

How Fond Hopes become Reality



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*“I can call up spirits from the dead . . .
But will they come when I call”*

Shakespeare. Henry IV, ACT I Sc 3



Design and the Digital Divide

*Insights from 40 years in Computer
Support for Older and Disabled People*

Alan F. Newell

*SYNTHESIS LECTURES ON ASSISTIVE, REHABILITATIVE,
AND HEALTH-PRESERVING TECHNOLOGIES*

Ron Baecker, *Series Editor*



Mainstream CIT designers

Over-estimate the challenges and marginal costs of inclusive design

Underestimate the benefits

Can be loath to move out of their comfort zone.



Mainstream CIT designers

- Fooled by stereotypes
- Unaware of market possibilities, and/or
- Do not know how to respond to trends



**Data and guidelines are
necessary but not sufficient**

**An empathy with potential
users is required**



**Data informs,
but**

**A good story can
change minds**



Inclusive Design is:

- Achievable with modest effort
- Scientifically & technically challenging,
- Exciting and worthwhile.

It can produce:

- Beautiful and Delightful products, which
- Are easier to use by everyone, have
- Clear social value, and it
- Encourages better design practice



**“Design for everyone”
is not a good design brief**



The need for a good story

*In all theatre, reality is revealed through unreality and
truth is exposed by a mummer's fiction.*

Morris West - Daughter of Silence, Coronet 1985, p105



The use of theatre for:

- **Raising Awareness in designers and other stakeholders of:**
 - **User characteristics**
 - **User experiences**
 - **User challenges**



Using theatre to promote discussion



An awareness raising video. “Relatively PC”



Script writers & actors

- Can present behavior in engaging ways
- Know when to exaggerate for effect
- Use narrative to provide a human rather than technological focus

See: www.computing.dundee.ac.uk/staff/afn



Use of actors as surrogates

- Easily available
- Can present a wide variety of disabilities
- Skilled at “think aloud”
- Few ethical issues of protecting the user
- “Suspension of disbelief” – use of props rather than prototypes



Ways of turning “Hopes” to “Reality”

- Work with writers and film makers to produce engaging stories for mainstream designers.
- Train actors to provide a pool of “surrogate” users to work with mainstream designers.

