

The human-centred approach to design a digital ecosystem that maximises the dissemination of diaristic material while preserving its singularity

Sara Ermini, DISPOC, University of Siena, Martina Magri, Unimore

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THE NATIONAL DIARY ARCHIVE (NDA) IN PIEVE SANTO STEFANO

THE ARCHIVE

The NDA holds a collection of **more than 9,900 autobiographical texts** (manuscripts and typescripts - testimonies, diaries, letters - accompanied in some cases by photographs, drawings, objects), which can only be consulted *in situ* on paper, and exceptionally remotely, by requesting a partial scan of the text.



Fig.1 – Ida Nencioni diary
Photo Luigi Burrone

THE CHALLENGE

How can new technologies be used to support the preservation, the enhancement and the dissemination of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage conserved by the National Diary Archive, respecting the peculiarity of each autobiographical text and the materiality of its support?

DESIGN THINKING APPROACH

The search for a solution to the initial question was developed through three main phases: first, we identified the needs of the Archive team and the expectations of current and potential users, through:

- comparative analysis of the most interesting and effective storytelling platforms in the cultural field;
- contextual interviews with the National Diary Archive employees;
- questionnaires and interviews with potential and real users.

In the second phase, various architecture solutions have been explored and the first sketches of the platform have been created through a co-design process. The third and final phase consisted in the testing process and has been used to validate the final prototype. Usability tests and interviews have been conducted to evaluate the user experience. Thanks to the feedback received from the network of stakeholders, the prototype has been then refined.

CO-DESIGN

Co-design sessions were organized with particular attention to the second level of the platform, entirely conceived as an educational tool for schools (dedicated to teaching and learning). A network of teachers of all grades, from all over Italy, was created: various workshops have been held with the aim of collecting needs and wishes concerning the architecture, the functionalities and the contents of the future platform, in order to build an efficient and modular digital tool, responding to different needs.

RESULTS: PDS PLATFORM OF DIGITAL STORYTELLING & TOOLKIT

The results of this co-design process materialized in two outputs:

- an interactive prototype of the *PDS platform*, co-designed and validated by users;
- a website, called *The PDS toolkit*, containing the guidelines for replicating the design methodology in new contexts of digital memories storytelling.

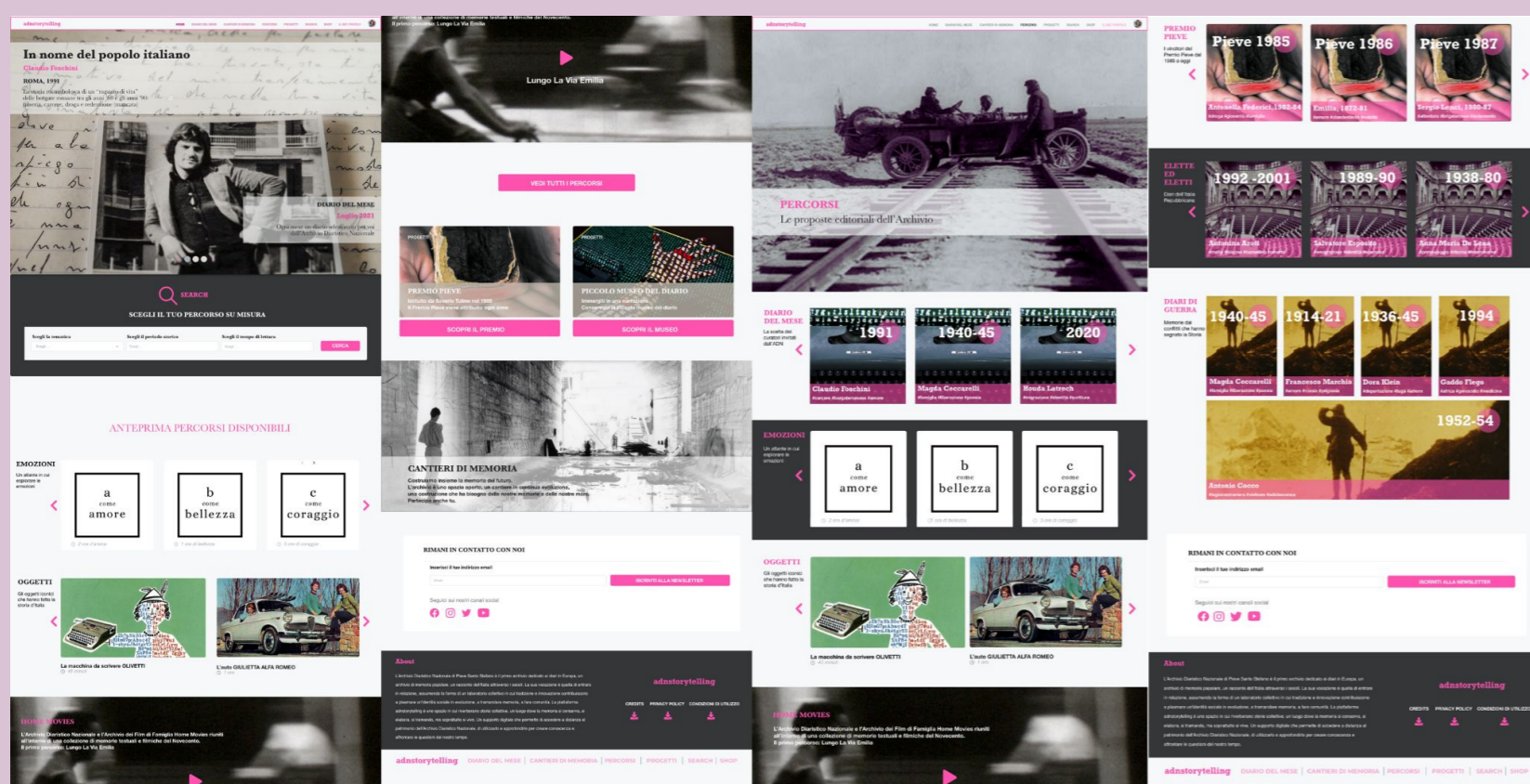


Fig. 2 – Horizontal collage of the length view of a diary of the interactive prototype created with Adobe XD.

The final prototype, created with Adobe's XD, represents an interactive model of the storytelling platform, sewn on the basis of the needs and the expectations emerged from users interviews, focus groups, co-design workshops and continuous feedbacks collected from the entire stakeholder network.

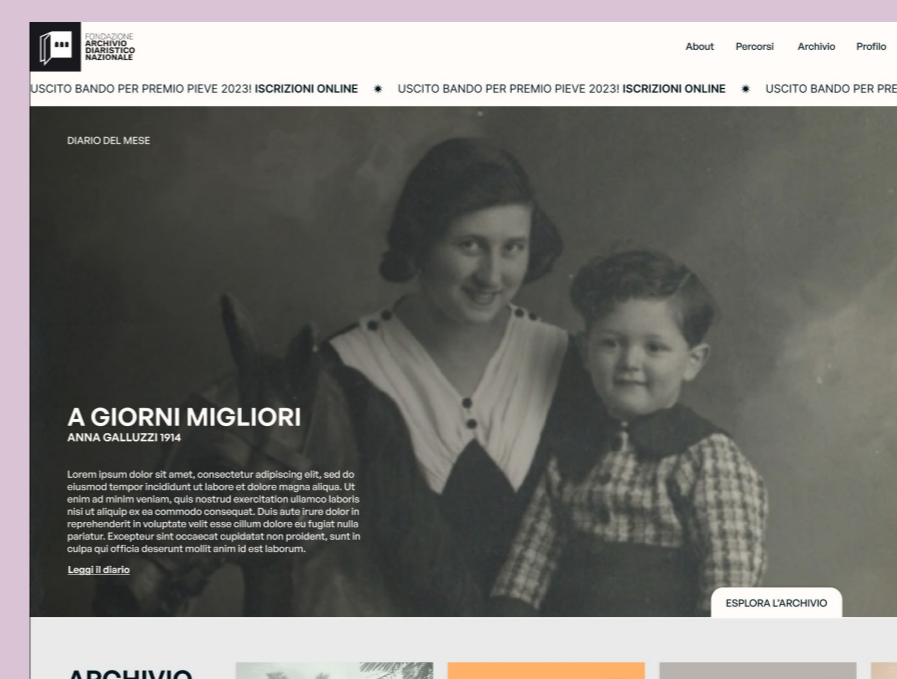


Fig. 3 – Last interactive prototype after final testing session.

Usability tests and interviews were conducted to evaluate the user experience. The collected evidence was delivered in a report form to the dev team, in order to proceed with the final implementation of the platform.

The entire design experience (including methodology and tools) has been collected in a dedicated website and composes *The PDS toolkit*, a replicable protocol for the digital dissemination of archive contents.

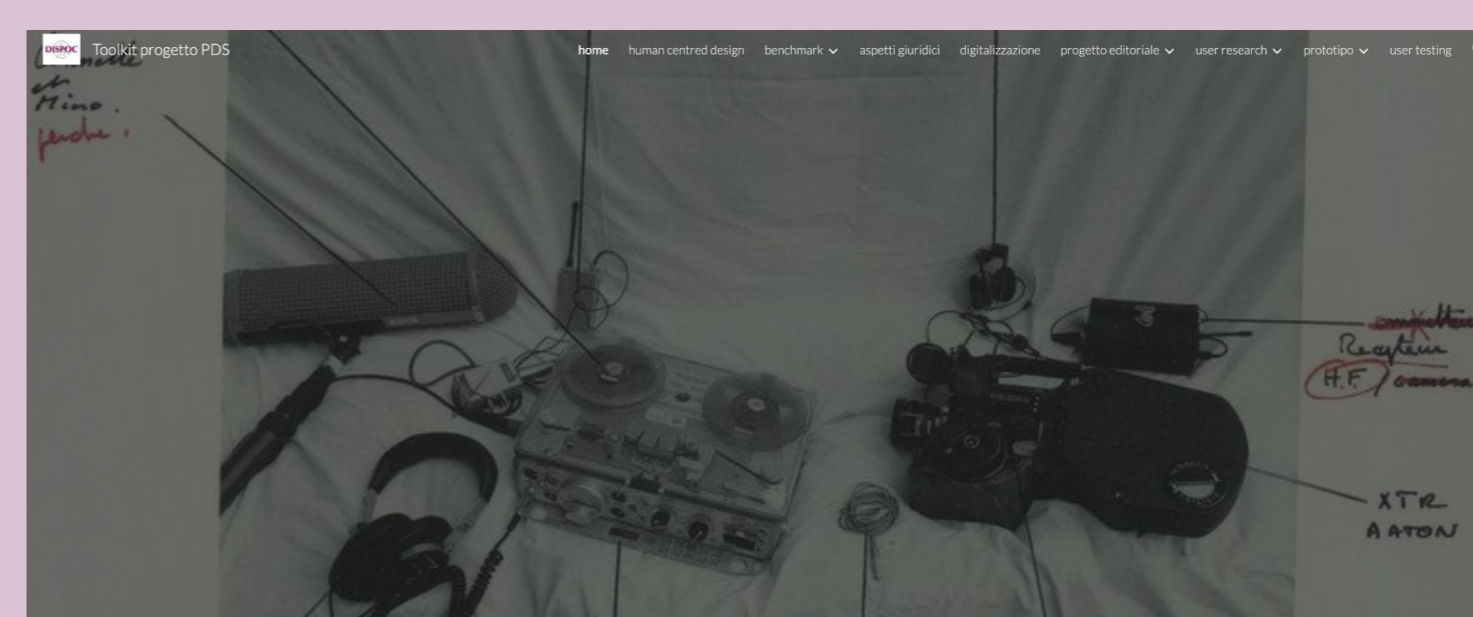


Fig. 4 – Toolkit Google Site Home and main menu.

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For further information: Please see the dedicated Gsite <https://sites.google.com/unisi.it/toolkitpds/benchmark>