

Making Sense of Design Space

What Designers do with Large Numbers of Alternatives?

Naghmi Shireen ^{1*}, Halil Erhan ², Robert Woodbury ³, Ivy Wang ⁴

^{1,2,3,4}School of Interactive Arts and Technology, Simon Fraser University
{nshireen¹, herhan², rw³}@sfu.ca, ivy.ye.wang⁴@gmail.com

Abstract. Today's generative design tools and large screen displays present opportunities for designers to explore large number of design alternatives. Besides numerous studies in design, the act of exploring design space is yet to be integrated in the design of new digital media. To understand how designer's search patterns will uncover when provided with a gallery of large numbers of design solutions, we conducted a lab experiment with nine designers. Particularly the study explored how designers used spatial structuring of their work environment to make informed design decisions. The results of the study present intuitions for development of next generation front-end gallery interfaces for managing a large set of design variations while enabling simultaneous editing of design parameters.

Keywords: Parametric design · Alternatives · Design space exploration · New interfaces · New media · Protocol analysis · User study