

A new paper looking to validate the [User Types](#) HEXAD Survey has just been released from the HCI Games Group (Games Institute, and Cheriton School of Computer Science, University of Waterloo). You can find it here [Empirical validation of the Gamification User Types Hexad scale in English and Spanish](#) or free...

<http://hcigames.com/download/empirical-validation-hexad-scale/>

One of the findings is something that has been noted before and is not a surprise to me, but something I realise I have never explained. The finding is that the Philanthropist and Socialiser types are very closely linked when you look into them.

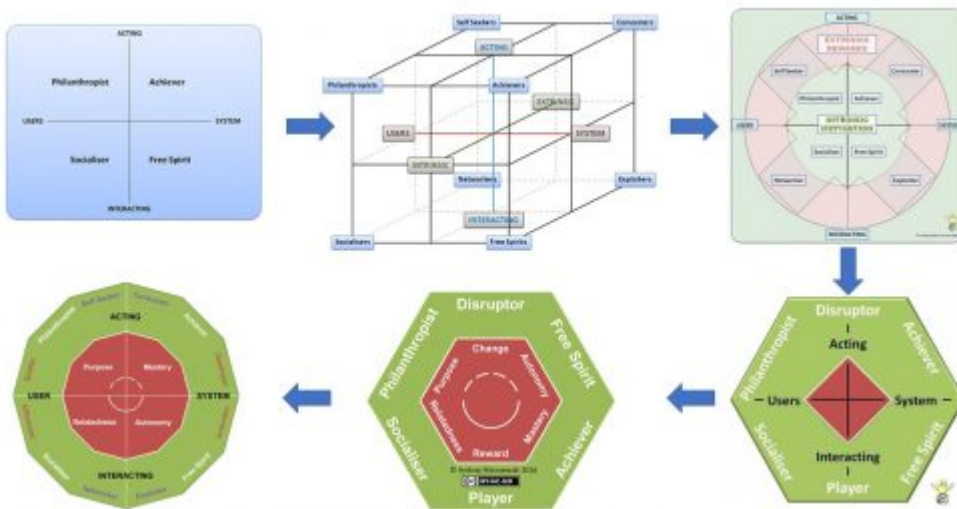
Furthermore, the evidence suggests there is a stronger correlation between the Philanthropist and Socialiser types than the theory anticipated, suggesting the possibility of an improvement to the theory itself, i.e., it should acknowledge that a person who is highly motivated by philanthropism will probably also be motivated by socialization in some degree, and vice versa. [1]

Now, as I say, this is not a surprise to me, but is something that I have never explained - which surprises me!

The Origin Story

If you look at the original User Types I created in 2012 or so, you will see that I had 4 types to start with, just the intrinsic types Socialiser, Achiever, Philanthropist and Free Spirit. This expanded into a 3D model and eventually contracted into the HEXAD for practical reasons!

Evolution of the User Types HEXAD (2012 - 2018)



The original 4 were based on two things initially. Self Determination Theory and Dan Pinks Drive. Both identify 3 key areas of motivation but differ slightly.

Self-Determination Theory

- Competence
- Autonomy
- Relatedness

Drive

- Mastery
- Autonomy
- Purpose

When I started to dive into it I made a decision, I was going to combine them into what you

know now as [RAMP](#), Relatedness, Autonomy, Mastery and Purpose. However, Purpose was focused on altruistic purpose rather than meaningful purpose. All types are driven by their own Purpose and meaning, but this specific group had a more focused purpose that was selfless in nature. I even asked Edward Deci about it and he pointed me to a paper [2] “The darker and brighter sides of human existence: Basic psychological needs as a unifying concept” where they discussed why meaning was not considered as a need in Self Determination Theory.

Social Philanthropists

However, and this is the important bit when you actually look into it carefully you will discover that relatedness and altruistic purpose are strongly linked. It makes sense, they both are about people and relationships. You can’t be altruistic if there is no one around to be altruistic towards! So it makes sense that a Philanthropic user would probably score highly on the Socialiser scale.

Keep in mind, this was a tool built to help gamification designers. The reason I separated them was to help them with their thinking. Just because someone is looking for social [mechanics](#), does not mean they will automatically be philanthropic in nature. So when building systems that require philanthropy I felt it was helpful to consider them slightly differently, hence I gave them their own sets of mechanics. In reality, those mechanics overlap slightly and that was to be expected, but it is interesting to see that proven now!

So, when building solutions that are aimed at Philanthropists, remember to think about Socialisers as well!

Citations

[1] Tondello, Gustavo F, et al. “Empirical Validation of the Gamification User Types Hexad Scale in English and Spanish.” *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, Academic Press, 13 Oct. 2018, www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1071581918306001

[2] Ryan, Richard M., and Edward L. Deci. “The Darker and Brighter Sides of Human Existence: Basic Psychological Needs as a Unifying Concept.” *Psychological Inquiry*, vol. 11, no. 4, 2000, pp. 319-338., doi:10.1207/s15327965pli1104_03.

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