
Book Review

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Managing emotion in design innovation

by: Amitoj Singh

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The title suggests a high level handbook of fairly broad applicability in terms of design domain and practitioner background. The foreword by Lalit Kumar Das, the PhD Supervisor of the book's author, brings these title-suggested expectations down a couple of notches. According to the foreword, the book's purpose is to present an approach for understanding emotions appropriate to products, user needs and motivations associated with them in their pursuit. The foreword claims that this can be done by embedding appropriate emotions into the design of products and services, which is debatable, as emotions are personal and dynamic, and hence the words on this respect really sound like something supernatural or mystic. In other passages the foreword's author writes about emotions in a more down to earth manner, saying that products and services can be designed to resonate with the user's emotional needs and wants, and coming closer to the natural reality, suggesting that products may be given an emotive styling, which is actually something completely different from embedding emotions in products. Once the page turns into the author's preface, the reader quickly understands that the book is about emotive quality in product styling. Hence, the title should have reflected this instead of being misleading in its broadness. The author received his PhD in 2009 from the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, with the title 'Development of an emotion centred research framework for product styling: a case study on motorbikes in India'. The book really focuses most of its length in a design case of motorbikes and emotions, structured by an emotion-centred framework that is meant to support product styling, with the author claiming that it can potentially be applied to diverse product categories. Hence, the author has the merit of having a major global publisher showing interest in his PhD dissertation, and having successfully developed it into a book. However, this may not be enough to make the book of interest to a wider audience, particularly given the blatant change in title, while not changing the content to the same extent in order to actually match the book's title. It is not the purpose of this book's review to judge the appropriateness of the choice of literature, research methods and subjects of the case study. Rather, the review is intended to provide a fair account of the purpose of the book and to judge whether it might be of interest to the *IJHFE's* readership. Despite being targeted at a wider

audience, for whom it seems to provide only marginal value given the afore-mentioned shortcomings, the book may be of relatively greater value to researchers, especially for those who are interested in developing the approach that is presented in the book in other case studies. A word of caution is given regarding the somewhat incomplete literature review on product and emotions, which is not inclusive of human factors and ergonomics publications, in the realm of affective user experience, Kansei engineering and pleasure with products.