



International Design Innovation Workshop 2014



March 24th – 27th Ecole des Mines – Saint Etienne, France

The futures of high street and retail shopping, outside major capitals and tourist destinations

The continuous growth of online shopping at the expense of other traditional forms is a mega-trend, which was foreseen years ago. What we are facing now are the consequences of this shift: a dramatic impact on retail shopping and a huge question mark on the future of high streets themselves. A department store brand like John Lewis now sells more online than in its Oxford Street flagship store. In a review following UK Government's Portal report of 2011, market analyst Bill Grimsley accumulates figures (e.g.: vacancy rates, rental price decrease ...) which depict what he calls a "painful truth facing [uk] high streets", with a possible exception for London. The same trends can be observed in France, Italy, North America ... With an economy heavily relying on services and small businesses, the UK government was among the first to consider this as a national issue. Others are following. However, most recommendations stay at macroscopic scale and government programs tell us very little of what the actual future experience of high street and retail shopping experience could be like. With wide possibilities offered by technology and new user experiences developing inside and outside city centres, some design thinking is needed to incorporate these in relevant user-centered scenarios.

From March 24th to 27th 2013, 80 students in Engineering, Design, Architecture, Brand and Innovation Strategy from Saint-Etienne (France), London (UK), Milan (Italy) and Auburn (US) will be hosted by Ecole des Mines de Saint-Etienne to develop 16 scenarios on how technology, new usages and new business models can feed our natural gregarious instincts and attract us back to city centres and retail shops. These scenarios will be publicly presented on the evening of March 27th in the auditorium of Maison de L'Université.

L*unchBox Workshop is a brand of Ecole des Mines de Saint-Etienne. It is a hands-on experience in multi-discipline design-led innovation, devised in 2009 by Ecole des Mines de Saint-Etienne in association with Brunel University of West London. Since 2009, over 300 international students experienced the challenging and rewarding experience of cross-cultural teamworking on the design challenges offered by technology breakthroughs such as digital identities, personal fabrication or energy solutions for mobile devices.

The 2014 edition will host the first class of the new 'Prospective Design' MA program of University Jean Monnet, co-operated by Ecole des Mines de Saint-Etienne and Saint-Etienne School of Arts and Design. This international event is co-funded by Ecole des Mines de Saint-Etienne, the Saint-Etienne Metropole urban community and the Rhone-Alpes Regional council.

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