A MULTIPLATFORM, MULTI LEVEL TELEVISION USER EXPERIENCE

"Take it easy, or take it over - up to you"

Design Strategy Document 1.0 : 27 July 2005

Technology Background

We are going to propose the following platforms and technologies:

• TV Set Top Box with multiple connections: digital terrestrial, fast 2-way broadband, high bandwidth local area wireless (wimax, super-bluetooth, etc).

• A PC sharing the fast broadband and local area wireless networks and providing shared storage for the other devices on it.

• A variety of smaller devices - mobile phone, remote control, webcam, etc that provide the physical user interface. Specifically we are going with a custom remote with content related buttons as well as a big friendly BBC2 button: "don't panic!".

• An Internet where TV content is available to download easily - both legally and illegally.

• An TV content market where producers no longer need a channel or network to broadcast through.

Multiple User Device-Spaces

Different device and platform settings and combinations reflect of how different users react and consume:

TV only - Everyone
A comfortable environment of TV, from linear playlists to timeshifting, social suggestions and exploration

TV + mobile - Socialites
A synchronous environment of chat, comment trails, quizzes, 'live' interaction

TV + web - Forward-leaners
An asynchronous environment of personal datamining, creative usage, deep community and placeshifting

Don't Make Me Choose

At one level we need to be able to satisfy that need of instant gratification, of providing an ideal TV fix with the minimum, even zero, fuss. Choice is a wonderful thing, but there are many who resent the huge increase in choice - it is at odds for many people with the armchair.

With this entrypoint to BBC2 the experience is more like having one great TV channel, custom-ised for you by watching your 'old' viewing habits in a transitional period of broadcast streams.

Presentation of this begins when you switch on with a beautiful ident and a "what's on" lineup as if you just caught it between shows. If you do nothing, the shows will play one after another.

Turn if off and return a little later and pick up from where you were. Return much later and expect a new lineup, with the last watched show available if you want to pick that up again. All pretty easy, veggie telly armchair stuff to be sure.

Channel Zero

Feeling uninspired? We have a big friendly BBC2 button on our remote - that's a great place to start.

The main screen is taken up with proper TV in the form of "channel zero" beginning with a quick BBC2 ident then running promos for shows that are available - our UI is confined to basic functions at the top for now.

The lineup of this "channel zero" is based on your preferences to a degree, so it would be unusual to see a promo for a current affairs programme if you had made it clear that you disliked these shows, but a major 'event' such as a General Election might slip in. At any time, hitting the PLAY button will play the show being promoted.

From a different perspective channel zero is a conveyor belt of ambient marketing driven suggestions. It exists in different forms on mobile and the web: As a Flickrtape-like experience, in the header of the web side of BBC2, as a way of sending and receiving suggestions via MMS with friends, complete with BBC2 'bookmark' and video trailer.
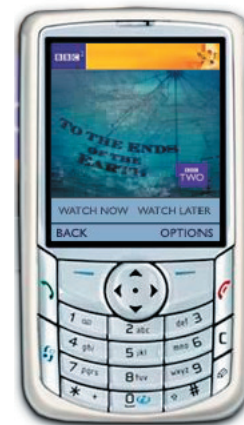
Suggestions Everywhere

Our main TV content finding tools are attached to the remote control colour buttons. These toggle on and off an overlaid view onto the screen. Let's switch on 'Friends & Family'.

What we are presented with is a map of *content-people-objects* representing your friends who are currently watching TV. You are represented at the centre, and the further away each content-person-object is, the less what they are watching matches your profile.

Using the arrow controls you can highlight each of these and do a number of things. You can play any content directly or bring up more detail on that person and the content. You can check out other suggestions from this person (both actual recommendations and automated to your tastes).

We can add another layer of suggestions, more editorial-less time focused, some from people you know, some from generated from datasets such as *"people in your area"* or *"people who have cats"* and some editorially created ones from TV characters or TV celebs. These appear as similar content-person-objects, with instant play or detail available as before.
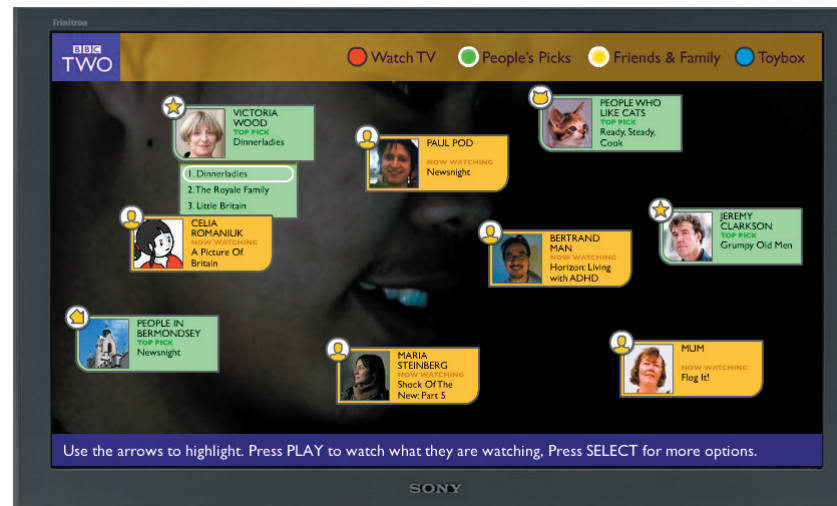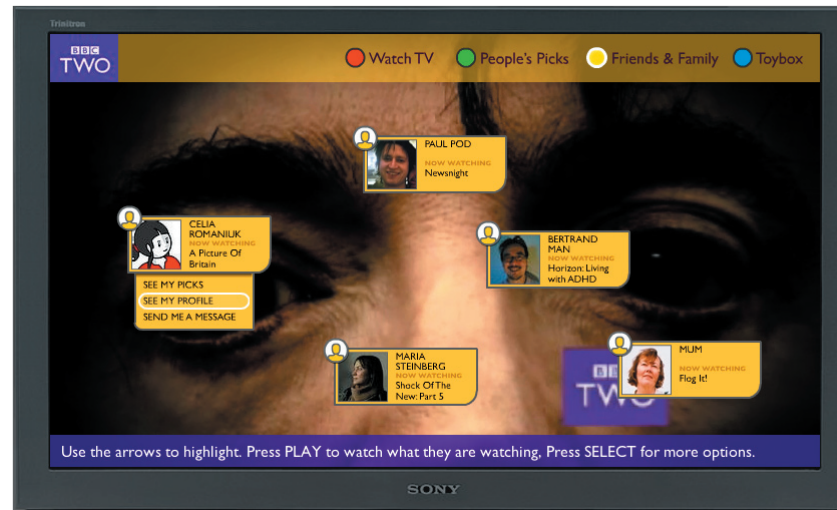
Content Feedback

Towards the end of each show a user watches a subtle pop-up will ask the user to give a rating. We have two buttons which allow up to 3 of either a dislike response (the rotten tomato) or a positive response (the heart).

Each is accompanied by a brief animation and sound overlaid on the TV as a reward for making a rating. This data then feeds back into your profile and is used to generate suggestions in the future.

I Dislike This

I Like This

I Like This

More Like This

One of our three content-related buttons on the remote lets you see at any time suggestions related to the currently highlighted content, bringing up a floating UI based on concentric circles.

The further out the content the less directly linked to the one selected. The connection my thematic, cast or write or director or keyword based.

This content map can be explored and jump to and play any of the content presented. The map can also be recentered with another push of the MLT button, allowing rapid and deep movement along the 'long tail of tv'.

In this example the More Like This surfing mode is prompted, but the button can also be pressed at any time a TV programme is either playing or highlighted in one of the other views.

More Like This
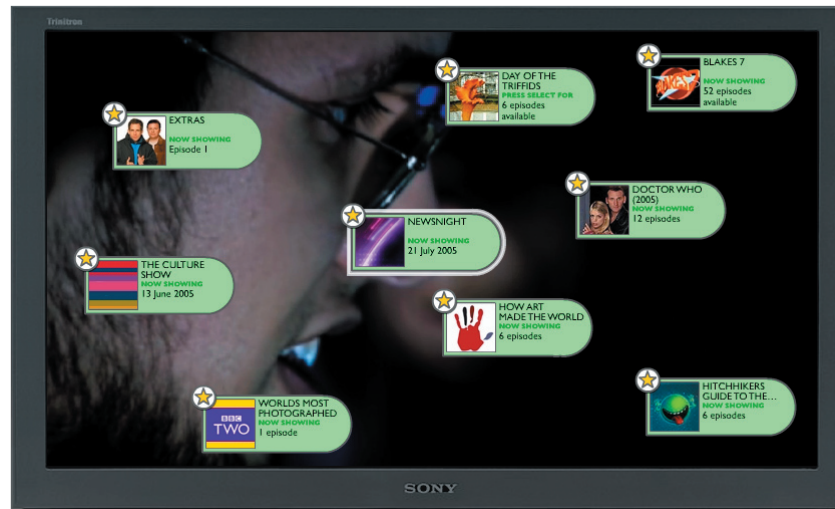
Social Glances & Leaving Traces

These features try to reconnect people using television content as the social glue. At one level we have zero interactivity markers that will pop up at the beginning of a programme showing you if any of your friends and family are watching the same programme (if in the live broadcast stream) or if they have recently, using visual cues as the trail goes colder.

With a live broadcast it might be neat to be able to have a shared reaction and response space for your group at the beginning or end. This would be in the form of a mini-forum or chat room, with short text messages input over the TV remote control and augmented with visual symbols (not just smileys either).

Beyond that, we can see chats thoughout the duration of the programme being moved off of the TV and onto smaller personal devices - mobile phones are ideal for text or speech. Our glancing indicator would tell you if they are online, you do the rest.

There are other cases for group commentary within a social sphere, but there are better PC-centric ways to handle those interactive scenarios.
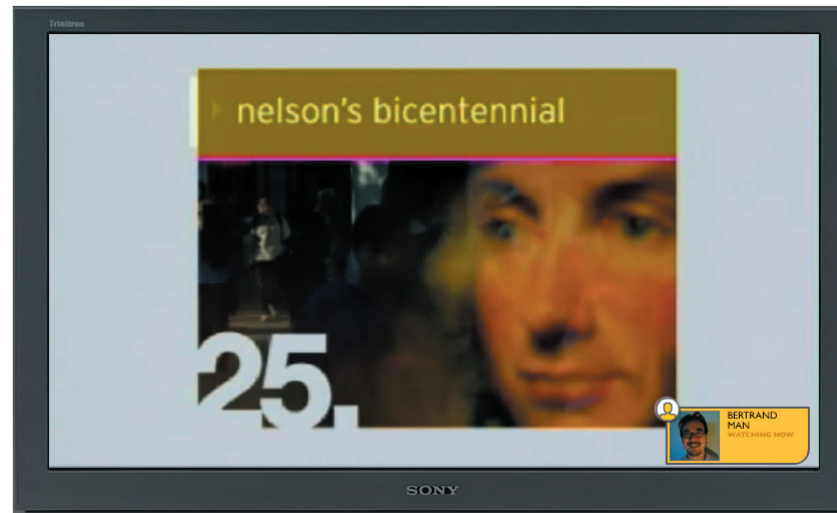
Web

At a simple level, the web experience lets you build simple schedules/playlists for your 'instant on' BBC2 TV functionaliy. These can be shared with friends and mirrors the social network of TV interface seen earlier. A similar mirror of the editorial and generated suggestions is also available.

Building on the 'More Like This' BBC2 TV functionality, the web experience stores your history of recent 'More Like This' content-wanders.

Delving around any of these suggestion spaces, you can add any content to your playlist, or explore further connections from any content or person.

BBC2 web offers a rich lean-forward layer of wikipedia links, news sources and other internet resources generated from content metadata, content tag-clouds, searchable transcripts or subtitles where available.

In reverse BBC2 web should allow a standard way of linking other internet resources back to actual BBC content.
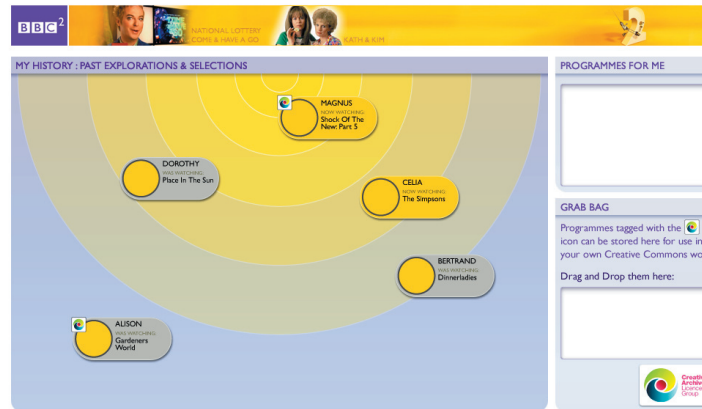
Web & Creative Archive

Each content-object available in your history, playlist, suggestions or explorations could be highlighted as being part of the Creative Archive, and a CA grab-bag function is available at all times while browsing, a playlist for *creation* if you like.

Reviewing selections you have made here peeks at other Creative Archive projects that use the same source content and lets you view them.

Beyond this, BBC2 can become a fabric for linking to comments, communities and conversations rippling out from the original content.

BBC²   NATIONAL LOTTERY COME & HAVE A GO   KATH & KIM

MY HISTORY : PAST EXPLORATIONS & SELECTIONS

- Gardeners World
- Gardeners World
- Gardeners World
- Gardeners World
- Gardeners World
- Gardeners World
- Gardeners World
- Gardeners World
- Gardeners World
- Gardeners World
- Gardeners World
- Gardeners World
- Gardeners World
- Gardeners World

RECENT ───────────────────────────── OLDER

GRAB BAG

Programmes tagged with the ◉ icon can be stored here for use in your own Creative Commons work.

Drag and Drop them here:

Creative Archive Licence Group
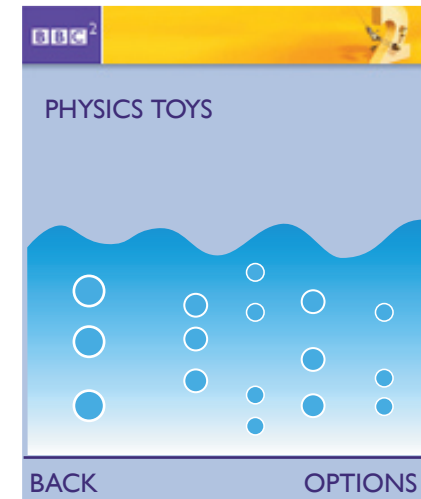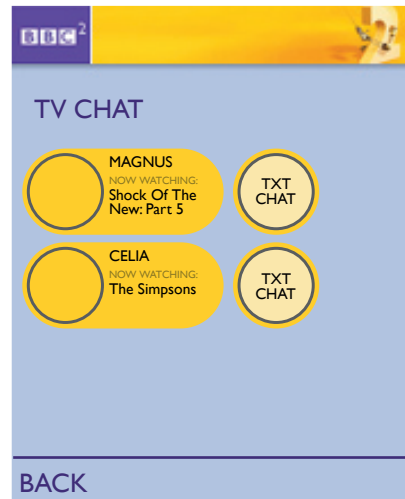
Neuromantics™
Design and Digital Couture

Mobile

Use your existing bluetooth (or similar local wireless enabled) mobile phone to provide a general purpose interaction platfrom, bypassing the mobile network where relevant.

A single BBC2 mobile app that complements the set top box, provides a chat environment, a social glancing space and mobile interactive layer.

This layer offers a simple API space for TV producers to create takeaways and live interaction - quizzes, toys, reference info, etc. Think Flash media objects with a consistent interaction framework.

Creates a secondary delivery system for the Media ToyBox

BBC²

TV CHAT

MAGNUS
NOW WATCHING:
Shock Of The New: Part 5

TXT CHAT

CELIA
NOW WATCHING:
The Simpsons

TXT CHAT

BACK

BBC²

PHYSICS TOYS

BACK   OPTIONS

BBC²

FRIENDS & FAMILY

MAGNUS
NOW WATCHING:
Shock Of The New: Part 5

WATCH NOW   WATCH LATER

CELIA
NOW WATCHING:
The Simpsons

WATCH NOW   WATCH LATER

BACK   OPTIONS

Media Toybox

A visual programming playground - a BBC Micro for the Nintendo DS/Raver generation

Sound/Music/Visual/Physics toys, frameworks and experiments

Part of the Creative Archive, as are your creations - Media Toybox introduces a 'Play' orientated open community and open framework for genuinely "New Media" to the widest possible audience.

A library of celebrity and expert examples to introduce and connect them to programmes

Big connections to Radio, Music, Science, Art programmes

Sharing experiences around the TV, experiencing the different layers of the medium together

Take Away Toys - move them to a phone, mobile game platform, web, etc

Some of the examples we used when we were brainstorming this

1) The physics programme, playing with the simulation toys in the 'foreground' of the broadcast to get the point of the experiment.

2) Mum is ironing to Radio 2, while her kids are playing with the media toybox to make visualisations to the music she's enjoying.

3) Take away media art from the likes of John Maeda, Yugo Nakamura etc accompanies the Radio 3 downloads of all of Beethoven's symphonies.

PHYSICS TOYS

BACK   OPTIONS