



Tourism Sociabilities and Place: *Challenges and Opportunities for Design*

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Proposing new design opportunities, this paper challenges received notions of tourism, arguing that tourism is fundamentally social and concerned with making place. This turn makes tourism not only a convenient testing ground for technology concepts, but increasingly also for more sensitive renderings of, and interventions in, tourism as a relational and social practice. Using examples from commercial, arts, and design projects, and providing excerpts from our own fieldwork and design workshops with tourists and locals, this paper outlines three challenges through a conceptual lens that we see as productive for appropriate interaction design of tourism technologies.

Keywords – Design, Fieldwork, Place, Place Making, Tourism.

Relevance to Design Practice – Whilst ubiquitous technologies seem obvious candidates for supporting tourists, tourism can be viewed as practices that transcend sightseeing and information retrieval. This paper advocates for a richer conceptual commitment to ‘tourism’ to fuel innovation by suggesting challenges for appropriate technological responses to tourists’ increasing mobility and integrated use of IT.

Citation: Bødker, M., & Browning, D. (2013). Tourism sociabilities and place: Challenges and opportunities for design. *International Journal of Design*, 7(2), 19-30.

Introduction

The shape of tourism has altered significantly since the halcyon days of packaged destinations, having long grown beyond venerated branded images such as Copenhagen’s The Little Mermaid or the Sydney Opera House. Whether we journey for work, or as backpackers, or to visit friends and families in our extended global network, agendas are now frequently far removed from mass tourism’s archetypical dependence on high-recognition place iconicity and canonical affect. This can be seen in current social media formats such as the Secret #London (insert your favourite #capital here) Facebook pages, the slow tourism movement (see e.g., http://slowmovement.com/slow_travel.php), or what Lew (2008) broadly terms the “long tail” niches of tourism products and economies. Thus, whilst the classical tourist places are still ripe with meaning and emotional impact, tourist intentions and expectations, tourist itineraries, and the sites where tourism is performed are becoming increasingly complex and diverse.

As technology researchers and designers, our understanding of tourism has barely altered, even if important advances have been made in related research arenas. In tourism research, one important academic strain within which these changes have been reflected is the mobilities paradigm (e.g., Franklin & Crang, 2001; Larsen, 2008; Larsen, Urry, & Axhausen 2007; Urry, 2002, 2007). Broadly speaking, these authors propose that the virtual and physical mobilization of things, people and practices, are central characteristics of modernity. For instance, the extension of networks, by virtue of increased access to means of corporeal and virtual mobility, allows places previously reserved for *either* tourists *or* locals to become contested and negotiable. Mechanisms of mobility and globalization, such as the increase in visits to friends and family abroad, bring about new itineraries

as previously ‘local enclaves’ or mundane spaces, such as residential areas or predominantly local places, become accessible and relevant for touristic curiosity (Urry, 2007). In addition, tourism as a fundamentally place-based social practice does not die with those digital services that have brought distant people and places closer together virtually. Jansson (2002) argues that whilst virtual landscapes of the digital age may have provided us with new forms of (mediated or simulated) mobilities, socio-physical co-location plays a *fundamental* role in tourism, particularly by deepening the meaning of ‘authenticity.’ Hence, while some, e.g., Urry (1995), suggest a “death of tourism” by way of an ubiquitous mediatisation of places and the fundamental desires of tourism, rendering tourism a part of the mundane (and mediated) everyday, Jansson (2002) suggests that in a thoroughly mediatised landscape, the “realness” of the embodied *here and now* is attaining increasing importance. The above are examples of the conceptual frame within which we believe designers should approach tourism.

In this paper, we propose this re-envisioning as a starting point for how designers of technologies such as mobile and place-based technologies (e.g., Hornecker, 2006; Messeter, 2009; Paay, Kjeldskov, Howard, & Dave 2009) might think about

Received March 16, 2012; Accepted May 12, 2013; Published August 31, 2013.

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tourism. We argue that tourism can have ‘meeting the other’ as an important experiential agenda. In meeting the other, ‘places’ attain special meaning and are given affective substance, with social interactions being integral to the making of places in tourism. Such interactions may be played out both between tourists and other tourists, and between tourists and locals, the latter providing much of the social and cultural furniture of place. As Larsen et al. (2007) suggest, tourism is increasingly concerned with making “connections with [rather] than escape from, social relations” (p. 245). Understood in this way, tourism is a particular sensory and social practice that is performed in continuous interaction with other people’s performances in place. In a theoretically grounded turn away from narrow definitions of tourism as sightseeing, navigation or information finding, this paper seeks to foreground the notion of sociabilities and place making as essential components of tourism.

The paper has two main themes: *First*, whilst a detailed review of the literature is beyond the scope of this paper, we consider some influential prototypes for mobile, ubiquitous, and pervasive information systems ostensibly aimed at tourists. Issues addressed in mobile and ubiquitous computing research seem straightforwardly applicable to the field of tourist practices. Tourists are, by definition, mobile bodies (Urry, 2007) engaged in pleasurable or challenging problem-solving behaviours (Brown & Chalmers, 2003), and have a heightened and curiosity-driven awareness towards their physical, social, and cultural environment (Graburn, 1989). Hence, from a technological perspective, designing mobile, ubiquitously networked information devices might seem obvious. However, we argue that while there is much merit in the technical research carried out, there is a lack of broader, conceptual work about tourists in the technology and design oriented literature.

Secondly, we suggest that the concepts of sociabilities in ‘place making’ can be generative for creativity in ubiquitous and pervasive technologies for tourists. In designing for mobile, ubiquitous interaction with digital devices and networks, it is important to understand touristic place making and the ‘placeness’ of tourist sites, rather than simply assuming that tourists just need improved systems to assist them with way-finding and location-dependent information about sights. We argue that place making as a concept enables us to develop more relevant and timely technological responses to the field of tourism. To explore sociabilities in tourism, we draw on examples from

exploratory fieldwork using “accompanied tourism” inspired by Healy, Beverland, Oppewal, and Sands (2007) and Egocentric Point-of-View Camera work by Browning, Benckendorff, and Bidwell (2009). The research was conducted on Magnetic Island, Australia, and in Copenhagen, Denmark. Drawing on this work as well as the conceptual frame put forth in the introductory sections of this paper, we suggest three significant challenges to mobile and pervasive interaction design in the domain of tourism.

Information Technology and Tourism

While not necessarily living up to Mark Weiser’s seminal pledge for seamless interaction with ‘smart’ environments (see e.g., Bell & Dourish, 2007), mobile devices satisfy one of the central promises of ubicomp to allow people ‘accompanied’ computing away from the desktop. At the same time, tourism is an embodied practice that has mobility at its heart (Urry, 2007). With the increasing popularity and adoption of small, mobile computers, several projects within the field of IS (Information Systems) research and HCI (Human-Computer Interaction) have been conceived to explore how tourists might benefit from mobile technologies. With inspiration from the influential Cyberguide project by Abowd, Atkeson, Hong, Kooper, and Pinkerton (1997) and the GUIDE project by Davies, Mitchell, and Cheverst (1998), other projects have focused on mobile guide systems for tourism. For example the mobiDENK project by Krosche, Baldzer, and Boll (2004) show how historical monuments, an archetypical feature of a tourist site, can be embedded with smartphone or PDA accessible information. Similar kinds of sightseeing information systems are proposed in, for example, Park, Nam, and Shi (2006) as well as work by Garcia, Linaza, Arbulu, Torre, and Cobos (2008).

However, the conceptual underpinnings of tourism and what being a tourist means are rarely considered in the field of IS, HCI, and ICT (Information and Communication Technology) research. In particular, much technical research that is ostensibly connected to travel and tourism treats geographical displacement and sightseeing/guide information needs as the primary challenges for mobile and ubiquitous tourism technologies to solve. For example, the Cyberguide project proposes that, “The long-term goal is an application that knows where the tourist is, what she is looking at, can predict and answer questions she might pose, and provide the ability to interact with other people and the environment” (Abowd et al., 1997, p. 422). While it is unclear what kinds of interactions the system is designed to afford, the statement that the system should “know where the tourist is, what she is looking at” (Abowd et al., 1997, p. 422) hints at a relatively simplistic understanding of tourist behaviour.

The application of mobile and ubiquitous technologies in tourist settings has also given rise to the import of particular conceptualisations of behaviour and experience; arguably concepts of behaviour and experience that fit well with a ‘computational’ view of context that ubiquitous computing research inherited from computer science (Dourish, 2006a). Critiquing work on location-aware and context-sensitive technologies, Messeter

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(2009) argues that, “[r]ather than tapping into the social and cultural practices of particular places to inform design and provide contextual grounding, most location-aware systems restrict focus to different mechanisms and strategies for making the information provided place-specific” (p. 31). Hence, while the early work on mobile IT for tourists has been generative of a wide range of technical insights, it would seem that the application area of the technology was selected primarily because tourism provided a fitting and recognizable field of practice unto which technological concepts could be projected (Bødker & Browning, 2012).

The works of Brown and Chalmers (2003), Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier (2009), Axup, Viller, McColl, and Cooper (2006), and Bilandzic, Foth, and De Luca (2008) constitute four significant exceptions to this focus. Brown and Chalmers use an ethnographic study with ethnomethodological sensibilities to draw out implications for the design of tourist mobile technologies. Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier use ‘netnography,’ (adapted from Kozinets, 2002), to analyse and understand spatial patterns of tourist experiences. Both studies emphasize the need to approach tourism as a practice that takes place in the interaction with a particular setting. Where Brown and Chalmers focus on the improvised and collaborative problem solving that tourists typically engage in when at a destination, Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier focus on what they tentatively call the ‘tourist experience.’ They emphasize how tourist experiences and practices are mediated by mobile technologies, and point towards implications for design. Axup et al. propose lo-fi prototyping interventions to explore social practices between backpackers. Particularly focussing on matchmaking algorithms on mobile devices, Axup et al. study how lo-fidelity prototyping can disclose new perspectives on tourist socialising practices. Bilandzic et al. provide a design case for a system that enables social navigation as well as sharing of local knowledge and experiences. The system works on the premise that places are inherently contingent and dynamic, and that social navigation, as opposed to navigation using static representational tools such as maps, enables the expression of different kinds of knowledge and lowers barriers of access.

Yet few, if any, within the field of IT, IS, HCI, and design, have considered the nexus of tourism, tourist places and place making in any detail. What, beyond informational practices such as navigation, wayfinding, guiding and accessing info about sights, might coalesce into mobile tourism IT in the age of (near) ubiquitous data networks? Interaction design that engages with tourism needs to be sensitive to tourism’s inherent complexities, and thus needs to develop a vocabulary that can reflect the more nuanced challenges. For this, we find the concept of *place* to be a useful starting point.

Making Place

Experience of place and the making of place is the infusing of location with myriad meanings, and is a fundamental socio-cultural accomplishment (e.g., Strauss, 1961). Place is not prescriptive, but socially negotiated, contested, and dynamic.

It is part of a process that involves both global mediatisation and discursive or political representations, as well as localized socialities performed in place.

Tourist Sites as Socially and Culturally Interactive Places

A turn towards tourism as a site of negotiation, and, to some degree, contested, is represented in various critical positions within tourism research. Hollinshead (1999), for example, argues for the utility of a Foucauldian vocabulary in tourism studies that entails understanding places as continuously striated with struggles for control, power, and meaningfulness, thus illuminating the systemic effects visitor behaviour and tourist place making efforts might have for the various constituents of networks in place, including local cultures and practices, ecologies, economic networks and public management. In their work on *travel as interaction*, White and White (2008) argue that social interactions whilst travelling are central to the creation and negotiation of a tourist identity and its attendant place making. In a study of a tourist party travelling in the Australian outback, they show how social interactions between tourists were regularly performed with reference to the desolation, grandeur, or perceived dangers. For example, anxieties associated with travelling through the strange and hostile environment were exposed through transitory social encounters, centred on their evolving perceptions of the landscape. Rogelja (2002) provides an ethnography of local fishing practices that leads to insights on the bi-directional shaping of identities between tourists and local workers. Rogelja notes how locals co-operate tacitly in the gradual stabilization of touristic representations of their lifestyles as authentic and connected to nature. Thus, romanticised versions of small-scale fisheries are produced for tourists to consume. The identities of a fishery and authenticity were constructed to better fit the touristic desires of the visitors (see also Urry, 1995). This entailed, for example, less fishing with dragnets that represent more industrial and thus less ‘authentic’ practices. The process of visiting and meeting for better or worse, requires properties of mutual reshaping of hosts and guests (e.g., Black, 1996; Coleman & Crang, 2002).

Such on-going dialogues give places their meaning and the tensions between itinerant, passer-by relationships to place, and long-term relationships with place provide interesting interstices for technological intervention.

Technological Interventions: *Three Examples*

New forms of sociality that have their basis in tourist encounters have become possible through digital social networking technologies. The desire to engage in “becoming local” is a potential mode of tourist experience that is aided by established sites such as *spottedbylocals.com*, *localyte.com*, and *couchsurfing.com*, as well as a range of weblogs and Facebook pages with local travel tips. Similarly, several context sensitive smartphone apps draw on a similar trope of becoming local.

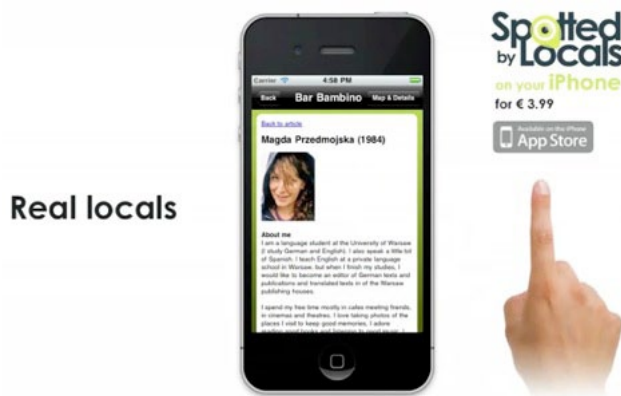


Figure 1. Spottedbylocals.com - iPhone app promising “real locals”, © spottedbylocals.com, reprinted with permission.

Spottedbylocals promises “a series of blogs, PDF city guides and iPhone apps with up-to-date tips by handpicked local bloggers.” The editors tell us, “(B)y experiencing cities the local way, you learn about the culture and habits of the inhabitants. We are convinced a better understanding of different cultures will make the world a better place. We think we can make a modest contribution!” (<http://www.spottedbylocals.com/>).

At first glance, this might just be another information service that differentiates itself by providing information from ‘within.’ However, the descriptions by local ‘spotters’ indicate that what Bødker and Browning (2012) call ‘pride-in being local’ could work to mobilize local engagement in non-commoditised tourist encounters. One local ‘spotter’ (called Frederikke, in Copenhagen) for instance describes herself in this way on the *spottedbylocals* website:

“I come from a family of devoted Copenhageners, so the love for my city is in my blood. When I was a child, my father used to ride his bicycle around the city and show me the beautiful sights of the Danish Capital. And I knew right then and there that I loved Copenhagen. I still feel the same way but now I explore and enjoy the city on my own or with friends” (<http://www.spottedbylocals.com/>).

Many tourists seek out what they would describe as ‘authentic’ experiences. While a complex and multifaceted concept in itself, authenticity often includes wanting to engage practically with a local community and becoming familiar with the tourist destination surroundings at a local, back-stage level (e.g., Allon, 2004; MacCannell, 1999; Pearce & Moscardo, 1986). In the case of Frederikke, pride in being local is a driver for local commitment to engage in an explicit involvement in tourist experiences.

Far from the commercial settings of services like *spottedbylocals.com*, technologies may also provide locals with tools to mount a pluralistic resistance towards commoditized authenticity and touristic constructions of cultural ‘gazeability.’ Eric Fischer’s work on local and tourist photography provides unusual visual insights into where locals and tourists differ and overlap in terms of taking pictures in urban areas around the

world. Using OpenStreetMap.com, and geographical data from images taken by users of the online image sharing service flickr.com, Fischer creates tourist and local heat-maps of picture taking, marking out local images in blue, tourists in red, and ‘unknowns’ (where image data does not provide sufficient information) in yellow.

Giving no instructions or recommendations on how to use the images, the images emphasize the disparity of local and touristic geographies. In Copenhagen (in Figure 2), what counts as important and worth taking pictures for those who have a long-term engagement with a place is different from those who are iterant passers-by. This is hardly surprising. However, on closer scrutiny, there seems to be more depth to Fischer’s work. As a technological artefact that uses web-based technologies as well as digital geo-data, the “Locals and Tourists” maps might be used as geographical representations of resistance from both sides of tourism: the visitor and the host. For locals, Fischer’s work provides a visualization of tourist densities, suggesting perhaps where *not to go* or what *not to see* if one is to be taken as a ‘real’ local. Similarly, for the tourist, the maps challenge the understanding of Copenhagen as exotic and unique, suggesting that what is consumed, as a ‘traveller’ in Copenhagen, is in reality the same product that is consumed by the mass tourist. Thus, although far too ambiguous to be a *bona fide* tourist guide, such maps might be used to spot possibilities for more ‘authentic’ (i.e. ostensibly non-commoditised) sights.

Galloway, Sundholm, Ludvigsen, and Munro (2003) provide examples of speculative interaction design interventions into the experiential landscape of city tourism. Their work consisted of practice-based situationist responses in the effort to deconstruct city tourism that they find to offer “a predictable,



Figure 2. “Locals and Tourists.” Tourist images are marked red, locals are blue, and unknowns are yellow. Copenhagen, Denmark. CC Erik Fischer, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/walkings>, 2010, reproduced with permission of the artist.

mass-produced and strangely *isolating* experience” (p. 3). Through engaging in city touring and using sensibilities originating in the situationist arts tradition, the group used field work and playful lo-fidelity prototyping to stimulate new forms of interactions between tourists and locals. The design work involved a brief that emphasized the mutually shaping properties of tourism. Not only does visiting reshape the visitor, the visited also become tasked with adopting a particular view on their local places, often through commercial ‘place-branding’ and place images. One intervention was the “rent-a-tourist,” which proposed that visitors could be rented to help with daily chores. According to the authors, the intervention “played with tourist vulnerabilities and dependencies by placing the tourist directly at the service of locals,” and it shifted “attention on the notion of co-dependency” (p. 3).

These three interventions explore and challenge the notion of tourism as either sightseeing or problem solving (e.g., way finding and information finding) by turning towards more ambiguous and open-ended aspirations of tourism. They exemplify Jansson’s (2002) point that virtual connectivity *at-a-distance* and the ubiquity of access to networks does not entail the “death of tourism,” but renders ‘thereness’ an even more important aspect of tourism. However, they are not merely about extending and deepening tourist experiences to incorporate more vernacular and ‘authentic’ practices. The examples should be seen as demonstrations of the effort to shift conventional representational powers in tourism. Rather than leave place making to outside players or, in the case of place-branding (Govers & Go, 2009), to commercial forces interested in attracting visitors, the examples consider how representations of tourist places can be performed from within. Galloway et al.’s (2003) reversal of relationships between guests and hosts, whilst acknowledged as infeasible, nevertheless serves to highlight the typical roles assigned to visitors and hosts respectively and, by ‘making strange’ such mundane distributions of power, the intervention offers ways to challenge them.

Tourist Place Making: Two Empirical Examples

As part of a larger project on tourist technologies, a series of short, exploratory field studies were conducted on Magnetic Island, Australia, and in Copenhagen, Denmark. The studies were conducted using a participatory or ‘accompanied tourism’ method (see Healy et al., 2007 for an example from retail shopping ethnography), which we dubbed ‘walk-alouds.’ Adding a further component to the method, we attached small cameras to tourists’ hats to facilitate *egocentric point of view video* (EgoPOV, see Browning et al., 2009) in order to render data that would supplement the researchers’ more immediate interpretation of the activities. We conducted four accompanied, full day tourism trips combined with EgoPOV video on Magnetic Island, a small island off the North Queensland coast. In total, seven tourists were followed, each for a full day. In each case, a single researcher made additional third person video recordings and took field notes.

The second field-study we report on was a meeting between a young visiting American tourist and five local students recruited from a university in Copenhagen, Denmark. The encounter took place in a public square near the university. Both the visitor and one of the five locals were equipped with shoulder mounted EgoPOV cameras (Oregon Scientific ATC2K). To follow up the encounter, we facilitated an exploratory design workshop with the American tourist to elicit views on what tourist technology might look like. Likewise, we hosted a workshop with four locals (three of whom met with the tourist in the encounter) to elicit their experiences of meeting tourists and to discuss what role interactive technologies might play in this. The findings should not be seen as representative of any particular ‘kind’ of tourism, but rather exemplify different kinds of interactions as they occur in social encounters during touristic visits.

Magnetic Island, Australia

On Magnetic Island the participants were Guy and Isa, a French couple in their mid 20s who had been travelling across Australia for several months, mixing work with leisure along the way. They embarked on a trip around the island, travelling in a small 4X4 that enabled access to most sites. After a bit of driving around and negotiating a bit of undergrowth by foot, they stopped at a small, secluded beach bounded by cliffs on two sides. The beach was anything but an overrun tourist enclave. Locals do visit the place, but the drive down to the beach is somewhat difficult, and there are other, more accessible beaches on the island.

Guy and Isa first oriented themselves on the foreshore, noticing a beat-up camper van and another couple engaged in some form of initially undecipherable activity. Guy and Isa then started describing the beach, noticing its beauty, a derelict metal chair on the beach, a ‘natural’ chair made from a tree stump under some trees, fantasizing about having a cup of coffee on the beach, idling all day, and relaxing in the sun. However, the camera on Guy’s hat showed him continuously orienting himself towards the beat-up van and the other couple, culminating in him saying, “Oh, I am jealous” and “How did they get the van ‘ere?” From having looked at and fantasized about what to do on the beach, Guy and Isa gradually closed in on the other couple, seeing that they were trying to dislodge a coconut from a palm tree with small piece of wood attached to a string. As Guy and Isa drew closer to the other couple (Bob and Alice, an Australian tourist couple), Guy looked up at the palm tree, commenting and cheering on Bob and Alice’s attempts at getting the coconut. Soon after, Guy and Isa also made an effort to get a coconut from another tree, imitating Bob and Alice. After some attempts they give up, and began approaching Bob and Alice more directly. Both parties then used shouts of encouragement, and finally Bob and Alice succeeded. They pick up the coconut, and Bob shrugs and remarks jokingly that it, “Only took two hours...,” Alice then used a knife to stab at the coconut. Isa asked Alice whether Guy should help, and together they began working on extracting the milk from the coconut.

Solbjerg Plads, Copenhagen

In Copenhagen, an encounter was staged between a young American tourist travelling independently to Denmark and four local students from Copenhagen Business School, recruited from a class on Social Informatics. As the study was designed to offer insights into interactional features of tourist-local interactions, we chose not to rely on what Silverman (2005) has termed ‘naturally occurring data’ such as observing incidental meetings between tourists and locals. The phenomena we were interested in eliciting are not necessarily typical ‘naturally’ occurring events. Rather, we felt the need to provoke a situation that would highlight some of the dynamics of ‘meeting the other’ in a tourist setting. Meeting locals is not a rare occurrence on a tourist visit, and using a staged setting allowed us to prolong and deepen the kind of interaction that we intended to study, rather than relying on ephemeral, short, and often professionalized meetings that are typical of local/tourist interactions (see e.g., Jaworski, Ylanne-McEwen, Thurlow, & Lawson, 2003).



Figure 3. Tourist’s design workshop.

During the conversation, which took place outside at a café in a small square, a recurrent element in the dialogue centred on cultural differences. Efforts were made to establish a degree of ‘sameness’ and an understanding of the shared situation. This conversational thread occurred in the context of both sides explaining how they came to be where they were when they met. It answered the tacit question, “So, what are you doing here and are you doing something similar to what I am doing?” Later, the conversation took a turn towards cultural *difference*. For example, the visitor, coming from the US ‘Bible Belt’ was unused to the consumption of alcohol, and had her second-ever beer at the meeting. This was in stark contrast to the local Danes who took some pride in the perception of Denmark as a liberal, open-minded, and tolerant culture. When the visitor asked where to go in Copenhagen, the liberal culture was again invoked as the locals recounted the story of Christiania at some length, with explanations of how it had become what one of the local participants described as, “a free state (...) outside of Danish

law and outside of everything.” The visitor was told about the non-payment of taxes and the open sale of marijuana. The telling demonstrated a lived familiarity, done with a sense of satisfaction that reflected an overt feeling of pride in being part of such a tolerant society.

The follow up workshops with both parties consisted of collaborative design exercises where the locals and the tourist were asked to come up with suggestions for technologies that would mediate encounters with tourists. The tourist’s response was to construct a paper prototype. This took the form of an imaginary device that combined a wide range of networking activities with semi-automated journal-type logging actions as well as a dynamic information service. So, rather than focusing on documenting or freezing a particular moment in time with a camera, the visitor’s prototype emphasized the dynamic, impermanent, and situated nature of visitor’s memories, and extended her reach into the locale, providing her not only with insider information but an enhanced means of connecting with others. For example, she imagined being able to ‘sense’ other visitors and locals in the immediate area who had access to similar technology and to network with them to the extent and depth that they wished to reciprocate. Whilst demonstrating her prototype during an excursion, she explained how not only would it allow her to browse location-relevant information, add pictures and status updates to her Facebook page, but it would also provide the means to access details of nearby similar technology users and act as a ‘ticket-to-talk.’ She emphasised the need to be able to control access to her own details and also to determine the path and level of persistence that any contact might take.

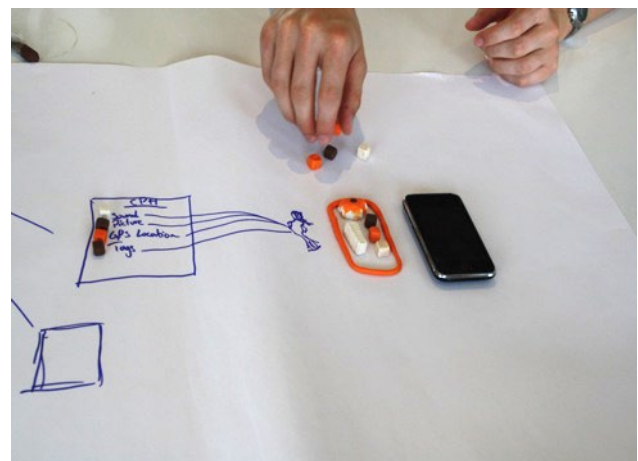


Figure 4. Locals’ design workshop.

The hands-on workshop with the four locals was conducted using dialogue around a table as a driver for motivating design suggestions. The dialogue revolved around two overarching themes. The locals first raised a question of what Copenhagen “really is” and how visitors were sometimes seen to rely on mediated images of Scandinavia and Denmark. On the other hand, if a local has friends or people they are in a relationship with visiting, they would actively assist them in trying to avoid iconic

sites and what they perceived to be tourist traps. The discussion also touched on the problem of talking to tourists. The locals particularly emphasized how Danes are introvert and unlikely to interact overtly with people they do not know. The second theme discussed was the importance of getting local insight to facilitate good experiences. The locals then began to picture themselves in the role of tourists, using their own tourist experiences as drivers for imagining how a technology could create experiences transcending the dependence upon iconic sites in the city.

Their design was a device that would interact with digitally enabled souvenirs, e.g., in the form of a regular souvenir with some embedded 'smart' technology and network capabilities, so that sounds, images, and video recorded in a particular place could be replayed when the tourist returned home. Also, the digital souvenirs could interact continuously with the places they represent, so that both locals and tourists who are still at the particular place could capture or create new sounds or videos that would be streamed to the appropriate devices. They emphasized the fleeting or glimpse-like character of the service, noting that interaction with the device should be peripheral and ambient rather than a focused activity. They further emphasized editorial control over what content to receive and share, whilst retaining a notion of serendipity and randomness.

Discussion

The brief collaboration that Guy and Isa staged with Bob and Alice on Magnetic Island reinforces the performance of the beach as 'useless beauty,' as a place for idling, where normal rules of efficiency and productivity are substituted for other concerns. These concerns are distanced from everyday life, and, in particular, from work. This place of uselessness was 'decorated' not only with artefacts (the chair, the tree, the van) and the topographical features (the beach, the cliffs, the seawater) but also with an ephemeral-but-intense encounter with Bob and Alice. As they left the beach, Guy said, "These are the best moments....," and again begins fantasizing about the pleasurable uselessness of the beach, and how, on returning to the beach, they might spend all day just getting a coconut from the tree. Thus, through social interaction, the place evolved, not as a place of quiet, natural, and unspoilt beauty, which is how local brochures tend to describe Magnetic Island, but as a place where an intense but short-lived and ephemeral social interaction was played out. The meeting entailed no promises or evocations of lasting friendship, and no transactions or reciprocity was expected from Bob and Alice once Guy and Isa were allowed into the playful setting. It was a meeting with others that served to put substance into the tourist experience, brought about by an openness that accompanies being outside one's everyday milieu.

The Coconut Beach encounter revealed the experience as fundamentally social, exemplifying how the meeting between the two couples came to be choreographed and performed in place. The collaboration played a central role in making place, enrolling a range of objects from the environment (sticks, trees, and coconuts), human artefacts (the van, a piece of string, a knife)

and socio-cultural actors (the two couples, mutual expectations based on knowledge about social norms for interaction, established tourist behaviours). The example showed how both collaboration and social interaction are part of the negotiation and construction of places in tourism. Embodied performances in place are key in this process. Guy and Isa, who demonstrated an interest in catching coconuts by gradually moving closer to Bob and Alice, appeared to indicate their interest in interacting. Not unlike examples given by Goffman (1967) on how body language is used to communicate and uphold mutual definitions of a situation, the parties at Coconut Beach used their bodies as props to help project their social orientation and their openness. The reciprocal behaviour in place can be understood as one of mutually acknowledging the importance and legibility of the others' activities *in situ*.

A large part of the interaction in the Copenhagen example revolved around an elaborate performance of local cultural aspirations, such as the laid-back and liberal alcohol and drug consumption, as well as relaxed attitudes towards religion. Such narratives can be understood as ways of exhibiting 'pride in being local' (Bødker & Browning 2012). The dialogue unfolded from orientational cues, innocuous, and non-offensive talk that had 'phatic' functions (see Lawson & Jaworski, 2007), gradually moving towards more controversial and challenging aspects of Danish culture vis-à-vis a North American, 'Bible Belt' sensibilities. While Lawson and Jaworski use the example of how economic inequalities motivate communication between British visitors and Gambian hosts, the interactions in Copenhagen entailed none of the transactional features of communication where narratives are exchanged for monetary gain. The curiosity and 'outsiderness' of the visitor worked as a driver for narratives about what was normal in a Danish context and how that might be perceived as foreign or controversial.

For example, the conversation around Christiania focussed on the difference between the two cultures, with the locals drawing upon familiar (to them) embedded social and cultural furniture. However, in this indexical context of generally shared understandings, the hosts were not 'simply' purveyors of local culture, and the visitor was not just a consumer of local flavour and exotic tableaux. For the locals, the value of the encounter was in part the pleasure of staging Copenhagen and Danish culture as different from US culture, and expressing succinct opinions about authenticity and the 'real' Copenhagen. Following up on the meeting with the tourist, one of the locals, who had served as a Queens Guard at the Royal Castle, told a story of silently standing at attention whilst tourists discussed where to go. Several times, when tourists mentioned that they would like to visit what he perceived to be an overrun tourist attraction, he had wished he could intervene with advice. Thus, whilst the interactants were more or less equal in economic and social standing, the locals were continuously asserting cultural inequalities or differences. This was not an experience of merely being an informational node in the network, but entailed pleasurable performances of a particular form of cultural capital that drew its authority from evoking 'Danishness' or an 'insightful Copenhagen.'

The American tourist made a number of observations about her prototype during the construction, debriefing following the workshop, and an excursion to demonstrate the prototype: An integrated device, since being a tourist was not just a sequence of discrete activities, but rather a processual flow of interactions that might involve way finding, information seeking, problem solving, experience recording, updating followers back home such as friends and family, and social interactions in the locale, with a number of these threads being maintained simultaneously. At the same time, the device must not get in the way of/detract from the delight of experiencing the 'other.' As an example, the tourist talked about having the camera function of the device rather like a film camera so the results of taking a picture were not immediately available for review thus avoiding the distraction afforded by digital devices that encourage instant evaluation of the captured images. She indicated the need for ownership over the information generated. Thus, for example, if what was a casual connection with another person was made in the immediate locale, then the default state would be that the connectivity would fade over a relatively short period of time, and that to persist, some positive action would have to be taken by both parties. That part of the purpose of the device was to capture some of the essence of being a tourist in a direct manner that afforded the persistence of the otherwise transient experience whilst also maintaining more immediate contact with the folks back home. These indicate some design goals that transcend current thinking in relation to designing for tourists. They attend to a desire for resources that draw upon the lived experience of tourism rather than provision of information services, guiding, and problem solving.

Complimenting the desires demonstrated in the tourist's prototype was an aspiration on the part of the locals to guide this process, using their local knowledge. The locals in the design workshop initially debated a notion of authenticity, expressing the occasional frustration when tourists were observed to be mindlessly visiting sites that were perceived to be iconic or overrun. As the dialogue unfolded, they found that any perceived "tourism problem" was not necessarily one-sided. One participant, for example, admitted that her first visit to Christiania (known as the 'free state,' a historical hub of Copenhagen subculture, now perceived as a somewhat unusual tourist attraction) was with visitors coming to Copenhagen. Thus, the experience of the local environment was enriched through the particular sensibilities that tourists perform when they visit. This theme lingered and was elaborated in the design solution, where emphasis was directed towards places as a particular kind of 'memory,' and how it would be possible to extend the experience of a place through knowing what dynamics of a place to activate when "mediating" places across digital platforms. Their design built on interconnectedness across distance, but also on ambient and ephemeral cues to assist tourists' memory work.

The examples from the fieldwork presented above demonstrate that tourist places are not simply stable containers of products or meanings. They entail an elaborate and collaborative making-of-place that unfolds through embodied and social interactions. Places may be constructed as nodes of local culture (such as in the Copenhagen example), or they might be, first and

foremost, more reserved enclaves where tourists are the agents of place making such as in the Magnetic Island example. However, tourism does not simply happen inside a structured space. It *takes place* and it requires a particular performed kind of engagement, drawing on the possibilities afforded by the geography as well as the cultural, social, and technological contexts.

We can understand tourist places as similar to dramatic stages whereupon embodied and social performances are played out. While there is scripting taking place, in the form of physical (things), social (e.g., expectations of what tourists are, what they should do) and cultural affordances (e.g., how things are done here and now), there is also room for improvisation and going outside formal scripts and expectations. The workshop with the American tourist in Denmark and Danish locals emphasized that tourist place making can be ephemeral and fleeting, consisting of a number of different interactions that take place simultaneously. Activities may be planned, but our workshop participants stressed the value of serendipitous and ephemeral encounters and activities, and the way in which connection or networks with places need not be a highly focused activity, but could take place through ambient media that supports affective recollection and story telling.

Interaction Design Challenges for Tourism

Drawing on the conceptual work, our explorative fieldwork and the two workshops, this section will attempt to isolate three significant challenges to appropriate technological approaches to, and future interventions in, interaction design for tourism. These challenges are not meant as 'implications for design' (for a critique of HCI's approach to 'implications for design,' see e.g., Dourish, 2006b), but seek to highlight how Interaction Design might critically begin to approach the field of tourism. The design of technological interactions in place has the possibility of fundamentally changing the fabric of places. In the examples of different technological interventions outlined above we saw how technological concepts and applications were appropriated to challenge implicit assumptions about the nature and practice of tourism. The concepts confront the view of the tourist as an isolated 'user,' focusing instead on relational aspects of tourists' place making.

In our brief and selective outline of tourism research literature, we emphasized the power of tourism as something that shapes cultures and sociabilities. While it would be naïve to suggest that the fact that IT is moving 'beyond the desktop' is key to solving challenges that arise from e.g., cultural dominance and the colonization of places by tourism and the associated unsustainable practices, IT 'beyond the desktop' does present us with new and enhanced options for shaping place making in tourism. At the same time, seeing tourism as a mutual reshaping in place should not be approached as inherently problematic. As our accounts from the field studies and the workshops suggest, social interaction and relations performed in place are central to some of the core experiential agendas of tourism. With regard to this view, locals or strangers are not incidental human furniture in tourist places, but crucial resources for performing tourism.

Design Challenge 1: Place as a Resource for Designing Tourism Technology

In our workshops, both tourists and locals understood place as an ephemeral, dynamic accomplishment. This emphasizes how places are socially performed in the course of an interaction between strangers, and similarly how identities are constructed temporarily and fleetingly in tourist places. Messeter (2009) and McCullough (2004) emphasize how *place* should be understood as a significant new material for Interaction Design. Both ask how designers of mobile and ubiquitous computer technology might work from (or *in*) place rather than from a view to addressing generic or specific needs or requirements of humans constructed as users. Thus, in relation to the design of tourism technologies, we suggest that a similar challenge emerges in turning from designing technology from a *tourist-as-consumer*'s perspective to focus on interaction design that appreciates the various identities performed in tourist places as resources for design. Rather than designing technologies for the tourist site as containers of information, understanding how places contribute to a mutual re-shaping of identities and practices provides an alternative direction. Interaction design for tourism entails questioning how social and cultural identities are negotiated in place, seeing place-based services and technologies as possible affordances for enhancing and extending the cultural and social interactions between touristic 'guests' and local 'hosts,' whilst attending to the ephemeral character of the networks produced in place. How might place making, as a relational accomplishment, be enhanced using mobile or other potentially 'place-centric' technologies? How are issues associated with e.g., local's possible willingness to share places managed when the social connections of tourism are fleeting and temporal?

Design Challenge 2: Tourism as Mutuality in Place

We have suggested that tourism can be seen as a diverse set of practices that imply questions of power and dominance over place. Who decides what places are 'about' and what constitutes appropriate behaviour in them? Can design of place-based technologies be a tool for reflecting on problematic relations of power and dominance in touristic settings? The challenge here is to acknowledge that the tourist as 'user' is often too limited a concept for technology design. In the context of tourism, the mutuality of place should be addressed in ways that are not inimical to tourists experience *per se*, but generative of the creation of pluralistic narratives of place. For example, how might being-looked-at from the outside be generative of stories about communities and localness, and what role might interaction design play in such processes? Such local forms of agency, somewhat similar to Schuler's (2012) notion of 'Civic Intelligence,' if applied to interaction design for tourism, should strive to understand the roles of outside forces and local dynamics of power and configurations of agency. How, for instance, are such ephemera as pride in being local expressed and brought into the tourist networks, and how might locals attain a voice in the otherwise professionalized staging of local places and cultures? Designing

place-based technologies provides a means for engaging in the productive plurality of visitors and hosts, paving ways for sustainable technological interventions. By attending to place and the meaning making of place as well as to the networks of people, things, and cultures that facilitate meaning making on both sides of the traditional divide in tourism, then interaction design can support performances of tourism that are more intimate, social, and culturally sustainable.

Design Challenge 3: Methodological Challenges to Design Ethnographies in Tourism

Apart from the above challenges that directly concern the conceptual understanding of tourism in design, we suggest that the means with which knowledge about tourism is gathered and represented in design processes is a vital concern for bringing about change in the approach to designing for tourism.

Being a tourist can be understood as a sensory practice; an experience that transpires from being displaced and immersed in a setting different from the everyday, and engaged in a process of making sense of place. The experience of *place* is not only a representational (or semiotic) practice, but, according to Thrift (2007), an immediate and multi-sensual engagement with one's surroundings. At the same time, interviews are still one of the most widely used methods in social research (Heath, Brooks, Cleaver, & Ireland, 2009) including research on tourism. The research interview or the survey does not capture those sensuous and affective experiences of place as it 'takes place.' Learning about participants' affective and sensory experiences is rarely an explicit part of a research plan, but occurs as serendipitous and embodied learning in the engagement with, and attention to, participants making meaning in place (Pink, 2009). Experiences from the fieldwork referenced in this paper suggest that accompanied *walk-aloud* methods such as EgoPOV provide ways to empathically share embodied experiences of tourists. In what is necessarily a subjective, limited, and culturally bound way, such methods provide ways of recognizing and to some extent sharing the thoughts, feelings, emotions, moods, and affects in tourism (Pink, 2007). Rather than assuming that the rich first person audio/visual artefacts that EgoPOV produces provide 'hard data' (see Buur, Binder, & Brandt, 2000), using this kind of data in a design context involves engaging with it as design material, as inspirational artefacts that have interpretational flexibility so as to motivate and inform design decisions whilst retaining some representative fidelity. Such methods are tentative and exploratory, but we believe that EgoPOV walk-alouds with tourists enable designers to capture both the affective qualities and the social and cultural dynamics of tourist place making. However, EgoPOV or accompanied tourism are not 'silver bullets' that provide a definitive insight. Instead, we argue that these methods, (which have similarities to cued recall debriefs, see Bentley, Johnston, & Baggo, 2005; Omodei & McLennan, 1994), provide data from which it is possible to elicit reflections on social and affective aspects of tourists' place making, and that these reflections are more deeply grounded in the tourist experience than those provoked by other means.

Concluding Thoughts

The premise advanced in this paper is that the relationship between abundant and cheap travel, virtual forms of mobility (e.g., online social networks), and the increasing mobilization of computer technologies has fundamentally changed tourist agendas, making the activity of place making more visible and more social. Yet, although some HCI/design projects show appreciation for the need to go beyond simple technical implementations of location-based guides and information infrastructures, the underlying metaphor in designing IT for tourism has previously been centred around tourism as information work. IT design has been ignoring the wider implications of tourism as a form of place making and the ways in which tourism as a holistic phenomenon cuts across boundaries of the physical, the social, and the cultural. It is no longer sufficient for designers of IT to remain constrained within a discourse of ‘tourist-users/tourist-consumers’ or a discourse of ‘user experience’ that reduces tourism to a somewhat individual pursuit of pleasure or information. Rather, a useful starting point for a fresh approach is precisely to foreground the role of place making in tourism.

From our field studies, we exemplified place-making practices, focussing on the importance of social interaction in bringing about *places of tourism*. Importantly, we have argued that social interaction with strangers in a less than familiar if not mundane context is an important element of place making in tourism. We showed how this trope could be identified in current projects, exemplified in *spottedbylocals.com*, Fischer’s ‘locals and tourists’ visualizations, and Galloway et al.’s (2003) interventions and design experiments. Through the analysis of selected instances from our fieldwork, we have shown that artefacts arising out of observations of situated interactions between tourists and locals can sensitize designers to the way in which social interactions work as vehicles of place making in tourism. Sensitivity to place making can indicate novel ways in which services and technologies might respond to increasing mobility and availability of digital devices in the performance of tourism. A mobile and location aware technology “does not stand apart from the physical world within which it is embedded; ...it provides a new set of ways for that physical world to be understood and appropriated” (Dourish, 2006a, p. 304). Thus, beyond merely furnishing the physical world with information, such technologies are also sites at which social and cultural interaction takes place (Dourish et al., 2007). Technologies, in other words, shape the experience of place, contributing with both disruptive and positive potentials for tourism. Tourism technologies, in this rendering, have the power to shape not only the capabilities or the *gaze* of the tourist herself, a gaze that in IT work has typically been reduced to information retrieval, but to transform places and identities through extensions of social and cultural interactive networks that cut across the customary boundaries within the landscape of tourism.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the Department of IT Management, Copenhagen Business School for support. The Danish Council for

Independent Research (FSE), Social Sciences, funded a part of the research. We would also like to thank Pierre Benckendorff, Nic Bidwell, and the anonymous reviewers for their feedback.

Endnotes

1. “One of the defining elements of slow travel is the opportunity to become part of local life and to connect to a place and its people. Slow travel is also about connection to culture,” taken from http://slowmovement.com/slow_travel.php.

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