Sensemaking and Framing: A Theoretical Reflection on Perspective in Design Synthesis
Jon Kolko
We are fanatical about improving the world.

We choreograph cultural change through design.

We are not just a business. After 40 years, we're part of the cultural fabric.

Our work outlasts movements and fads.

Quality is our non-compromising obligation. We strive to change minds, touch hearts, and move markets.

We are curious, vigilant, expert, cost-driven, and aware of the need to save our scarce environments.

Our talent is both an art & a science. It is both business and culture.

Our clients are the key to our success. However, we don't take any b.s.—inside or outside.

We live honestly, open and without fear.

Humor and spirited fun are the essence of FOG.
We are fanatical about improving the world.

We choreograph cultural change... through design.

We are not just a business. After 40 years, we're part of the cultural fabric.

Our work outlasts movements and fads.

Quality is our non-compromising obligation. We strive to change minds, touch hearts, and move markets.

We are curious, vigilant, expert, cost-driven, and aware of the need to save our scarce environments.

Our talent is both an art & a science. It is both business and culture.

Our clients are the key to our success. However, we don't take any B.S.—inside or outside.

We live honestly, open and without fear.

Humor and spirited fun are the essence of FROG.
“It’s all about our people.”

Why?

Why is design about art, science, business, culture and people – and how can that possibly be the differentiator for a successful company?
A Working Theory of Design Synthesis:

Design synthesis is an abductive sensemaking process of manipulating, organizing, pruning and filtering data in an effort to produce information and knowledge.
A Working Theory of Design Synthesis:

Design synthesis is an abductive sensemaking process of manipulating, organizing, pruning and filtering data in an effort to produce information and knowledge.
A Working Theory of Design Synthesis:

Design synthesis is an abductive **sensemaking** process of manipulating, organizing, pruning and filtering data in an effort to produce information and knowledge.
A Working Theory of Design Synthesis:

Design synthesis is an abductive sensemaking process of manipulating, organizing, and interpreting data in an interpretive and creative fashion and without preconceived results.
“The process of searching for a representation and encoding data in that representation to answer task-specific questions... the process of creating a representation of a collection of information that allows the analyst to perceive structure, form and content within a given collection.”

Daniel Russell, et al
“We have found that [our framework] gives decision makers powerful new constructs that they can use to make sense of a wide range of unspecified problems. It also helps people to break out of old ways of thinking and to consider intractable problems in new ways... it is designed to allow shared understandings to emerge through the multiple discourses of the decision-making group.”

David Snowden, et al
“Sensemaking is, importantly, an issue of language, talk, and communication. Situations, organizations, and environments are talked into existence... Sensemaking is about the interplay of action and interpretation rather than the influence of evaluation on choice.”

Karl Weick, et al

The use of spoken language to describe what might be

Effective for growth and planning

A collaborative process

Highly subjective and requires deep interpretation

Unique to each person
“By sensemaking, modern researchers seem to mean something different from creativity, comprehension, curiosity, mental modeling, explanation, or situational awareness… Sensemaking is a motivated, continuous effort to understand connections (which can be among people, places, and events) in order to anticipate their trajectories and act effectively.”

Robert R. Hoffman, et al
“...reconceptualizes factizing (the making of facts which tap the assumed-to-be-real) as one of the useful verbings humans use to make sense of their worlds.”

Brenda Dervin

A process of education and meaning making

Occurs continually and forever

Is contingent on experience

Unique to each person
Sensemaking is highly dependent on a participant’s perspective and interpretation of a situation. Sensemaking is effective for, and integral to:

- Long-term socialization of complex problems
- Learning and education
- Completing specific tasks
- The stages of problem solving
- Organizational growth and planning
A Working Theory of Design Synthesis:

Design synthesis is an abductive sensemaking process of manipulating, organizing, pruning and filtering data in an effort to produce information and knowledge.
Complex problem
Poorly articulated boundaries
Ill-defined set of stakeholders
Unclear measures of success
Lots of value
Lots of revenue
Lots of synthesis

Complex problem
Poorly articulated boundaries
Ill-defined set of stakeholders
Unclear measures of success
A robust process of synthesis is most useful on programs that are:

Identifying an opportunity or a problem to solve
Determining an appropriate point of intervention in a process
Defining a corporate strategy
Addressing a large social problem
Creating “innovative” ideas
for example ...
10 Million
Total population of KwaZulu-Natal

4 Million
People estimated HIV infected in KwaZulu-Natal.

500,000
People who have been tested and know their status.

400,000
HIV positive people who will develop AIDS each year.

200,000
People currently in treatment.

120,000
People will are likely to complete a 2 year regiment of treatment.
“I don’t want people to see me standing in queues. I want it to be private and secret.”
When you call you can set up a prompt for a 6-month “Call me back” to remind you to take another test.
User Scenario: Bheki, 19

1. PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

- Packaging
- Instructional Materials
- Pocket Guide

- Sends sms
- Receives voicemail
- Sends PCM
- Requests reminder

- Voicemail
- PCM Hep #
- PCM
- SMS Reminder

2. DATA SERVICES

- Call Center

3. CALL CENTER

- HIV Expert Support

4. MEDICAL STAFF
Text message

From: gustavpraek

Please call me: 0824593656
U-HIV positive, uizwza
ucwasekile abasekhaya
nabangani? Ukuthula usisozo
shayela ku AIDS Helpline
08000012322

Options

Back
“I think they would love this kind of test. People are so afraid to go to the clinic. We would like to have this test instead.”
“You’re very late. I’ve watched so many of my friends die, because they are too scared to go to the clinic.”
10 Million
Total population of KwaZulu-Natal

4 Million
People estimated HIV infected in KwaZulu-Natal.

500,000
People who have been tested and know their status.

400,000
HIV positive people who will develop AIDS each year.

200,000
People currently in treatment.

120,000
People will be likely to complete a 2 year regimen of treatment.

From October 1, 2008 – January, 2010:

350 Million
PCMs sent to South Africans

1.2 Million
Calls to the AIDS help line, attributed directly to PCM messages sent

300%
Increase in calls to the AIDS help line
When you call, you can set up a prompt for a 6-month “call me back” to remind you to take another test.
User Scenario: Bheki, 19

1. PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

- Packaging
  - sends message (sms)
- Instructional Materials
  - receives voicemail
- Pocket Guide
  - sends message (PCM)

2. DATA SERVICES

- Voicemail
  - receives message
- PCM Hep #
  - sends message (PCM)
- PCM
  - requests reminder
- SMS Reminder
  - sends message (邬C)

3. CALL CENTER

- Call Center
  - receives call back from AIDS hotline
- Call Center Counseling
  - receives message (邬C)

4. MEDICAL STAFF

- HIV Expert Support
User Scenario: Bheki, 19

1. PHYSICAL COMPONENTS
   - Packaging
   - Instructional Materials
   - Pocket Guide

   - sends sms
   - receives voicemail
   - sends PCM
   - requests reminder

2. DATA SERVICES
   - Voicemail
   - PCM Hep #
   - PCM
   - SMS Reminder

   - receives call back from AIDS hotline

3. CALL CENTER
   - Call Center
   - Call Center Counseling

4. MEDICAL STAFF
   - HIV Expert Support
Sensemaking is highly dependent on a participant’s perspective and interpretation of a situation. Sensemaking is effective for, and integral to:

Long-term socialization of complex problems
Learning and education
Completing specific tasks
The stages of problem solving
Organizational growth and planning
A Working Theory of Design Synthesis:

Design synthesis is an abductive sensemaking process of manipulating, organizing, pruning and filtering data in an effort to produce information and knowledge.
Thanks