From the Chair  Susan Hallbeck, Chair

Welcome to the Spring 2012 Issue of the PDTG newsletter. There are so many wonderful experiences from 2011 and more coming in 2012. This is a great year for PDTG and ergonomic product design in general! The first exciting item to report is that the Human Factors Journal is sponsoring the 2012 Human Factors Prize and this year’s topic is of special interest to the PDTG. The second is the renaming of our User-Centered Product Design Award. The third is that our 2nd annual networking event between the Healthcare Technical group and the PDTG was overflowing and a great success. The fourth is that our lecture series at HFES has continued to be a success. The fifth is that the 2012 Annual meeting is in BOSTON – a hotbed of product design. This leads to our next challenge – that of making ergonomic design a feature event in Boston.

The Human Factors and Ergonomics Society is proud to announce the Human Factors Prize. The prize, which will be presented for the first time in 2012, recognizes excellence in HF/E research through an annual competition. The prize carries a $10,000 cash award and publication of the winning paper in the Society's flagship journal, Human Factors. The award will be presented at a special session at the HFES Annual Meeting, where the recipient will present his or her work. The topic for the 2012 Human Factors Prize is: the human factors/ergonomics science behind product design. The paper is due on or before July 1, 2012. For more information go to http://www.hfes.org/web/pubpages/hfprize.html

Thank you all for voting for the Chair-Elect and Program Chair-Elect of the Product Design Technical Group. Special thanks go to the exceptional candidates – we had two candidates for Chair-Elect and two candidates for the Program Chair-Elect. In addition, we had our best voting response ever. Please join me in welcoming the new officers: for Chair-Elect, Russ Branaghan from Arizona State University and for Program Chair-Elect Erik Wakefield from SonoSite. I want to thank the other candidates and encourage them to run again in the future.
In the past few years, the Alexander C. Williams Award has not been awarded. If you are interested in nominating someone (including yourself), please contact Dianne McMullin (dianne.l.mcmullin@boeing.com). She is also interested in whether the process for nominations is too long or if there are other barriers, such as proprietary information, that is keeping our talented PDTG members from applying.

In Las Vegas at the HFES Annual Meeting, we celebrated the 10th Annual Product Design Award competition, which recognizes innovative and user-centered approaches to human factors and product design. The award was presented to the Fisher-Price iXL Learning System™. More about the award session, the winner, and honorable mention can be found on page 4.

In addition, we had our second very successful joint networking event between the Product Design Technical Group and the Health Care Technical Group at an evening reception. This event attracted 139 members and guests. Due to this success, the networking event is going to be repeated at the 2012 HFES Annual Meeting. The event’s success depends on the generosity of sponsors, so please consider arranging for your company or university to become a sponsor. It is easy to make the sponsorship transaction by calling Stefanie Alexander at HFES headquarters, 310-394-1811. More information about the event can be found on page 6.

The PDTG sponsored an invited speaker, Dr. Charles Leech, from ABM Research, who led us through “Exploring the Subconscious through Semiotic Analysis: What’s Really Going On Underneath The Form & Function of Design”. A review of the event and link to the online recording can be found on page 5. The session was exceptionally well attended and the PDTG aims to build on this success in future years with other invited speakers and by having panel sessions on new product design concepts and tools. If you have ideas for speakers as dynamic as the ones you have seen in these special sessions, please contact Stan Caplan with names and topics (scaplan@usabilityassociates.com).

We have many PDTG members, all dedicated to developing products that are practical, usable, safe, and desirable by applying the methods of human factors/ergonomics, consumer and user research, and industrial design culminating in a total user experience for consumers, as well as for people using commercial, medical, and industrial products and systems. We need to continue our success from 2011 and place our focus on highlighting product design in all its aspects at the upcoming HFES meeting.

I am excited to tell you about what the PDTG is planning for the 56th Annual HFES Annual Meeting at the Westin Boston Waterfront in Boston, Massachusetts (October 22-26, 2012). Please make plans to join us at this meeting! Remember, the conference proposals are due March 19.

We will be planning a Design Chautauqua focusing on the Boston area. If you have any great ideas, Brian Stonecipher (BStonecipher@continuuminnovation.com) is coordinating the Design Chautauqua and he would love to hear from you!
To follow up on our recent PDTG featured conference speakers, the PDTG is going to put together a panel on emotional design for the 2012 Annual Meeting in Boston. If you are interested in participating on this panel, please email Hugh McLoone who is coordinating this session (hughmcloone4@gmail.com) for more details on how to apply for a panelist position.

The current PDTG officers and advisory board members are all working hard to bring us a broad offering of human factors and design-related material. However, the success of the PDTG is directly attributable to the interest and participation from the PDTG members. As such, I look forward to hearing from all of you about what you would like to see the PDTG do and how you would like to participate. Together, we can create and maintain a technical group that strengthens our contributions within and outside of HFES and the PDTG.

**Program Chair Report** Ameersing Luximon, Program Chair

First of all, I wish all members and their families a very Happy New Year 2012 and a Happy Chinese New Year of the Dragon. The year of the Dragon is the year for great performances, innovative ideas, and big projects. I hope this is very true for the PDTG.

The 55th HFES Annual Meeting at the Red Rock Resort in Las Vegas, Nevada was a great success. Last year, the PDTG sponsored six sessions that included one invited session, one award session, and four lecture sessions (18 papers in total). The only bad news was that although we had planned a Design Chautauqua, it did not materialize. The Design Chautauqua was developed to provide practitioners and designers the opportunity to learn about other design-related disciplines, hence it is very important. We will plan for a design Chautauqua for the coming conference and this time we expect it to be a success. The good news was that in addition to an invited speaker and award session, there were four technical sessions on Product Design and Modeling; Product Design, Investigation and Assessment; Product Design, Usability and Accessibility; and Product Design, Evaluation and Accidents. These were very exciting with active participation from the audience. I once again thank the authors and hope they will actively participate in this year’s conference. In addition, I also thank all the reviewers - without them we cannot select high-quality papers.

The PDTG promises a very strong program for this year’s meeting. We expect our HFES 2012 conference will have informative presentations about creative, up-to-date research related to design methods, products, modeling, assessments, evaluations, processes, and usability. However, we need your submissions in order to make our PDTG sessions the best in the conference. We have had 6 sessions for some time, and my wish is to increase the number of PDTG sessions from last year. I am sure the upcoming program chair-elect will agree. In addition to oral presentations and technical research papers, we also invite authors to send proposals for alternative formats, such as demonstrations and presentations of successful designs and design processes. Please note the important dates on the next page for submissions. We look forward to seeing you in Boston!
Important dates
- **January 14, 2012**: Call for Proposals opens on hfes.org
- **March 19**: Proposals due
- **May 14**: Acceptance and rejection letters sent
- **July 16**: Registration opens
- **July 16**: Proceedings papers due
- **September 10**: Early registration deadline

“Smart Device” for Children wins 2011 User-Centered Design Award

In 2011, PDTG conducted its 10th Annual User-Centered Design Award competition which recognizes innovative and user-centered product design and the methods used to specify and achieve the design. After applying the designated systematic review process, the panel of 5 judges decided on presentation of a winner and an honorable mention.

Winner of the award was the Fisher-Price iXL Learning System™, a “smart device” for children ages 3 to 7 designed by User-Experience Researcher and Senior Manager of Child Research Kathleen Kremer, Industrial Designer Donald Stucke, Jr., and Lead Producer Brian Mysliwy. From Kathleen Kremer’s informative presentation the audience learned about the team’s outstanding job of meeting the challenges of understanding children’s behaviors, conducting user testing with children, and designing a user interface to accommodate them. The iXL Learning System is a 6-in-1 handheld learning system, incorporating a digital book reader, game player, digital art studio, MP3 music player, notepad, and photo viewer. In other competitions it was a finalist for the Toy Industry Association’s Preschool Toy of the Year, Educational Toy of the Year, and Most Innovative Toy of the Year.

Honorable Mention was awarded to Frank A. Drews and Jonathan Bakdash for MEDClick—Medical Central Line Catheter Care Kit, a medical kit for performing a weekly procedure on a central line (which is used to infuse medication and draw blood). Frank is Director of the Center for Human Factors in Patient Safety, VA Medical Center, Salt Lake City, UT and Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT. Jonathan is a Research Scientist at the Center and a Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Psychology Department.
Judges were David Aurelio, Theresa Bellingar, Jean Schiller, Bill Vigilanti, and Ila Elson. A student volunteer, Dan Nathan-Roberts, was a silent judge. Session photographers were Rochelle Evans and Ryosuki Matsumoto.

Also during this session, the User-Centered Design Award was renamed the Stanley Caplan User-Centered Design Award in honor of his efforts to create and maintain the prestige of this award. HFES president, Dr. Tony Andre presented all these awards in the special awards session at the HFES meeting in Las Vegas. Previous awardees can be viewed at http://tg.hfes.org/pdtg/award.htm. The 11th annual Stanley Caplan User-Centered Product Design Award nomination packet will be due on May 25th, 2012. Information about the award and submission instructions are available at: http://tg.hfes.org/pdtg/index_files/Call%20for%20Nominations%202012%20website.pdf

Invited Guest Speaker WOWS Attendees Stan Caplan, Usability Associates

For the third consecutive year PDTG invited a keynote speaker to lead off the PDTG sessions at the Annual Meeting. The intent of this speaker series is to expose the audience to topics and perspectives that stimulate thinking beyond our everyday considerations. This year, the audience learned about semiotics through an engaging presentation by Dr. Charles Leech of ABM Research, Ltd. in Toronto. Semiotics is the study of the type of signs that are cultural symbols and essential building blocks of language and communication. Dr. Leech’s talk titled “Exploring the Subconscious through Semiotic Analysis: What’s Really Going On Underneath The Form & Function of Design” included airline and video game examples of the way semiotic analysis offers some deep insight into human motivations and behavior around interactions with design – both form and function.

Audience reaction to Dr. Leech’s content and his presentation style was very enthusiastic. It was a WOW experience for most that were learning about semiotics for the first time. Thanks to Adam Shames who recorded the full presentation - you can enjoy it by going to the PDTG website at http://tg.hfes.org/pdtg/. As it was for the audience in attendance, the new perspective you will get on subconscious communication is well worth the 90 minutes you invest to watch the presentation and the Q and A.

Melissa Meingast took photographs which included the following at an early point in Dr. Leech’s presentation.
Successful Networking Event at Annual Meeting  Stan Caplan, Usability Associates

Following the PDTG business meeting, a joint Product Design–Health Care Technical Group networking event was held on the outdoor patio of the Agave restaurant a short walking distance from the hotel. Inaugurated at last year’s annual meeting in San Francisco, this year’s event attracted 139 members and guests which was an 18% increase over attendance at the inaugural event. All attendees enjoyed complimentary wine and appetizers and two of them won an Amazon gift certificate door prize at the end of the evening. Unlike attendance, it is difficult to measure the amount of networking taking place. But photographers Nicole Pink and Margaux Price provided a visual account of the interactions and activities. Two of their many great photos are shown here.

The event was made possible by generous sponsorships from CNH Global, Usability Associates, the National Center for Human Factors Engineering in Healthcare, Design Science, User Centric, UserWorks, Jay Pollack Consulting Human Factors Practice, and an anonymous donor.

Stan Caplan and Laurie Reiprich arranged the event with help from Terry Fairbanks at the registration desk. Terry and Anne Miller have volunteered to help with arranging the event at the 2012 annual meeting in Boston. You can help significantly by becoming a sponsor. Contact Stan Caplan (scaplan@usabilityassociates.com) to learn about all the sponsorship benefits.

Contributions Sought for Newsletter
Do you have a topic you would like to share with other members of the PDTG?

► We are looking for individuals to contribute editorials, book reviews, etc. to include in future editions of the newsletter. If you would like to contribute an article or have another idea for the newsletter, please contact Neta Ezer (nezer@futron.com).
A Personal Note  Stan Caplan, Usability Associates

The previous newsletter had a reprinted article about myths of the overall product development process. I submitted that article to spark a discussion thread for people to share their thoughts and experiences about myths of Human Factors applied during product development. I initiated the discussion on the PDTG listserve and the responses were diverse and interesting. But a couple people expressed their displeasure at receiving additional emails and, subsequently, further use of the listserv to share thoughts has been discouraged. That is disheartening to me because I think sharing information between people with similar interests is a major benefit of the HFES technical groups. Before using the listserv for the discussion I considered the Product Design Group (a subgroup of HFES) on LinkedIn instead as the vehicle for the discussion. But I rejected it because it only has about 150 members while the listserve reaches all 500+ members. Given the situation, I return to focusing on LinkedIn for relevant discussions. If you are interested in being a “sharer” or a “sharee” of product design and usability information, I’d like to encourage you to join the Product Design Group on LinkedIn. With enough willing people in the group, effective and rich information sharing can occur. If you have thoughts or any concerns about this approach, contact me at scaplan@usabilityassociates.com.

PDTG 2011 Annual Business Meeting Minutes

September 20th - Las Vegas, NV
36 in attendance

Old Business
Announcements
— 2010 annual business meeting minutes were not available to be voted on
— THANK YOU to the User-Centered Product Design Award judges for all your time and hard work
— THANK YOU to the members at large for all the various ways you helped the TG out this year from reviewing submissions to volunteering at the conference
— THANK YOU to our invited speaker, Charles Leech
— THANK YOU to Adam Shames for recording Steven’s talk. It will be made available on the PDTG website soon in case you missed it!
— Records show we currently have 532 PDTG members, making us the 4th largest TG
— Financially, we are sitting comfortably at $12,466.99. But, this was before taking into account some conference expenses.
— 137 people attended our joint PDTG/HCTG networking event. Even with less registered conference attendees, this is a 16% increase over last year’s event!

Program Update
— Breakdown for 2011 program
  o 28 proposals submitted
  o Accepted 20 of them (18 papers, 1 poster, 1 invited speaker)

10th Annual User-Centered Product Design Award
— 11 submissions
— The award has officially been named after Stan Caplan to honor his efforts with this award since its creation 10 years ago.
New Business

Mentoring Initiative
- HFES has pushed for stronger mentoring within the technical groups
- Looking for someone to lead it
- Think about how we would meet goals and sustain efforts

Listserve
- How do we want to communicate discussions?
- Should we have two separate listserves? One that simply relays announcements every so often and one that is unlimited?
- Or possibly keep the listserv for announcements only and pointing everyone to our LinkedIn page for all discussions.
  - **Action:** We are asking for a second listserv and in the meantime, use LinkedIn.

Alexander C. Williams Award
- Diane McMullin will be the award chair
- This award hasn’t been given in 3-4 years
- Please think about how to solicit nominations and how to increase the numbers

HF Prize 2012
- Topic is recognizing excellence in HF/Ergo Research
- Prize includes a $10,000 cash award!
- Submission due in June
- Will be printed in the Human Factors Journal
- Details on the HFES website

HFES 2012, Boston 22-26 October
- Design Chautauqua
  - decide topic
  - find presenters
  - spread the word!
- Please contact Stan Caplan with any ideas for an invited speaker
- We’ve been asked to do more panel discussions/presentations
  - we could structure it like a debate since it’s been popular in the past
  - possibly on emotional design
  - invite designers to discuss current “hot topics”
  - “Legends in the field” – but have them focus on today’s topics instead of revisiting
  - History
- Consider extending a “one day pass invite” to CHI, UPA, etc. and make the day design focused.
- Melissa Jacobson sent out postcards to product design companies to encourage participation in the User-Centered Design Award. This approach could be expanded to other announcements. It worked well and was fairly inexpensive. She handed out examples of the postcards to those in attendance.
- Hugh McLoone volunteered for the panel on emotional design.
- Melissa Jacobson had an idea for a panel to feature the top 4 or so products from the User-Centered Design award and have them present in a panel.
- Discussion that those nominees that didn’t win the User-Centered Design Award should be encouraged to submit papers for the 2012 conference on their methodology and design.
- We need to nominate a chair-elect and a program-chair elect. An individual may nominate herself or himself or someone else at the conference or in an email to Sue Hallbeck. The chair-elect and program chair-elect will be able to observe the chair and program chair during this coming year before taking over the duties.
- Sue Hallbeck discussed the options for effectively using our PDTG budget.
- Scarlett Miller will look into student travel awards
- Discussion on the possibility of increasing our dues in order to better support students. A vote will be forthcoming via email
- Funding also goes to an honorarium and expenses for the invited speaker
- Discussion on free student dues or $5/student and $10/professional

End of meeting