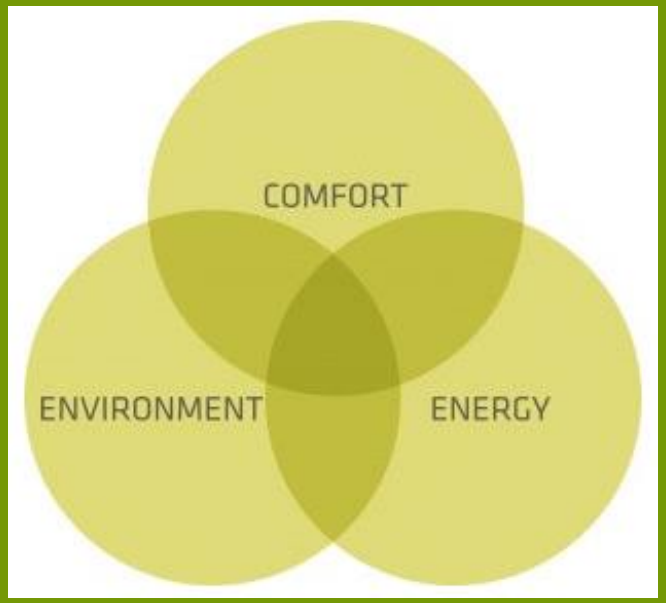

Active House

A new world of standards through experimentation

PhD research by

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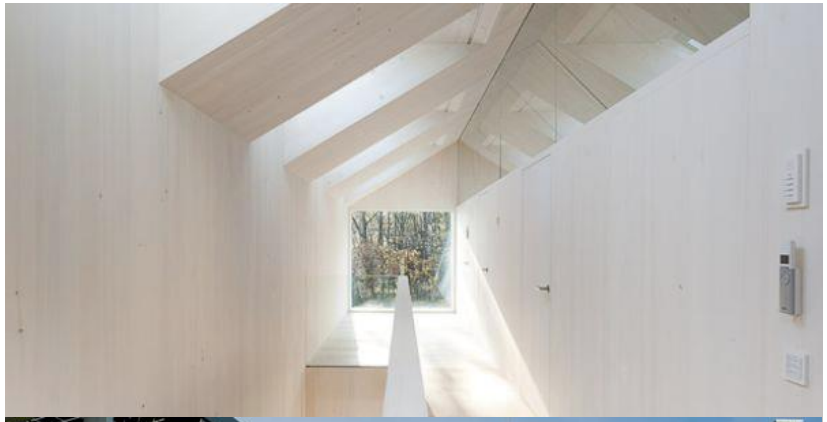
CBS activehouse.INFO NETWORK AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING VELUX® The Academy of Business in Society



Brief Overview

- Qualitative research: organizational studies, political science, sociology
- 3 projects:
  - Sunlight House, Vienna
  - LichtAktiv Haus, Hamburg
  - RenovActive, Brussels
- 2 research stays w/VELUX, co-founder
- 30 semi-structured interviews

Questions Investigated

- QUALITY

How can *comfort* be translated into technical specifications?

- DESIGN

How can default rules kickstart sustainable consumption?

- TECHNOLOGY

Why is user focus significant for home technologies?

How can *comfort* be translated into specifications?

- Main finding:
  - Go through processes of **commensuration**
  - More work on this, more legitimacy
  - Connected between professional development and local application
- Implication:

  Experimentation can **connect international** knowledge **and local** areas to improve technically defining qualities, i.e. comfort, indoor health, well being.

**Commensuration: putting a numerical value to a quality or experience.

Comfort commensuration

- “Comfort is **everything that surrounds me**: it’s the space, it’s the colors, it’s the materials. It’s basically what I see with my eyes and how can I use the space. So it’s **not only in regard to the aspect that you cannot grasp**, like daylight and fresh air, the things you feel, **but also the things you touch and see**” (Interview 28 May 2014).

- An architect points out the **difference between how she designs** for comfort (clean and open design, white colors, simple**) and how she experiences** comfort herself at home (chaotic and cluttered, historical details, colors) (Interview 23 November 2014) -- a contrast that evokes the subjectivity of comfort commensuration.

How can default rules kickstart sustainable consumption?

- Main finding:
  - Awareness **is** part of how default rules work
  - **Contrast** between non-sustainable housing & Active House engenders new values (and demands…?)
- Implication:

  Consumers **need exposure** to the contrast between status quo & quality sustainability. This could involve more of a **trial approach** for the average consumer.

**Default rules: The option already set before a choice is made, i.e. thermostat set at 20 C, or part of income diverted to retirement.

Why is user focus significant for home technologies?

- Main finding:
  - Human input leads to **socialized** technologies.
  - People need ownership & design needs to respond to this.
- Implication:

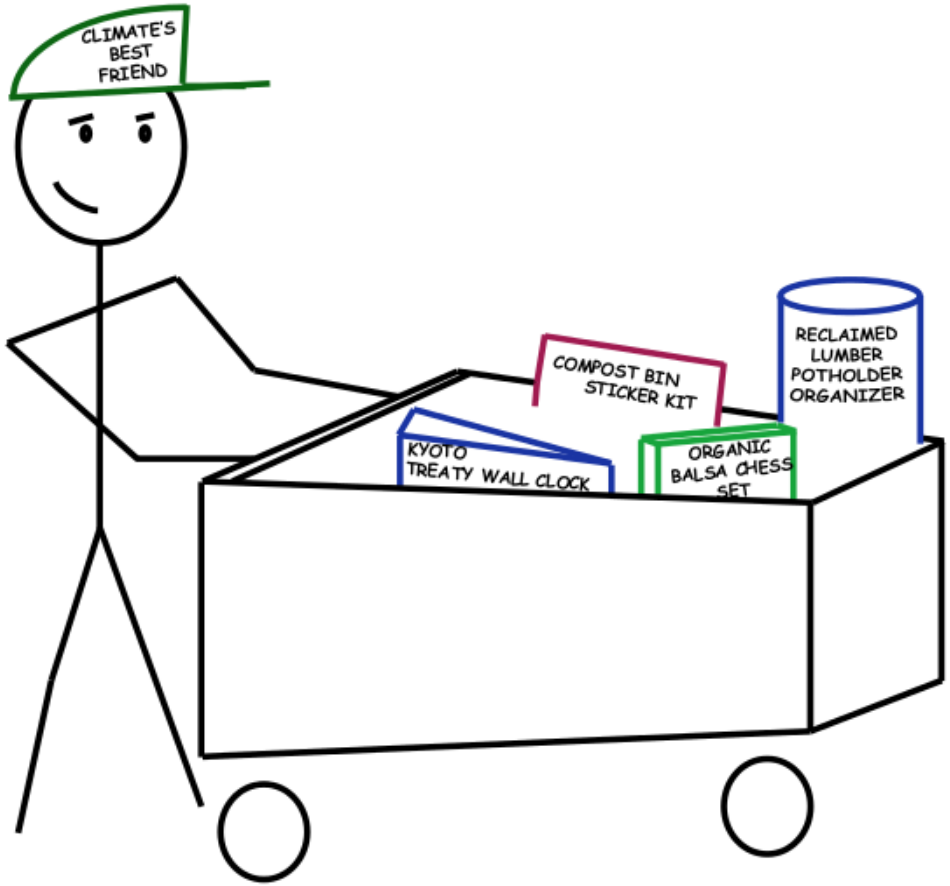
  Technology can support sustainability, but must be **oriented to people** & developed with feedback. The co-development **unfolds over time**. Experimentation furthers the learning process & technological refinement.

**When using technologies, people tend to go through *appropriation & scripting* (taking control & using them how they like).

Conclusions

- Experimental standards are significant for…
  - Legitimizing sustainable approaches to building;
  - Bringing international expertise to local networks;
  - Exposing consumers to the value of sustainable living; and
  - Allowing for co-development of people and home technologies.
- The future of experimentation?
  - Affordability and accessibility of sustainable housing
  - European focus on experimentation w/renovation
  - Adaptations for developing areas
  - True “living” labs
  - Recognition that carries quality assurance

Thank you for your attention.



SAVING THE WORLD... ONE ~~ITEM~~ AT A TIME.

ACTIVE HOUSE