

CLIENT: Canal+ **PROJECT:** Le Cube

Think Outside The Box

STRATEGY:

- To reinvent the typical TV receiver box experience by fusing well integrated technologies and design into one form factor.
- Develop an entire product ecosystem, including on-screen graphical interface, use modes and physical product.

BRAND/PACKAGING:

- To build upon Canal+ existing brand recognition while creating a new user experience for the millions of existing users and potential new ones
- Extend the brand beyond the physical product to both the on-product interface design and the On-screen UI design

PRODUCT:

- Design an innovative and iconic set-top box, remote control, and graphical user interface that will differentiate Canal+ from other carriers and that can integrate into any home environment

RECOGNITION:

- Red Dot Design Award, 2009
- International Design Award, 2009
- IF product Design Award, 2008



“*Le Cube is the first step in bringing the new capabilities we have come to expect from cell-phones, computers and the internet, to the way we interact with our television.*”

➤ Yves Behar,
Founder/Chief Designer, fuseproject



THE BACKGROUND

Le Meilleur

Canal+ is the premium pay television channel in France, bringing subscribers a wide selection of cutting-edge television from around the world. While Canal+ has the highest brand recognition in Europe, fuseproject was asked to develop and integrate physical and interface experiences.

THE STRATEGY

Product & Promise

Canal+ wanted to introduce a receiver box, remote and TV graphical interface for their new DVR capabilities. But they understood that the average television receiver lacks both intuitive functionality and anything resembling a design aesthetic. If they wanted to stay on brand and give their customers something beyond the ordinary, they needed to completely rethink the process. They turned to fuseproject to design a unique product and experience: one that reflects the identity of Canal+, while at the same time offers both a contemporary visual simplicity that fits organically into the modern home, and integrate new interaction modes and technologies.

THE DESIGN SOLUTION

Total Television

We realized we needed a holistic solution that enabled the box, the remote and the user-interface to not just work seamlessly, but for each item to adhere to an integrated experiential logic. With that in mind we developed Le Cube.



This game-changing TV experience project is a rare feat of innovation in an industry content with sameness. From the very start, Canal+ chose to challenge the status quo: to redesign the TV experience from on-screen user-interface to new set-top box and remote redesign, to new functionality and Internet connectivity.

Le Cube was a chance to make the typical “dumb” receiver, smart and beautiful at the same time. In order to do so we had to conceive of the receiver box, the remote, and the Canal+ user interface at the same time: the integrated system brings information, personal preferences and communication to the living room before one has turned-on the TV. Le Cube is the first step in bringing the new capabilities we have come to expect from cell-phones, computers and the Internet, to the way we interact with our television. Le Cube functions beyond just entertainment, the set-top box’s backlit black LED area displays weather, temperature, the time or as an alarm for your favorite shows.

Typically, TV receiving boxes are devoid on easily understandable function, and are “in the way” of the actual television experience. This is the paradigm Canal+ and the designers at fuseproject want to change: for Le Cube, well integrated technologies AND design are converging the experience, a true departure.

Canal+ programs are watched by millions of French and European TV viewers, with a strong emphasis on quality and intelligent programming.

The Le Cube is designed to be aesthetically pleasing and to encourage the user to leave it out for display rather than hide it in a cabinet.



The strategy for this project is 3-fold:

- **The design delivers a new interactive experience:**

The design of the black square interactive area was not a style exercise, but actually is a precise 128x128 pixels LCD display allowing graphical animations. The decoder is designed to be used in either a horizontal or vertical position; this was done through the implementation of a gyroscopic sensor to automatically orientate the information displayed in the black cube in the appropriate position.

In order to create a complete user experience, the user interface has been designed with bright black and white graphical areas, which provide a very simple access to the main services through transparent animated menus. The Canal+ identity is naturally carried through Canal+ text font.

The complex layers of the information are carefully designed and placed for ease of deeper navigation. The information zoning became the heart of the design. The top left zone is always the main header, while the bottom right zone is always the navigation window. This easy to understand logic of placement is constant through the 600+ pages of user interface. And with the Canal+'s signature typography used throughout the pages, the user interface is bold and easy to read from a distance.

This satellite decoder is not a hybrid STB showing IP TV. But its Ethernet connection allows really innovative "first to be launched in France" services such as Video On Demand, Catch'up TV, including some exclusive content and an advanced electronic program guide that will automatically find the right program at the right time and match viewer preferences.



Additionally the display is designed down to the pixels; the Le Cube signature typography, the unique animations and its brightness are automatically adjusted to the environment.

- **The design is unique and well integrated for the home:**

How do you design something different to reflect the unique identity of Canal+, and yet build a contemporary visual simplicity that fits in our homes?

Le Cube from Canal+ is designed from every angle; the details are tuned down to the smallest texture and vent holes. You can stand it up or lay it down; its versatile horizontal and vertical orientations allow the unit to neatly fit in any environment. In particular the vertical orientation is the most space efficient with a smaller footprint: it leaves more room on your shelf for other things.

The receiver is designed for utmost simplicity: monolithic from a few feet away, yet highly detailed with aesthetic and functional surprises upon closer inspection. The finish was considered for both its beauty and durability. Le Cube STB and its remote controller are designed as a family, the high contrast palettes along with strong clean geometry. The remote has a soft sculpted back surface for comfort. On a functional level, the soft back surface also "levitates" the remote from the ground, making grabbing the remote very easy. The key layout is divided into two zones, the navigation zone is located in the black gloss area and the control zone is located in the satin white area. And with its high contrast finish, finding your remote is easy.



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- **The design is environmentally responsible.**

Le Cube is designed for re-use by Canal+, as to serve more than one customer: it is disassembled and refurbished after it's first use, the exterior can be repainted, and the internal components can be upgraded before it is shipped to the next TV viewer. This green approach to the product has tremendous environmental benefits.

The creation of a total Canal+ family, including STB, remote and on screen UI, allowed for a distinctive design language and identity, derived from the Canal+ brand, to be carried through the entire product line. This continuation of the design language through all parts of the family resulted in an innovative entry in the STB market as well as an aesthetic that appeals to users beyond the functional level.



THE BUSINESS IMPACT

Here, there, everywhere.

Le Cube has been met with both critical and popular acclaim. Canal+ has seen a significant rise in its subscribers, and many current subscribers have upgraded to the new box. Le Cube has been reviewed as the most innovative in it's product category, while the millions of subscribers switched seamlessly to the new TV interface. Proof that when you think outside the box, you get a better box.