

Skateboards as a Mobile Technology

Changing how users understand and interact in their environment

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This work explores the appropriative, creative and adaptive practice of skateboarding as a way to reveal a new perspective on mobile technologies and their influence on mobility. We describe how skateboarding, a technology as an embodied practice, encourages practitioners to engage with the environment and thereby changes their mobility, even though the technology is not user-friendly and requires extensive practice. Comparing these aspects to other mobile technologies offers new directions for the design of mobility and the influence of technologies.

Skateboards are a mobile technology that transforms its user's mobility, their understanding of their environment, and the way they interact with it.

Creativity

"I think **creative people are often drawn to skateboarding because of its freeness and openness**. It is about having a good time and being yourself with the board and **creating your own rides and tricks**."

"**you see a post and you think**, wow, I can ollie over that and then if I ride this way, I can boardslide or do a noseslide over that bench"

Familiarity by extensive experimentation

"First you think: 'I wanna try this. I wanna try this. I don't wanna get hurt!' There is a lot of talking to yourself. Then **you just have to try it. For a hundred times**. It is a lot the mental power."

"**It's a matter of tweaking** the angle of your body, where your feet are located and how your feeling/flicking the board."

Connection to the Environment and Embodiment

"When I started **skateboarding** I feel like it **helped my brain to understand** or to just **get a better appreciation for my environment**. Some usual space like a parking lot gets all of a sudden to be a new favorite place. **Skateboarding changes your perspective**. It's like a new paradigm of thinking."

The relationship between the body and the skateboard is like friends and enemies. If things are going well and you are landing tricks it's the best feeling ever. If not it can be very frustrating."

Implications for HCI

This illustrates a new way of looking at Mobile Technology and a transformation of mobility. Rethink embodiment, creativity, and experimentation when designing new mobile technologies.

