

USED Clothing

Martin Mairinger

Goethestrasse 54, A-4020 Linz, Austria

info@used.co.at / www.used.co.at

+43 664 844 2009

ABSTRACT

USED Clothing is an interactive, web-based installation designed for creating a brand image for a virtual clothing label on a collaborative basis. In an “Open Source”-like development process, the brand’s image is defined by the customers.

Author Keywords

Branding, Open Source, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)

ACM Classification Keywords

H.5.3 Group and Organization Interfaces > Web-based interaction

ABOUT

USED Clothing is an interactive installation that explores the concept of “Open Source Branding”. Open Source Branding” is a branding concept especially designed to succeed in today’s information landscape. In a time where wikimedia, blogs, podcasts, bittorrent, myspace and flickr are main components of how we receive and deliver information, “good old” central communication strategies (e.g. branding campaigns) face a problem: how to stand out of the crowd and get heard?

Open Source Branding serves as an innovation solution here: A brand image is not created by central management, but through the participation of the customers. People add stories or whatever multimedia content they like to products and shape the brand image. The result is a much closer emotional connection between the brand and the customers.

USED Clothing was created as a prototype for the Open Source Branding concept. In a “second-hand-shop”, people can bring and exchange clothes and add content to them. So a virtual library is created for each single garment and people can look up who had their stuff and the content each owner added. This is realized by attaching RFID transponders to the garments and a special web application. USED Clothing was realized in cooperation with the Ars Electronica FutureLab during an artist-in-residence programme and presented at the Ars Electronica Festival in Linz, Austria in 2005. It was also the winner of the international Prix category [the next idea] and part of the creator’s diploma work.

USED Clothing is ideal for Festival settings, as it allows people to borrow and bring back clothes within a reasonable period of time. It also comes in a travel-kit-setup which only requires an active internet connection.

In PDC-06 Proceedings of the Participatory Design Conference, Vol II, Trento, Italy, August 1-5, 2006, under a Creative Commons License. CPSR, P.O. Box 717, Palo Alto, CA 94302. <http://www.cpsr.org> ISBN 0-9667818-4-8