

IMAGES (see files):

- abstract: our photos (to make!)
- understanding the problem: case studies, designers, milano-bovisa map (coming soon)
- exploring opportunities: sketches
- solution: 3d model (rendering to make), market analysis screenshot.

Abstract (2000 char with white spaces)

D-sign is a place that provides services in terms of space, tools, and visibility to emergent fashion designers and other creatives in knitting fashion, fostering their creativity and promoting social abilitation and strong link with territorial specificities. It represents a hub for creativity in fashion, and, in particular, in knitting fashion.

In designing our service, we envisioned a concept based on the idea of *merging*: we believe that gathering people, knowledge and technologies could catalyze innovative processes. From a first point of view, our big open space will unify different functional areas: emergent designers and creative people working in fashion, as well as photographers, will share the same space, same facilities and machinery, just for the time they need or they can afford to. This obviously will translate into a cost for each person lower than the cost of renting a boutique, but it will also enable the rise of new ideas through synergies.

The variety of events held in the space, open everyday even to external customers, will modify also the common relationship between designer and customer in the fashion industry. In D-sign, customers are not only buyers of the final product, but can personally meet designers, view their creations, share impressions and suggestions, or simply spend some time together. Entering our space, the customer himself can experience what we call a “widespread sense of creativity”, everyday different, from the one rising from an active lab during the day, to those originated by fashion shows, showcases or cultural events in the evening.

Aiming at becoming a unique expression of the urban context in which it arises, D-sign also strengthens its link with the community, renewing an abandoned space in the industrial district and transforming it into a cultural center and a meeting point, and boosting the feeling of locality with the use and the advertisement of local products.

Subproject description (7000 char with white spaces)

1. Understanding the problem

From the initial phase of the whole Fas.P.onSite project our three teams had the task of designing a concept of a new kind of fashion store, which could mix a shop and an atelier (lab), in order to emphasize the idea of km 0 and total customization in knitting fashion. Such place should attract customers who can enter to design their own unique garments together with fashion designers (with the technology of *Shima Seiki*) in just a few hours.

After the first phase of the project the teams started to focus on really different problems and possible aspects. We decided to work on the “social” aspect of the project and we aimed at designing a physical place where different kinds of people can become part of an experience characterized by social and environmental sustainability. Our space targets all the creative talents involved in fashion knitting production who can meet in our place and could design and produce fashion items, make fashion shootings and exchange experience. Our goal was to find a solution to how it could be possible to collect and increase local creativity, to share knowledge, to imagine events in fashion in order to make the concept of our potential “client” wider. The main problems were related to defining: *which categories* of potential *users* could be

interested in a service providing space, tools and visibility through events; which *activities* could take place in our fashion hub of creativity; in which exact *space parts* the hub could be divided; and finally how all these three categories of our project could be interconnected and integrated with each other.

Moreover, such an hub should have a strong link with territorial specificities, such as a potential creatives on the territory, food and wine producers, and textile producers. More in general, the mix and integration of all of these different kinds of local traits can create a sustainable, appealing, and unique experience. After discussing some of the ideas we came to the decision that we have the following categories of clients/users:

- Studying designers (not graduate)
- Newly graduated designers
- Designers that are trying to become entrepreneurs and create their firms
- Fashion photographers
- Graphic and web designers
- Theatre creatives
- Fashion editors
- Brands (both small and big) interested in playing a role in our ecosystem
- Buyers of knitwear garments

The next step was to find an integrated solution for the possible activities in the physical place and having all the possible components of this place thoroughly defined in a uniquely identifiable yet interconnected way.

2. Exploring the opportunities

During the phase of exploring the opportunities we thought about resources we could use in a hub, about categories and potential quantity of our users (market analysis), about unique clear concept which could connect everything in one: the idea of social impact, an increase of local creativity, knowledge sharing in knitting fashion, proper supply for demand of different users etc. So, after deciding about categories of customers we want to focus on, we started to think about all possible needs of them and all activities which might take place in a creativity hub. All the activities for the users could be the following: 1) get your space and get your services, 2) learn and practice your knowledge in creativity, 3) meet, work, and innovate, 4) knit your garments and take part in a event, 5) promote and sell the garments, 6) buy knitwear, 7) relax, cook, and discuss with other creatives and with customers. After this, we tried to identify possible space parts connecting in a unique way to the previous activities: 1) big common space, 2) ateliers and private rooms, 3) support services and all working spaces, 4) production room, 5) and 6) shop space, 7) café and small kitchen. In our space concept we have made a clear identification of different places for different activities, but we have also made them interconnected and possible to intercept. We want our users to identify with a part of the space but, at the same time, to identify with the whole hub and all the other users.

3. Generating a solution (Paolo)

Final outcomes of the D-sign project have been the service definition, a virtual space concept, detailed in a 3D model, and an accurate market analysis based on the assumption of setting the space in Bovisio, Milano. In accordance with the guiding ideas of *customization* and *modularity*, the service offer for each designer and creative talent had been developed and organized into packages, realizing that such a configuration could better encounter users' needs in terms of flexibility and economical saving. Starting from a *Basic* package, offering each designer a shared desk, available on hour-based rates, he or she could build up the service, space and

machinery offer which better satisfy his or her needs, with a modular approach perfectly suiting the variable demand from an emergent creative.

The same approach has been applied to the design of the space. Instead of keeping different functional areas completely detached, D-sign aims at merging activities, sharing knowledge and producing synergistic effects from different fields in fashion creativity. The *Shima Seiki* machinery represents the core of our space, visible inside a transparent “bubble” located in the middle of the open space. On the other hand, each one of the other areas has been thought as completely flexible and transformable: basic tables, shared during the day between several creatives could be joined to become a stage or a catwalk during night events or fashion shows; textile room dividers, printed with creations from incubated talents, could delimit an on-the-go private meeting room inside the open space, and so on.

Various events held inside D-sign, some of them with fee, as courses and workshops, some others free, sponsored by local producers or fashion brands. During some of them, pieces of garments designed and produced by our talents could be exposed and sold, with a face to face contact between creator and final customer. The large variety in paths of revenues, from incubator fees to cafe incomes, from sponsorships to contributions for participation in workshops has the positive effect of lowering margins on final price for knitwear, with respect to the single on-demand piece produced with *Shima Seiki* technology, in order to give a strong contribution to the rise and growth of designers’ activities.