

CHI 2005 Development Consortium

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Portland, Oregon

IDSA + User Experience Design

Historical Overview

After almost 30 years of mergers and organizational evolution, The Industrial Designers Society of America (IDSA) was founded in 1965 to serve 600 members in ten chapters across the country. At that time, IDSA members worked in the areas of design education, crafts, decorative arts, graphics, products, packaging, exhibit design and automobile styling. In the last forty years, IDSA has expanded to serve more than 3,300 members in 28 chapters across the United States and Canada. The practice of our members has expanded to more than 75 unique specialties within the context of industrial design including interaction design, user experience design and human factors design and research.

IDSA officially defines industrial design in the following manner:

Industrial design is the professional service of creating and developing concepts and specifications that optimize the function, value and appearance of products and systems for the mutual benefit of both user and manufacturer. . . The industrial designer's unique contribution places emphasis on those aspects of the product or system that relate most directly to human characteristics, needs and interests. This contribution requires specialized understanding of visual, tactile, safety and convenience criteria, with concern for the user. Education and experience in anticipating psychological, physiological and sociological factors that influence and are perceived by the user are essential industrial design resources.

Since the early 1990s, IDSA has expanded its member offerings by creating Professional Interest Sections devoted to specific areas of expertise and member interest. The goal of Professional Interest Sections is to provide in-depth information on the latest design trends, news and commentary in different fields. Membership in Professional Interest Sections is open to all IDSA members without additional cost. Programming efforts are volunteer-driven with financial and organizational assistance provided by IDSA's Board of Directors and professional staff. There are currently 21 Professional Interest Sections within IDSA including the Interactive Design Section and the Human Factors Section.

Mission & Vision of IDSA

As the profession of industrial design continues to evolve and the global economy continues to expand, IDSA has begun to embrace a more holistic notion of "Big D" Design with an emphasis on the process of design and the impact it has on business value and quality of life. IDSA's current vision statement calls for the organization to "advance the positive impact of design on business and society while directly benefiting members by evolving into the world's most effective design organization."

IDSA's mission statement supports that vision by directing organizational efforts toward promoting the benefits, awareness and value of design while simultaneously facilitating design quality through professional development and education within a vital and expanding global design community. IDSA is actively engaged in encouraging membership diversity and encouraging multi-disciplinary collaboration.

Interactive Design Special Interest Section

Chaired by Bill Mak of Microsoft, the Interactive Design Section of IDSA maintains the following goals and commitments:

(1) Enable educators to innovate for success, graduating effective designers for a world of digital convergence. Help affect curriculum by providing mentors for leading design schools.

(2) Enable key IDSA chapters to embrace and extend their membership reach into ACM SIGCHI & HFES through formation of strategic alliances.

(3) Help IDSA drive clarity of definition for professional identity in the practice of interactive design, leveraging IDSA's domain knowledge and leadership in education, membership and professional governance.

IDSA recognizes that these goals represent both opportunities and challenges. In fact, the successful achievement of these goals will require growth and process improvement from within IDSA including the full commitment of IDSA's Board of Directors, professional staff and general membership.

As products and technology evolve, the user experience becomes more and more critical to the success of the product. The software components and visual interface elements of products have become as important as the form factor. Industrial designers are keenly aware of this convergence of tactile and cognitive subjects. Interaction designers are as crucial as 'traditional' industrial designers. In the product development process, the barriers between the two are crumbling and the relationships are strengthening. IDSA embraces this growth and evolution.

Human Factors Special Interest Section

IDSA also maintains a Special Interest Section dedicated to Human Factors. Chaired by Steve Wilcox, PhD of Design Science, the Human Factors Section is dedicated to promoting interest, knowledge and responsibility for the cognitive, ergonomic and perceptual aspects of product design and use. This group spends considerable effort educating IDSA members about best practices within Human Factors, improving applied methodologies and the appreciation for academic rigor within the practice of Human Factors.

Similar to interaction design, the inclusion of Human Factors professionals and methodologies in the product development process has become *de rigueur*. Designers are embracing this specialty as fundamental to the process for both physical and virtual or software-based products.

Conclusion

IDSA recognizes the growth and expansion of Design as a profession. Merely providing form and style to products is not enough. As 'products' become virtual or afford more extensive interaction opportunities, the design profession will continue to evolve in breadth and depth of expertise. IDSA welcomes opportunities to engage with other organizations and professionals dedicated to improving the business value of design as well as the cumulative user experience with a product from manufacture through disposal. Collaboration will continue to be the key to success in the global economy.

For more information, please visit <http://www.idsa.org/> or call 703.707.6000.