SpringerBriefs in Applied Sciences and Technology

PoliMI SpringerBriefs

Editorial Board

Barbara Pernici, Politecnico di Milano, Milano, Italy
Stefano Della Torre, Politecnico di Milano, Milano, Italy
Bianca M. Colosimo, Politecnico di Milano, Milano, Italy
Tiziano Faravelli, Politecnico di Milano, Milano, Italy
Roberto Paolucci, Politecnico di Milano, Milano, Italy
Silvia Piardi, Politecnico di Milano, Milano, Italy

More information about this series at http://www.springer.com/series/11159
http://www.polimi.it

Davide Spallazzo · Ilaria Mariani

Location-Based Mobile Games

Design Perspectives

POLITECNICO
MILANO 1863

Springer

Davide Spallazzo
Department of Design
Politecnico di Milano
Milan
Italy

Ilaria Mariani
Department of Design
Politecnico di Milano
Milan
Italy

ISSN 2191-530X ISSN 2191-5318 (electronic)
SpringerBriefs in Applied Sciences and Technology
ISSN 2282-2577 ISSN 2282-2585 (electronic)
PoliMI SpringerBriefs
ISBN 978-3-319-75255-6 ISBN 978-3-319-75256-3 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75256-3

Library of Congress Control Number: 2018931443

© The Author(s), under exclusive licence to Springer International Publishing AG, part of Springer Nature 2018
This work is subject to copyright. All rights are reserved by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.
The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.
The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Printed on acid-free paper

This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer International Publishing AG part of Springer Nature
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Preface

This book frames Location-Based Mobile Games from a design perspective, investigating the peculiar traits that make them compelling contemporary practices and challenging fields of investigation.

Bridging the real and the digital into novel and unexpected hybrid worlds, these games are emerging as powerful scenarios for exploratory processes and versatile means of communication, in addition to be recognised means of entertainment.

Relying on an interdisciplinary theoretical background and empirical studies, this book digs into Location-Based Mobile Games intertwining theoretical assumptions and descriptions of their translation into practice. The authors look at these games from different perspectives, exploring how they can impact on the way we look at our surroundings, their influence on our social dimension, their ability to translate a wide range of information into game experience and the negotiations they activate by intertwining two realities. Each issue is addressed from a twofold perspective: that of designers who craft the games and that of players who interpret the choices of designers and take part to the game experience. In so doing, the book covers the relationship between processes of designing and playing, investigating games that communicate through meaningful interactions, shares perspectives as forms of narratives and integrates physicality and surroundings in the play activity.

The reasoning advanced throughout the chapters is intended for researchers, designers and entrepreneurs in the field, since the book provides a novel perspective on Locations-Based Mobile Games, aims at affecting designers' awareness about issues often neglected and suggests interpretations and practices of use that can impact on the way commercial games are designed. Addressing this specific field of research, it provides a thoughtful perspective that adds experience-based knowledge to the current literature on Locations-Based Mobile Games. We propose a novel approach regarding the role of LBMGs in fostering informal situated learning and in favouring social engagement. Furthermore, we reflect on these games as persuasive media, with a significant narrative dimension, as well as on the function that physical objects can play within game experiences in hybrid spaces.

From a design perspective, stressing in particular the relationship between theory and practice, we invite game designers to reflect on the implications of its design choices in terms of game experience and transferring of meanings.

In conclusion, considering the entrepreneurs in the field, the book may be a source of suggestions, interpretations and practices of use that can be inspiration for proposing front-end solutions. Exploring game design features and techniques, tools and methods, it may support game production and development. In so doing, it can impact on the way commercial games are both designed and employed.

Milan, Italy

Davide Spallazzo
Ilaria Mariani

Acknowledgements

This book is the result of various years of research and exploration, conducted largely benefitting from the invaluable support and contribution, expertise and exceptional talent of others.

As ideas and insights made their appearance, we had the opportunity to discuss them with brilliant colleagues and accomplished professionals and to test them with enthusiastic novices, as well as with skilled designers.

We found ourselves surrounded by many colleagues and friends who sustained our need to investigate, test and understand. Hence, we gratefully acknowledge those who challenged our insights, inspiring us and shaping our work. In this regard, our university has provided a fertile and supportive environment. We are deeply thankful to the School of Design and the Department of Design of the Politecnico di Milano, which allowed and encouraged our researches.

A special thank goes to the BS students of the course "Augmented Reality and Mobile Experience", A.Y. 2013/2014, 2014/2015 and 2015/2016. They put themselves to test by participating in the design and assessment activities, critically analysing their own projects and giving us constant, precious feedback.

This book owes a significant debt to those who collaborated with us and those who co-authored our past and ongoing works.

For their outstanding support, we offer special thanks to the significant people in our lives, friends and family.

Contents

1 Introduction 1
1.1 Purpose and Significance 2
1.2 Background of This Book 3
1.3 Methodology 4
1.4 Aims and Impact 6
References 7

2 LBMG in a Nutshell 9
2.1 Brief History of LBMGs 10
2.2 Location Matters 13
2.3 LBMGs as Pervasive Games 15
References 16

3 Informal Learning Between Design and Play 19
3.1 Theoretical Premises 19
3.2 LBMGs and Learning Outcomes 22
3.3 Learning by Designing and Playing 23
3.4 Considerations from the Empirical Study 27
References 29

4 The Social Dimension of Located Play 31
4.1 Inside the Magic Circle: Social Configuration of Players 33
4.2 Outside the Magic Circle: Interacting with Strangers 39
References 42

5 LBMG as Persuasive Medium 45
5.1 Between Play and Ordinary Life: Making Sense Through Games 45
5.2 Games as Communication Systems 47

5.3 In and Out: Situated Experiences for Contextual Communications . . . 53
References . . . 57

6 Stories, Metaphors and Disclosures: A Narrative Perspective Between Interaction and Agency . . . 59
6.1 Games and Narrative: A Complex Relationship . . . 60
6.2 Enter the Story and Make a Difference . . . 63
6.2.1 Narrative Across Agency, Interactivity and Immersion . . . 64
6.3 Disguise It, for Player's Sake! . . . 72
6.3.1 Say Something, Meaning Something Else: The Case Study of the Treasures of Captain Torment . . . 72
6.3.2 Stealth Approach: Keep Some Distance and Have a Meaningful Experience . . . 73
6.3.3 Embedding Meanings, Between Rhetoric and Metaphors . . . 76
References . . . 81

7 Beyond the Digital: Reflecting on Objects and Contexts . . . 83
7.1 Bounding Two Worlds Through Physical Game Elements . . . 84
7.2 Physical Objects as Triggers of Players' Interactions . . . 85
7.2.1 Game Elements and the Surroundings . . . 85
7.2.2 Game Elements and the Players . . . 88
7.3 Attitudes of Employing Physical Game Elements . . . 89
References . . . 93

8 Conclusions . . . 95