
Power-Hour: A Case Study For Time-Bound Events On Crowdsourcing Platforms

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Abstract

Time-bound events such as hackathons, installfests, designathons and other maker time-bound events are growing in numbers and diversity of topics. At the same time, online collaboration platforms are on the rise. In this position paper we report our preliminary ideas on how to design time-bound events in crowdsourcing platforms based on a case-study of "Power-Hour" an online, time-bound event that occurred twice in the month of October 2016 at Design2Gather.com.

Author Keywords

Crowdsourcing; Design; Time-bound Event; Online collaboration.

ACM Classification Keywords

K.4.3. Organizational Impacts: *Computer-supported collaborative work.*

Introduction – Particular Interest to the Workshop's themes

From the very first hackathon organized, in the end of the last century [1], the idea of hosting a time-bound event in which people actually make something at the end of it has taken off. This concept's popularity is evident by its diffusion into all continents but also into

other areas such as design in which designathons are hosted around the same concept.

Another growing development that has happened more recently is a new form of collaboration, in this case not on a specific physical space, but online, known as crowdsourcing. Although there are different definitions of what crowdsourcing is, we prefer to cite the following, encompassing definition: “*crowdsourcing is an umbrella term for a variety of approaches that harness the potential of large crowds of people by issuing open calls for contribution to particular tasks*” [2]. This definition includes paid crowdsourcing but does not restrict other platforms such as social networking systems or other computer supported cooperative systems.

Our specific interest for this workshop is the intersection of time-bound events and crowdsourcing. So specific to the listed themes, we are interested in the application of time-bound events in the context of crowdsourcing. We already know from research on online communities that events help the community to define itself by reminding members what they have in common and what their community is all about [3]. In the context of crowdsourcing platforms, Quirky [4] is a known example that has events at its core. Quirky organizes every week a time-bound event that members of its platform would join it –both online and on a actual space- and decide on a product idea that then the company would actually develop. Furthermore, OpenIDEO encourages its crowd to form “chapters” and then hold events on certain cities around the world [5].

Although the concept itself is not new, there is very little information in existing literature on how to design, organize, execute and evaluate such events on crowdsourcing platforms.

We would like to contribute to this aim by sharing our experience with “Power Hour”, a time-bound event that was organized twice on the crowdsourcing platform: Design2Gather.com. Design2Gather.com is a crowdsourcing platform in which ideation and early design of specific tasks (known as “designments”) is taking place.

On Wednesday the 5th of October from 11:30AM - 12.30PM (GMT) and Thursday the 18th of October from 12:30AM - 13.30PM (Figure 1) Design2Gather.com organized two “Power-Hour” events on its platform. Power-Hour was aimed at boosting the crowds’ designment process. During this event, Design2Gather employees were available to provide crowdworkers direct feedback on their ideas, inspiration and deliverables for the designment: “Redefine Kitchen Lifestyle”. In that event, workers were able to brainstorm about the project with other designers and ask more detailed questions about the project.

The designment’s description was:

How can you make cooking or anything around the kitchen easier, smoother or just more fun? An international brand that competes with the big kitchen brands in the world wants new innovative kitchen items! We are looking for products that have stainless steel as the main material but this can be combined with other materials to create a clever new product that makes your life easier in the kitchen. You are not limited to redesign existing items such as spoons, forks, knives, cups, mugs, bowls, pots and pans. Original new ideas with combined functions are

encouraged! Durability and aesthetics are important as well and the product should express a sense of quality and multi-functionality. Are you hungry to create fresh, new and innovative kitchen tool ideas? Join now!

During the workshop we would like to share the data we logged regarding the involvement of workers as well as our experiences in how to organize, design, execute and evaluate this type of time-bound events.

Motivation & Background

Our motivation is twofold: 1) we would like to share our experience in organizing a time-bound event in a crowdsourcing platform and 2) we would like learn from other workshop participants good practices of time and space-bound events that could transfer to the context of crowdsourcing.

Dr. Vassilis Javed Khan is assistant professor at the Industrial Design Department of Eindhoven University of Technology in the Netherlands. His currently research interest and activities can be captured in the following title: *Design for Crowdsourcing & Crowdsourcing for Design*. What is

mean with the first part is how designers can improve existing crowdsourcing platforms and by the second part what is meant is develop novel crowdsourcing platforms to support designers.

Bas van Hoeve is an alumni of the Industrial Design Department of Eindhoven University of Technology in the Netherlands and the creative director of Design2Gather.



Figure 1: Online ad that promoted the "Power Hour" event on Design2Gather.com

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