

## Abstracts in English

*Mika Pantzar and Elizabeth Shove*

### Fossilisation of consumption objects and practices

Apart from the fact that consumption objects and practices are born, they also die. Consumer research has thus far mainly concentrated on the birth of consumption practices or innovations, while their death or “fossilisation”, remains outside the mainstream. It may be well to balance the field of consumer research by turning attention from innovations to fossilisations instead. Consumption practices are processes of autopoietic integration, composed of material objects, symbols, images and know-how. These components, moving from place to place, are renewed through practice. People create consumption practices and adapt to them, but also abandon them. By examining these fossils, i.e. traces of disintegrated and dispersed practices, we can learn more about past consumption patterns.

*Oskar Korkman*

### Adult imitation and other consumption practices on ferry cruises

An understanding of customer practices and of how business enterprises can enhance such practices forms the basis for new service innovations. Customer practices are contextually produced ways of acting. This study examined families on a ferry cruise between Finland and Sweden. Altogether 21 different customer practices could be identified, three of which are presented in more detail: imitation of adult behaviour, dining rituals, and time off from the family. Indeed, it is more beneficial

for business development to gain a profound understanding of the actual practices of customers than of their motives. Studies aiming to understand customer practices should, in fact, be a viable alternative to traditional market studies based on the “customer’s voice”.

*Virve Peteri*

## Media geography of the home

Studying the world of domestic objects can teach us something new about home life as well as about the relationships between media forms. The introduction of different forms of media into the home at the same time creates conceptions of what we mean by a good home life and of how domestic life should differ from other life spheres outside the home. Media technologies contribute to the ritualistic line-drawing between domestic and work life. Today technologies are elements of the spatial arrangement of homes – each home articulating its own particular idea about matters like the right use of the computer at home. Among various arrangements of media technology in the home, the article describes the library and archive room, the work room, the family room and the entertainment centre in more detail.

*Riitta Nieminen-Sundell and Sara Routarinne*

## Interior design and electronics: strangers to each other

Interior design and IT magazines offer several models for combining home furnishings and modern technologies. A study of material picked from these magazines shows that design magazines tend to marginalise entertainment and communication technology, while IT magazines close their eyes from the context of the home. These two different species of objects are bound to meet in the community of domestic objects, but fitting them together is not easy. The above division of labour in the printed media seems to reflect a corresponding division between the world of design and the world of engineering. The reconciliation problems faced by consumers can be seen as a special challenge for industrial designers.

*Jari Luomanen*

## Hobbies and the Internet

Hobbies and the Internet form an increasingly important part of people's lives. This study explored the relationship between these two based on 68 interviews. The use of the Internet was seen either as somehow questionable or as an acceptable activity, depending on the use context. A particularly interesting finding is that a relation to hobbies made Internet use understandable and acceptable. Hobbies were described as serious, long-term activities that often bear elements of personal development.

*Heli Rantavuo*

## Photographic art on a multimedia phone

The project entitled "Moby Click" tested the potential of a Nokia multimedia phone as a device for visual communication. Art students were asked to build an exhibition for the Kiasma museum of contemporary art in Helsinki by using the multimedia phone. The assignment resulted in four photographic artworks and one which utilised MMS messages. The study that followed examined why the multimedia communication device transformed into a photography camera in the students' use. Students' perception of the multimedia phone proved to be different in a work context, i.e. building an exhibition, than it was in a private context, in which it was used in multiple ways. The article discusses why there was such a marked difference between work use and private use and what aspects to consider if people working in an art context are asked to act as test users of new technology.

*Eva Heiskanen and Kaarina Hyvönen*

## Consumers as developers of speech recognition

From the standpoint of product development it is important to be in direct interaction with future users. This project tested the participation of consumers in the development of telephone services based on speech recognition. The project was implemented in two phases: we first arranged a demo trial of the service including a questionnaire for a wide group of consumers, and followed this with group discussions to

deepen the collected data. Participants gave feedback, identified needs for development as well as described their own use environment and came up with new service ideas. We also looked at how consumer feedback and perceptions were utilised to develop the service. It became evident that a fairly simple trial like this was able to provide answers to many questions and raised new, challenging issues for product development.

*Petteri Repo, Kaarina Hyvönen and Mika Saastamoinen*

### User-driven development of a tourist moblog

The development of popular, novel mobile services has proved quite a demanding task. We studied the feasibility of transforming a mobile service for businesses (b2b) into a mobile service for consumers (b2c). The focus of this pilot study was a moblog service for tourists. The results raised a number of commercially important questions. We were particularly interested in how active user participation might promote product development and help to direct the process. From the product developers' perspective, user participation in the development process coupled with personal interaction between product developers and users turned out to be a fruitful, albeit demanding, experience worth investing in.

*Päivi Timonen, Katja Järvelä and Sanna Piironen*

### Interactive new packaging design

It is often through packages that production and consumption meet in the market. In autumn 2005 the National Consumer Research Centre organised two workshops in the field of packaging to come up with new package ideas for the future, stemming from consumers' everyday lives. The entire product chain – from industrial manufacturers and users of packages and the trade sector to ordinary consumers – took part in testing the viability of such collaboration in the commercialisation of novelties in packaging. The greatest benefit to actors in the packaging sector was that the workshops enabled a dialogue beyond the traditional discussion based on customership. The packaging sector appears to have both a willingness and need to extend this dialogue and see consumers

more broadly than before as part of the development community, not just as choosers of products in the shop.

*Sampsa Hyysalo*

## User knowledge in the 2000s

An innovation will not take root unless it is useful and sufficiently easy to use. The greatest single reason for product development failures is an insufficient understanding of the needs of the product's would-be users and use environments. This text applies the summary of my recent book *User knowledge and methods of user research* (in Finnish) to discuss why user knowledge is in such demand today both in the Finnish business and education sectors, what its primary areas of emphasis are, and what future challenges are foreseeable. The theses which outline answers to these questions are based on a 10-year research programme to identify the demands faced by Finnish high-tech SMEs in planning new-technology use. The lifecycles of high-tech products were followed in the programme from the early planning phase to product use and the birth of new generations of product versions.

*Tanja Kotro*

## Users in product development: blood, sweat and images

Interviews made in business enterprises repeatedly show that whenever discussion turns to the users of the product or service and to methods of obtaining user knowledge, interviewees tend to think of users primarily as test users, people who are involved in product development for only a short while. The test user with his or her opinions and use experiences represents for them the wide mass of potential users. Enterprises themselves seldom recognise the many other ways in which the user is involved in the product development process. Yet much has been written in the literature on the hidden assumptions about the user created by every choice made in product development. The product developer's assumptions, experiences and images of the potential user affect the product but often fail to be analysed in the product development process.

*Pekka Isomursu*

## Personal content lifecycle in mobile product design

The market success of a new multimedia device is influenced by the consumer's total user experience of the product, starting with its image prior to purchase and on to its discarding and potential recycling. Still, ease of daily use continues to be the foundation that must first be in place. To make product use as easy as possible designers should seek an advance understanding of the specific features of users and the diverse elements of multimedia. Modelling the content lifecycle helps to build such an understanding. It makes it possible to outline the main user functions of the new device already at the design stage and to see whether the tools needed in each lifecycle phase are there. The article discusses the importance of content lifecycle modelling and the distinctive characteristics of mobile content and describes the lifecycle model of personal mobile content in more detail.

*Ilpo Koskinen*

## Everyday sociology of a mobile user interface

The Californian conversation analyst Harvey Sacks observed in the 1960s that callers to a suicide helpline were advised to find help in a certain order: only after having sought help from family and friends were they directed to consult an expert. Sacks suggested that this observation, insignificant in itself, represents a very common mode of social behaviour. In talking with other people we categorise them and expect certain behaviour from those belonging to a certain category, and these expectations then guide our own actions. The article analyses the Nokia communicator using the categorisation analysis developed by Sacks based on this observation. Behind the communicator's physical structure, interface and packages opens up an entire social world: designers have designed the product for a certain type of people, relying on their own everyday sociological guesswork.

*Heidi Grönman*

## Creative and tame features of consumption

In their own domestic settings, consumers use products both in the ways intended by the manufacturer (tame consumer) as well as differently from the manufacturer's intentions (creative consumer). From a consumer's own standpoint, his or her creativity or tameness is a matter of routine, everyday activity. The article describes "correct" and "incorrect" daily use of products using examples from interviews. Of the many parallel meanings of domestic objects the article presents the use of a product as a medium for memory storage. Since usage is unpredictable in this respect, designing product use seems intriguing and challenging base for product development.