



Designing technical products in such a way as older people need them

Information days: Start-up AGE-Ing. is looking for test persons who would like to take part in product development

Technical products should be made in such a way that they can be used intuitively, be barrier free and correspondingly designed. However, they are mostly not geared towards the special needs of older people. The start-up project AGE-Ing. from the University of Stuttgart would like to rectify this situation. It involves people from 55 years of age in the development and design of products. On 23rd and 24th February interested parties have the opportunity to attend information days on the Vaihingen Campus.

One research focus at the Institute for Engineering Design and Industrial Design (IKTD) at the University of Stuttgart is on age-appropriate and inclusive product design. The spin-off AGE-Ing. (pronounced like the English word "ageing") would now like to show society its research results. It offers companies like the manufacturers of technical products based in the region of Stuttgart development services. In so doing the engineers, design experts and man-machine interaction specialists at AGE-Ing. actively involve seniors in the technical development process.

How is the optimum twist water tap designed?

How is the navigation and entertainment screen in the central console of a car particularly easy to operate for older drivers? What can be done to improve water taps so that they can be turned on and off more easily? How should a drill handle be designed so that older people can also drill holes in the wall without any great effort? In order to answer questions like these AGE-Ing. uses innovative techniques of user-centred product

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design. In this way the experts can record visual movements of seniors in order to analyse their attentiveness when operating graphic surfaces, for example on smart phones or screen displays. Angle sensors help to observe the joint angle of seniors when getting into and out of a car in order to identify painful false postures and in this way to adapt the design of the product in a targeted way.



With eye-tracking glasses the visual movements of an older gentleman are recorded whilst he uses an app on a smart phone. The findings help the team at AGE-Ing. to improve the software.
Photo: AGE-Ing.

Besides ergonomic analyses, an additional focus is on the aesthetic design. Older users shall not reject age-adapted technology due to an unappealing design; therefore AGE-Ing. uses specially developed questionnaires. Seniors can also play a role in designing, for example by manufacturing own prototypes of handles made of modelling clay. The designs are then subsequently digitalised and constructively prepared by the engineers from AGE-Ing. through a 3D scan process.



Looking for test persons from the age of 55 – information days in February

Up to now over 100 test persons have supported AGE-Ing., other interested persons from the age of 55 are wanted. For this purpose on Friday, 23rd February 2018, and Saturday, 24th February 2018, there will be information days taking place at the University of Stuttgart on the Vaihingen Campus. AGE-Ing. will be introducing possibilities for older people there to support the work of the project as test persons or designers. Interested people from the age of 55 are requested to phone or email Benedikt Janny, email: benedikt.janny@age-ing.design, telephone: +49 (0)711/685-68219.

AGE-Ing. combines research and practice

AGE-Ing. is a start-up project that has been financed with the support of TTI GmbH since January 2018 through an EXIST start-up grant by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy and is to become a company. Two of the three founders, Benedikt Janny and Matti Schwalk, worked as research assistants at the IKTD for nearly six years and are in the final stages of their PhDs. They continue to be associated with IKTD and are being supervised by Professor Dr.-Ing. Hansgeorg Binz and Professor Dr.-Ing. Thomas Maier. In this way they wish to use their expertise from the research in practice.

Further information

www.age-ing.design

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