Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design: How to Create Games Children Love

Mark Schlichting

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What makes an interactive experience compelling for children? What turns a simple click or tap into a magical interchange? Mark Schlichting's book, *Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design*, answers these questions, and more, with a deep dive into the multiple factors needed to create award-winning games and activities that children will love and come back to.

With insights, research, and practical knowledge gathered during over thirty years of designing award-winning games, this book is the bible of interactive design for children. It is a practical book that discusses the physiological and psychological dynamics of attention, the value of intrinsic play, and strategies to invent activities that support kids' engagement, entertainment, and learning.

It helps designers to better understand:

- - The nature of play and how to recognize and support its presence.
- - Over 30 natural play patterns with applied examples in games and toys.
- - Learning theories, especially as they relate to optimum engagement.
- - How to connect with a specific audience by understanding children's ages and developmental stages.
- - Animation tips, tricks, and techniques for getting and holding attention.
- - How to keep games alive by using the many varieties of **surprise**.
- - How to maximize the impact of audio design in interactive experiences.
- - How to create character and avatar designs that kids will love, use, and relate to.
- - How to work with creative teams and clients to make the best products for kids.

Understanding Kids, Play, and Interactive Design features real-world stories, practical methods, tips, and design secrets that user experience practitioners and children's designers need to ensure that the products they create are successful and engaging for kids. It addresses all aspects of children's design in depth, and it is packed with hundreds of full color photographs, screenshots, illustrations, and effects that use many of the design principles outlined in the book, providing a look that practices what it preaches and teaches. Written in accessible style, it offers insights and inspiration to parents, designers, educators, and anyone looking to create content that will be an immediate hit with kids.

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