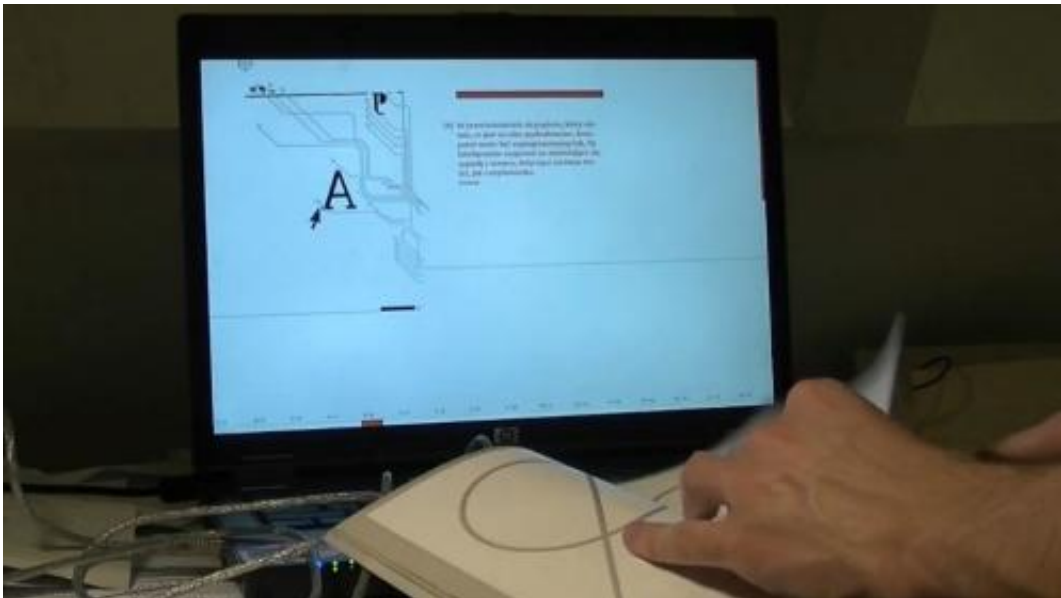


## Rethink book as computer interface, says designer (w/ Video)

September 9 2012, by Nancy Owano

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(Phys.org)—A Polish designer has taken the word "interface" to an interesting level. Waldek Wegrzyn has a prototype that teases us into thinking about future interconnection opportunities that lie between the book and the computer. We might be about to turn a corner where there is no either-or choice to be made between a print book and an e-book, a print newspaper or an online site, but rather both print and digital working with each other. The book becomes part of the computer reading experience. His creation, called Elektrobiblioteka

(Electrolibrary), bridges a chasm separating print and screen. This came about as a diploma project at the Academy of Fine Arts in Katowice, and it is catching eyes and imaginations.

Wegrzyn as student created his work in the Multimedia Publications Studio at the academy. The final result of his project was a paper book that can be connected to a computer via USB cable. The book communicates with javascript code on the website. With his concept, the book serves as a companion to web pages in that the physical book presides over the on-screen text. Flip pages of the book? The web pages flip over too. You control the screen via the book. The book can be browsed as any other regular book but when connected to the computer via USB, you get added information and animations, appropriate to the page that is open. He used a set of circuits made of conductive paint printed with a silk-screen method. This allowed him to add touch-sensitive elements to illustrations. The website was created with HTML, CSS, PHP and jQuery, mostly in Adobe Dreamweaver. Wegrzyn used the teensy development board, a USB-based microcontroller development system.

Elektrobiblioteka is online now and one can peruse his work and its functions. The site is in Polish. While site visitors may not read Polish and have easy access only to awful automated translations, the eyes have it. Much can be appreciated; numerous bloggers agree that he is on to something.

Forward-looking sales catalogs, children's literature, and magazines are easy to imagine, using his techniques. The interest that his project has drawn surprised Wegrzyn, as he said his effort was not toward a commercial product, only intended for presentation as a prototype. According to *CreativeApplications.Net*, there are only three existing [copies](#).

In *This is Paper* magazine, Wergzyn said one of his major inspirations was the [manifesto](#) "The topography of typography" published in 1923 by graphic designer El Lissitzky. It was Lissitzky who foresaw that one day there could be something he called an "electrolibrary" that would replace a book. "It seems that his predictions came true," Wergzyn said. "The great interest in my project that I encounter surprised me. I did not expect that at all, so maybe this project can be developed further."

**More information:** [elektrobiblioteka.net](http://elektrobiblioteka.net)

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