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INNOVATION[®]



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More Showcase submissions on page 54.

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The quarterly publication of the Industrial Designers Society of America (IDSA), *Innovation* provides in-depth coverage of design issues and long-term trends while communicating the value of design to business and society at large.

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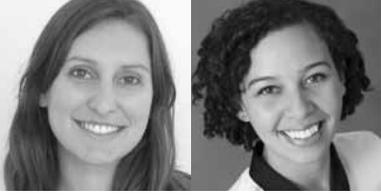
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By Jill Klegin, IDSA and Danielle Caldwell, IDSA
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Jill Klegin and Danielle Caldwell are industrial designers at Hallmark Cards, Inc. They collaborate with innovation teams to seamlessly integrate strategy, design, research and engineering throughout the product development process.

Bringing Experiences to Life

DESIGNING EMOTION

Greeting cards cannot iron clothes, make toast or vacuum a carpet. So why have so many people purchased them over the years? Hallmark's products are not designed to solve *functional* problems; they are designed to satisfy *emotional* needs—which extend well *beyond* ink on paper.



As industrial designers at Hallmark, we collaborate with a variety of creative disciplines—artists, designers, writers, engineers, etc.—to bring sentimental objects and experiences to life. We looked back at several products and identified 11 ways to empathize with people and help them tap into and express their feelings. This is not an official company formula, just observations from two young industrial designers in product development. However, we hope these ideas will inspire you to develop products and services in your industry that connect with people on an emotional level.

1. Leave Space.

People become engaged in an experience when parts of it are intentionally undefined. Arguably, one of the most essential parts of a greeting card is the space for a person's signature. A simple signature transforms a manufactured object into a personally crafted message for a certain someone and the unique relationship the giver and receiver share. The giver can write a message, draw a picture or forego the signature all together. The blank space will accommodate whatever interaction is desired. What can you eliminate from your design that will encourage people to engage with it?

2. Consider Relationships.

The power of relationships can elevate seemingly simple objects to something more meaningful. We've observed this through people's stories about how products have bridged a gap in their relationships. Recordable Storybooks, a book that records a person reading a story, have helped families feel more connected with an absent or distant relative. When a parent is out of town on a business trip or serving on active duty, for instance, hearing

that familiar voice reading the story provides comfort and becomes a tangible, loving stand-in for those back at home. How can your designs represent a bond between people?

3. Map Experiences.

Build a deeper understanding of people's emotional needs to develop more meaningful product experiences. Combine research, writing and design to synthesize data and real-life stories into compelling narratives that resonate with your internal team. If the team is still struggling to see the emotional aspects of a situation, work with people who have a natural ability to tap into and articulate the human condition. Our researchers do this by challenging us to read between people's words and actions, while our creative writers come to the rescue by helping the team to integrate subtle nuances that ensure the stories told internally reflect the reality of people's lives. As designers, we collaborate to convert these stories into visual dialogue through sketching, prototyping and role-playing scenarios to foster empathy among the team. How can you immerse your team in an experience that enables them to tune in emotionally and create more relevant products?

4. Infuse Warmth.

Integrate art and design to add warmth and life into stylistic decisions. Work holistically to combine various elements, such as materials, form and carefully crafted words and imagery, to activate feelings of attachment between people and objects. Borrow ideas and tools from other disciplines. Hallmark's diverse creative environment naturally lends itself to the cross-pollination of craft aesthetics and design techniques. Take, for example, Hallmark's Signature Collection card line. These new cards offer sophisticated designs with beautiful papers, rich textures and embellishments. The tone of the line creates a feeling of warmth and freshness with a more dimensional aesthetic. What techniques can you employ to make your designs signal a human touch?

Interactive Storybuddies come to life and respond when they hear key phrases from their books. Design and technology combine to create a magical experience for kids through the tradition of story time.

EMOTIONAL DESIGN



5. Activate Memories.

Design experiences that evoke familiar situations with iconic elements. Sound Cards, which play a song when opened, have the ability to transport people back in time. Music has the power to conjure fond memories—such as the spirit of an era, a place or a moment in a relationship—in a warm and inviting manner, offering recipients the temporary ability to escape the present. How can you provide people the opportunity to connect with the past?

6. Design Personality.

Leverage capabilities to give character to inanimate objects. We combine our design expertise and technology to develop character attributes. For example, some of our plush characters sing, dance and respond to capture people's attention and provide entertainment. However, what's most interesting to us isn't how the plush interacts with people, but how people interact with the plush. These lively characters often inspire people to sing and dance along with them. Can you find subtle points in your product experience to invite play?

7. Tell Stories.

Use stories to create deep context around objects or experiences. Stories provide powerful metaphors that help people relate to situations and find meaning in their lives. At Hallmark, people's lives and relationships provide the context, and we offer the emotional artifacts that complement them. Keepsake Ornaments illustrate how people collect artifacts that assemble larger stories. Take a look at a family's Christmas tree and you can tell what they value most. Keepsake Ornaments bring everything people love to the tree, from hobbies and interests to life's milestones (big and small)—perfect to remind them of memories with family and friends. What do your designs say about a person's life story?

8. Amplify Gestures.

Observe a meaningful behavior and explore ways to amplify or enhance the experience. When observing ways that kids greet each other, we noticed smiles, nodding, raising an eyebrow and even some fist bumping. The team was intrigued by these instinctive acts and explored ways to



Team members work together to create new ideas.
 Left to right: Tim Patch, Alexandra Sperrazza, Max Younger, IDSA, Danielle Caldwell, IDSA, Jill Klejin, IDSA and Rob Langley

enhance the significance of these affirmative gestures. Thus was born Text Bands, wristbands that enable kids to exchange short messages by bumping fists with other wearers. What are some human behaviors you've noticed that might inspire a new experience?

9. Extend Traditions.

As physical and digital worlds blur, ground people in sentimental traditions to minimize complexity. Card showers, a tradition of sending a large number of greeting cards to a single person or group, has been popular for years. However, the organization of such an undertaking typically relied on things such as word-of-mouth, community newspapers and bulletin boards to spread the message. By extending this tra-



dition into the digital world, people can more easily invite others to participate; share details about who, when and where; and mail cards and other gifts. This online Web service was designed to fit into a person's routine. It tracks responses and the progress of participants and provides an easy way for everyone involved to communicate with each other. How can you bring an old tradition into a new space and bring ease and convenience to people's lives?

10. Imitate Nature.

Borrow cues from the natural world. If people get even the slightest hint that something is alive, they are instinctively drawn to it. Blooming Expressions is a flower inside a vase that reveals a heartfelt message through the drama of the petals unfolding. The team explored how people respond to fresh flowers from bouquet to wastebasket, and the engineers who developed the movement even studied time-lapse videos of flowers to perfect the experience. The team members then challenged themselves to preserve what people love about flowers in a new experience. Even though it is artificial, its imitation of a petal's movement is surprisingly soft and lifelike. How can nature inspire your designs?

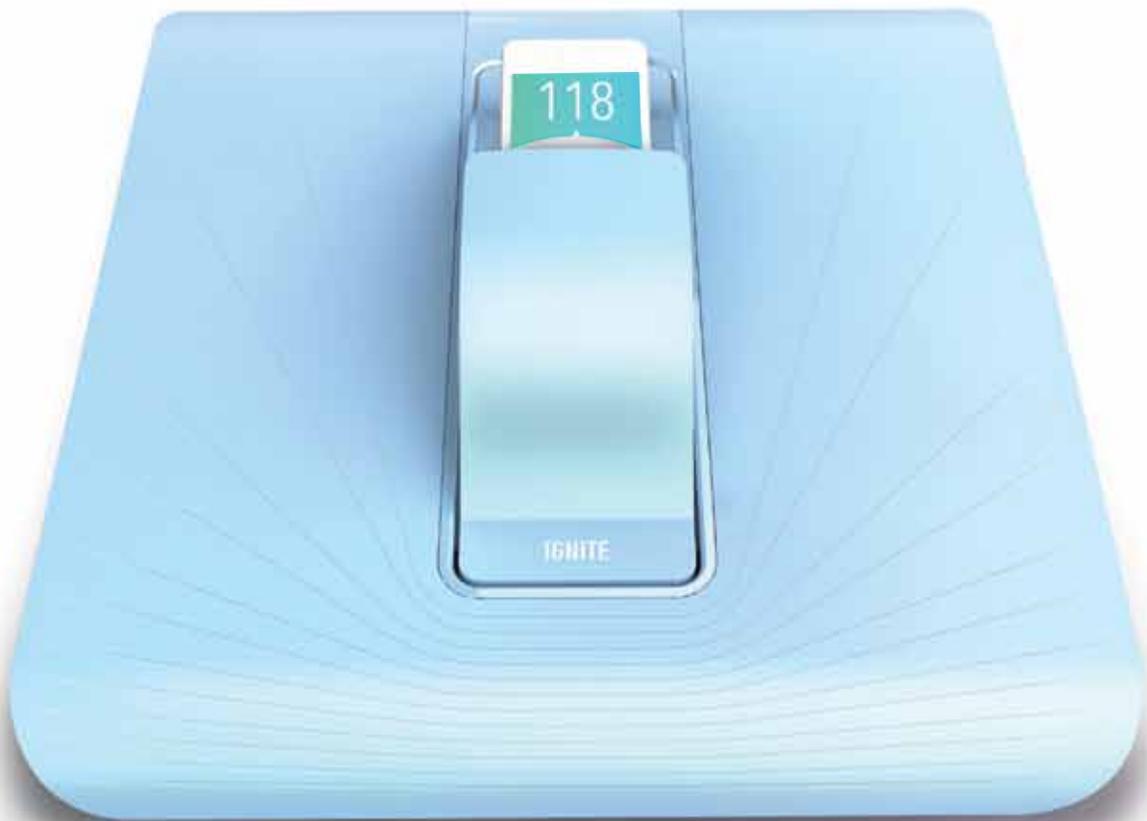
11. Live it.

Establish an internal culture of compassion. It's not enough to design emotional experiences; you must adapt your work culture to live them. At Hallmark, we sincerely live our brand and operate with the belief that we are doing good in the world. We celebrate each other with gifts, cards and cake. People bring their whole selves—personal and professional—to work. It's not uncommon for people to offer personal life stories in meetings for the benefit of the team. Hallmarkers genuinely care about people, and many invest in their communities through volunteer efforts. So if you want to create emotional experiences, be emotionally in touch. How can you place yourself in your consumers' world, listen to their stories, observe their behavior and appreciate the spectrum of emotional needs that inspire great designs? n

Grab N Gab games get everyone talking. Their simple form and unique designs invite play for people of all ages.



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