

Pictorial: The influence of smartphones in social interaction

Group 5B

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INSIGHTS AND REFLECTION ON THE MAKING OF THE PROBE KIT

When making the probe kit, the feedback on the previous iteration of the probe kit was used. The probes—picture prompts, postcards, and maps—offered diverse insights. The picture prompts were very insightful, revealing when participants felt the need to use their phones, experienced some sort of social anxiety, or felt secure. In contrast, the postcards needed improvement, as they essentially asked the same question leading to the same less inspiring answers. The maps, while interesting, appeared to be too vague, as participants did not know where they were allowed to put a sticker. Some thought that they were only allowed to put a sticker on a seat, which could have had an influence on their answers. Last but not least, the probes lacked overall coherence, as in some sort of theme, missed the aspect of being a meaningful "gift" to participants and also lacked originality. After analyzing the results, the decision was made to change the research question. The team chose a different direction after realizing the complexity of social anxiety without having sufficient knowledge about the problem. Thus, the research question now changed to: "How might we design for social interactions disrupted by people that get distracted by their smartphone?" Overall, while the probes offered interesting insights, they also showed room for improvement in design and coherence, leading to a revised research focus.

This feedback was used to develop the second iteration of the probe kit. The kit now consisted of revised postcards, each having their own theme and question, revised picture prompts, with questions more related to the research question and a slider card with which participants need to show how they feel about someone else grabbing their phone while they are talking to them (slider from happy to sad). Furthermore, the maps were now explained more thoroughly and made clear where participants would need to put a sticker. Besides, a new element was added with which participants need to show which app they open as soon as they open their phone.

The renewed probe kit was presented to other groups and the tutor to gather new feedback, from which it turned out that the probe kit still lacked coherency and more importantly might not be specific enough to gather valuable information which could be used for further studies. Accordingly, the probe kit was made more coherent by introducing a theme of colors and a font, which helped the kit feel more as a whole. Besides, the research question was further defined, now being "How might we design for smartphone usage to improve social interactions in pubs between friends?"

REFLECTION

The first iteration of postcards did not work well as the responses were very repetitive and not very inspirational, users were expected to respond to the same very open question about the feelings perceived from looking at

very chaotic images representing social anxiety. In order to improve this probe we decided to make specific questions related to the scenario and making the images more coherent and less chaotic.

The map probe worked better, results were interesting, but there was some confusion regarding the scene, users were unsure if they could stand or if they must sit or what relationship they had with the people in the map. Furthermore, the probe was further improved by adding smartphones to the people in the map to see how that would affect your behavior. The taking pictures probe worked well, although we had to change the tasks to adapt the probe to our new scenario. Lastly, two new probes were added to the kit, a phone screen in which the users can select the apps used in the scenario and a slider in which the user can show how they feel in a specific situation in the scenario.

PICTURES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF PROBE KIT

The first element of the kit is a map probe, users are expected to put stickers and explain where they would feel the most and least comfortable being in a pub scenery with people you have different relationships with some of which are using their phone.

Secondly, the 3 postcards consisting of 3 different open questions given specific situations related to the scenario.

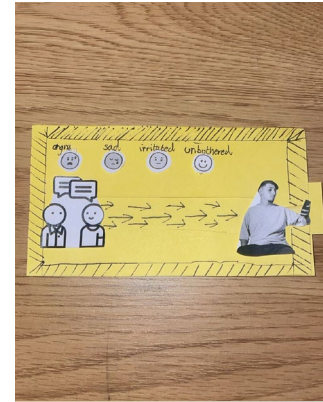
The postcards also have inspirational images on the back side.

Furthermore, the kit includes a slider that lets the user express how a certain situation makes them feel like.

Moreover, the kit includes another probe which has a phone screen drawn in which the user can select what type of apps they are likely to use in the scenario.

Lastly, the kit includes a probe which looks like a phone, in which the user has to take images following the tasks that can be seen on the probe screen.

FINAL PROBE KIT



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