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By means of contextmapping, different stakeholders become involved in the development process; user insights are translated to possible solutions, products and services. The theory and techniques are still under development and should not be seen as a strict set of instructions. Different methods and approaches are continuously explored and tested. Interesting starting point of this years' elective: large companies versus small sized enterprises.

Theory in practice - LEs versus SMEs*

Contextmapping is a qualitative research technique in which researchers, designers and participants, are involved intensively over a longer period of time. Hence this research technique is time-consuming and therefore expensive. As a result, the technique is more likely to be applied in larger companies with large research budgets in contrast to small-medium sized enterprises (SMEs). However, contextmapping can also be of great importance for the latter.

Applying user-research for SMEs is recently catching on. Amongst others, the Hogeschool Utrecht and the Delft University of Technology are researching this topic. In addition to this research, Muzus and the DUT wanted to gain insight on the effectiveness and differences of contextmapping, for both large companies and SMEs.

These differences are explored by means of five case studies. The case descriptions can be found in the following chapters. Afterwards, the projects were evaluated and compared. The final chapter presents the conclusions of this comparison.



Kickoff: participating companies introducing themselves to the students and other companies

The participating companies of this year's elective were:

Large companies

- AkzoNobel (Division DIY | Flexa),
- E.ON Benelux
- Wacom Europe GmbH

Small-medium sized enterprises

- Difrax BV
- Kenneth Veenenbos industrieel ontwerp

* According to EU legislation, small and medium sized enterprises are defined as enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and whose annual turnover does not exceed EUR 50 million or whose annual balance-sheet total does not exceed EUR 43 million. Enterprises which exceed these numbers are defined as large enterprises.



Deliverable: interactive workshop with the sales and marketing department to communicate the results.



Informal lecture on contextmapping in practice

references

www.akzonobel.nl

www.eon-benelux.com

www.wacom.com

www.difrax.nl

www.kennethveenbos.nl