

WHERE CAN WE GO FROM HERE? SOME IMPLICATIONS OF CURRENT RESEARCH

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The current focus in the internet and the world wide web mask some other underlying changes, based on current research, which are likely to occur in our use of computers as design aids. This talk draws on three streams of current research being conducted at the Key Centre of Design Computing as a platform to examining two possible directions for computer-based design aids.

Computer-based design aids have all assumed that designing occurs independently of the context in which it occurs. Research into "situated" learning is showing that it is possible to develop design aids that learn. The consequence of this is that the tools improve their performance over time.

Models of design processes based on analogies with natural evolution are providing a fruitful area for ideas. Novel developments related to genetic engineering are producing results which indicate that there are useful alternate design processes to those modeled on human design processes.

