Digital Realities Navigating the Grid

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Our lives are becoming increasingly digital with the integration of smart devices everywhere we look. Our dehumanized social media personas encroach on our daily lives while the commercialization of Virtual and Augmented Reality software provides access to a fully immersive experience from anywhere in the world. While digital owns most of our leisure time now, it is not hard to see education, travel and work also being democratized by the digital revolution throughout the next 30 years.

As more of our lives exist in digital realities, a paradigm shift is needed to legislate spaces that exist apart from physical boundries. Faster decision-making than existing governments can handle will be necessary as technology's complexity grows exponentially. Global management committees consisting of experts from cybersecurity to anthropology will be necessary to manage these lawless digital realities. Another outcome, happening today, circumvents government stipulations and favors capitalism with industry leaders, such as Google, Facebook, and Disney, influencing government decisions and implementing protocols that favor themselves. While legislators and technologists focus on regulating the digital world, designers must discern new methods for users to live, navigate, and stay sane in these increasingly pervasive digital realities.

Digital Realities speculates a future in 2050 where humans spend a large portion of their daily lives working, shopping, learning, and playing in a digital reality apart from their physical one, called The Grid. As technology's capabilities have increased, users expect their digital spaces to be as flawless, immediate, and organic as their physical ones while also able to provide the benefits of immediate global travel, expressive freedom, and spacial controls. Can experiences be redesigned to provide users with the control they need to navigate digital spaces similar to the physical world? Will splitting your personality across multiple realities be as dehumanizing as social media today? Can users feel secure and in control or will digital spaces remain as lawless and separated as they are now? Learn how design can challenge these questions through *Digital Realities*.