based companion-components to your virtual world/virtual world application, e.g. web site, member forum, member wiki, special interest groups, social event scheduling and notification, reputation-ranking, etc.

9. Research – All background research (other than the Experiment). (Text and images) What other virtual worlds were examined and what lessons (inspirational, contrasting, negative examples) were learned from them? If you are doing an application, what other in-world Applications did you research and what lessons did they offer? What readings did you access? (For other virtual worlds besides those dealt with in class, see Janis Nakano Spivack's pdf chart of virtual worlds as well as <http://www.virtualworldsreview.com> (though this was frozen in 2006).
10. Experiment Plan & Results – include (in this order):
 - Experiment Title
 - Scenario
 - Image/video Documentation of Experiment event
 - Summary of Feedback (from the feedback form and, for graduate students, SurveyMonkey results)
 - Description of how that contributed to the final concept design
 - The original, complete Experiment Plan