Minitrack Summary: Creating the Experience of Media — From Media Design to Media
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As is now obvious, our traditional notions of document are breaking apart as the very idea of "office memo" or "textbook chapter" are shapeshifting under the influence of new technologies. Media exists in many forms, and are now as likely to be email, pointers to web sites, references to IRC channels, images in the body of the document, even sound annotations and entire video segments. In this minitrack we reconsider what it means to have "documents" in the workplace and in our educational system as media types multiply and increasingly become realtime and connected in nature. And as importantly, how we come to create and use such diverse kinds of media.

In the three papers presented here, the topics of discussion range widely across the field:

**Vila, Beccue and Anadikar** in their paper “The Gender Factor in Virtual Reality Navigation and Wayfinding” consider what it means to navigate through a virtual reality space. As VR increasingly becomes a common media type, issues of navigation and finding-ones-way throughout a constructed space will become increasingly important. Intriguingly, the authors find a gender-difference in the way people navigate through VR spaces. They begin their discussion with a broad characterization of what it means to meaningfully navigate in a complex space – a discussion that pertains more generally to any kind of successful media use – and then turn their attention to how different groups actually behave in VR environments. It is interesting to consider that our media are demonstrably NOT used (and most probably, not perceived) in the same way by everyone. Context matters, past experience matters, and now, as shown here, it seems that gender matters as well.

**Mu and Galletta** inspect “The Influence of the Meaning of Pictures and Words on Web Page Recognition Performance” in their contribution, examining what it means to have meaningful visual design elements in web pages. As our field continues to experiment with new and ever more elaborate presentations of media, this study highlights the importance of consistency and task-salient elements in the content. Often, the authors point out, web designers (in particular) go for glitz and flash in their presented media – but as this study shows, this tendency will sacrifice memorability (and therefore overall utility) for short-term appeal.

**Russell and Dieberger** show how “Synthesizing evocative imagery through design patterns” can be accomplished by using design patterns to guide the automated creation of visual summaries. They observe that a common task of media users is to navigate through ever-larger collections of content. By automatically creating summaries of collections, in a way that is both evocative and visually appealing, they hope to begin to crack the problem of media overload that burdens nearly everyone. This paper aligns the problems of navigation (as discussed in Vila et al.) with the question of image meaningfulness (as in Mu & Galletta), proposing a technique that combines a navigation technique with media design.

Collectively these papers create an interesting look into the future pathways of media evolution. As we develop ever more sophisticated media forms (e.g., VR and beyond), we still need to solve the basic problems of good design, use, and navigation. These problems are eternal, and this session illustrates the work going on to solve them.