

Experience Radar

Overview

The Experience Radar connects users with their physical environment by identifying sensory pleasures in such a way that users are inspired to seek these experiences out. The effect of the radar is to heighten their observational capacity and awareness of their environment.

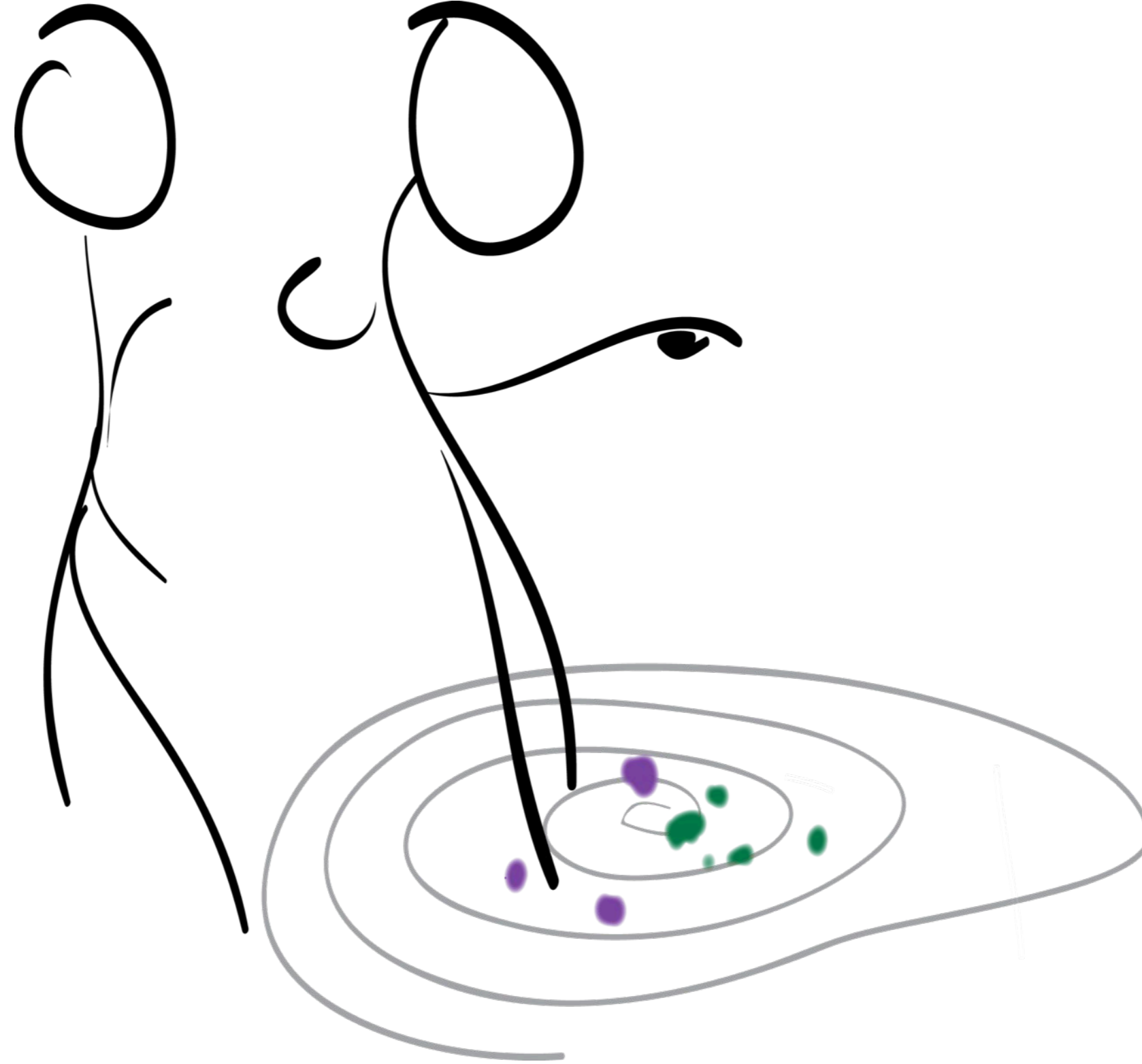
The Experience Radar inspires users to journey without predetermined paths or even destinations as the precise location of sensory experiences are abstract as are the navigation

tools, hence 'lost in Melbourne' can be seen as not knowing where you are going until you arrive. As they lose themselves in the area shown on the Experience Radar users will likely uncover new sensory experiences of their own (which can be uploaded), and so are able to contribute to the experience for future users. Local users may be inspired to alter their daily routes in order to explore new sensory pleasures; visitors are encouraged to explore from the combined perspective of locals and visitors.

Users interact with the Experience Radar by walking, jumping or otherwise crossing the surface.

The Experience Radar will visualize information gathered via social networking data.

The user utilizes visualizations of experiences to determine how to explore the surrounding area.



Definite locations of experiences are not given, nor are traditional wayfinding icons, instead the display uses a variation on a radar to identify locations.

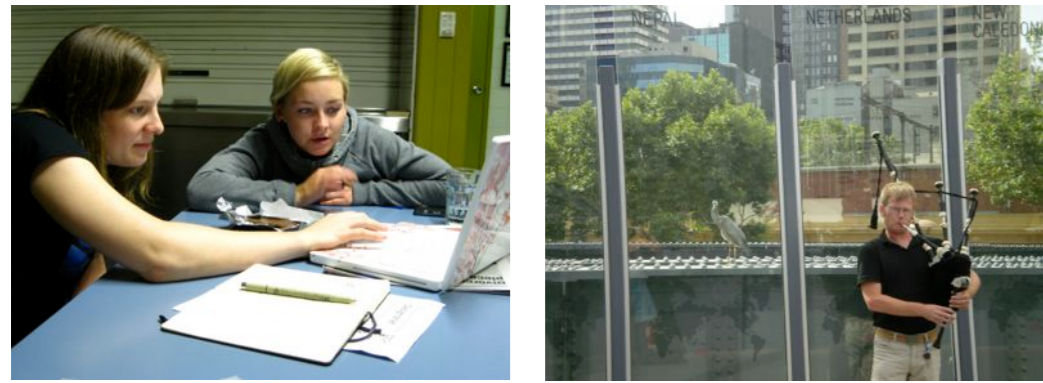
The screen is orientated in line with the environment, no further navigational details are provide.

Design Process

Interviews

We conducted 5 semi-structured interviews with individuals who identified themselves as visitors to Melbourne. The participants were all citizens of other countries; Norway (P1), Denmark (P2), India (P3, P4) and Britain (P5). Two female and three male participants were interviewed. Participants were offered the opportunity to share photos taken during their travels.

These initial interviews revealed interest in capturing subjects in nature. There was also discussion about including people in photographs to make them more valuable. With regard to being lost while travelling, three participants cited specific examples of being assisted by others while lost in Melbourne or surrounding region of Victoria. In response to this question, one person responded that "getting lost is an opportunity to find friendship."



Surveys

Insights generated from the interviews were used to inform a broader survey conducted via Survey Monkey and distributed to a Melbourne based social media listserv and on Twitter.

22 responses were received.
86.4% of respondents identifying themselves as residents of Melbourne
60.9% of respondents had no plans to leave Melbourne

Photos provided by participants also included images of natural surroundings, as well as interpretations of new or familiar places that are viewed from a different perspective due to changes in physical location.

Final Concept

Experience Radar is a circular interactive screen embedded in the ground of pedestrian areas. Around its exterior is a legend providing users with the information required to make sense of the visualisations it creates. The interactive screen is activated by a user (or users) stepping onto it. When activated, it lights up showing a spiral shape with coloured lights displayed along the lines of the spiral. Each light is one of five colours, these colours correspond to the legend which identifies each of the five colours with a sense (taste, touch, sight, hearing, smell). The density of the lights and the frequency of each colour are determined by the data pool from which the device draws its information.

Data is provided from social networking tools where value is prescribed to items through tagging. These tags are mapped onto the screen and categorised according to the sense

Prototype & Usability Testing

A situated prototype was built in an urban greenspace in Melbourne using chalk, tape and colored paper by which sensory descriptions were identified (taste, smell, touch, sight, sound). Three users (P6, P7, P8) were invited to engage with the installation and the researchers utilized these materials to approximate real-time responses to their actions.

Iteration:

A second prototype was created with a different surface pattern comprised of concentric circles to determine if the pattern itself was influential in understanding.

Insights:

The name Experience Radar gave a recognizable cue by which users could better understand our concept.

The majority of users preferred the spiral and understood that the pattern represented expanding distances.

That a legend was necessary to identify meaning.

The relationship between different point as user moved around wasn't clear.



they would most likely trigger (or dominant sense if there is more than one sense triggered). It is anticipated that the data visualisations will change over time, and change frequently based on user experience and input. Examples of existing social network frameworks that already utilize this concept are noticin.gs and Foursquare.

As with the urban game noticin.gs, observation is a key element in the experience radar. The radar data visualisation is both built on the observations of many users, and users of the radar are prompted to engage their observational skills. Each user may benefit from the input of others, whether they are a local user or visitor to the area. Local users may be inspired to alter their daily routes in order to explore new sensory pleasures, visitors are encouraged to explore from the combined perspective of locals and visitors.