



The (Sixth) Sense of Design: the Ability of Mediating and Linking the Territories with the Local Systems and the Knowledge with the New Forms of Innovation

Impact Case Study

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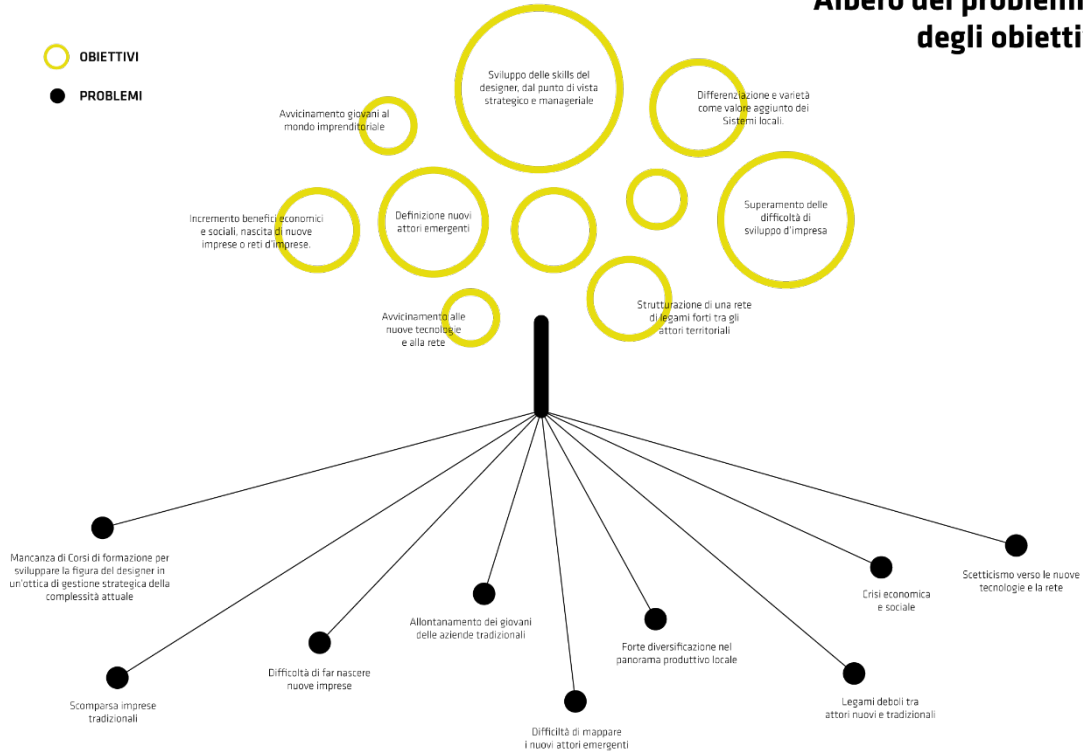
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Abstract

The research aims to contribute to the development of a spatial networking system centred on new knowledge. For this purpose, the following projects have been designed: a Master's degree that, on the basis of the knowledge paradigm shift that emerged, aims to broaden the designer's skills to prepare him or her for the role of mediator and knowledge integrator; a platform aimed at creating strategic links between territorial stakeholders, equating the roles of manager-user, through a collaborative platform model with a non-hierarchical structure. The platform develops a system of services based on the input of questions/offers and becomes itself the administrator of the interaction thanks to an algorithm that allows it to manage data flows from users, connecting profiles and structures according to real needs. Such tools will facilitate the connection between physical and virtual places and transform local systems into cognitive multipliers.

Albero dei problemi e degli obiettivi



These outputs are an expression of the creative ecosystem and its actors, representing an attempt to give life to a formative and virtual place of performance and growth, where the various stakeholders can make themselves available to the territorial system and get back certain services that facilitate and improve their work/training activities, thus improving the impact they have in the local productive ecosystem, in a reticular collaboration. Consequently, territorial reorganization finds its balance in network conformation, in the connection between places and flows; the local system becomes a cognitive multiplier, aimed at developing forms of localized learning, producing knowledge capable of spreading and increasing the territory's own value (Rullani, 2002).

Summary of impact beyond academia

The Master and the platform, the output of the thesis, are an expression of the creative ecosystem and its actors. They represent an attempt to give life to a formative and virtual place of performance and growth, where the various stakeholders can make themselves available to the territorial system and obtain back certain services



that facilitate and improve their work/training activities, thus improving the impact they have in the local productive ecosystem, in a reticular collaboration. Territorial reorganization thus finds its balance in network conformation, in the connection between places and flows; the local system becomes a cognitive multiplier, aimed at developing forms of localized learning, thus producing knowledge capable of spreading and increasing the territory's own value (Rullani, 2002).

The general objective of both outputs is to contribute to increasing the connections on the territory among the actors of the current production system, developing a tool to exchange services in a territorial, productive and innovative network projected into the future. Hence, the idea of a service platform whose main objective is to widen the possibility of matching supply with demand for services and performances, creating a system where users can insert general or specific supply and demand, and send them directly to the system and not to a single user. In this way, the platform effectively becomes smart and interactive, producing itself – thanks to an algorithm – notifications that link the users among them. The platform acts as an independent and impartial intermediary between who offers the service and who searches for it, representing a tool with obvious benefits because it helps not only to regenerate and recover territorial competitiveness but also to reactivate cooperation processes on the territory which are the basis for an effective social and economic development. So, the platform is intended to be a strategic tool to encourage future synergies and the creation of both physical and virtual meeting points at a local and global level, in order to make different realities communicate with each other and to facilitate the mutual exchange of knowledge and experiences.

Underpinning research, context and summary of methodology

After thorough research - carried out in the field with interviews, meetings, focus groups, and questionnaires - and against general objectives, a design methodology was structured for the implementation of projects aimed at innovation and enhancement of territorial systems, based on the rediscovery of the "sixth sense" of the designer, i.e. his or her creativity applied also to the management of the design process. With this methodology, the designer can let himself or herself be guided by the complexity of factors, tools, and methods, which intertwine to create a kind of network polarized toward the right direction, but without being subjected to the constraints of structured methodologies that are hardly able to shape themselves to the various design contexts.

From this reflection comes the Commutative Design Process, an open and exploratory method, whose overall structure is absolutely transferable and replicable, as verified in various tests conducted on regional and European research projects. The



process is developed from the most widely used design methods and approaches in the scientific reference landscape, including Design Driven Innovation, Human-Centered Design, Design Thinking, Strategic Design, Service Design, Design for Social Innovation, Open Design, and Co-Design.

The methodological approach used is that of "re-cursivity," that is that proceeding back and forth between different stages of the process depending on the results that are provided by the tests. Although some methods create a rationale to follow for re-cursivity as well, it was preferred to use more fluid methodologies, characterized by an effectively free process, as the theoretical basis. In the figure, we show how we arrived at a general classification of the different phases by vertically positioning the various design processes selected for analysis and grouping the individual phases of each creating a kind of conceptual set. Each phase represents a cell in itself and can be placed in the order most appropriate for the specific context and multiplied according to different design needs.

References produced by researcher from/during doctoral research

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Irene Fiesoli, Il (sesto) senso del Design. La capacità del designer di mediare e connettere i territori e i sistemi locali, le conoscenze e le nuove forme di innovazione, Assemblea Annuale SID - Design per connettere, sezione "Idee di ricerca", Palermo, 2021.

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Details of impact

SID Design Award (2020) processes session.

Technical-scientific coordinator for the Erasmus+, INTRIDE - Soft, Digital and Green Skills for Smart Designers: Designers as Innovation TRIGgers for SMEs in the manufacturing sector (Erasmus+ KA2), 2019-2022.

Technical-scientific coordinator for COLUX - Piattaforma di CO-progettazione con utilizzo di Mixedreality per il settore LUXury Interiors (Regione Toscana POR-CREO FESR BANDO RS2020), 2020-2022.

Teacher for the Learning Unit Digital Design, Module "Design for Sustainability in the Boat Sector", in the project "Design Set Sail China & Italy" (Erasmus+ KA2), Wuhan University of Technology, China, 2022.

Online access



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