IIID

Information Design Summer Academy 2003

Travelling the City 2

Tourist Information de Luxe – for All

IIID
International Institute for Information Design

BMWA
BUNDESMINISTERIUM für WIRTSCHAFT und ARBEIT

An international multidisciplinary program examining accessibility of information in wayfinding and transportation, to make travelling the city a pleasant experience for older tourists in Salzburg.

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Introduction

- Purpose and Goals
- Faculty / Participants
- Visiting Experts
- About IIID
- Sponsors

Veronika Schreyer
Vienna, Austria

Veronika Schreyer is responsible for concept and content development of the Summer Academy 2003. She has her own design consultancy with principal interest in the fields of orientation, usability and product information.

Designing our Future World

An increasingly ageing society and falling birth rates have been at the centre of political debate in industrialized countries for a number of years. In this context design may not be the first thing that springs to mind when looking for solutions.

However, design plays a major role in our interaction with the environment. An environment that is designed for easy accessibility allows people with disabilities or older people to act independently and with confidence. "Inclusive" design is the awareness, that the world is full of people with varying ability, accepting diversity as a matter of course, not regarding it as a special minority issue.

The new generation of older travellers and travellers with disabilities are demanding guests and expect an environment that provides all necessary comforts without being explicitly labelled as "senior-something" or "disabled".

These considerations led us to this year's topic for the information design summer academy: Tourist Information de Luxe – for All.

The Salzburg School for Tourism as co-organiser provided an ideal venue and gave us a great deal of support during the event.

We were also very lucky to get Elizabeth Pastor and Garry van Patter from Understanding Lab in New York to lead the course. As experienced information designers with a strong interest in design learning and education they were able to provide the perfect combination of practical know-how and theoretical background knowledge.

One of the principles of information design is to understand the user. This was a difficult exercise: understanding a target audience that is totally outside our own experience. The "Age Explorer" seminar (p. 21) as well as the lecture by Keith Bright gave us valuable background knowledge that helped us to better understand older users. Paul Mijksenaar was a gold mine of information regarding orientation systems and wayfinding.

This documentation shows the path we took during the workshop, and how participants from the USA, Canada, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Israel and Austria experienced Salzburg. Their findings again emphasise the need to make public space more accessible – for all.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped make this summer academy happen – financially, with their time, with relevant information, and with support in kind.

Purpose

Providing an inclusive environment for travellers: Tourists in the city of Salzburg are currently on average 49 years old, culturally interested and like to relax in a clean and healthy environment.

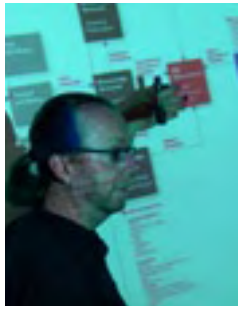
They often have more money to spend and are demanding guests.

Only a positive experience in every respect will make them wish to come again.

Goals

- Analyse inclusive, tourist specific information and its presentation.
- Look at special aspects regarding the target audience and related technical requirements.
- Consider feedback mechanisms to continuously improve information systems.

Elizabeth Pastor
NY, USA
(Spain)



Garry K. VanPatter
NY, USA

Elizabeth Pastor is Co-Founder of Understanding Lab in New York where she works closely with client leadership teams to conceive and communicate compelling visions, strategies and initiatives that drive renewal, change, growth, innovation and industry leadership. Clients she has worked with include: Pfizer, EDS, General Motors, IBM, Morgan Stanley, Avaya, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Majestic Research, TED Conferences and many others.

Prior to creating the Understanding Lab, Elizabeth Co-Founded Scient's Innovation Acceleration Lab with GK VanPatter. At Scient their mission was to create systems to provide nurturing, skill-building and leadership in the areas of cross-disciplinary teamwork, strategic problem solving and innovation. During her two years at Scient more than 2000 employees, collaborators and clients completed innovation skill-building workshops. WorkshopONE subsequently won the only innovation experience design excellence award in the twenty third Annual of the American Institute of Graphic Arts.

In the spring of 2002 she co-founded the NextDesign Leadership Institute with GK VanPatter as part of their continuing experiments in innovation acceleration.

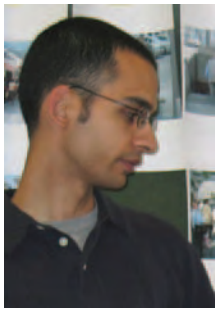
Elizabeth and Garry are active members of IIID.
http://understandinglab.com, http://nextd.org

GK VanPatter is Co-Founder of Understanding Lab and an internationally recognized cross-disciplinary Innovation Architect. Understanding Lab has pioneered the application of understanding as an instrument to drive growth, renewal, change, innovation and industry leadership in knowledge creating companies.

Garry has more than twenty years of design leadership experience, much of it within international, multi-disciplinary organizations. His works at the intersections of innovation strategy, strategic problem solving, experience design and information architecture. Clients he has worked with include: Pfizer, EDS, General Motors, IBM and many others.

Prior to forming the Understanding Lab he was a Scient Fellow and Co-Founder of Scient's Innovation Acceleration Lab. In collaboration with Elizabeth Pastor he conceived designed and developed all aspects of Lab including its strategy, structure, environments and skill-building program.

In the spring of 2002 he co-founded the NextDesign Leadership Institute for the purpose of helping design educators and practicing professionals around the world, prepare to meet the challenges of cross-disciplinary design and innovation leadership in the 21st century.



Michael Babwahsingh
Bayonne, NJ, USA

Matthew Boroff
Roethis, Austria
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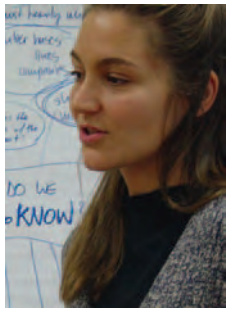
Yoram Chisik
Baltimore, MD, USA
(Israel)



Livia van Haren
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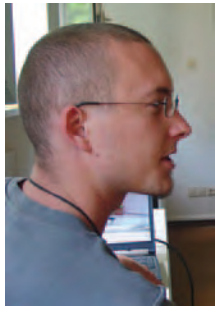
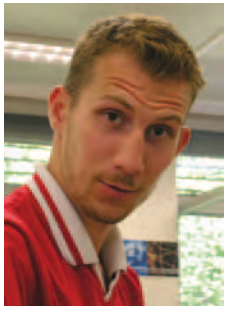
Oakland, CA, USA



Oliver Scheidleder
Graz, Austria

Liesbeth Stol
Den Haag,
The Netherlands



Vwodek Wojczynski
Toronto, Canada

Prof. Keith Bright

Research Group for Inclusive Environments,
University of Reading

Keith Bright has undertaken an extensive portfolio of research projects, publications and consultancy related to access issues and the development of inclusive environments, work that continues in several current consultancy and research projects. He is regularly asked to comment on complex pan-disability issues relating to the physical aspects of accessibility or how the implementation of current and proposed legislation impinges on the obligations of owners and managers of buildings, and service providers.
He founded the Research Group for Inclusive Environments at the University of Reading in 1993 and is a founding Director of Access, Design and Management Ltd. which was established in 1999.

www.reading.ac.uk/ie/
www.rdg.ac.uk/ie/Research/research.html

Prof. Paul Mijksenaar

Technische Universiteit Delft, Bureau Mijksenaar

Paul Mijksenaar is professor and head of the Visual Information Group at Delft University, the Netherlands, and owns the visual information design consultancy “Bureau Mijksenaar” with a staff of 15 people in Amsterdam and New York. His work focuses on wayfinding and complex information interfaces like maps, forms and screen interfaces.
Among his clients are Amsterdam Airport Schiphol, Metro Amsterdam, Metro Rotterdam, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, several hospitals and museums and The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey for their three airports JFK, Newark and LaGuardia and the PATH Subway. He also advised some other US airports in the USA.
Paul Mijksenaar is an internationally acknowledged speaker and visiting professor in – among others – Aspen, Barcelona, Beirut, Brussel, Copenhagen, Coventry, Denver, Genk, London, Magdeburg, New York, Pittsburg, Providence (USA), Reading, Salzburg, Southampton, Tokyo, Vienna and The Netherlands.

www.mijksenaar.com

The International Institute for Information Design was founded to develop research and practice in optimizing information and information systems for knowledge transfer in everyday life, business, education and science.

The main concern of the International Institute for Information Design is to contribute to a better understanding within the human community through improved visual and non-visual communication.

Special attention is paid to the potential of graphic information design to overcome both social and language barriers.

IIID

IIID endeavors to

- develop information design as an independent interdisciplinary field of knowledge and professional practice,
- document and make generally accessible specifically relevant information,
- carry out research within its possibilities and in co-operation with its members,
- find new ways of educating information designers.

IIID focuses on information design for

- business communications,
- product development,
- orientation in the environment,
- training and education,
- communication of scientific knowledge.

The aims of IIID are to be achieved by interdisciplinary and international co-operation. Thus IIID has established links to renowned universities, research laboratories and design companies.

IIID is affiliated to the International Council of Graphic Design Associations (ICOGRADA) and co-operaties with a number of other national and international organizations interested in information design.

IIID is recommended by UNESCO as a partner organization for world wide co-operation on matters of information design (Resolution 4.9 of the 28th General Conference of UNESCO, 1995, Paris).

Organisation

International Institute for Information Design
www.iiid.net

Co-Organiser
Salzburger Tourismusschulen
www.sts.ac.at

Sponsors

Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit
www.bmwa.gv.at

Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Innovation und Technologie
www.bmvit.gv.at

Bundeskanzleramt Kunstsektion
www.bka.gv.at

Tourismus Salzburg GmbH
www.salzburg.info

Salzburger Verkehrsverbund
www.salzburger-verkehrsverbund.at

Österreichische Computergesellschaft
www.ocg.at

Forster Verkehrs- und Werbetechnik GmbH
www.forster.at

EvoBus Austria AG
www.evobus.at

Salzburg AG, Salzburger Lokalbahnen
www.salzburg-ag.at

Objektwerbung
www.objektwerbung-salzburg.at

is design
www.isdesign.at

WebWerker
www.webwerker.at

Hartl Consulting
www.hartlconsulting.at

Kompass Verlag
www.kompass.at

Understanding our Challenges

- ▶ Challenges
- ▶ Why?
- ▶ Process

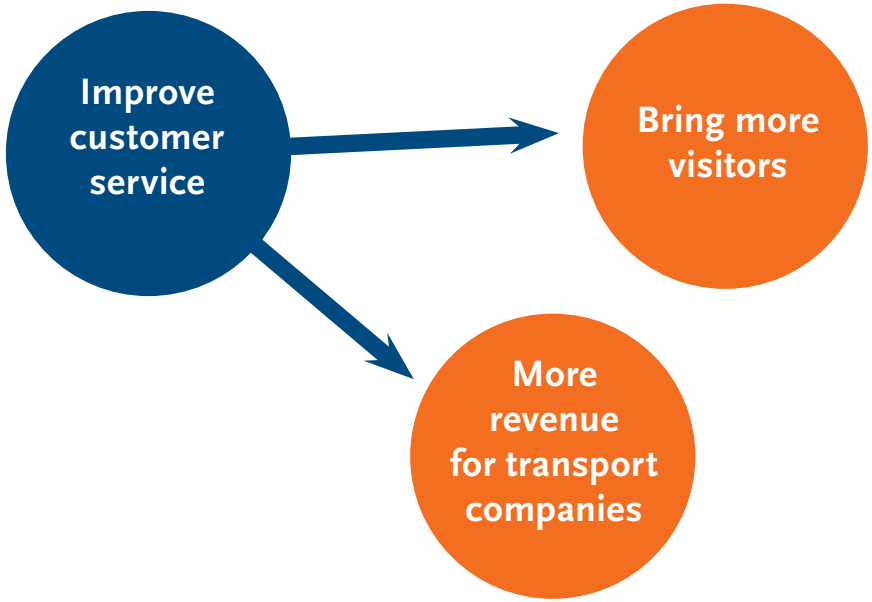
How might we make getting around Salzburg more understandable to visitors?

How might we improve the experience of visitors and passengers on the bus?

Improve customer service

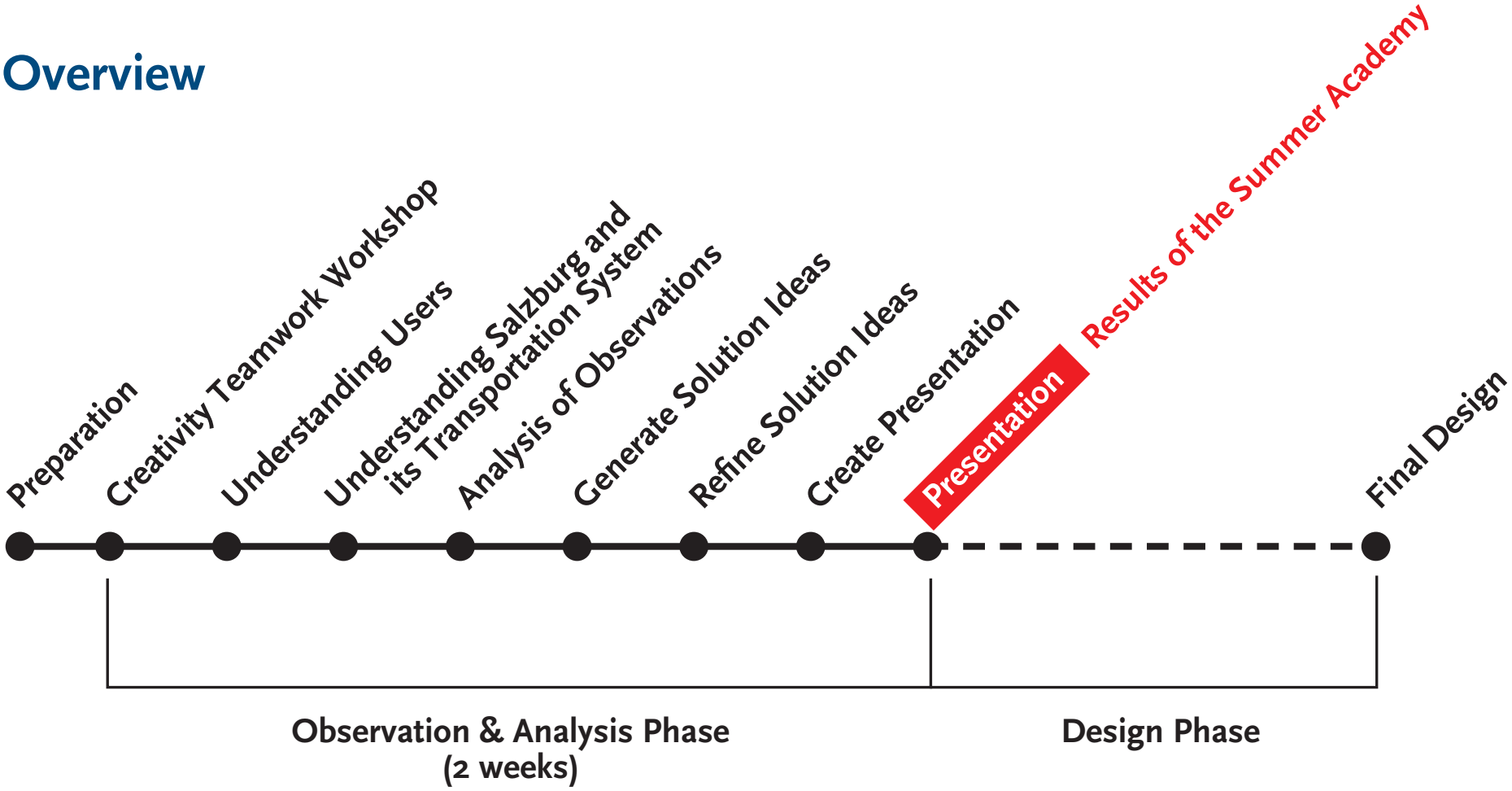
- ▶ Increase ridership
- ▶ Increase profits/revenues

Help make Salzburg a more enjoyable place to visit



The Process

Overview



Preparation

In preparation for the summer academy and our intended target audience, information was sent out to the participants on the physical effects of age and on Salzburg as a tourist destination.

Participants were also asked to complete three assignments:

1. City Comparison: Compare the population of your town or city to that of Salzburg, compare the percentage of the population in your city over the age of 65 to that of Salzburg, compare how many visitors your city has per year with the number of visitors to Salzburg.

2. People Observation: Take 10 snap shots in the your city that show people over the age of 65 interacting with the transporation system, and interviewing a person over the age of 65 on their travel habits.

3. Travel Diary: Keep a diary of the journey to Salzburg, take note of decisions to be taken, of problems encountered, of confusing situations.

Creativity Workshop

To get to know each other and to enter into the spirit of the event Elizabeth and Garry started the Summer Academy with their "Jumpstart" workshop.

NextD Jumpstart is both a mind awakening experience as well as a learning/skills development workshop. Exploring the language of innovation & collaboration involves learning individual and group innovation skills at a tabletop level (i.e., the tools and behaviors). NextD helps teams innovate and work together more inclusively, effectively, and faster.

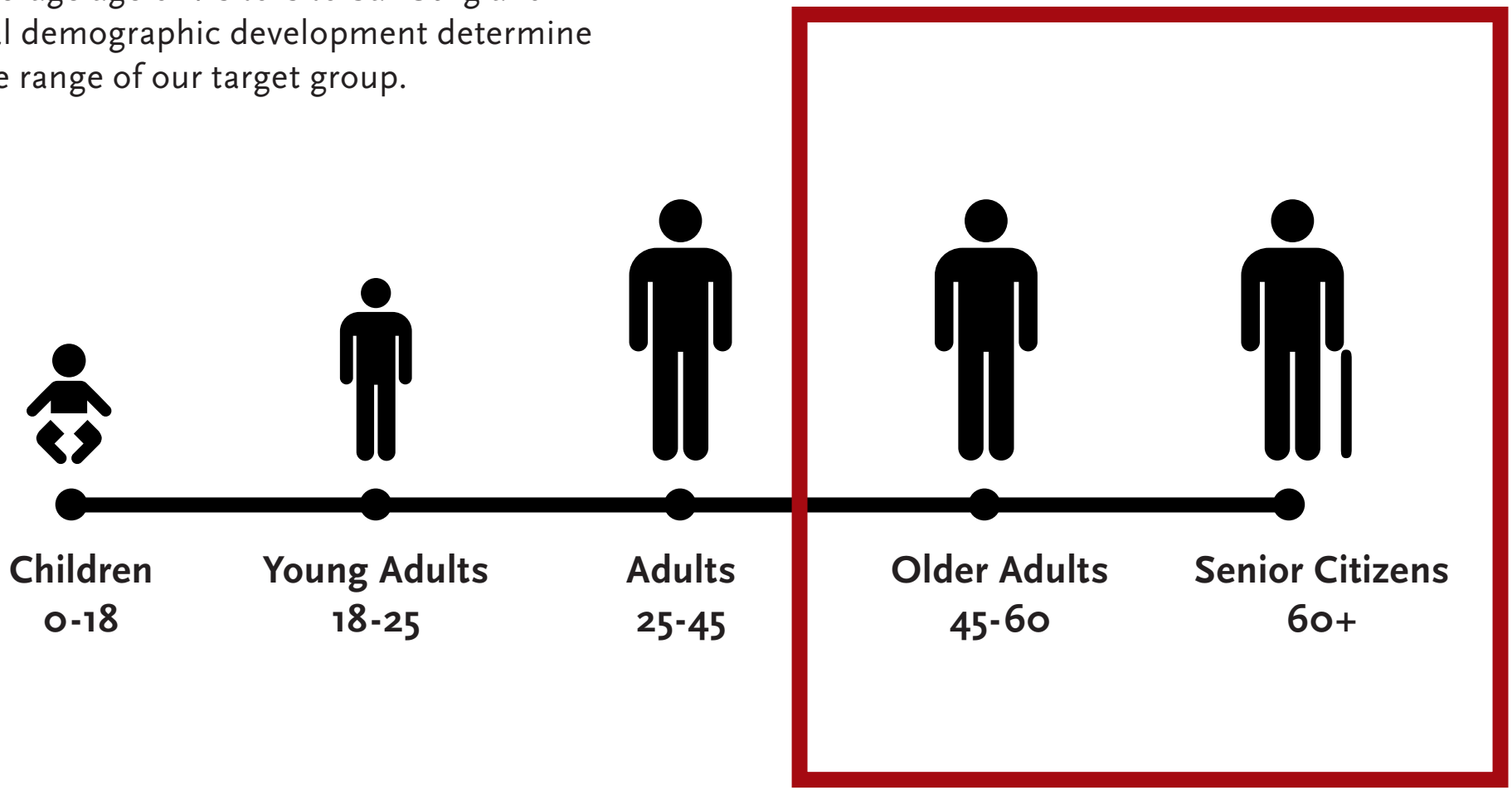
Participants experience the art and science of creative problem solving, and learn about their own individual styles. The skills learned in NextD Jumpstart Workshop one are general innovation process skills, that can be taken home and applied to any kind of problem.

- Unlearn old habits and learn new innovation thinking skills and techniques
- Gain working knowledge of tools and behaviors conducive to maximizing the brainpower of diverse, multidisciplinary teams
- Discover the art and science of creative problem solving to help you tackle today's marketplace complexities
- Discover how to generate thousands of ideas on a regular basis
- Learn skills related to continuously searching for new opportunities and anticipating breakthrough innovations
- Build understanding and gain knowledge of the NextD innovation language, tools, and methods

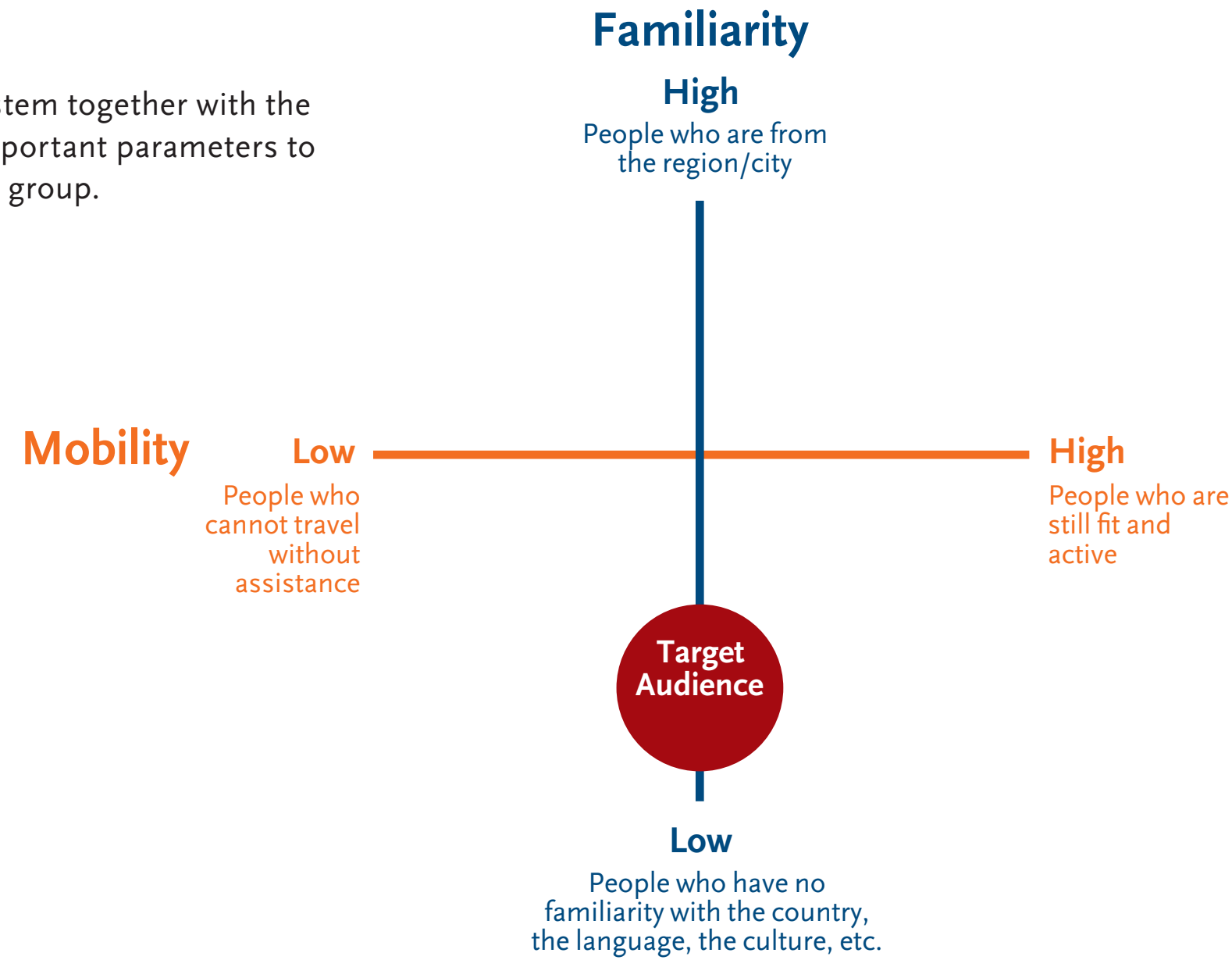
Understanding our Audience

- ▶ Target Audience/Users
- ▶ The Age Explorer Experience
- ▶ Other Sources

The average age of visitors to Salzburg and general demographic development determine the age range of our target group.

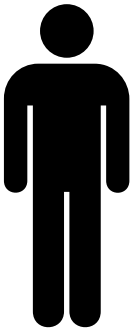


Familiarity with the system together with the level of mobility are important parameters to furhter define our user group.



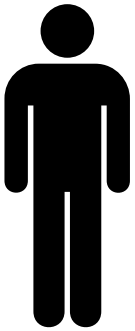
Why are visitors important customers for the transport companies? The revenue generated per trip is much higher with visitors than local residents.

Visitors generate revenue



Local resident

- multiple trips
- yearly passes/ low cost per trip



Visitor/tourist

- limited trips
- full ticket price

The Age Explorer Experience

Wearing a suit that changes your age to 70 in the space of a few minutes is a dramatic experience. Suddenly being able to perform everyday actions cannot be taken for granted any longer.

Oliver found buying a ticket a difficult task – although he is Austrian and knows similar systems. In addition to having to read the instructions and finding the correct coins, he had to answer the journalist's questions.

We become more aware of the impairments older people have to deal with every day.

Something as simple as a step, which might be a little too high, may turn into a major obstacle for an older person.

We, as young designers, didn't realize what it was like until we experienced it.

10 Things learned with the Age Explorer Experience

1. Vision becomes blurry.
2. Colors appear changed.
3. Distances are more difficult to judge.
4. Angle of vision is reduced both horizontally and vertically.
5. Movement is limited.
6. Movement takes more effort.
7. Must concentrate harder on each task.
8. Tasks take longer.
9. Only able to focus at one thing at a time.
10. Reduced hearing causes a feeling of isolation.

Other Sources

Observations/interviews

As part of a preparatory assignment participants were asked to observe older people in their own town interacting with the transport system, and to interview an older person on his/her concerns when travelling.

Medical information

The Salzburg Association "Ein Schritt ins Alter" ("One step into old age") has helped provide medical information about the effects of age on the body, which was sent out to the participants in advance.

Simulations

The association also provided us with an acoustic simulation that allowed participants to experience the difficulty of hearing an announcement at a train station, as well as a tactile and visual experience they could refer to throughout the event.

Lectures

Professor Keith Bright, (Research Group for Inclusive Environments, School of Construction Management and Engineering, The University of Reading, England) gave a talk on how people with disabilities experience our environment, and what considerations should go into the design of an environment to make it more accessible.

He categorized four groups of disability:

Mobility, Cognition, Hearing, Vision

One example:
how various visual impairments influence the perception of one scene on a street market.

"Normal" vision

Loss of central field of vision

Loss of peripheral field of vision

General loss of vision

Observation and Analysis

- City Content
- Navigation
- Ergonomics
- Branding

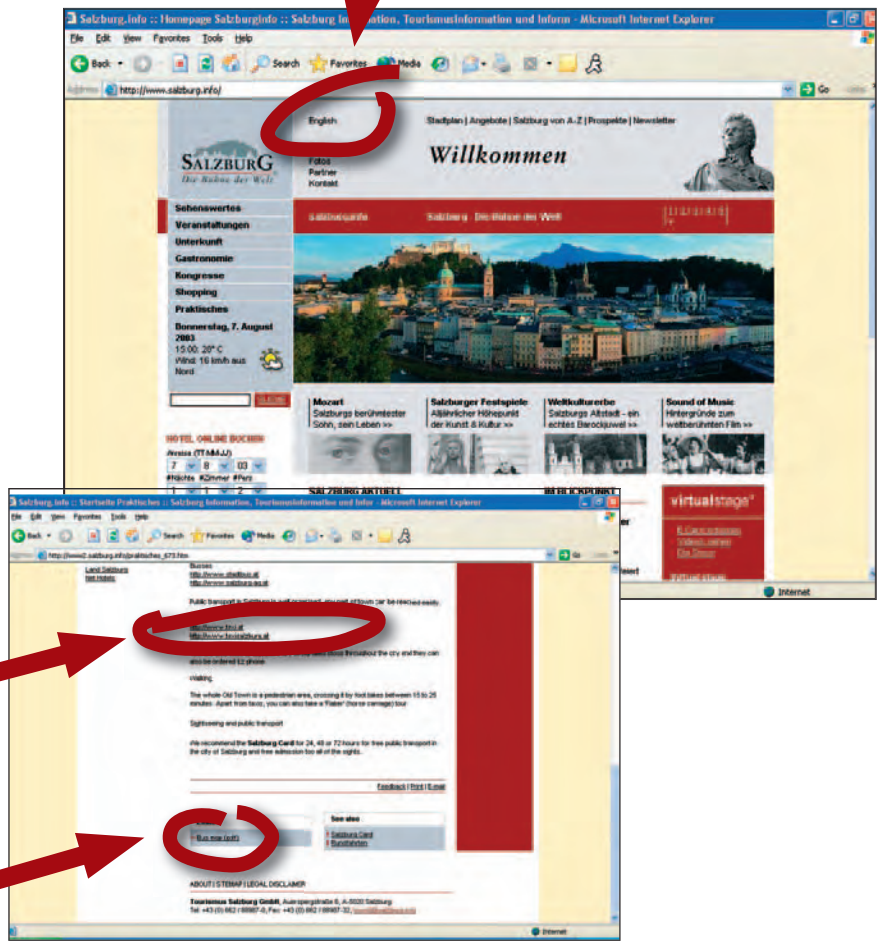
City Content

What can I see in Salzburg? Where do I find Information?

Before a trip: Information on the internet becomes more and more important to visitors. (By the way: the fastest growing user group of the internet are people aged over 50.)

During the stay: In a city many tourists like to rely on environmental information for orientation in a city rather than having to consult maps and guidebooks.

Link to English version is not very prominent

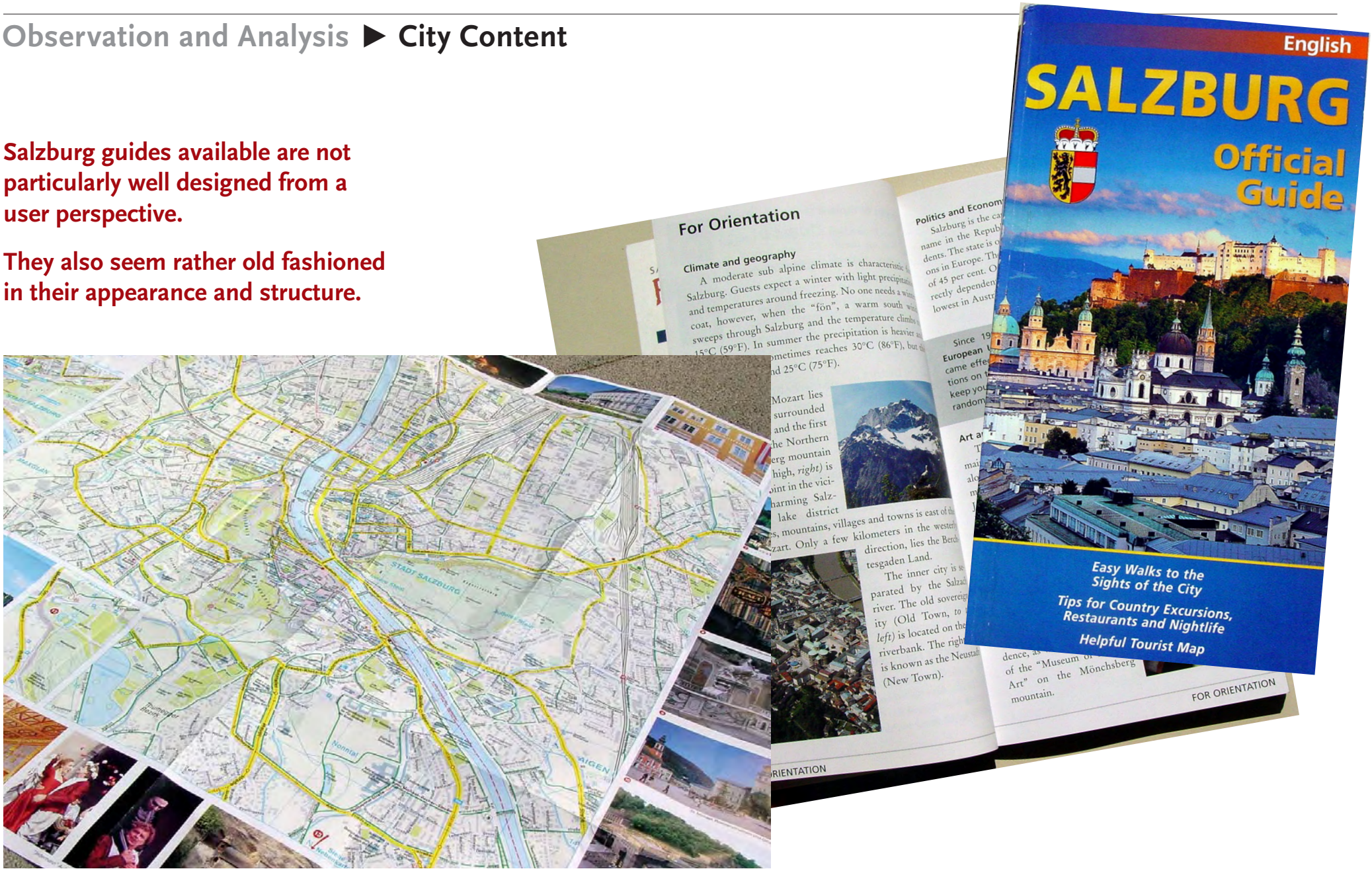


Why are there two different links to bus companies?

PDF bus map very large and all in German

Salzburg guides available are not particularly well designed from a user perspective.

They also seem rather old fashioned in their appearance and structure.



Contextual information in the environment is almost completely missing.

Especially in bus shelters we expected better information on the transport system and the immediate environment. There were no maps indicating current position.

City content – if at all available – often takes second place behind advertising.

This is the only piece of contextual information we found, it isn't very easy to understand.

Where am I?

Hardly any information in English

Empty showcase at a bus stop

Advertising

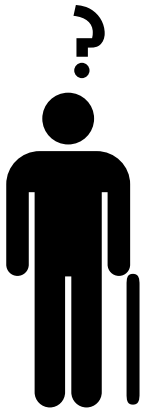
Information

Target Audience Relevance:

Key information, especially about the transport system is difficult to find and hard to read.

No visual guidance through the city – it would be helpful to establish familiar signage/ symbols to aid orientation and help take decisions on where to go. Familiarity gives confidence.

Similar structure and recognizable symbols in various media would help understand information.



Low contrast, small typeface and high placement combine to make information hard to read.

Navigation *Signage*

Signage seems to be treated as something that "happens" in certain situations, rather than as a navigational tool for citizens and visitors.

We found no signposts that help find the way through the city.
The placement of signage also seems incidental rather than considered.

Important information too high and too discreet

Information obscured by bench

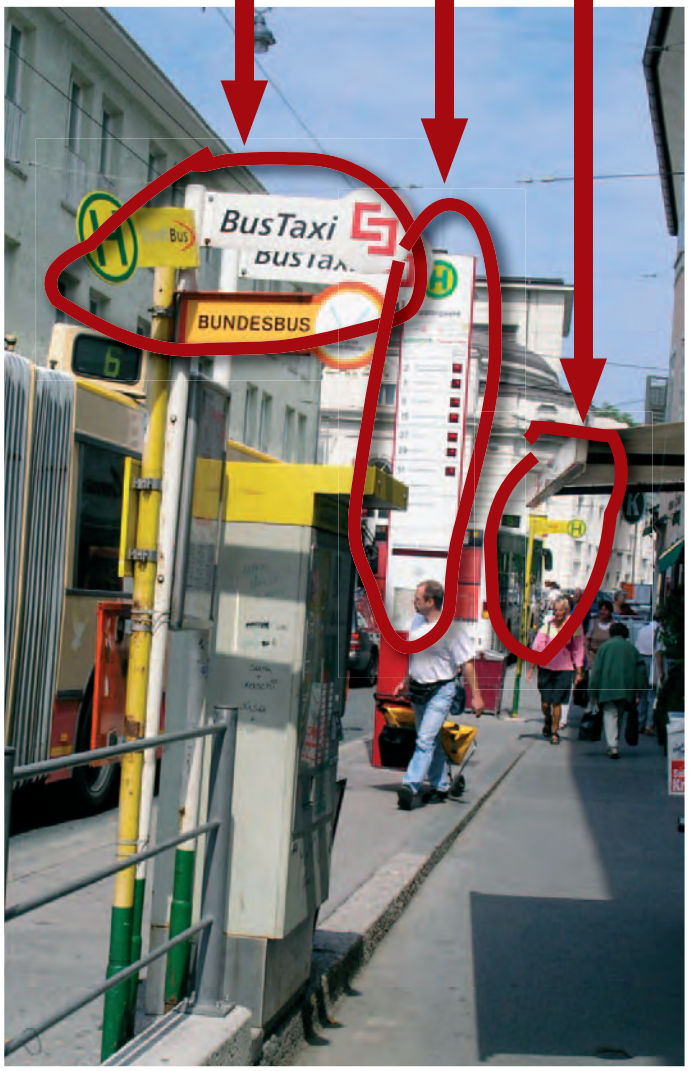
Especially in the context of public transport the signage systems were confusing.

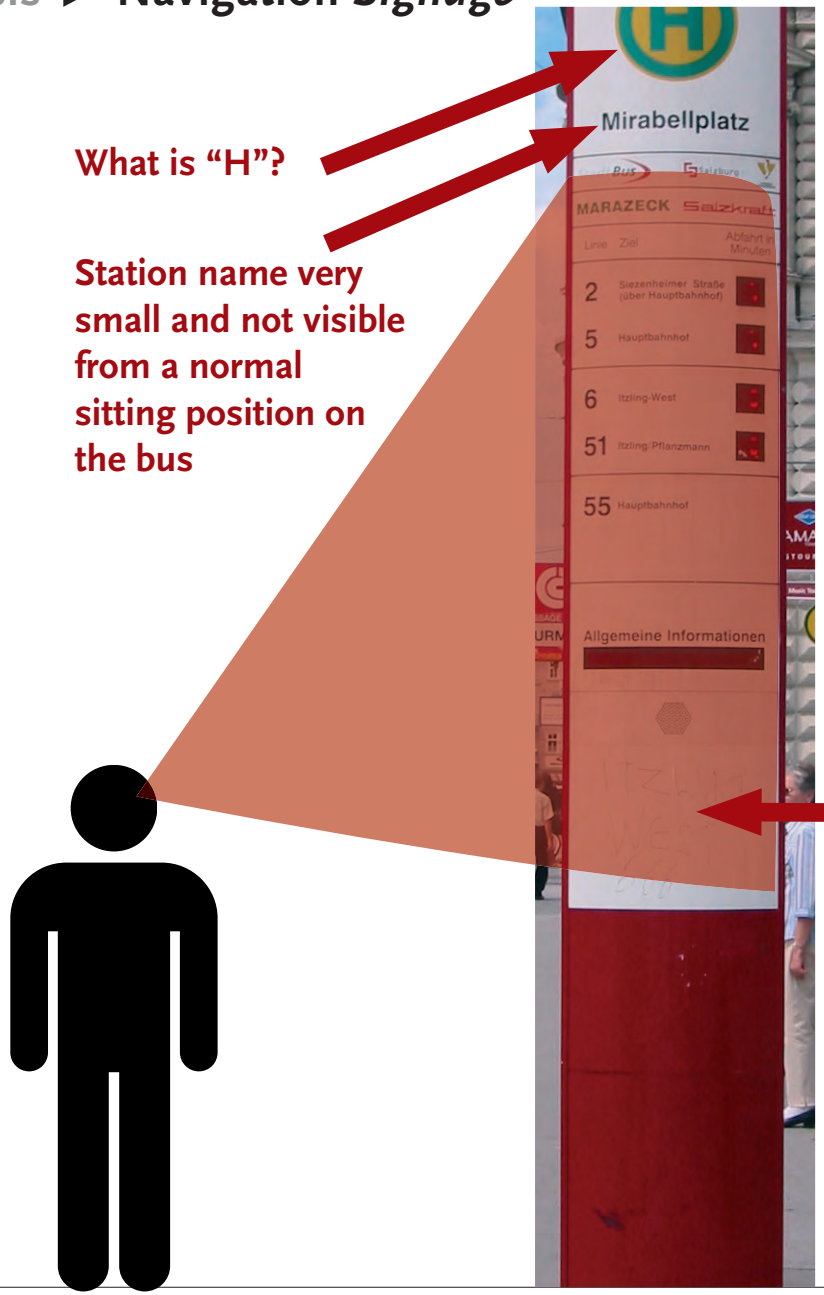
Which bus is mine?

Signs are overlapping

Where is the bus stop?

Here? Here? Or here?





What is “H”?

Station name very small and not visible from a normal sitting position on the bus

Bus information:must step back and look up to read

Bus destination very small

Map: must stand close to read

Older person's field of vision is narrower and tends to be directed downwards.

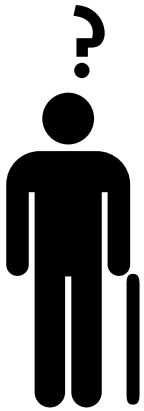
Target Audience Relevance:

Some consistency in colour, placement, shape or symbolism would increase confidence to move around the city independently.

Information spread over a large area is diffucult to take in.

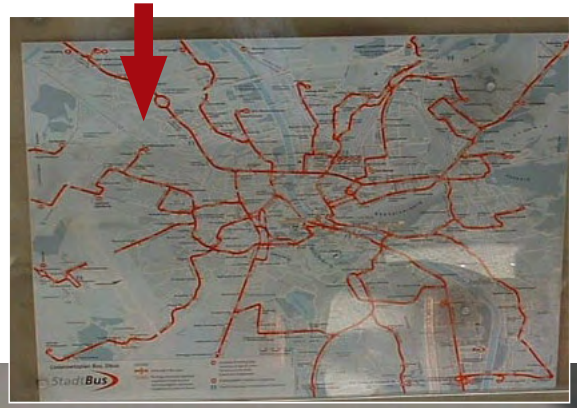
To read information a person with visual impairment must stand close. How do you read information high up?

Signage high up is often overlooked by older people, because the focus is directed at the ground.



Navigation
Information on the Bus

Map placed above the window: hard to read at a distance



Confusion as to what is the next station and what is the final destination

Letters tend to blur even for people with no visual impairment

Just one map on the whole bus in a position that's not easily accesssible

Looks totally unimportant

Looks very important

Button difficult to see from a sitting position

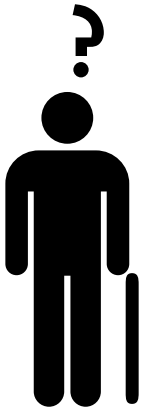
Looks a bit like an emergency stop button

Target Audience Relevance:

To be visible and readable, signage must be high contrast to the background, at reasonable size and consistent.

Information placed so high it's only readable when standing up – a difficult exercise for an older person on a moving bus.

An older person needs more time to prepare to exit. Related information must be particularly clear.



Placed at eye level of the dog

Not clear if it's a suggestion or a requirement.

Does the dog *have* to sit here?

No consistency in signage

“If people cannot satisfactorily use an environment because of the way it is designed and managed, the fault lies with the environment provision – not the user.”

– Keith Bright, University of Reading

Navigation *Ticket Machine*

Ticket machines and other public terminals are notoriously difficult to use, not just for older people or people who are unfamiliar with the system.
The experience of the Age Explorer and knowing more about the physical effects of old age made us even more aware of usability – or the lack of it.

The complicated path a user must follow to buy a ticket

Not immediately recognizable as a ticket machine from this angle

Where do I start???

Where is an explanation of the kind of ticket I need ?

Information in two languages, but type size is too small and contrast too low

Display hardly legible due to lack of contrast

Difficult to see change and ticket in the slot

Target Audience Relevance:

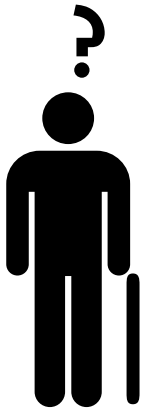
Good contrast helps to distinguish between various kinds of information.

Instructional text must be large and recognizable as such.

Feedback from the machine must be clear (keys, display).

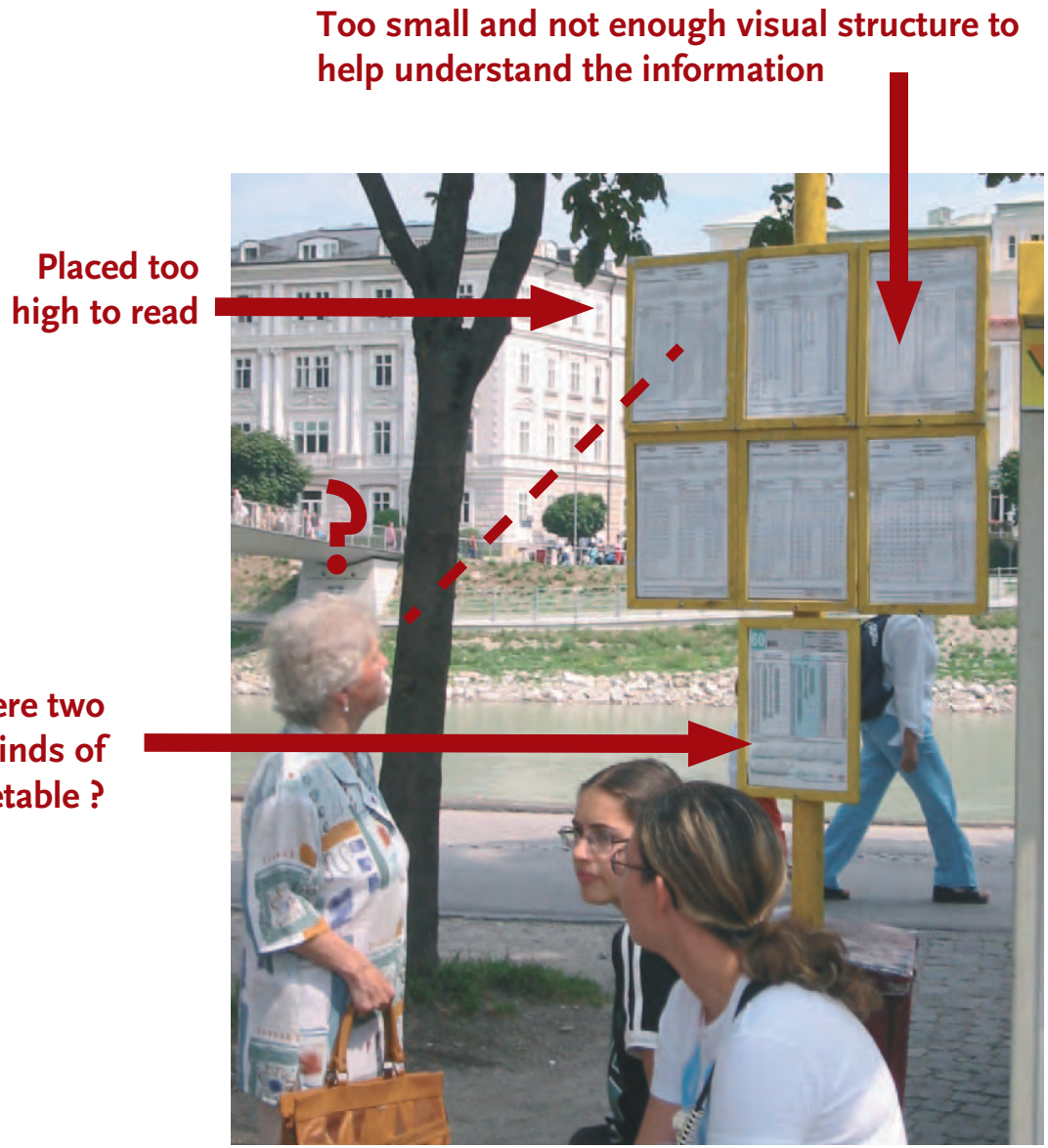
Slots must be more accessible, maybe with lighting to be able to see tickets and change.

It's very stressful to buy tickets, especially when others are waiting behind them.



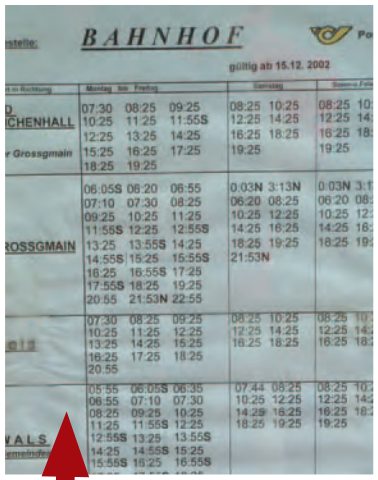
Navigation *Timetables*

We have found timetables displayed at the bus stops quite confusing, in various different layouts and all of them difficult to read. In some cases timetable information was totally missing.



Difficult to understand, hard to read, and the transparent cover casts an unpleasant reflection

Similar logic, different look



Missing information

Totally different logic

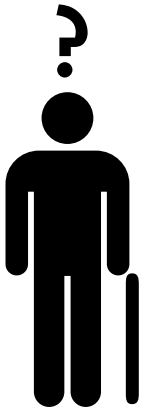
Target Audience Relevance:

One can become frustrated if information is missing or not easily accessible.

Information is too small and often unreadable.

Confusing information creates insecurity and loss of confidence in the system.

An older person may be afraid or embarrassed to ask for help.



Navigation *Printed Material*

Most obvious is the lack of identity and continuity in the printed material for the Salzburg transport system. At first glance it is very complicated.

It seems that the passenger is required to understand the system before he/she is able to actually use it.

The matrial is also not easy to come by – it is certainly not available on the bus, where it would be expected.

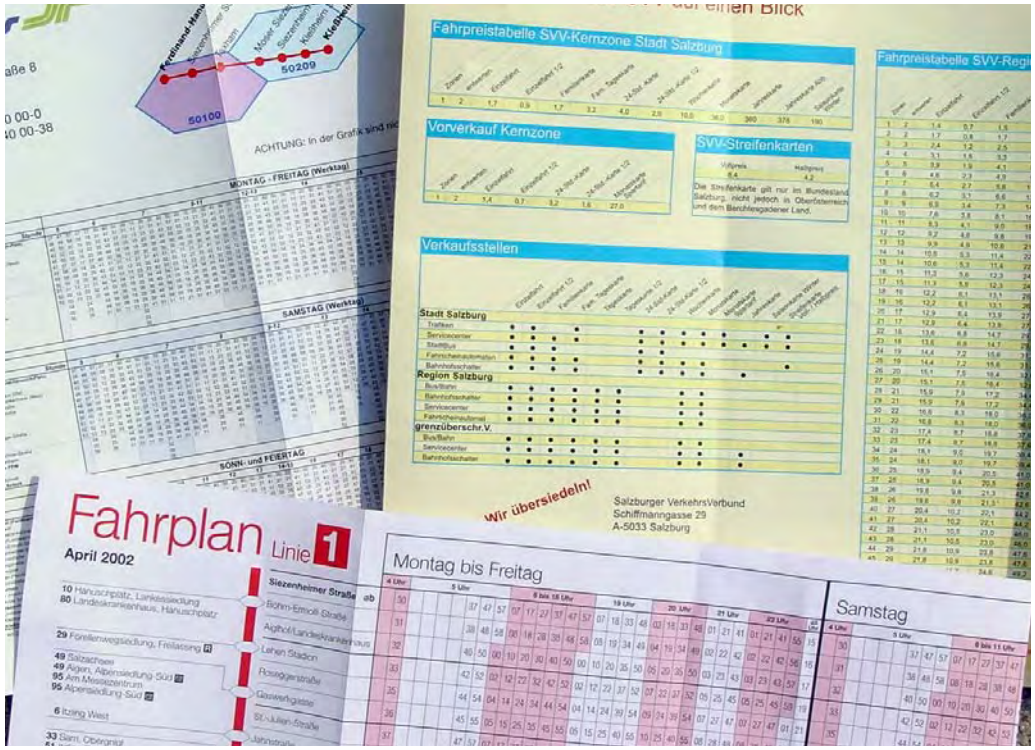
Both maps refer to the transport system in Salzburg. Even though they cover different aspects, a visual relationship should be apparent.

In both cases information is difficult to understand.

Three different bus schedules for the same city.

Three different companies with three different identities.

Three different visual designs for the timetables.



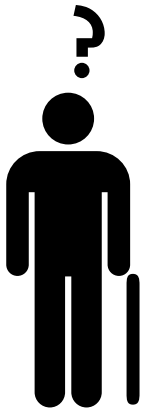
Target Audience Relevance:

Text and numbers must have a minimum size and weight, and a high contrast to background.

Need for several different schedules to determine one route.

Obtaining schedule information from different bus companies can be difficult for a person who is less mobile.

The impression that travel by public transport is difficult could cause older people not to travel at all and more mobile people to use the car.



Ergonomics

Even though in many cases the shortcomings in the physical environment of public transport are attributable to vehicle construction, some aspects of a more ergonomic environment can be determined by the city or transport companies themselves.

Why is this seat facing a wall?

Why is it so narrow?

Why does *this* seat have a step?

Most bus interiors have very low colour contrast

The glass is not easy to see – a visually impaired person could walk into it

Seats too low

No back-rest

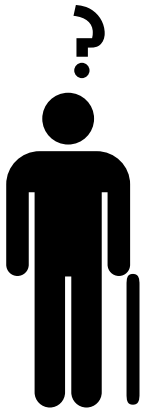
Target Audience Relevance:

Contrast = Confidence

Colour contrast helps establish a clear idea of space boundaries and gives confidence.

Important areas like the stop button, a step, hand grips, or the exit must be clearly visible and stand out from the environment.

For older people additional space is needed to accommodate movement.



Sitting down and getting up from a low seat is a problem for an older person.

Glass walls must be marked clearly to be seen.

Branding

A distinct lack of branding has followed us through this experience of the City of Salzburg and its transport system. Advertising is – literally – everywhere, even on the windows of the buses, but content, continuity and guidance are missing.

Two positive examples are the PostBus and ÖBB bus. They are recognized from a distance, as are – in some cases – the station signs.

Yellow bus – yellow signs

Red bus – red signs

All Salzburg City buses look different

Station signage has no visual relationship to the buses

Reduced vision through advertising

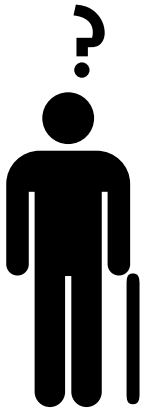
Target Audience Relevance:

Clear branding creates continuity.

Colour differentiation is a first indicator for what bus line to take – even before an exact number can be identified.

Familiarity gives confidence: constantly changing appearance through advertising can be confusing.

Advertising on the bus windows further reduces vision and makes orientation more difficult.

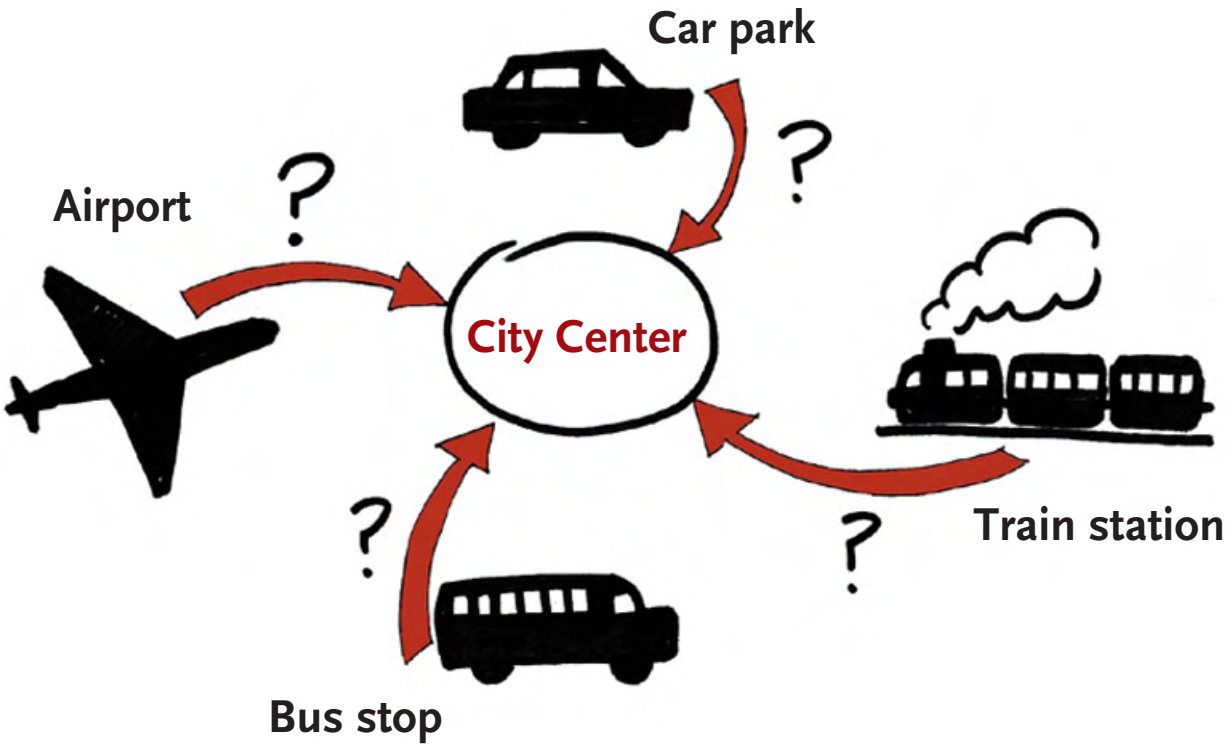


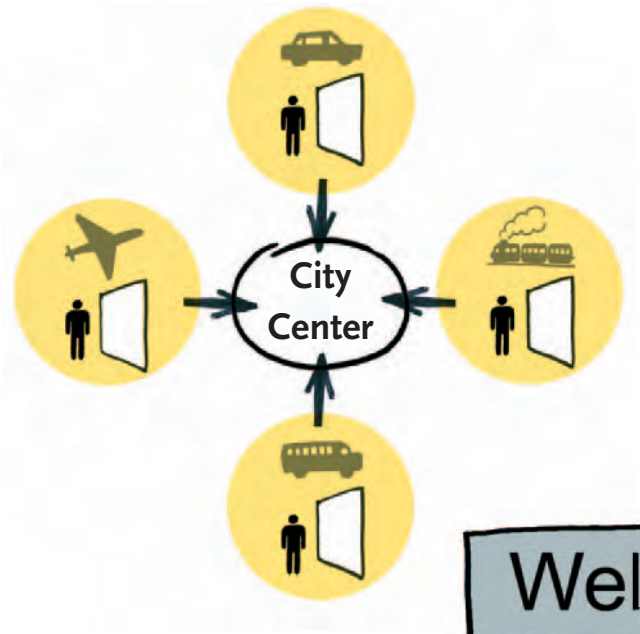
- City Content
- Navigation
- Ergonomics
- Branding

City Content

Problem:

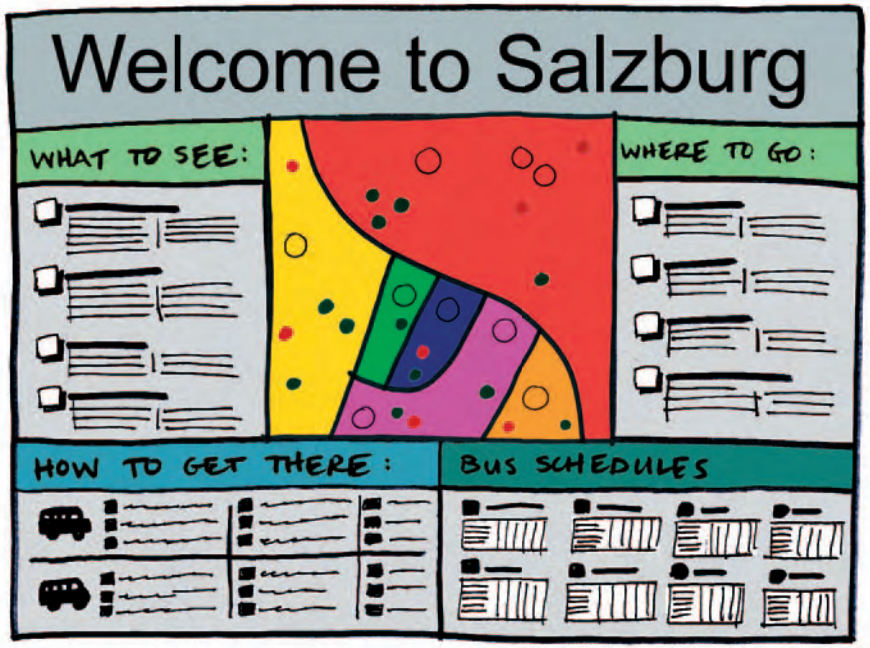
Visitors to Salzburg have no easy way of knowing where certain destinations are or how to get from different entry points into the city.





Proposal:

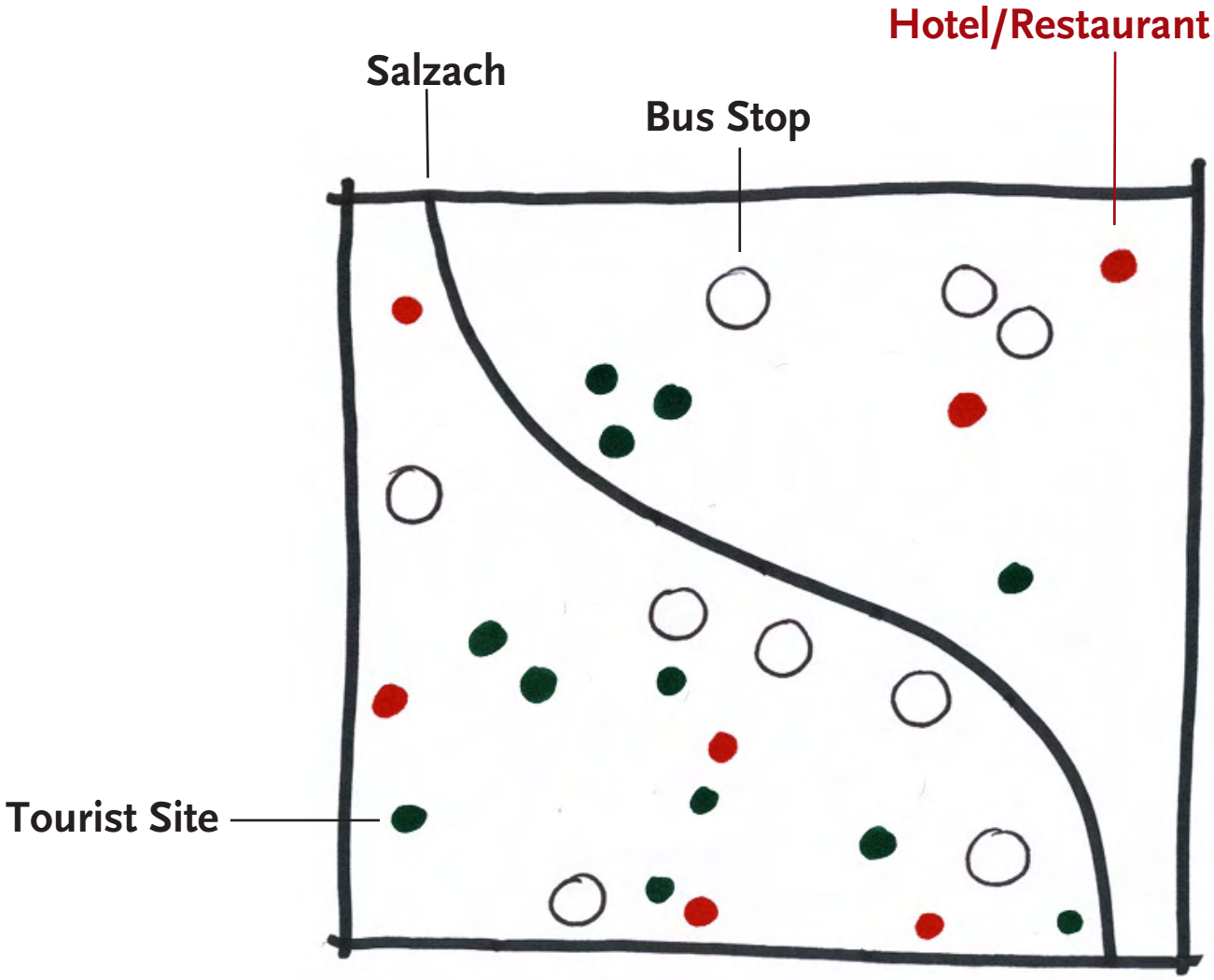
Create an information panel with key destinations labelled on a map and bus information on how to get there. Place panel in a visible location at all main entry points.



Navigation

Problem:

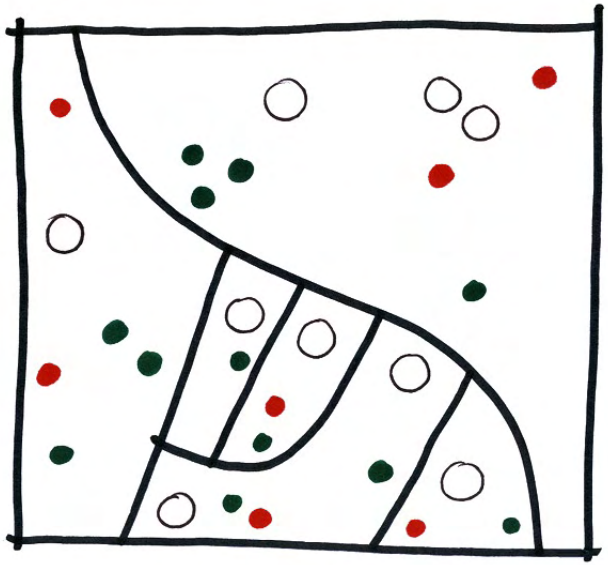
City sectors are not defined on maps.



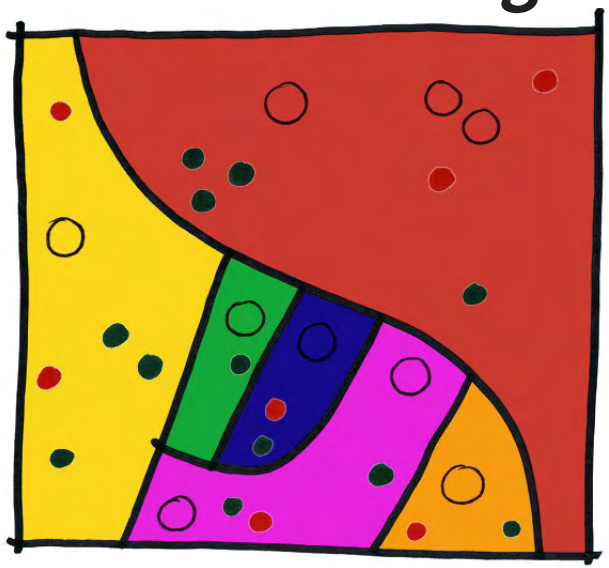
Proposal 1:

Divide the city into districts based on geographic regions and locations of key tourist sites and attractions.

District division

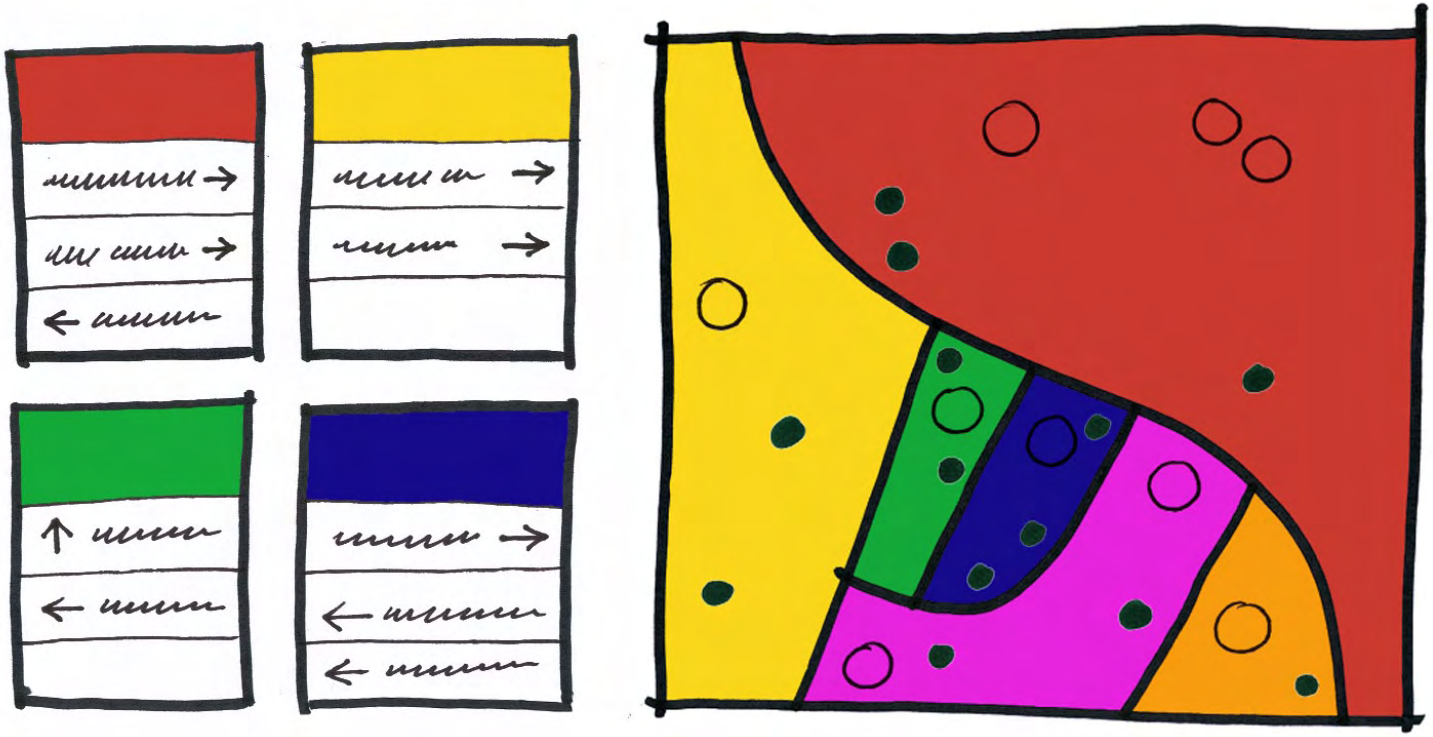


Colour coding



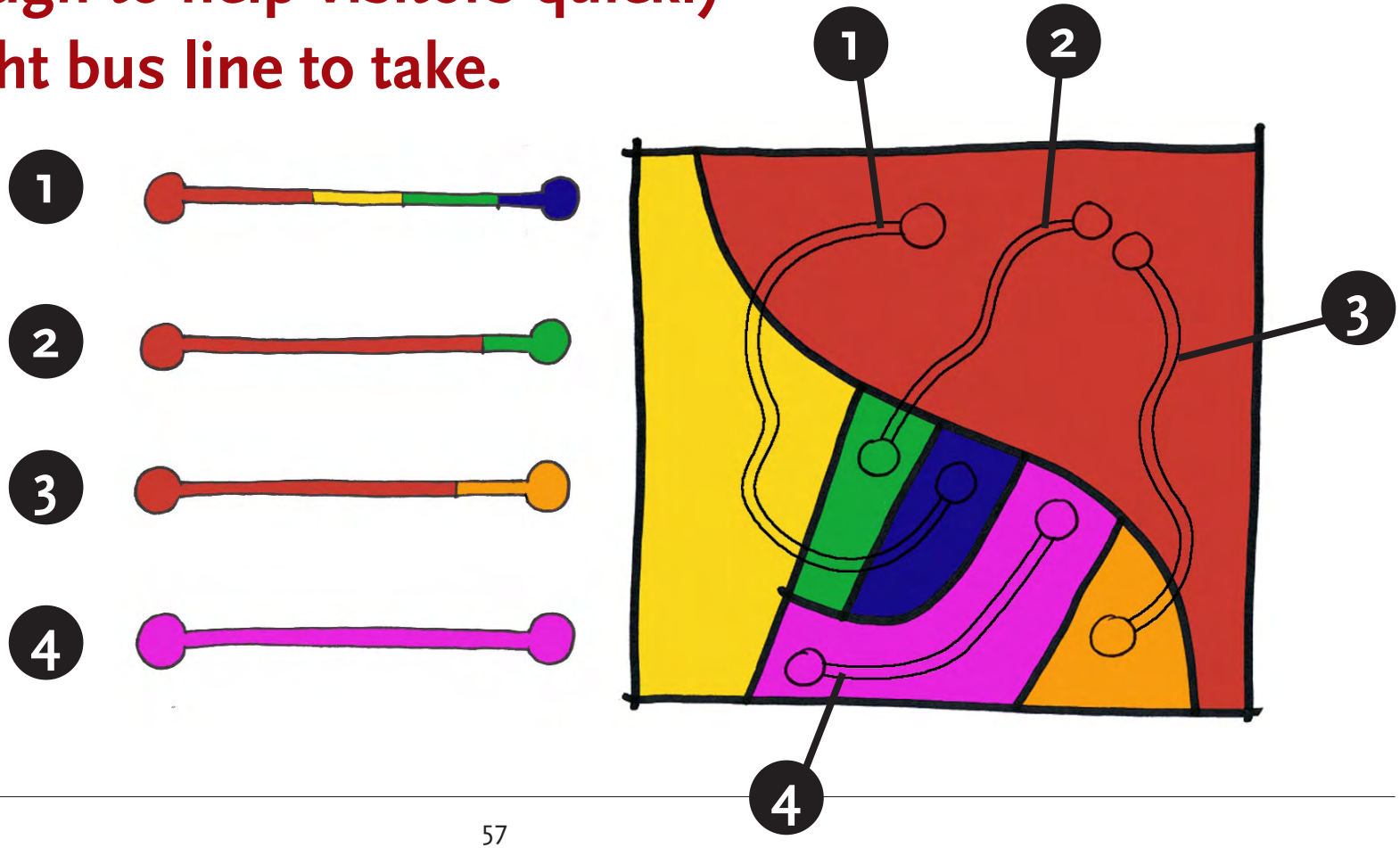
Proposal 2:

Develop signage for each district that immediately orients visitors by color and directs them to sites within a district.



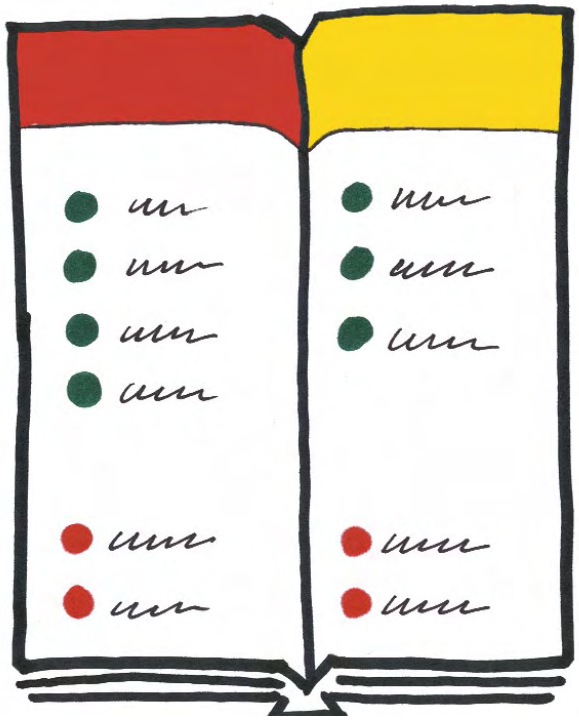
Proposal 3:

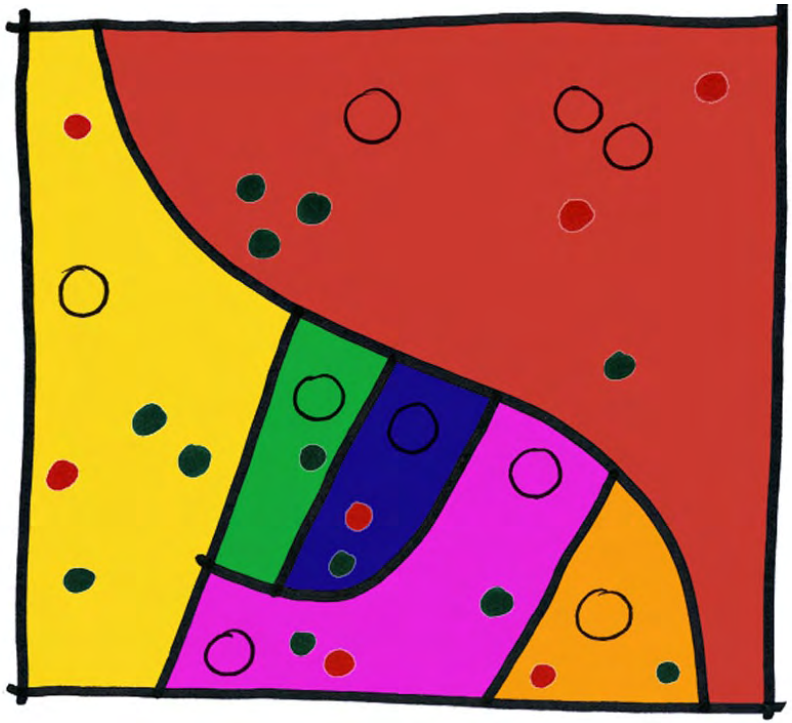
Color code bus routes by the districts they pass through to help visitors quickly identify the right bus line to take.



Proposal 4:

Create a visitor guide book organized by district, with detailed information on sightseeing, hotels, restaurants, and public transport.



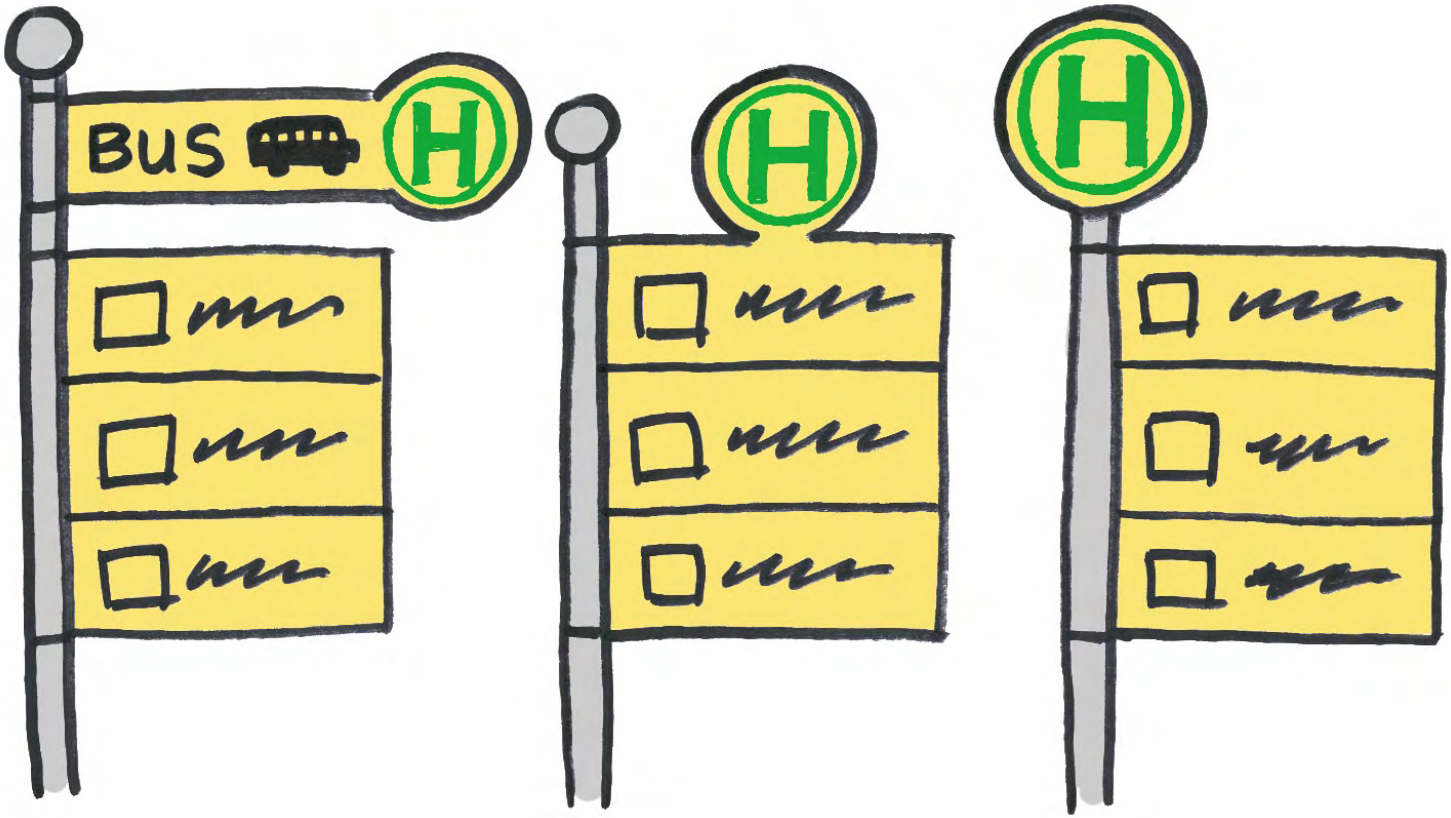


Problem:

Too many signs create confusion about individual bus services.

Proposal:

Use standard signs for all bus services.



Problem:

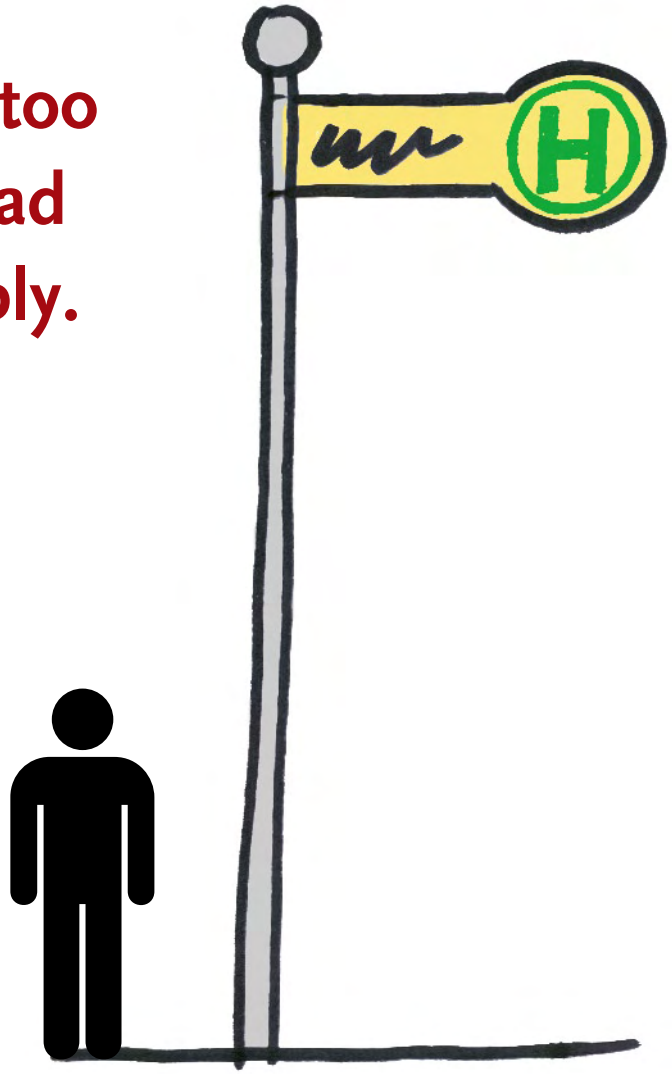
Signs are faded, bent or vandalized, making them hard to read.

Proposal:

Regularly maintain and repair signs, and keep posted schedules up to date.

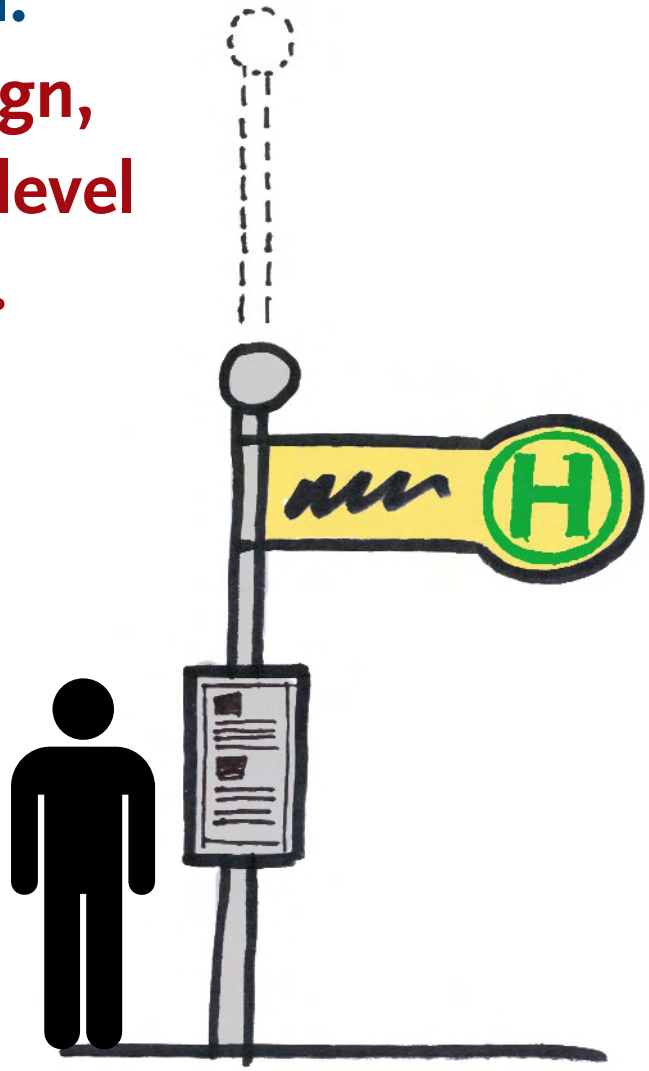
Problem:

Signs are too high to read comfortably.

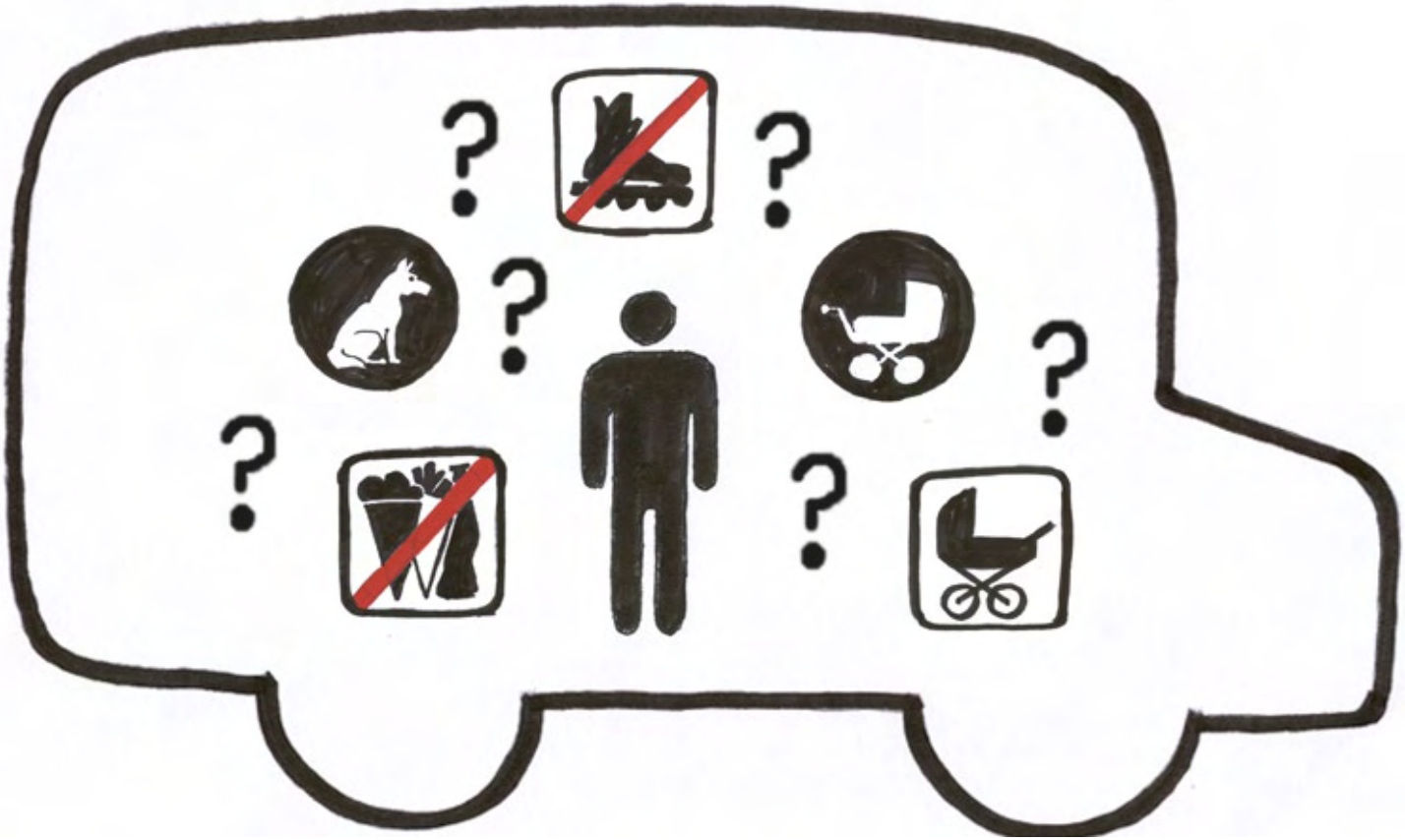


Proposal:

Lower sign, add eye-level bus info.



Problem:
Symbol usage inside bus is confusing.



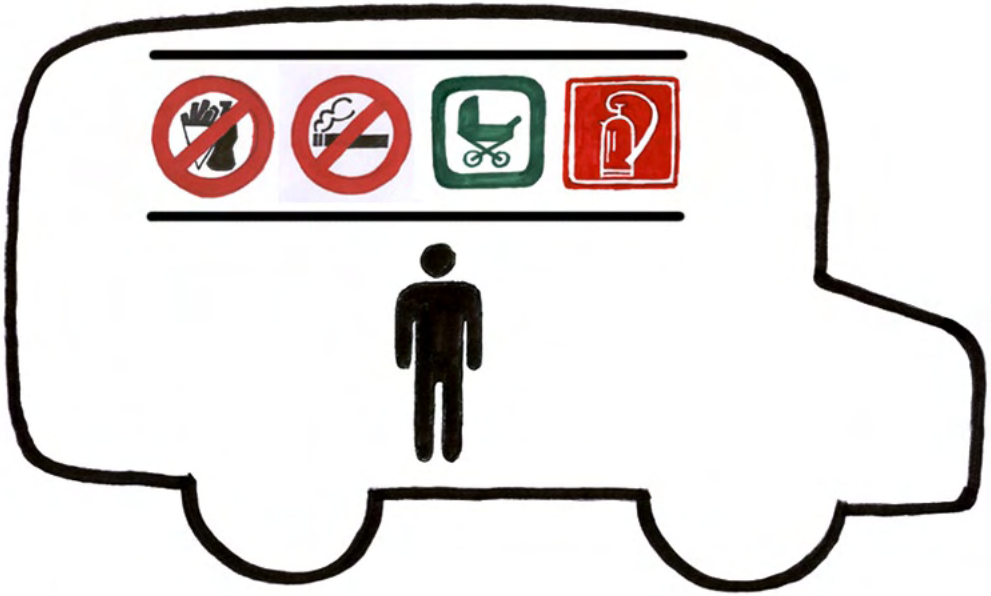
Proposal 1:
Create standard symbol system.

Prohibition — Red Circle

Direction — Green Square

Universal — European Standard

Proposal 2:
Place symbols consistently within a zone.



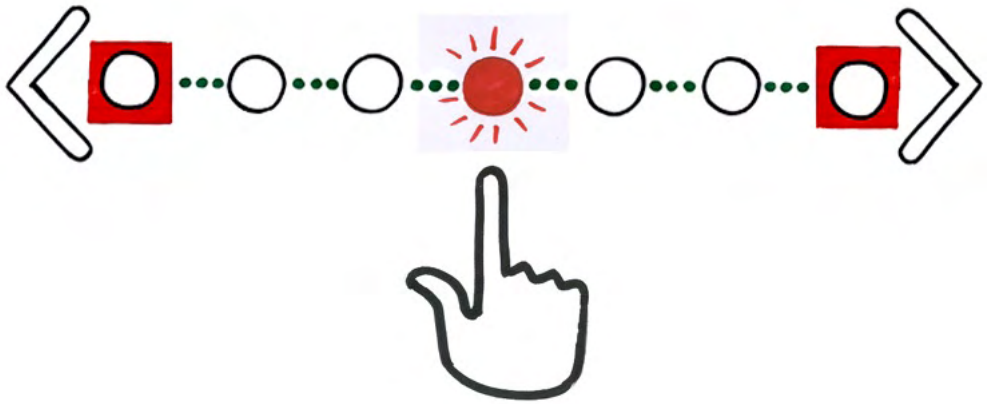
Problem:

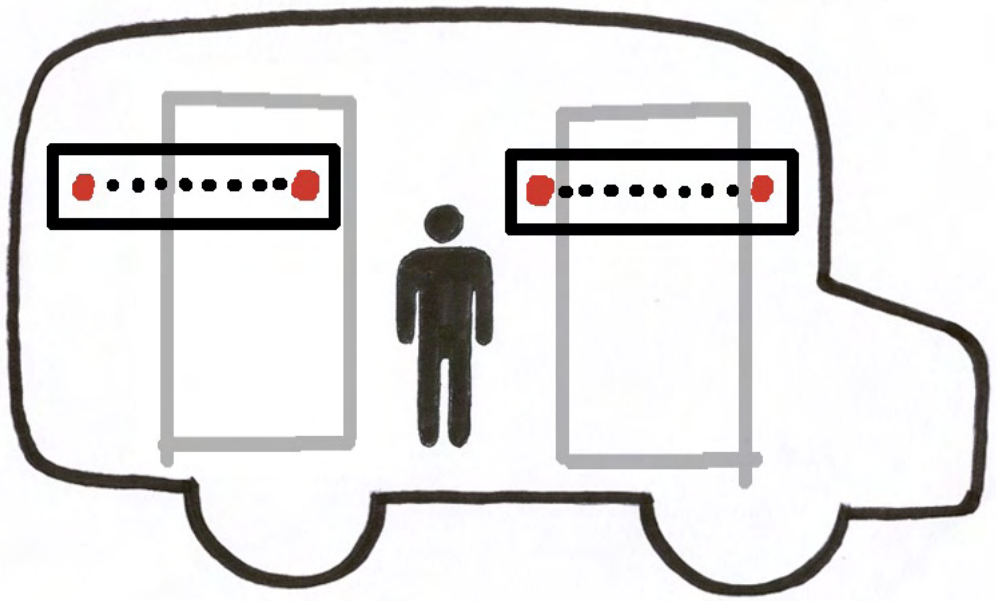
It is hard for an older person to get out of their seat and press the stop button.

Proposal:

A route map with integrated stop buttons. Passengers press the button for their stop when they board.

Place maps near bus entrances for easy access.

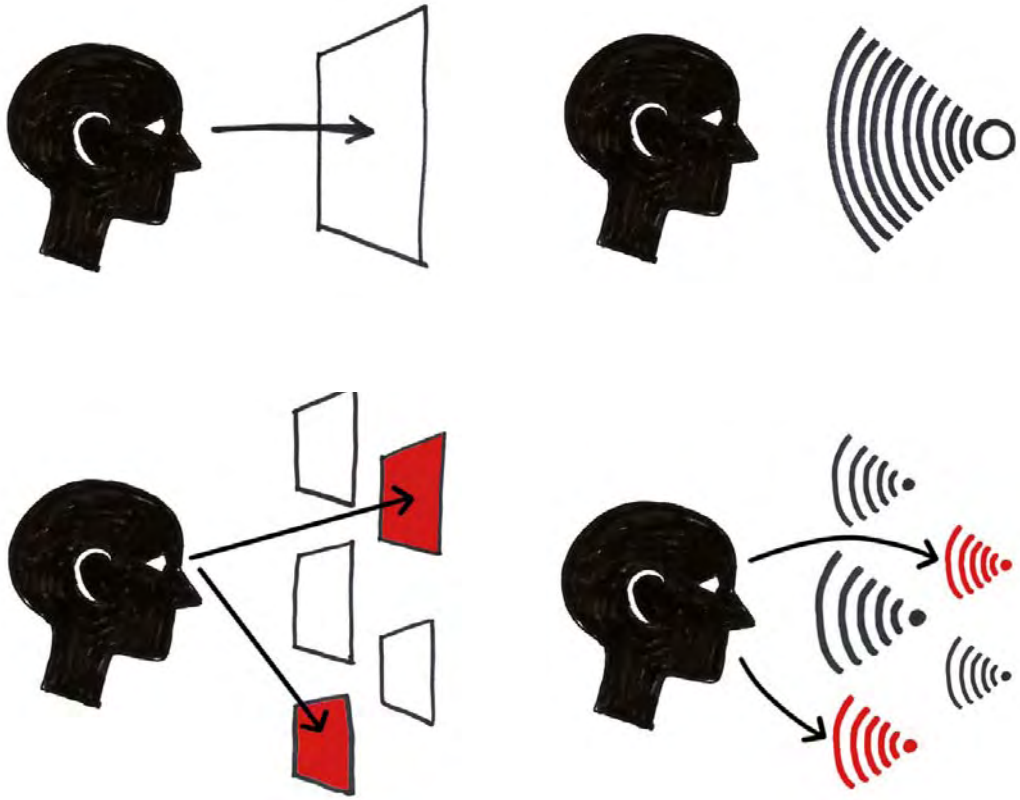




Audio Support

Some people rely on audio information as much as visual information for orientation.

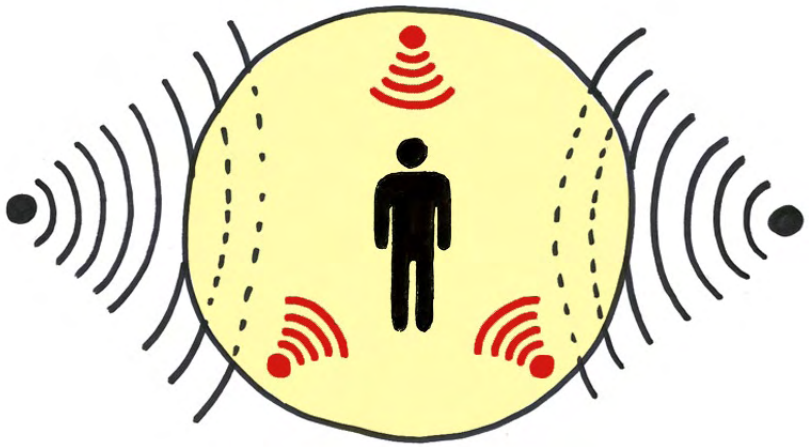
Audio, just like visual navigation information must stand out within its environment.



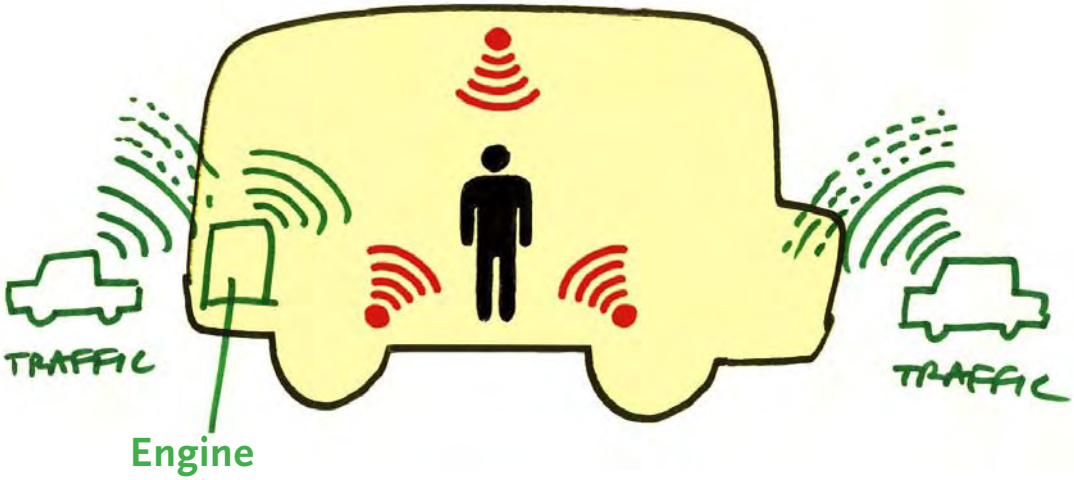
Visual navigation

Audio navigation

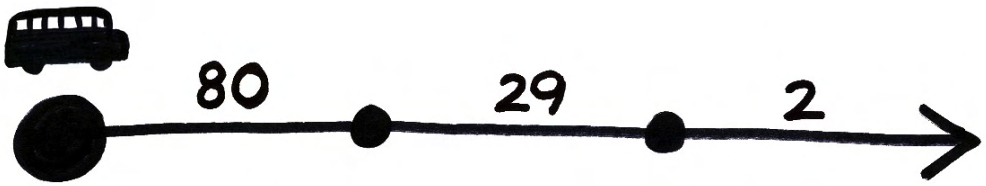
A clean environment is necessary to make navigation information easier to access and understand.



A bus is a good example of a clean environment. Presently, there are fewer audio stimuli to compete with navigational information.



We went on a journey on routes 80, 29, and 2 to experience existing navigational audio elements on the bus.



We identified the 3 types of navigational audio on these bus lines and how consistently they are used.

	80	29	2
Stop announcement	✗	✓	✓
Stop button	✓	✗	✗
Door alert	✗	✓	✗

Conclusions

- If used consistently and reliably, announcements and door alerts at every stop can be extremely helpful for passengers.
- Audio navigational information in a public space must be considered even more carefully than visual information. Audio signals are much more intrusive than their visual counterparts – you can't just look away if you don't like it.
- A clean sound environment must be maintained in order to hear navigational information clearly.

Note: Age-related hearing loss first manifests itself in the higher frequencies, therefore any audio feedback must be tested with older passsengers.

Ticket Machines

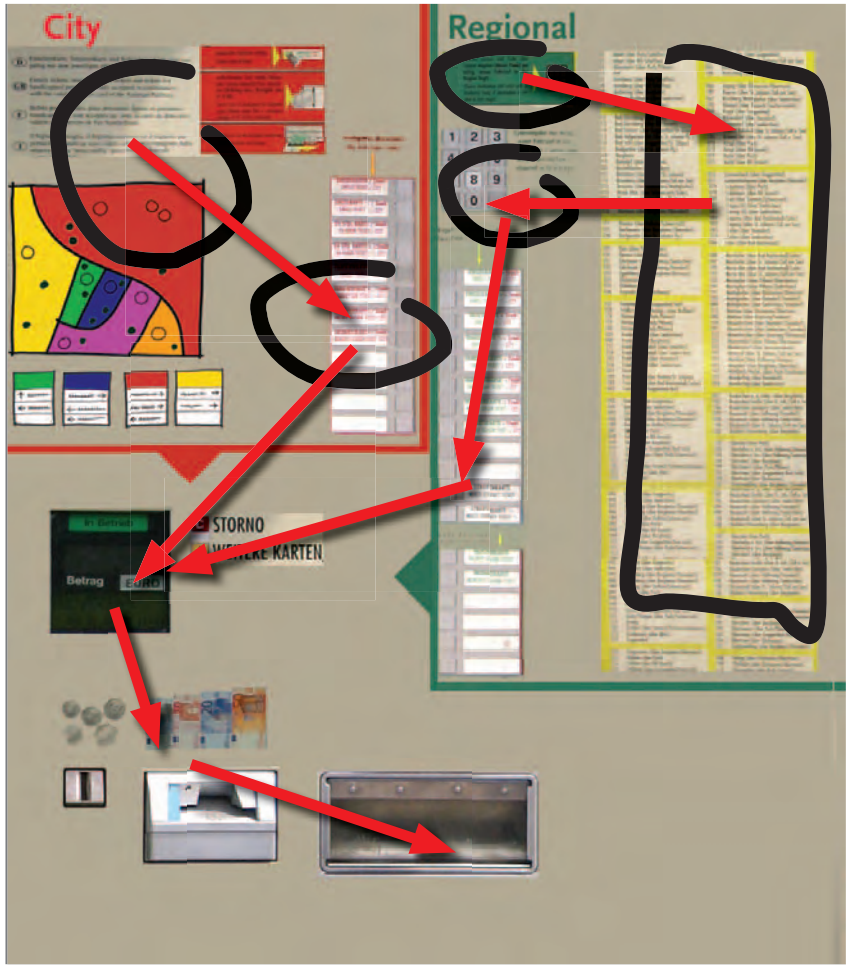
Problem:

Confusing layout, where the arrangement of various elements is not very user friendly.

We looked at the various elements and visualized the path a user must take to understand the system and buy a ticket.

Proposal:
Elements clearly identified and arranged in sequence.

Far from re-designing the ticket machine, we nevertheless looked at a more logical flow of information and use.



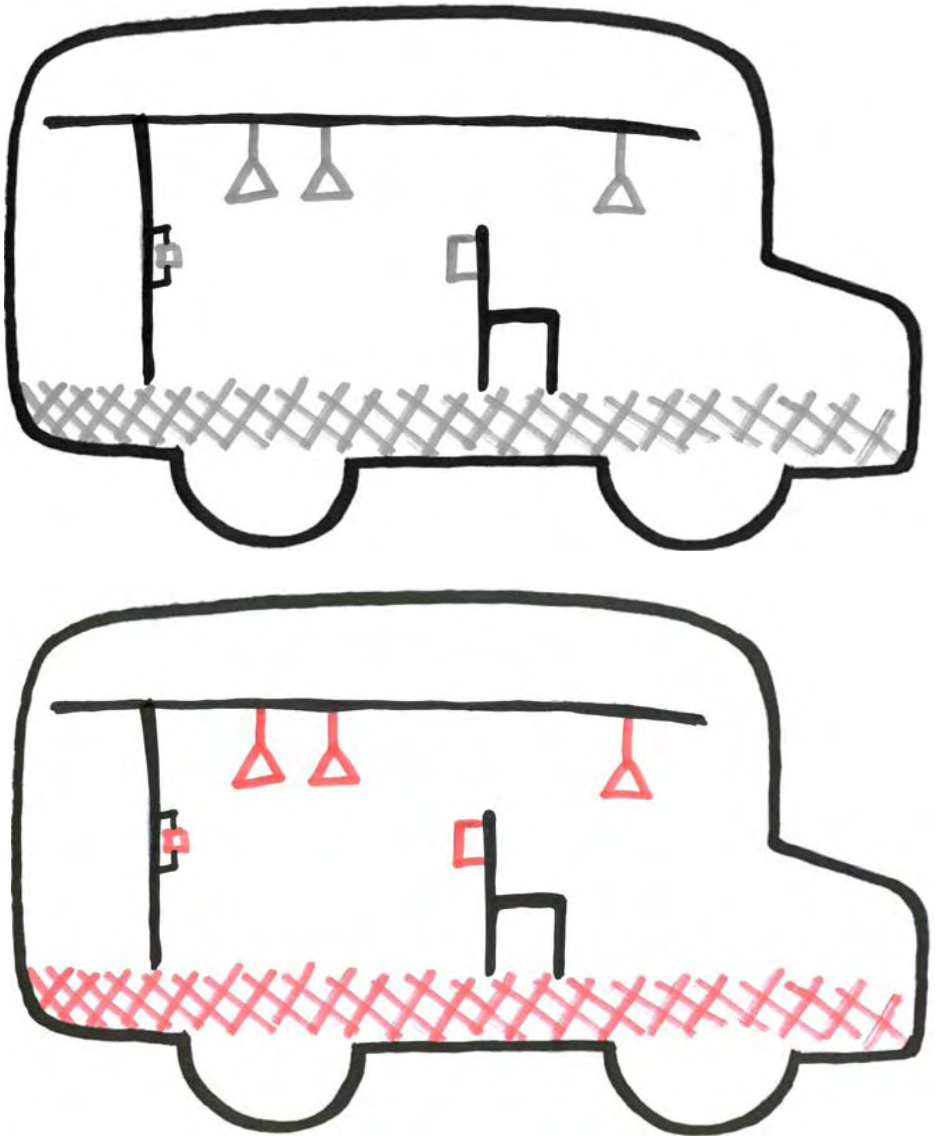
Ergonomics

Problem:

It is hard to see buttons, grips, and floor boundary in a neutral environment.

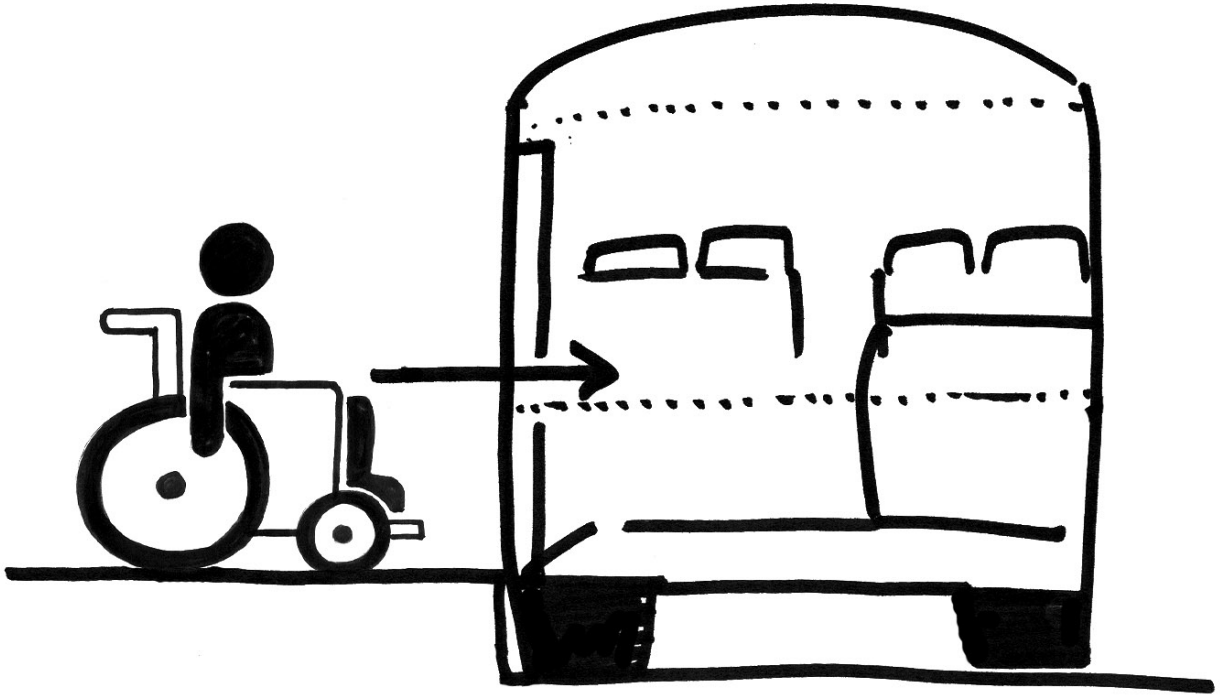
Proposal:

Increase color contrast by using – for instance – red against grey.



Problem:

It is hard for wheelchair users (or parents with small children in push-chairs) to get on and off a bus.



Proposal:

Make bus floor level with sidewalk.

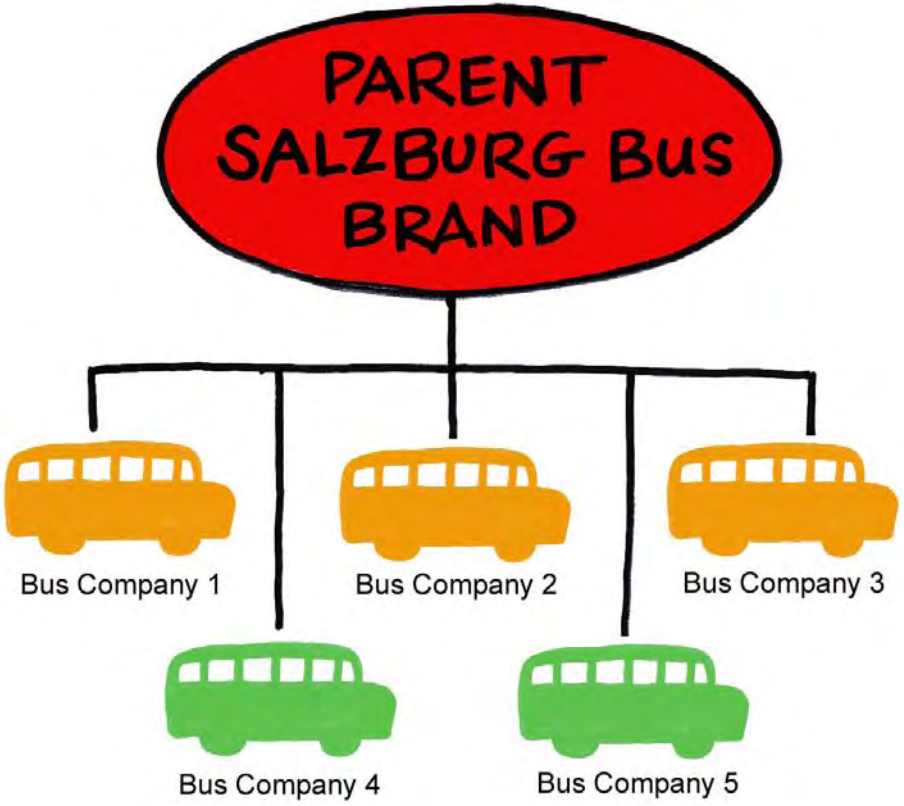
Branding

Problem:

There are fragmented identities among different bus companies, making it hard to recognize related bus services, ticket validity among different buses, and bus stops for certain routes.

Proposal:

Develop a parent bus company brand with local and area bus companies as sub-brands.

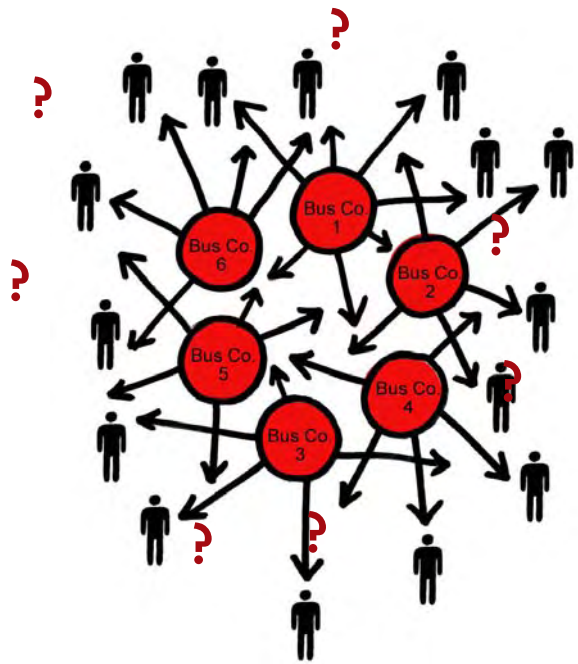


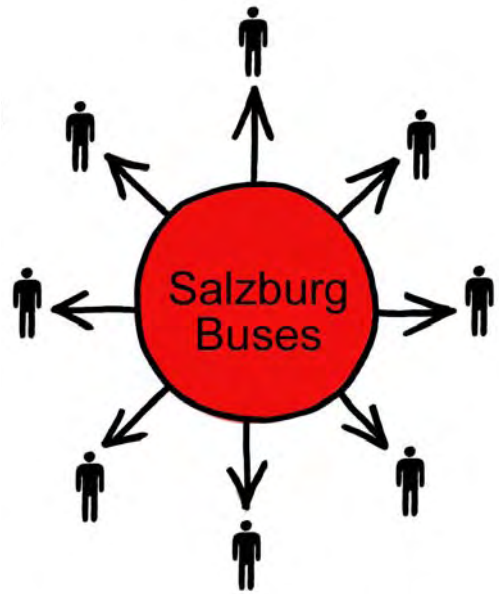
Problem:

Each bus company develops its own marketing strategy.

Proposal:

Promote all bus companies through the parent brand, with a single identity for all advertising.



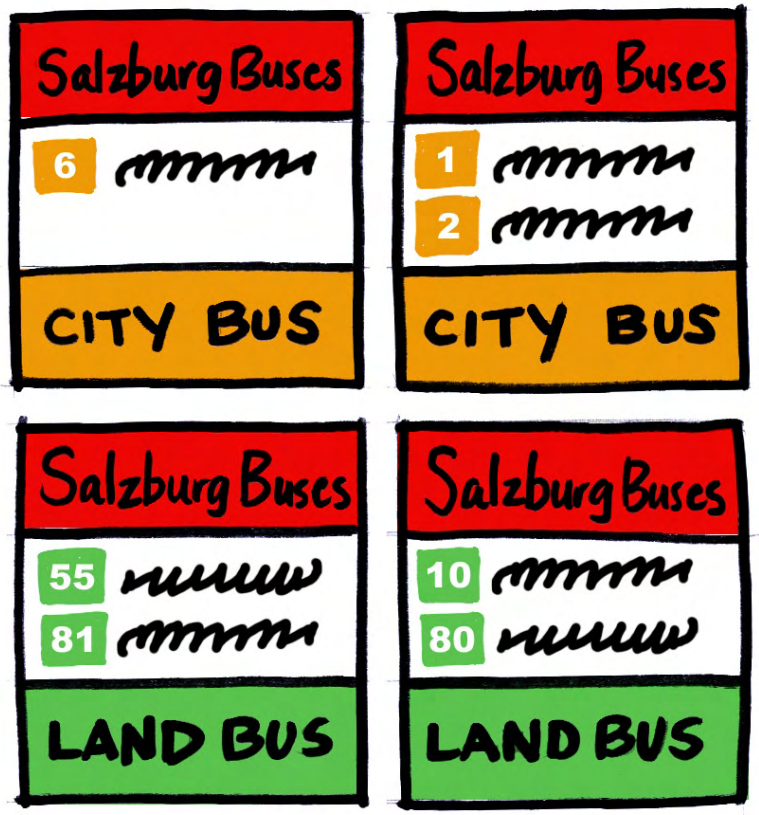


Problem:

Bus signs are inconsistent, showing different bus company names and logos.

Proposal:

Make signage consistent with the brand structure, reinforcing parent and sub-brand relationship.

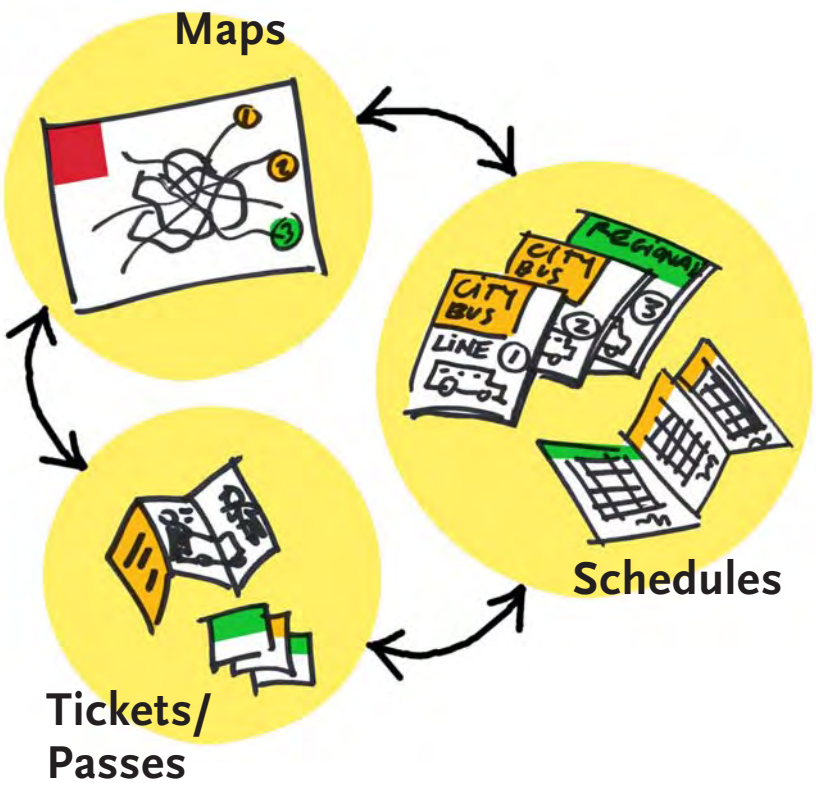


Problem:

Bus schedules, maps, tickets, and other print materials lack a unified appearance.

Proposal:

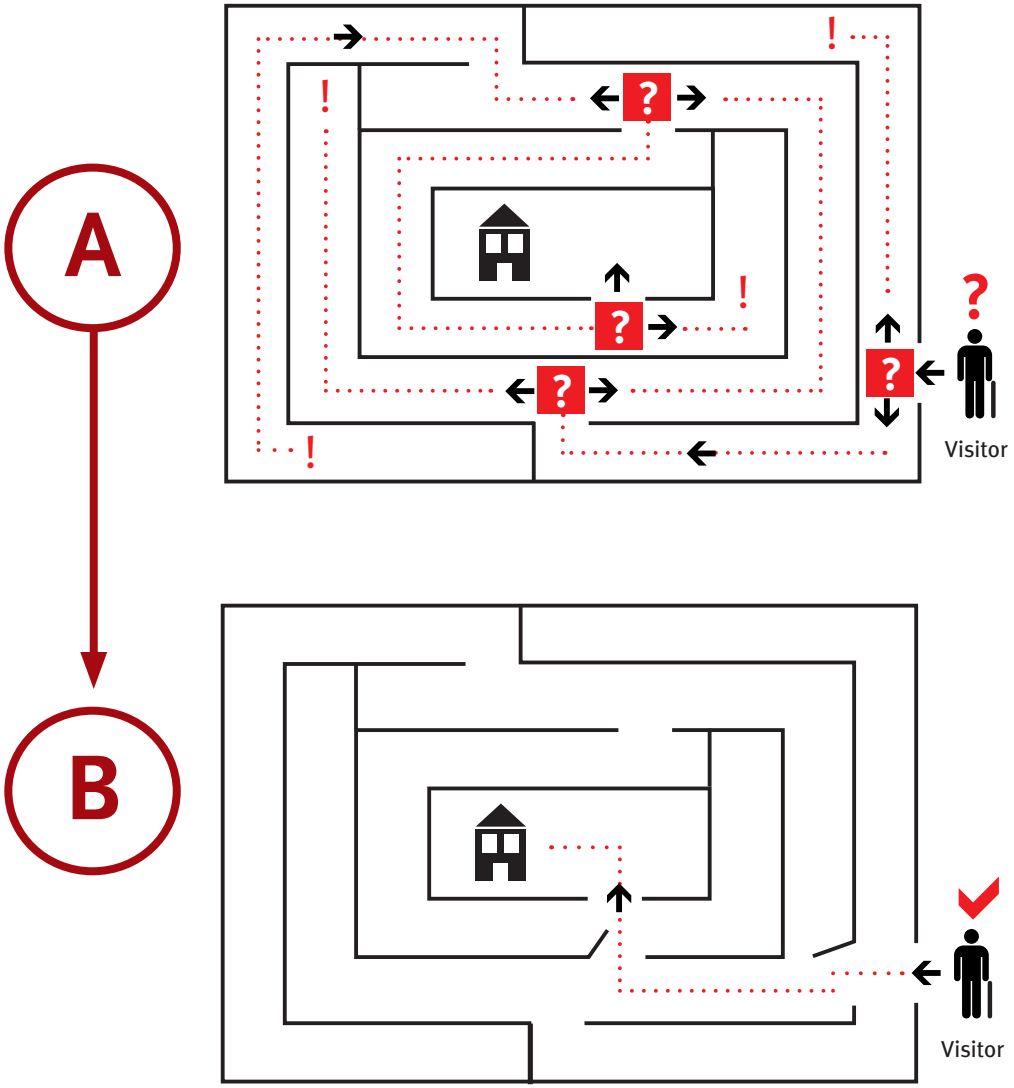
Create a system of interrelated print materials that incorporates the parent and sub-brand structure.




5

Next Steps

How to get from A to B



- Show findings to others
- Raise awareness about wayfinding issues
- Raise awareness about older users
- Verify research
- Choose category/starting point
- Implement further design solutions

Impressum

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Anschrift wie oben

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Our thanks also go to the Helen Hamlyn Research Centre at the RCA in London, who supplied us with information of their own projects on age design.