Designing for the sense of touch: a new frontier for design

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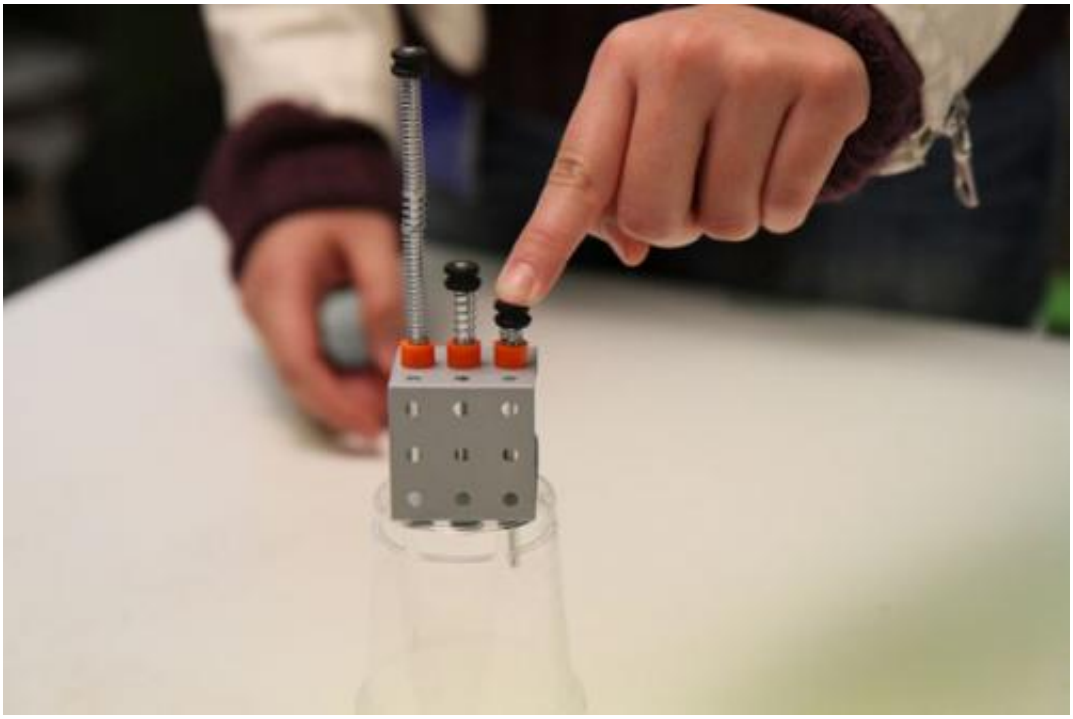

(Phys.org)—Camille Moussette explores how interaction designers can leverage and embrace the sense of touch to develop interfaces and experiences that go beyond traditional visual and form-based aesthetics. He will defend his thesis on October 30 at Umeå Institute of Design, Umeå University, Sweden.

Designing specifically for the sense of touch presents new challenges and opportunities for design: developing an object or object thatfeels right is quite different than designing a product or device thatlooks good. For example, how could a safety system warn a car driver using the sense of touch?

The proposed approach titled Simple Haptics offers concrete examples, recommendations and design guidelines demonstrating how interaction designers can successfully discover and embrace the sense of touch for designing touch-based experiences.

Historically, haptics – all different aspects of the sense of touch and its study – has developed around very technical and scientific inquiries. Camille Moussette's thesis aims to develop haptics from a design perspective, uncovering and fulfilling people's needs first and foremost, leading to a new field of activities labeled haptic interaction design. It advances that haptic attributes (how things feel through touch) are increasingly part of the qualities that make up the interactions and the experiences we have with objects and the interfaces that surround us, and that these considerations can and ought to be knowingly and explicitly designed by designers.

Camille Moussette thinks that the results of this thesis may help making the sense of touch easier to discover, learn and embrace for designers.

"My hope is to inspire design researchers, students and practitioners all over the world to discover and value haptics as a core component of any new design activities, " says Camille Moussette.

Provided by Umea University