

desired purchase or they can lead to frustrating experiences resulting in no purchase being made. When in this situation, people ask themselves questions such as: What is this about? Where am I? What has happened? What is going to happen next? What would happen if . . . ? The compositional thread is the internal thinking we do during our experiences.

- *The spatio-temporal thread.* This refers to the space and time in which our experiences take place and their effect upon those experiences. There are many ways of thinking about space and time and their relationship with one another: for example, we talk of time speeding up, standing still, and slowing down, while we talk of space in terms of public and personal places, and needing one's own space.

The threads are meant as ideas to help designers think and talk more clearly and concretely about the relationship between technology and experience. By describing an experience in terms of its interconnected aspects, the framework can aid thinking about the whole experience of a technology rather than as fragmented aspects, e.g. its usability, its marketability, or its utility. For example, when buying clothes online, the framework can be used to capture the whole gamut of experiences, including: the fear or joy of needing to buy a new outfit; the time and place where it can be purchased, e.g. online stores or shopping mall; the tensions of how to engage with the vendor, e.g. the pushy sales assistant or an anonymous website; the value judgment involved in contemplating the cost and how much one is prepared to spend; the internal monologue that goes on where questions are asked such as will it look good on me, what size should I buy, do I have shoes to match, do I need to try it on, how easy will it be to wash, will I need to iron it each time, and how often will I be able to wear it? All of these aspects can be described in terms of the four threads and in so doing highlight which aspects are more important for a given product. For example, if you were to do this exercise when buying a new car versus a domestic energy-saving device, you would find you would get quite different descriptions.

## 1.5 The Process of Interaction Design

The process of interaction design involves four basic activities:

1. Establishing requirements
2. Designing alternatives
3. Prototyping
4. Evaluating.

These activities are intended to inform one another and to be repeated. For example, measuring the usability of what has been built in terms of whether it is easy to use provides feedback that certain changes must be made or that certain requirements have not yet been met. Eliciting responses from potential users about what they think and feel about what has been designed, in terms of its appeal, touch, engagement, usefulness, and so on, can help explicate the nature of the user experience that the product evokes.

Evaluating what has been built is very much at the heart of interaction design. Its focus is on ensuring that the product is appropriate. It is usually addressed through a user-centered approach to design, which, as the name suggests, seeks to involve users throughout the design