Ballspenden:
Filling Your Domain User Dance Card

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What Kinds of Dances/Domains?

• pick one: foxtrot
  – learn language and problems of one domain deeply
    • become an expert yourself
    • easier to connect with and be found by people in that domain
  – many upsides
    • Bill Lorensen, medical imaging
  – some downsides
    • how to have fun at 4am when ballroom is closed and you're at a rave?

• choose between many opportunistically
  – my model: waltz, tango, polka, slamdancing, ...
    • who to dance with?
    • how and when to choose?
    • how can both dancers be happy?
  – challenges
    • learning each others’ language
    • finding right people/problems where needs of both are met
Keeping Both Dancers Happy

• holy grail: full project culminates with fabulous new technique paper and tool they use
  – what if looks like they need engineering not research?

• larger space of possibilities
  – you write a different kind of research paper
    • design study
    • evaluation of existing techniques/tools through field study
  – you're an initial/occasional consultant
    • point them to existing tools/techniques
  – you build them a tool that's purely engineering
    • maybe you do discover research issues once you dig in
    • takes you minimal time, use rest of money for real research
    • big timesink but hope for future goodwill/payoff
  – you decline the dance
Picking Dance Partners

• look broadly, gradually winnow
  – don't commit too soon!
• eye contact with many
  – initial meeting
• exchange words with some
  – further discussions
• continue bantering with a few
  – get feet wet with start on real work
• try a first dance
  – do a project
• multiple dances
  – do another project
When to Choose

• ideal: maintain mix at any given time
  – limited number of active projects
  – some preliminary work
    • may lead to dance if(f) banter phase pans out
  – steady stream of low-cost initial meetings
    • keep an eye on the whole room even when dance card is full for this particular evening

• premature commitment can be the wrong thing
  – avoid full dance card with wrong partners
    • joining grant at last minute with people you've never even met
    • don't assume "can't say no", consider more deeply
Four Process Questions

• ask them early in dance/negotiation!

• what is the role of my (potential) collaborators?
  – real end users or fellow tool builders?

• is there a real need for my new approach/tool?
  – or are existing tools good enough?

• am I addressing a real task?
  – how central is it to how many people for how long?

• does real data exist and can I get it?
  – now vs "real soon now" - what are probabilities?
More Variations on This Theme

• 15 min version (Dagstuhl infovis, 2007)
  *When To Walk Away: Questions To Ask In Infovis Projects*

• hour-long version (VIEW, Leiden 2007)
  *Research Cycles, Collaboration, and Visualization*

• 10 minute version (Dagstuhl scivis, 2009)
  *Visualization Process and Collaboration*

  http://www.cs.ubc.ca/~tmm/talks.html#dagstuhl09

  – paper: postmortem of how/why collab went wrong
    *Reflections on QuestVis: A Visualization System for an Environmental Sustainability*