

Frame the Future Thought Pieces



Redesigning IP Systems to Boost the Creative Economy



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Intellectual Property (IP) systems allow people and organizations to connect what they create and produce to the financial system. IP protection, in a way, means being recognized and protected by a legal system. The current IP system does not cover creative work in detail, which has become a barrier to boost the creative economy.

Complicated IP systems and enforcement authorities have been slow to catch up with the pace of technological developments. Because of that, there is a potential for blockchain technology and its applications, such as Non-Fungible Tokens (NFT), to disrupt established IP models.

In any case, designing new IP systems or improving available mechanisms is necessary.

The Facts That We Cannot Ignore

Changing needs: In the last few years, economic, social, and technological factors have substantially changed people's lives, needs and desires. No need to mention the radical change that the pandemic has brought. Therefore, understanding these needs is crucial. This is also valid for authorities who design and manage IP systems because, at the end of the day, they also serve the people.

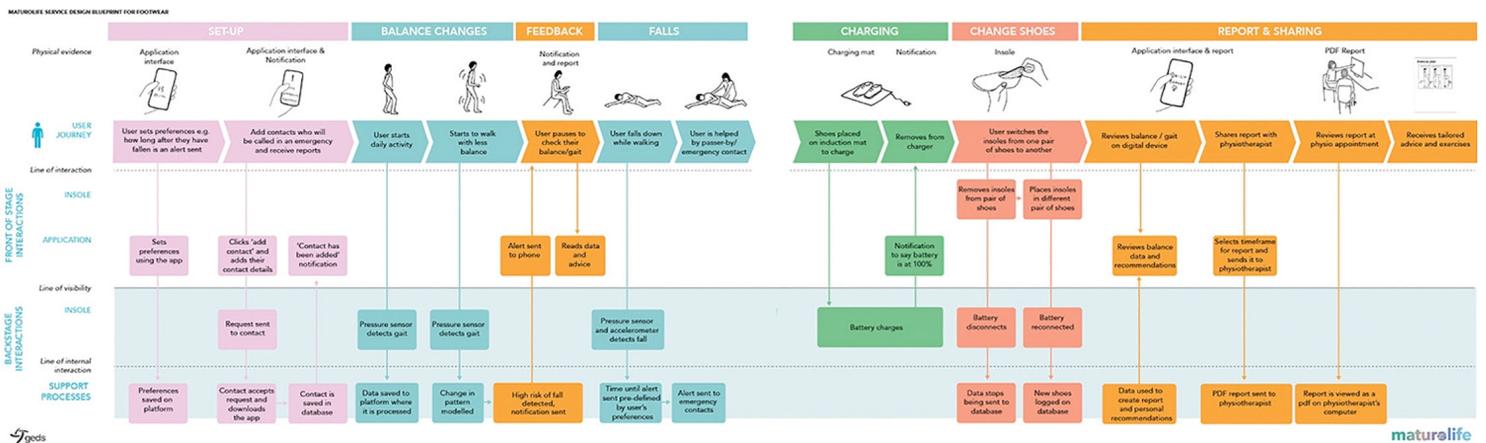
Creativity need: Competition forces people and organizations to come up with creative and innovative solutions, placing creativity at the center of economies in the 21st century.

"Creativity does not have a step-by-step process, and contains ambiguity and uncertainties... Although current IP systems cover graphic design or product design in general, they overlook the new domains of design and fail to provide legal protection."

The source of creativity has also been transformed. An old-fashion perspective would relate creativity to people from advertisement agencies or artists. But today, entrepreneurs are critical actors in the creative economy. A startup's output is not only about technology. The dynamics and impacts have changed.

Involving users: Involving end users in business solution development and improvement has become a critical strategy. Co-creation, co-creativity, and open innovation are the new innovation model.

Disruption of current IP systems: Digital art pieces can now be encrypted as NFTs with unique digital protection. This is a great improvement that at the same time might disrupt current IP systems.



An example of service design map

Having these four facts in mind, design-thinking is an important discipline to consider. It can be instrumental for designing new IP systems, or improving current ones, to cover new ways of working and the dynamics played by multiple stakeholders today.

Here are a few critical points in the design of new IP systems or to improve the current ones.

Hire Designers

Creativity does not have a step-by-step process, and contains ambiguity and uncertainties.

This is also valid for new domains of design, such as design management, service design, and interface design. Although current IP systems cover graphic design or product design in general, they overlook the new domains of design and fail to provide legal protection.

From a pragmatic perspective, it may be hard to understand the dynamics and impact of creative disciplines. Therefore, the most important step for an organization that aims to develop new or improved IP systems is hiring designers or creative people to understand the context of creative work and what to protect.

Use Service Design

IP systems and their applications are quite complex and intimidating for creative people. Service design blueprints would be an excellent tool to make IP systems easier to understand and apply to, and help identify new IP models to cover co-creation and end-user rights. In service design maps, you can approach the whole ecosystem from a system design perspective where all actors, their involvement, and actions are visible.

Embrace End Users

End users, or the general public, have been widely involved in solution design and development processes via methods such as open innovation, co-creation, user tests, etc. However, they are not part of the business and have no IP rights. All credits go to the brands or the solution owners.

This is an unfair business model. A new model that encourages people to participate in the development process and design solutions needs to clarify beforehand what are the incentives and the IP rights.

Develop a Method Without Borders

Businesses want to reach the global market, but most legal systems follow local rules. IP systems follow this same pattern. Blockchain and NFT showed that not having borders or local legal systems as barriers improve market acceptance and accelerate the implementation of new solutions.

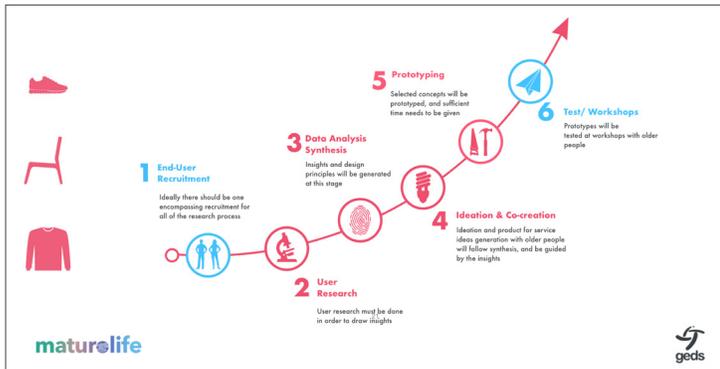
IP policymakers are aware of this bottleneck, but the actions to address these problems need to embrace approaches similar to blockchain and NFT.

A Case Example

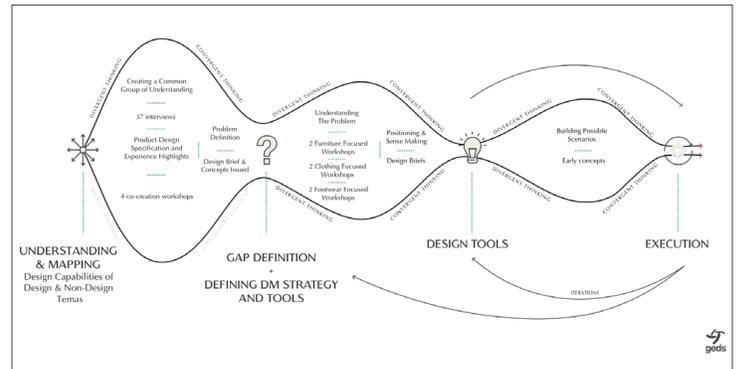
MATUROLIFE¹ is co-participative project that aims to develop smart products for older people to make their life more independent and fashionable. This initiative can be a great example for designing a new IP system or improving current ones.

The project involved 20 organizations from nine European countries and elderly people from nine different nationalities. They all participated in product design processes. The project was highly complex from an IP perspective. Yet, the IP

¹ MATUROLIFE is funded by European Commission's H2020 program with 6-million-euro budget. The project is led by Coventry University, UK. For the complete list of the partners, please visit <https://maturolife.eu/index.php/project-partners/>



MATUROLIFE Design Process



2019 DMI Design Value Award winner MATUROLIFE design management approach

structures were only measuring technology, science, and product design, and overlooked new domains of design and the rights of older people.

MATUROLIFE is a large-scale technology R&D project funded by the European Commission through the Horizon 2020 (H2020) program and has a 6 million Euro budget. The project was completed in three and a half years and brought creative people, tech developers, and policymakers together. At the same time, it also involved elderly people in the design process.

Four smart products were developed: footwear; a couch; a sofa; and smart clothes. These four products were designed by teams in Italy, Slovenia, Spain, and the United Kingdom. The overall design process was led by GEDS strategic design consultancy from Turkey. The first stage was to do design research in nine countries aiming to understand what the needs of elderly people are and what is their vision of independence. After collecting the data, a synthesis revealed six design principles.

Then these principles were given to designers for the initial designs. The initial designs were 20-25 ideas, which were later brought to older people in nine countries for co-creation workshops to decide which products and which features to develop.

There were also two co-creative workshops between MATUROLIFE, tech, and design people. Every organization had a different perspective on the products. Part of the design management strategy was aligning the teams.

It should be mentioned that the products used smart textiles which were developed or provided by two separate organizations. One type of smart textile was part of a research project by Coventry University in the United Kingdom. The other type was a ready smart textile from a startup in Spain.

The tests of smart textiles were done by two organizations in France. Non-profit organizations hired and managed the relationship with the elderly people

involved. The electronics of the products were also provided by a company in the United Kingdom.

Last but not least, there were stakeholders and advisory panels from private and public sectors who gave feedback on the products several times.

In this highly complex project, understanding the players' role and their impact on the success of the products was quite complex.

The project won the DMI 2019 Design Value Awards, one of the most important design awards in the strategic design field, whereas the IP mechanism did not cover this angle at all.

MATUROLIFE, with its complexity, can serve as a great example to define constraints for new IP systems or drive improvements in available mechanisms.

The Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils

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its members and fellows, the GFCC has a footprint in more than 30 countries. Leaders and organizations in our network strive to advance innovation, productivity and prosperity in their nations, regions and cities.

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