

DESIGNING MEDIA

Mainstream media, often known simply as MSM, have not yet disappeared in a digital takeover of the media landscape. But the long-dominant MSM—television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and books—have had to respond to emergent digital media. Newspapers have interactive Web sites; television broadcasts over the Internet; books are published in both electronic and print editions. In *Designing Media*, design guru Bill Moggridge examines connections and conflicts between old and new media, describing how the MSM have changed and how new patterns of media consumption are emerging. The book features interviews with thirty-seven significant figures in both traditional and new forms of mass communication; interviewees range from the publisher of the *New York Times* to the founder of Twitter.

We learn about innovations in media that rely on contributions from a crowd (or a community), as told by Wikipedia's Jimmy Wales and Craigslist's Craig Newmark; how the band OK Go built a following using YouTube; how real-time connections between dispatchers and couriers inspired Twitter; how a *BusinessWeek* blog became a quarterly printed supplement to the magazine; and how e-readers have evolved from Rocket eBook to QUE. Ira Glass compares the intimacy of radio to that of the Internet; the producer of PBS's *Frontline* supports the program's investigative journalism by putting documentation of its findings online; and the developers of Google's Trendalyzer software describe its beginnings as animations that accompanied lectures about social and economic development in rural Africa. At the end of each chapter, Moggridge comments on the implications for designing media. *Designing Media* is illustrated with hundreds of images, with color throughout. A DVD accompanying the book includes excerpts from all of the interviews, and the material can be browsed at www.designing-media.com.

Bill Moggridge, Director of the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York City, is a founder of IDEO, the famous innovation and design firm. He has a global reputation as an award-winning designer, having pioneered interaction design and integrated human factors disciplines into design practice.

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Bill Moggridge

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← Author, Bill Moggridge
photo by Alexander Tibbets

INTRODUCTION

What's happening to books, magazines, newspapers, television, and radio? The information revolution is in full swing, with digital versions of mainstream media taking hold and changing everything! Um ... but are they really changing everything, or are some traditional media here to stay? How are the new Internet entrepreneurs designing their offerings? Is it possible to thrive in both worlds, working happily in traditional and virtual media? Does content need to be designed differently for each medium, or can it be easily transferred without changes? I embarked on this book because I wanted to know the answers to these questions, and I thought, "What better way to discover the answers than to ask thirty or forty experts?"

My fascination with media has intensified in the past few years: I want to master the use of media to tell people more about design. My career has had three phases. From graduation as an industrial designer in 1965 until the formation of IDEO in 1991, I thought of myself as a designer. I helped others design as I grew the practice and added disciplines, but I continued to think of some designs as my own and others as belonging to the designers working with me. In the 1990s I thought of myself as a leader of interdisciplinary teams, where team members shared the authorship of design solutions and innovative concepts, with the "shared mind" more powerful than the individual contributions. Since Tim Brown took over the leadership of IDEO in 2000, I have thought of myself as a storyteller and have focused more on writing, conference presentations, teaching, and making videos. My desire to become a better storyteller makes me want to understand media and to try to answer those questions about how media are changing in these turbulent times. In my new role as director of the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, I hope to become a spokesperson for design, to help explain the value and processes that design can offer. Learning more about media can help me navigate the flow of narrative.

First, I want to help you navigate the material in this book and accompanying media. In my first book, *Designing Interactions* (MIT Press, 2007),

I combined text with lots of full-color images, including a DVD to show interactive examples in action and a Web site, Designinginteractions.com, to allow browsing videos and interview materials, with an option to download the “Chapter of the Week” for free. This time I have used a similar format, but I have expanded the scope of the media to match the subject matter. There are thirty-one interview segments recorded on HDV (high-definition video, to improve the quality from last time), with the transcripts used to form the foundation of the text. I have edited the videos into shortened versions of highlights and examples, to fit on the accompanying DVD. The material on the DVD and PDFs of the six chapters are available to download for free from Designing-media.com, where you will also find a blog.

Each of the chapters in the book opens with a discussion of the topic and is followed by the interviews. Each person is introduced with a photograph and a resume. The interviews are mixtures of stories and ideas and include direct quotes. I have tried to reflect the perspectives of those interviewed, writing the text to help the flow of the ideas and using the quotes to reveal the personality of each individual.

Some of the text is set in blue. The color indicates that I have written that section in my own voice, expressing my personal opinions rather than those of the people interviewed. The blue sections include a commentary at the end of each chapter, and a short introduction before each interview segment recounting an anecdote about the interview process. My goal for the commentary sections is to extract the ideas about designing media that I find most interesting in each chapter and to express them as a summary with some comments and explanations.

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You can put together this combination of words, graphics, video, Web site, and blog almost single-handed, using a portable kit of laptop, camera, and lights, with much of the material residing in the digital cloud. The resources needed for a traditional film crew and book development team are expensive, so topics for the traditional media are limited to high-profile subjects who can command television broadcasting contracts and best-seller lists rather than an individual author tackling a new topic. I have enjoyed taking advantage of the digital tools to interview, write, and edit video, but I have also had a lot of help from friends and colleagues.

First I want to thank all of the people who were willing to talk to me in front of my cameras and microphones, giving of their wisdom and helping me with my follow-up questions and requests. These are the people I interviewed, in the order that they appear in the book: Paul Saffo, James Truman, Chris Anderson, Neil Stevenson, DJ Spooky, Jimmy Wales, Craig Newmark, Tim Westergren, Blixa Bargeld, Erin Zhu, Fred Deakin, Nat Hunter, Alex Maclean, Roger McNamee, Jorge Just, Chad Hurley, Alexandra Juhasz, Bob Mason, Jeremy Merle, Ev Williams, Mark Zuckerberg, Joel Hyatt, Bruce Nussbaum, Jessie Scanlon, Jane Friedman, Martin Eberhard, Rich Archuleta, Arthur Sulzberger Jr., Alice Rawsthorn, Ira Glass, Colin Callender, David Fanning, Mark Gerzon, Shinichi Takemura, Hans Rosling, Ola Rosling, and Anna Rosling Rönnlund. Thank you all for contributing your ideas and stories.

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