



**Mathijs “*Thouzie*” Provoost**  
experience designer

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*"Th"* EN *"ou"* FR *"zie"* NL  
- Multilingual nickname for Ma"Thijs"

Dear Reader,

I'm Mathijs Provoost and as an experience designer I strongly believe in the transformational power of products and services. They empower us to achieve otherwise unattainable goals & dreams, and to shape desirable habits. **Meaningful experiences** are of great significance in the transformation of the current society towards a post-materialistic, experiential society as Prof. Dr. Marc Hassenzahl has noted in "User Experience and Experience Design" (<http://bit.ly/1m6TLr8>).

As a designer I need to understand the context and the human actions, behaviour and habits but also emotions, expectations and needs in order to design for experiences. For me, **EXPERIENCE DESIGN** is about storytelling and prototyping.

For instance when designing for experiences in the context of communication in long-distance relationships one needs to **RESEARCH** partners' communication processes, simultaneously with gaining empathy and understanding on why and how it affects them and their relationships. Stories are a great way to get these insights.

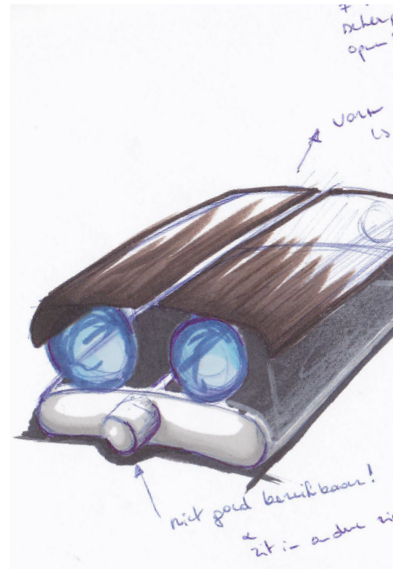
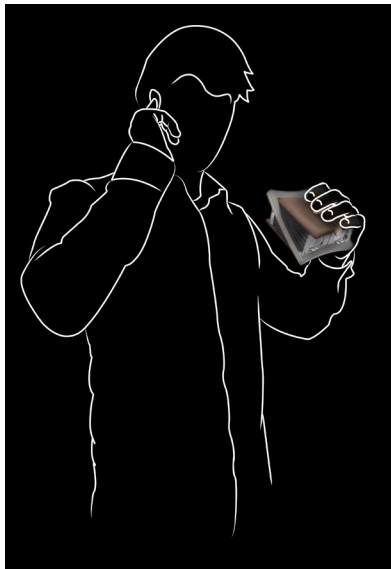
These insight stories are then used in an **IDEATION** workshop / session, to generate a wide variety of solutions and possibilities. In the **CONCEPT DESIGN** phase the stories are combined, edited and further visualised. The process comes together in the **PRODUCT & SERVICE DESIGN**, when technology and services are implemented for the right reasons, giving the design the most sustainable opportunities.

Cheers,  
Mathijs

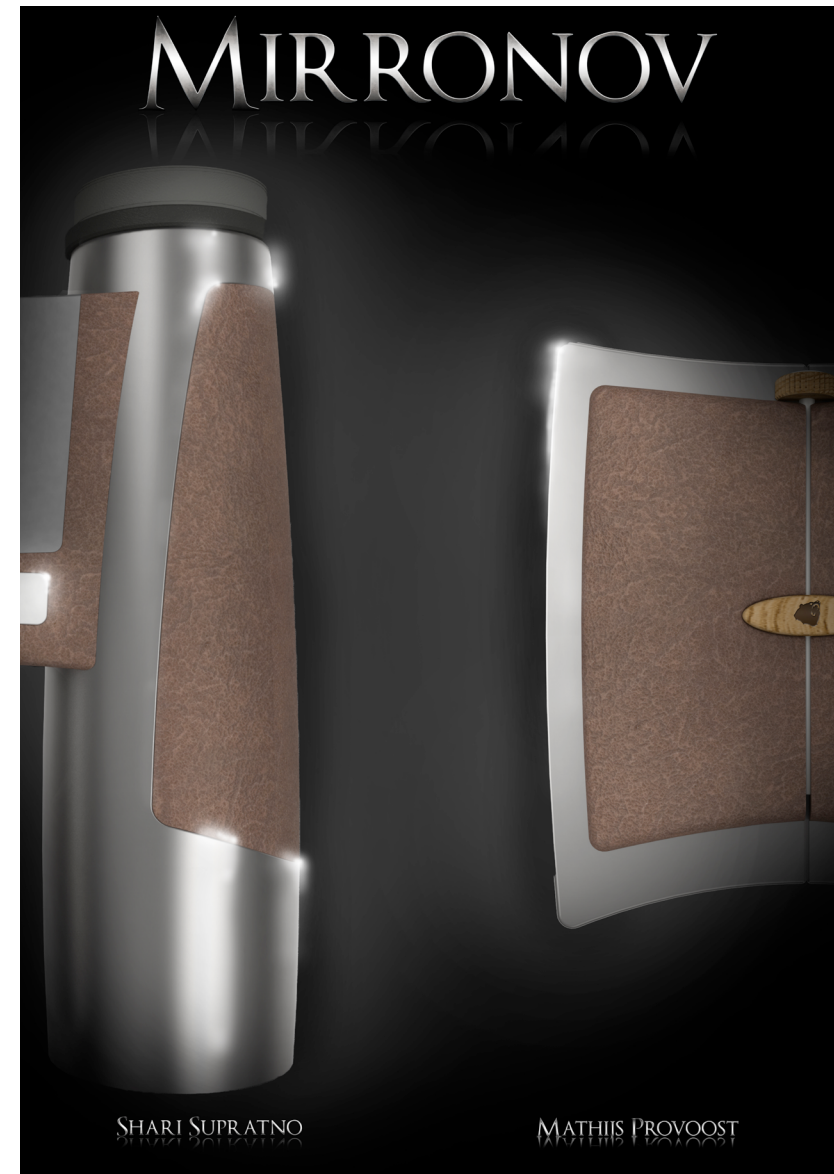
# Experience Design

Experiences create longer lasting memories and relationships than tangible products or digital services. That's why I start with defining an intended experience. Only later on, the experience is matched with technology and services to guarantee an implementation for the right reasons.

Storytelling and prototyping are the two main methods in the process when designing for experiences. Experiences are made more tangible and comprehensive at each phase of the design process to create a desirable product service systems.



The story of Mirronov is of the highest-end binoculars, serving trophy hunters, spies and private detectives. Only the most expensive materials are used and no costs are saved to manufacture these little status symbols.



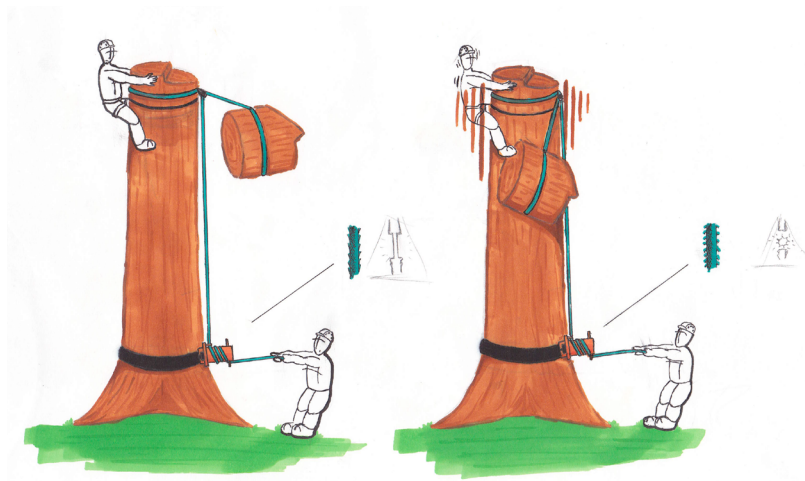
This team assignment started of with a branding exercise. For our brand we defined a market strategy. I developed binoculars to the highest technical quality & ergonomic (pocketsize) demands of my specific target audience: spies & private detectives.

# Research

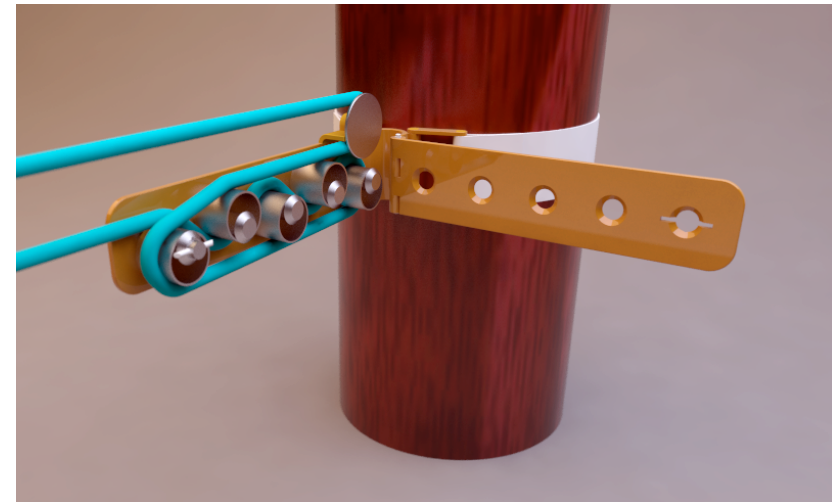
Outstanding experience design starts with a deep understanding of people and their context. Mining stories helps gaining empathy with people's real life goals, expectations and habits. This way I gain empathy on why and how people make certain decisions.

The user research starts off with qualitative methods such as observations, in-depth interviews or a diary study. The methods are tailored according to the project. Rather experimental prototypes are preferable to mine stories from people in a different manner.

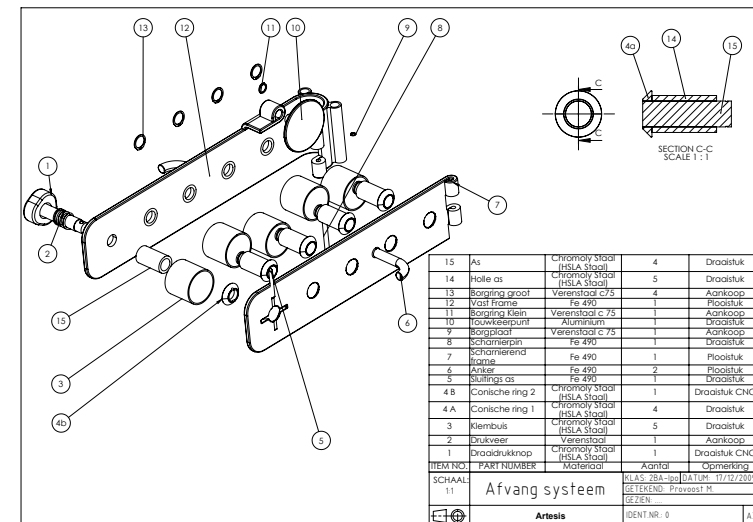
Other essential types of research are literature studies of Human Factors Theories or Anthropometric Data, competitive analysis and patent searches to find the essence of the problem and (un)used solutions.



Wearing and controlling problems with current gear leads to safety issues for tree loggers



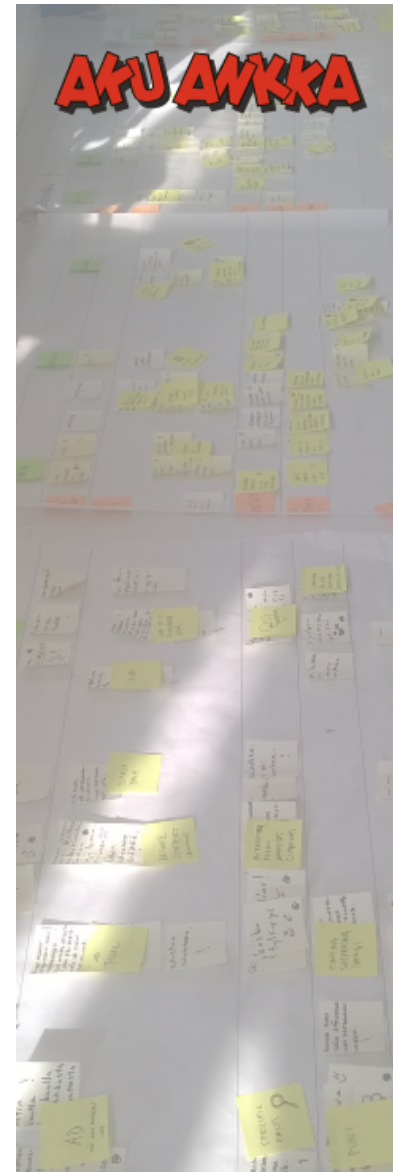
The Block Off System came as a solution conducting different in-depth interviews and verification with six different tree loggers. Their day-to-day problems varied from fast wearing, usability and safety issues of their gear.



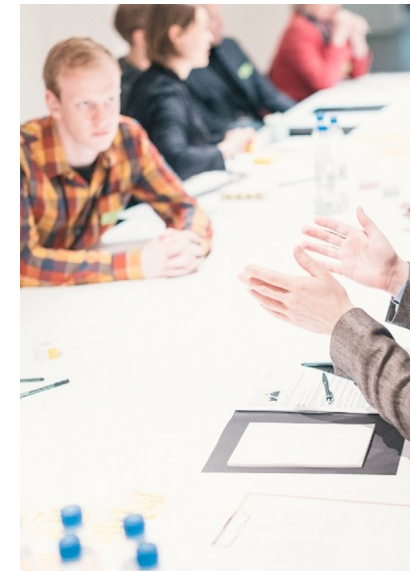
# Ideation

The stories discovered by research provide input to ideate. The stories help to set the boundaries but they are also the equipment of the creative playground of the ideation session. The session can be in the form of a brainstorm session or a Co-creation workshop, involving different stakeholders in the process.

During an Ideation session it is important to go for quantity to get an expanded starting base of possible solutions. Hence, a bigger amount of possible experiences is explored by the end of the project. Participants should try to visualise and doodle their ideas so that they are more tangible for others.



Aku Ankka,  
preparation and evaluation of  
customer journey mappings  
workshop



Design Club Helsinki,  
preparation and co-facilitating  
Ideaspector Ideation workshop  
with Milla Ahola, Grafik Butik

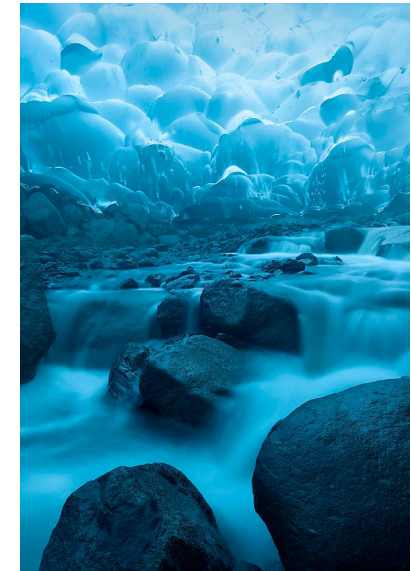
# Concept Design

Sifting different stories are combed to build a stronger concept without adding too many features. One needs to find the right balance on how the character (persona) and plot (Customer Journey) can work together and match to form a perfect experience. Some combinations of stories are made to work and others aren't. Figuring this out at an early stage helps a lot.

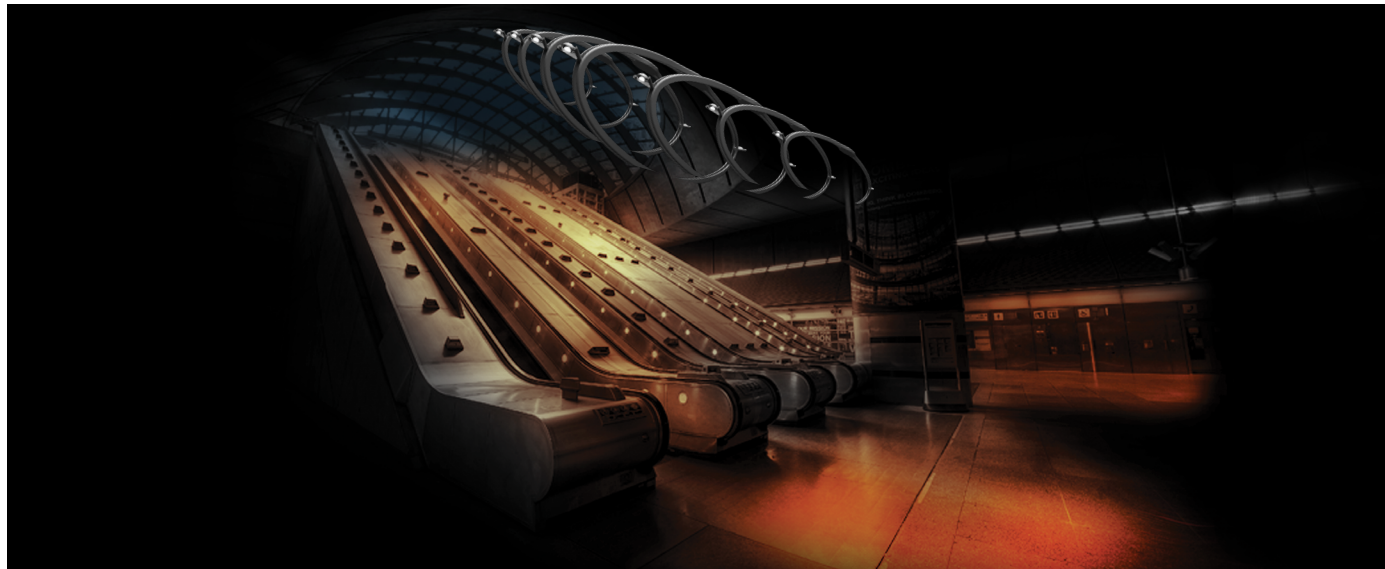
The resulting concepts can be more easily communicated as the solution is already more crystalised, structured and visualized.



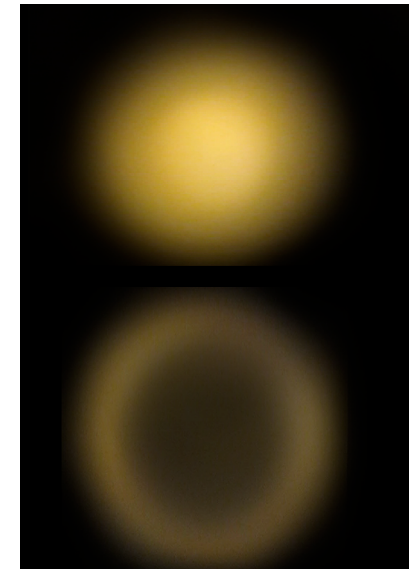
Inspiration



Inspiration



The concept came alive from different ideas about slow movement: a whale swimming and a glacier flowing through a landscape where time needs to go fast to notice the changes as it is guiding the movement in a slow pace. When drawing the initial idea it made me think of a zeppelin, with LED lighting in.



LED zeppelin, is an installation that takes people up & down the escalator, smooth as a zeppelin they are transported between different levels in their journey. The lighting should accentuate its environment, being architectural lighting, said the project brief given by RCL.

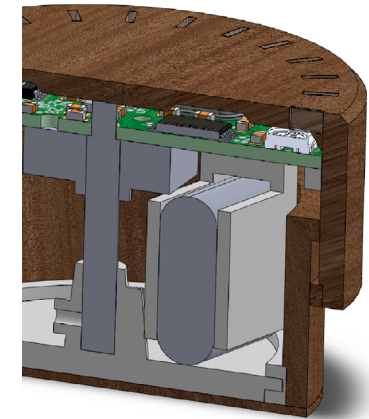
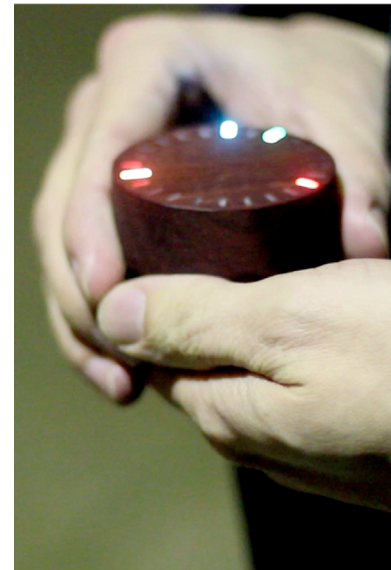
# Product & Service Design

In this phase the experience is validated by linking the story to the right technologies and services. The products and services are iterated and detailed into their final architecture form as a product service eco-system.

This phase follows a lean or iterative process which includes HiFi prototyping, validation and learning. Improvements are implemented quickly by gathering user feedback as early as possible.



Lempi is a device that connects partners with a more meaningful communication experience through communicating their location and mood. It raises awareness of how places are really meaningful in long-distance relationships. Lempi allows couples to understand each others' day-to-day environment more.



The starting point of this design research was non-verbal communication. Long-distance relationships provided an interesting context for creating meaningful communication. After competitive analysis, focus groups and different concepts, Lempi was prototyped and tested by 4 couples.



## Mathijs Provoost - experience designer & storyteller

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# CV

### Education

- 2015-... **MA New Media Design and Production** *Aalto University, Helsinki* 120cr  
Searching for meaningful bridges between the physical and digital world by combining new technologies, human factors, storytelling and experience design.
- 2014-2015 **Finnish Language studies** *Helsingin seudun kesäyliopisto*  
11 courses in total
- 2011-2014 **MSc Product Development** *University of Antwerp*  
Master's thesis: Lempi, Non-verbal storytelling for relatedness experiences in long distance relationships through an IoT device. Presented at the 10th Design & Emotion Conference 2016, published in its proceedings
- 2010-2011 **Product Design** *Brunel University, London, Exchange Student*  
Modules covered include: Design Process, Electronics Programming & Interfacing, Materials Workshops, Environmentally Sensitive Design and 3D Design & Animation.  
  
Developed excellent model making, wood, plastic and metal prototyping skills.
- 2008-2011 **BSc Product Development** *Artesis University College Antwerp*  
Developed team work, 3D modelling, rapid prototyping and drawing skills. Courses included e.g. Ergonomics, Marketing, Materials, Physics, Maths, Methodology, Sociology and Research.

### Work Experience

- 02/2017 **Antwerp University, Workshop Leader**, Product Service System workshop around displacement. Ideation on positive experiences through storytelling and roleplaying.
- 11/2016 **Aalto University, Workshop Assistant**, Documenting and guiding students during a workshop in experience design
- 04-09/2016 **Field Day, Summer Intern**, Design, Prototyping and Manufacturing of leather accessories. Leading the development of a conceptual gift packaging.
- 01-06/2015 **Prambag, User Experience Designer**, Conducting user research with a diary study and in-depth interviews, facilitating ideation workshop for concept design and prototyping of a convertible pram to baby carrying backpack.
- 01-07/2014 **The Big Picture, Service Design Intern**, creating personas and customer journey mappings, user research for an entrepreneurial tool kit and different information gathering behaviour, pro bono work for Tikau Share.
- 08-09/2012 **358, Product and Service Design Intern**, conducting field observations & reporting while taking part in channelling internal creativity & developing ideas into project proposals for potential clients.
- 08-09/2011 **stefan.schoning.studio, Assistant Designer**, visualising and testing ideas by creating sketches and 3D models for furniture, public spaces and clothing concepts.

### Language skills

**Dutch** mother tongue  
**English** fluent read, written and spoken (C2 level)  
**French** fluent read, fair written and spoken (B2 level)  
**German** excellent passive skills, fair written (B1 level)  
**Finnish** basic skills spoken and written (A2 level)

### Creative toolbox

#### 2D visualisations



#### 3D visualisations



#### Design process



#### Prototyping



#### Teamwork



#### Graphics



#### Programming



### Interests and activities

- Advocacy** As a 2016 board member of the student association DADA I was responsible for company visits and field trips. While studying in Antwerp I was an active member of the local student association.
- Sports** Skiing, Floorball, Table tennis and Orienteering are my favourite sports in Finland.
- Scouting** Scout leader and member for 15 years in total, organising weekly activities and summer hikes
- Arts** Drama and Drawing are some hobbies I have really enjoyed. I practice photography to keep my creativity and new ideas flowing.
- Learning** On a daily basis I train my sketching, photography and Finnish skills.

### References

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