

Being Human

v.01.07

Aim

We all use technology too much. The idea of being human is getting lost as we increasingly rely on tech to communicate, make decisions, augment our memories and a whole host of other purposes. The aim of this project is to consider and explore concepts that would act as an antidote to this tech-driven dehumanisation.



Brief - irony of ironies

Irony of Ironies. A new blockbuster movie is scheduled for release next summer. The film focuses on the plight of humanity as our lives become more and more under the influence of the technology we live with on a daily basis. To make people think and to encourage them to watch the movie, the marketing company for the film studio, with a super-ironic twist, want to release a mobile app that will encourage users to use less tech in their everyday lives - refer to the aim of the project above.

You have been engaged to work on ideas and development for such an app that will run on a mobile device ie smartphone (eg iPhone) or tablet (eg iPad).

Initial user research has already been carried out and potential target user groups are already ascertained and agreed. The main design criteria for the app are that it should aim to make users feel less overwhelmed by technology and to recover much of the time we use, indeed waste, whilst staring at the little glass windows in our hands.

Recommended workflow

1. Choose one of the two types of user - see details in the User Groups section below. Carry out an initial PACT analysis on your target users; Create two or more authentic personas to represent your target users.
 2. Research the use of mobile tech in relation to your user group. What is essential use, what is wasted time and all the other dimensions in between. What could be different?
 3. Sketch ideas for your app, based on your personas and secondary research and then decide on the design(s) you will take forward. Consider how to build playfulness and fun into the user experience.
 4. Make roughly-rough wireframes to try out ideas for the information architecture and information design for your app. After experimentation and refinement with the wireframes, create a set of digital mockups for the app and use these to user-test your design. Refine your design and prototypes to reflect the test findings.
 5. Keep to the core purpose of the app - to humanise our use of tech and to maximise our time 'being human'.
- You do not need to develop every possible screen of your design. Focus on making key-screens that demonstrate

innovative features of your app. If you have several similar sections in your design just develop one of them. Think vertical prototype!

Take full advantage of the affordances of the mobile device; be visually innovative; utilise, if possible, existing and emerging display and input technologies to maximise usability. Where possible, think about the use of non-screen-based interactions. Revisit Donald Norman's concept of emotional design to inform and influence your design decisions.

User groups

For the purposes of this brief, select ONE group from the predetermined user groups listed below.

A. Adolescents and young adults (13-21 yo)

B. Adults 21yo +

You may make informed assumptions about the characteristics of your chosen user group based on your own experiences and you may want to do some further research to test your assumptions. At the very least, secondary user-research will be useful. On the positive side, evaluate existing apps for their usefulness. On the negative side, consider the time-wasting, energy-wasting and pointless features.

Outputs

Outputs for this project will include: Record of PACT analysis; Personas representing target users; Wireframes of content and functionality including wire thumbs of the overall structure; Digital mock up of screens, (first and second iterations); Evidence of user-testing (video? screenshots?); Supporting evidence for secondary research and design development. All outputs for this project should be published on your portfolio website. Photograph or scan physical outputs as appropriate. Also publish a digitised indicative selection from your sketchbooks etc.

Resources

There is a wide range of web-based resources. The links below are a good place to start: <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/create-wireframes>

<https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/ux-research>

Notes and slides from the wk6, wk8 & wk9 Thursday classes on Blackboard.

learning outcomes

This project focuses on the following module learning outcomes:

A1/A2 demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the principles of design thinking and interaction design including user-centred design and the concepts relevant to design for new media;

B1 develop and articulate insights gained from a variety of research methods;

B2 analyse complex problems and envision a range of solutions;

C1 communicate the process and outcomes of design activities;

C2 collaborate effectively and use time management skills;

D1 demonstrate advanced proficiency in user-modelling tools and design development tools and techniques.

academic integrity

It is important that the work you submit for assessment is your own and does not include material that has been submitted for previous modules. Any third party elements must be clearly cited. For detailed guidance about plagiarism and the broader Academic Integrity policy of the University of Southampton please refer to the document: Academic Integrity Guidance for Students.

health & safety

It is of utmost importance that you do not, at any time, breach local or national laws or any temporary regulations regarding health-related or other emergency situations.

In conducting this project, you should always operate in such a way as to ensure your personal safety and security as well as being mindful of your impact on others.

You are advised to travel with a friend, preferably in daylight hours, and to take particular care using and carrying equipment such as cameras, as these are obvious targets for thieves.

Carry your UoS ID and always approach interviewees by informing them that you are carrying out a university-based assessment task.

Avoid talking directly to children without parental/teacher permission. If you plan to photograph people or private property, ask permission before taking any pictures.

images

Robots at the Science Museum London, AL July 2017

