Dis-Connecting
Switch the off-button on

peaktime
a digital communication concept

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Gothenburg Spring term 2012
Degree Project, MA Program in Design, 120 hecs
Abstract

Since the opportunities to connect with each other independently from time and space are increasing we are running the risk of losing control over our own time and get permanently stressed. Peaktime is an application concept that enables us to decide over our reachability and by that gives us the chance to take time off whenever we want.

Keywords
application, disconnect, time off, digital communication, reachability
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 How communication technology changed our daily life
Since the digital revolution our access to information through the World Wide Web is growing rapidly. As notebooks and smart phones became our constant companions, communication technologies enabled us to get connected with each other independently from time and space (Antonelli, et al., 2011, p. 13). The new possibilities of communicating and data sharing also change our daily life and behaviour: Work places and time become flexible, long-distance relationships use the advantage of video calls furthermore job interviews in other countries are no problem anymore. It is hard to imagine a life without these advantages since we adopted them in our everyday life. Used to everyone’s reachability we like to keep options like exact meeting times open just in case something else comes in between. Phones, e-mails and social media sites are checked regularly no matter where we are in order not to miss something or someone. Able to have conversations on different media, we often have several simultaneously, even without a clear end. That means if we do not answer a sender of a message directly we can do that later.

1.1.2 Constant reachability and its negative consequences
Constant reachability make us believe that we always have to be available as well. By that we are demanded to be flexible, multitasking and even manage everything in a polite manner. Also nowadays need of socialising is sometimes turning out to cause more addiction and pressure rather than being helpful (Ling, McEwen, 2010). These named issues can lead to permanent stress and as a matter of fact the risk of getting a burnout or depression increases (Bauer, 2011).

1.1.3 Need for time off
In our fast paced and connected society it can be very difficult to find time by yourself in order to recharge energy and calm down or just to think without ruffle and excitement and reflect upon incidents.

1.1.4 Personal interest in the theme
About a year ago I started to reflect about our todays seemingly increasing burnout cases and depressions as some people close to me were affected. Getting a better understanding of these diseases I was very interested in the circumstance that stress in our fast paced society can be one of their main triggers.

1.1.5 Purpose
With my project I want to take another way than the current trends in technology which enforce reachability and socialising. My work deals with the need to
disconnect from digital communication every once in a while in order to be alone and calm down, have quality time with a friend or simply just not to be disturbed.

1.2 Aims

1.2.1 Set objectives
As there are many reasons to get stressed in our fast moving surroundings I focused on the fact of always being reachable at any place and at any time. My aim was to create an object that helps you to disconnect from digital communication whenever you want. I did not intend to work against the new media but rather take advantage of it and by that getting back control over this technology and use it in its best ways. During my research I decided to enable that by involving an application which should work like a digital answering machine to all your communication channels.

Developing a concept that questions our nowadays constant reachability I wanted to present it by using different media for storytelling in order to clarify and strengthen my project. During my working process I decided to use video material to introduce the idea and to design a handbook for the application.

1.2.2 General aims
In our digital society it became an active as well as difficult decision to just be by yourself as it seems to be something negative. Having hard times to calm down burnout cases seem to become ordinary and spas and recreation centres get more popular as they promise us some wellness time on our own which we hardly find by ourselves in every day life. We pay platforms like freedom.com to help us to shut down our internet connections completely for once in a while to get calm time for other things. How come that we are about to lose our ability to just take some time off by ourselves? I would like to make people reflect upon these questions and start to think and discuss upon these daily current issues.

1.3 Delimitations

With my background in architecture and design I told a story by using an object and its way of presentation. I focused on the conceptual part as it was more important to clarify my idea rather than the actual implementation of a real product. That means that I never intended to put technology or programming into practice but to illustrate its possibilities.
2. Implementation

2.1 Research

2.1.1 Methods
To strengthen my idea I needed to research stress but also our communication habits and how they are about to change according to our digital opportunities. At the same time I looked into nowadays technological possibilities in communication devices as well as the upcoming trends in that branch.
I collected literature materials, online video information, talked to one professional app developer and people who had depressions as well as I did my own field study in form of a questionnaire and documentation.
Under point 2.2 I show up the different research outcomes in the areas of stress, communication and technology as well as my drawn conclusions according to the project.

2.2 Stress

2.2.1 Purpose of stress
The feeling of stress is an important tool of our body to warn us on an upcoming danger. By producing a hormone called cortisol different body reactions are created to manage the situation. Like the production of adrenalin increases which keeps us aware, and others like feeling hungry are regulated in order not to disturb us. Is the situation overcome the so called recovering phase begins and our body catches up the neglected processes. (Bauer, 2011)

2.2.2 How permanent stress affects us
Nevertheless do we feel ourselves exposed to permanent stress situations, may it be occupational or private, our body does not find any possibility to turn into the recovery phase. Consequently the hormone release will no be regulated over a longer time period and our immune system weakens - we get more vulnerable for diseases. In addition our complex gene system learns to react faster and even stronger in known situations. Getting into a period of rest becomes more difficult over time. In the book „Gedächtnis des Körpers“ (english: Our body’s memory) dr. Bauer (2011) describes explicitly how scientifically proven by the lack of regulation of our hormone system, psychological diseases like depressions occur. But also how drastically the danger to suffer from a physical illness like heart attacks or lung cancer exists.
Spitefully, diseases that are based on this reason cannot be cured by medicine in the long run. Affected people have to work on their way of living and thinking to avoid their unnecessary stress triggers and help their bodies to find back to a healthy hormone regulation. Mostly this is only possible with the help of a psychologist. (Bauer, 2011, pp. 51-161)


2.2.3 Importance of time off periods

People who have no control over their time schedule as they have to be reachable around the clock, cannot really „detach psychologically and let go from their job-related-thoughts“ - they are not able to really take time off „which leads to permanent activation of their bodily stress symptoms“ (van Hoff, Geurts, Beckers, Kompier, 2011, pp.57-58).

But even if there is a time-off policy at work, some things have to be ensured to make people take advantage of it. They obviously have to know about their right obviously and be aware of that they can take it without any negative consequences. If they have to explain themselves or furthermore might be considered as lazy by others, they will never take their needed recovery phase and run high risk to be affected by burnout syndromes (Cedfeldt, et al., 2010, pp.977-984)

Work periods without a clear beginning and ending accompanied by a pressure to be good, rivalry and being afraid to lose the job lead to new ways of self-exploitation (Blech, 2012 cited Holzer, 2012). A 3d artist in my questionnaire pointed out that he would love to use my answering machine but would get „paranoid of missing a job opportunity“ (see attachment Nr. 1 ). These so called „soft facts“ which deal with our emotional constitution and by that with our regulation of stress, are nowadays leading illness source (Bauer, 2011, p.19).

2.2.4 Stress - Conclusion

Being „off“ does not only mean to spend time on your own but also to psychologically free your mind.

That is only possible if you do not have to pay attention if someone might try to reach you. Also you have to be sure about how much time you actually have for yourself in order to calm down. Equally your wish to be undisturbed has to be generally excepted and unquestioned.

In my survey (see appendix 6.4) most people agree that they would need some time off once in a while but fear to miss out on something important or to appear impolite. Someone even said disconnecting would be like „breaking“ the new social laws. A new question for me became how to reach that disconnecting is a positive and socially acceptable behaviour?

„Both the perception of being able to take time off and actually doing it may result in a feeling of control over one’s work environment“ which makes you feel sure and relaxed (Cedfeldt, et al., 2010,p.).

All in all it has to be an obvious available choice to disconnect, which stands for an excepted positive and good experience.
2.3 Digital Communication

2.3.1 Communication
Communication in any way is very important as it creates community and the feeling of belonging. However we do not only speak with our language but also with our facial expression, gesture, intention and body language. (Nyiri, et al., 2001, p.271). Face to face conversations are very important for our personal development as they happen directly. What we reveal unconsciously by for example our voice mostly tells more than what we say contextually. And observing our dialog partner lets us learn about our own acting and appearance as well. Also dealing with just one person over a longer period and by that listening to the non spoken parts and less important information as well, allows us to build up a real emotional relationship (Turkle, 2012).

2.3.2 Digital conversations
Through the digital area new communication opportunities are constantly created. They help us to gain and keep more personal contacts than ever possible before. Technology tries not only to widen our sphere of activity but as well to mimic our face to face conversations as good as possible in order to make us feel emotionally connected. Voice, video, chat and new symbol languages like emoticons are used to reach reality as far as possible (Nyiri, et al., 2001, p.271). By all different available communication possibilities naturally we often have several conversations simultaneously. Nowadays more people say that „they rather text than talk“ as it is easier to catch up and has other advantages as well (Turkle, 2012). We can rethink and modify our answers and questions as well as we can skip to listen to the uninteresting parts. By that the conversations take less of time and in addition we can address ourselves to other things on one go (Turkle, 2012). Social networks developed an even faster way to communicate by introducing the „share“ and „I like“ buttons. By just one click you show interest and an opinion, you communicate to others without talking (Antonelli, et al., 2011, p.128).
As we can get any information we want directly also the advertising industry needed to react on our new possibilities. Experiences and meanings have to be designed to gain people’s attention. Delivering facts which everyone can look up themselves is not enough anymore (Volkswagen, 2009).

2.3.3 Consequences of digital communication
Getting digital we have more opportunities than ever before to socialise (Ling, McEwen, 2010). In my survey (see attachment Nr:04) most people think that they spend around two to three hours a day with digital communication. But in a study I asked twenty persons of my target group (see 2.3.5) to document their communication habits in the virtual world over one week (image Nr:01), the result showed, that in average they spent 34 hours a week on digital communication which means 4,85 hours a day. Even if we communicate more than ever we, and especially the generation born into the digital world, run risk to lose our ability to make real emotional connections. Some of our digital conversations become just fragments without revealing our real selves. Said pointedly we only get to know others how they want to be seen by us. In consequence we do not learn anything about ourselves from these conversations anymore (Turkle, 2012).
2.3.4 Communication between humans and objects
With digital communication and technology new work fields like interaction and web design developed as storytelling used in traditional graphic design with a beginning middle and end do not suit the new interfaces anymore. Platforms for personalised conversations but unknown users have to be designed (Antonelli, 2011, p.13).
Interaction designers have specialised themselves in what experiences people get when interacting with products. As they nowadays often become our„companions“ it is important to know why (Antonelli, et al., 2011, p. 13). Likewise it has to be regarded that objects which appear too human deliver an uncanny feeling. That was probably the reason why the product like tamagochi was a more successful toy than robots that really looked like humans. The same boundaries have to be considered in communication areas. For example when virtual personas with fake backgrounds are designed for service centres it has to be considered how real they actually should appear to make me as a customer feel emotionally connected (Antonelli, et al., 2011, p.163).

2.3.5 Digital communication - Conclusion
My research strengthened me in the assumption that digital communication replaces our face to face conversations more and more. In technological messages it is important to be as close as possible to a real personal conversation to make the receiver emotionally connected to you.
Also the boundaries between our different areas of life disappear largely as we are reachable at any place and time. Mobile communication leads to a continuous compulsion to always check the different communication systems as well as to always need an answer and opinion (Nyiri, et al., 2001, p.271). By that we cannot disconnect psychologically from our devises and seemed duties. As described under point 2.2.4 this fact leads to stress.
I decided to work with a target group which enabled me to design a good thought through concept and object. Otherwise a study in cultural differences as well as design for different ages and classes would have been unavoidable and too time consuming.
target group
The target group consists of western Europeans around thirty who remember
times when they only had a landline at hand, which makes them to understand my
purpose. They should have no nine to five jobs but flexible working hours, maybe be
freelancers but not run their own business. The persons should use at least three of
these digital communication possibilities on a regular basis: email, sms, chat, video
call, social network and mobile phone calls. According my research these people are easy to feel stressed by digital communication

2.4 Communication Technology

2.4.1 Today’s possibilities and future development
To be able to understand if and how my idea would be able to put into practice I
had to research basic functions and operating systems of communication
technology.
My project idea was an answering machine that worked for all platforms and
devices. A storyboard (see appendix 6.1) helped me to discuss my idea with
Bernhard Slawik, a German app developer, who was a huge help in explaining
several possibilities with their advantages and disadvantages.
My solution was to work with a web server that runs an application. If the app
would just be on your smart phone it would be out of action as soon as you switch
the device off. With cloud computing the program would always be activated as well
as reachable from everywhere. „Today cloud computing appears to mark the
evolution to a whole new way to conceptualise storage and information
access.“ (Herther, 2011, p.11)
Bernhard Slawik clarified that I would need to think about data security as I worked
with a lot of different platforms. As it was not relevant for my concept I decided not
to deal with this issue during my thesis.

2.4.2 Trends
There is a clear trend towards more and better wireless broadband as it leads to
greater flexibility. Data and communication possibilities being available nearly
wherever you are became ordinary and people got addicted to it (Frenzel, 2011).
Naturally so called smart devices will become a bigger part in our „digital and
wireless“ society (Forcier, 2011).
And as applications allow us to customise our products also their service is
increasing. „An IDC research study released in June 2010 estimated that 107 billion
apps were sold or acquired in 2010 and predicted the number of apps would rise“
to182.7 billion by 2015.“ (Herther, 2011, p.8). Most of nowadays apps are used to
give you just-in-time content or help you access your facebook account, but it is
time to think further by considering the usage of applications in a more meaningful
way (Herther, 2011, p.1). Like with the smart device „jawbone“ where a bracelet
with an integrated application shall help you to sleep, eat and exercise in a more
healthy way (jawbone, 2012).
2.4.3 Communication Technology - Conclusion
I am sure that my project came in the right time as it is a smart device that deals with our living and rises current questions. Regarding technology it would also be possible to implement my idea today if you manage to work with all the different application platforms.

2.5 Conceptual work and sketches

2.5.1 Inspiration
When I feel the need to get away from it all to be able to relax, I love to go to the Alps nearby my hometown Munich. Standing on a summit and feeling the raw nature makes me feel free and I am disconnected from all digital happenings. The mountains enable me to reflect upon my personal issues from a certain distance. They became my big inspiration source for my project.

2.5.2 Formulated outcome
During the research phase my project was formulated and until the mid presentation on march 14th I had decided on the outcome. I wanted to create a smart object that would be portable and by that always with you. The idea should be introduced by a short movie, in order to make people curious on my project in an easy understandable way. The actual app behind my device should be explained more detailed in a handbook. It was important that all the parts spoke the same graphical and conceptual language and by that form one whole concept in the end.

2.5.3 Used media
I used storyboards, mood boards, hand sketches, paintings, paper and clay models as well as 3d modelling techniques to formulate my project idea. The designing of the movie, the jewellery and handbook went hand in hand but under the following points I show the three parts separately.

2.5.4 The object
As the object should be portable I had three possible options for its design:

1. small and portable but standing on its own
2. adjustable to a phone, key or other item
3. wearable

Furthermore I decided to let the object interact with the owner. That lead me to design a wearable jewellery which had the possibility to have skin contact and by that react on the wearer’s feelings.
2.5.4.1 Form giving

First shape
Inspired by old telegraphs and phones I created a mystically looking object (image 02). Installations could be done by turning several discs, speaking to it as well as pushing a button. Designed according to the settings which would be necessary in order to disconnect. But its appearance turned out to be very technical which reminded rather off a machine than a jewellery. Also the act of disconnecting became too difficult. The object would have worked good for my movie's story but not for reality so I skipped that design very quick.

Second shape
I went on formulating basic points the object’s design should reach:

1. the jewellery’s shape should be the same as the app’s icon
2. the user should really disconnect the item by action to make the choice more consciously
3. it should look like a jewellery not like another device
4. disconnecting should be simple
   -> Decision to let the user manage all settings in the app and not within the object!

Thinking stronger on my inspiration, the Alps, while sketching (images 03, 04, 05) helped me to find a simple triangle shape for a pendant which was changeable to a mountain like appearance by sliding a small piece to the side. I decided to work with a necklace and brooch, as I needed two pieces for my movie as well as I wanted to two opportunities for the jewellery.
2.5.4.2 Interaction

Thinking about the jewellery becoming a companion I wanted it to communicate with the wearer. If the person would feel stressed and restless the object would react and remind that it’s time to take some time off.

I thought about several possibilities how the interaction could happen. For example by temperature, change of shape or by noise. I decided to work with colour as it seemed a simple and clear solution as well as it influences our mood.

Colour

I decided to let the colour change from white (neutral) over yellow to orange (stressed) and back again (images 06, 07, 08). The colours where not only decided by their warning signal but also by the Alps and their appearance in the so called alpenglow effect. It can be observed on the mountain’s peaks after sunset or before sunrise through the backscattering of light and provides a sheer breathtaking atmosphere. I decided to call my project alpenglow.

image 06

image 07

image 08
But thinking about how the effect would be adopted in real life I changed my opinion. If everyone can see whether someone is stressed it would make the one feel bad and he would not use the jewellery. I changed my idea slightly to let the object just shimmer and sparkle. Like a positive light of hope that mostly the wearer would recognise. The colour itself would not be affected.

2.5.4.3 Material
The interaction of the jewellery could be implemented today by using intelligent textiles. They are used in the medical area and other products start to take advantage of them. Like the before named jawbone concept under point 2.4.2 (jawbone, 2012).

But as it was not part of my project to put the interaction into practice I considered the best way of how to show my idea in the prototype. I researched different materials like metal, plastic, ceramic and glass according to their properties as well as their processing and decided to work with glass. Due to its transparency and hard texture it reacts on light conditions in a way that lets it appear equally fragile and strong.

2.5.5 The movie
In the beginning of my project I had several ideas in mind of how to present the object.

1. Physical art installation
   I skipped that idea quite quickly as being too artistic would have needed too much interpretation by the observer. I wanted an easy introduction to my work at the probably crowded exhibition.

2. Experience
   Inspired by Volkswagen’s advertisement, the fun theory by (Volkswagen, 2009) I started to think about how to design an experience. I wanted to create a real situation and film people’s behaviour. But either my ideas seemed to try to lecture people or they went too far into interaction design which was not possible for me to implement, so I abolished that idea as well.

3. Info graphic
   I thought about making posters with info graphics. But as it reminded me of exhibitions in museums where you have to read a lot as well as the posters cannot really be shown elsewhere I did not realise it.

4. Movie
   Making a short movie as a teaser seemed to be the best way for me to deliver an atmospheric feeling, which people would understand immediately.
2.5.5.1 First story
Working with the mystic object explained under point 2.5.4.1. I thought about a person walking through a town which seems to move faster and faster moving. The one cannot keep pace, struggles and breaks down. Suddenly a small object on a sidewalk’s corner feels to draw the person into its spell and makes him or her take it. He or she gets confident and knows what to do. By turning the discs, the person installs the settings, speaks to it by closing the eyes and then pushes the button certainly. Suddenly the setting changes to the mountains.
As the whole story seemed to show a negative weak picture of the person taking time off and the object was too complicated I went on to the next story.

2.5.5.2 Final story
I decided to let the main actor appear strong and self assure about disconnecting and the object should really accompany the person from the very beginning. At first I had the object’s colour changed in the storyboard (see appendix 6.2) which I later decided to skip as described under point 2.5.4.2. (see appendix 6.3). The story had now three scenes:
1st. in the mountains
2nd. in the town
3rd. the mountains as a metaphor
A second actor was needed as I wanted to show that time off also can mean to have an undisturbed and nice conversation with another person. Also the fact of having two people the story became even more positive.

2.5.5.3 Preparation filming
As filming was a new field for me I showed my storyboard to Ralph Glander who works for a German television channel and directs movies on his own. He gave me helpful hints, like not to make a white transition between the second and last scene as it suggests dead. On his recommendation I also read the book „Grammatik der Filmsprache“ (english: The film language’s grammar) by Daniel Arjon (2001), about directing. With the gained knowledge I could prepare the filming in a good way which made the directing but also the later cutting and editing work out.

2.5.6 The application’s handbook
I started very early to think about which settings would be needed and what they should look like in order to disconnect in a good way. I started to read about info graphics (McCandless, 2010) as well as I studied different manuals. Finding the objects and icons shape as well as my researches helped me to define the installations for the different needs. I was also concerned not to give too many options as it would be made easier to not really disconnect in the end after all.
2.5.6.1 Important settings

1. Time: a set time frame is good as it gives yourself a known recovery phase as well as it shows politeness to the rejected contact person.

2. Groups: the possibility to chose groups enables you to simply disconnect for example the work-group and by that spend quality time with friends.

3. Emergency number: to take people’s fear of unreachability in emergency situations I decided to give an opportunity to select one contact that never can be disconnected.

4. Message: next to a standardised message, which works in all situations with all groups, you can add personalised ones. They can for example be good for messages in another language or simply be more personal.

5. Present: to not appear impolite or to show that you do not disconnect from persons because you are angry on them, I introduced the present option. You have the possibility to attach a link to a nice song or a picture to your message.

6. History: people can see their dis-,connecting history in an encouraging way

3. Result

3.1 Peaktime

Discussing the name alpenglow with others several times I came to the conclusion that it was a very poetic metaphor but did not deliver the projects idea. I finally decided to call it peaktime. Peak time is normally written in two words and expresses the high seasons which is supposed to be very busy. Peak alone stands also for a mountains summit, my inspiration from the very beginning. Writing peaktime in one word makes the two of them belong together. It stands for your time. Take your peaktime and relax!
3.2 The jewellery (image 09)

In the end I had two different jewellery’s, a necklace and a brooch. The first made out of blue the other out of dark orange transparent glass. The supporting material titan adds a rawness to their light presence. They are reminding you of the appearance of summits in different light conditions. Being fragile the jewellery’s need to be treated as carefully as you have to take care of your time.

3.3 The movie (images 10, 11, 12, 14, 15)

I travelled to Munich to make my movie directly at the inspiring Alps. Due to snow in April we could not climb the top with all the accessories as planned but found a nice spot in the area called Samerberg. As well as one originally planned actor could not make it I had to be flexible and reorganise. The jewellery was finished in time and everything went very well. After the filming I cut the material and edited it's effects according to light, the jewellery's shining and the appearing messages. I also went on looking for the right and particularly copyright free music, which was more time consuming as I had thought. I chose it to be acoustically and electronically in order to fit the theme, time and target group.
3.4 The application's handbook

Instead of one handbook I made three brochures.

*Peaktimetype_the short story* told the girl's story from the movie and by that gave information about the target group.

*Peaktimetype_the jewellery* explained the objects functions and lead to the third one.

*Peaktimetype_the application* was most important as it was the only project piece describing the actual application. I designed the different icons and functions and showed them consciously in a hand sketched layout instead of as computer drawings in order to strengthen the conceptual idea of the project (image 16).

With the history function mypeaktime was created. It gives users their own personal dis-connection patterns which they can create, show and share (image 17). Mypeaktime , the present as well as the appearing icon when a person disconnects would make the idea to reach out to others naturally.
Each of the brochures was printed in slightly different white tones. The application’s handbook was the whitest one to enforce the manual and the short story’s the most yellowish one to look like a magazine. I bookbined them myself to add a more personal feeling (image 18).
3.5 The whole impression

As I used the same conceptual language, pictures and colours in all three parts it can easily bee seen that they belong and act together:

Status
The icon's shape appears in all your networks while you take your time off. The jewellery acts as a very strong worn symbol. Together they become a status which everyone can see. It appears like a secret and strong group sign and piques curious itself. People would start to share their peaktimes and make others want to dare and be part of the movement peaktimes.
4. Reflection

4.1. The examination

During my presentation I tried to sell my concept. That means I did not show my process or earlier ideas and development. Starting with the movie I gave background information according to the target group and the jewellery afterwards and finished with presenting the application and my peaktime. In between I proved my statements with results from the research.

4.1.1 The critiques

The main part of the discussion was between me and my opponent. Later also the examiner joined in.

In the following part I want to reflect upon some questions we talked about.

1. Why was it important for me not to work against the new media?
   Technology allows progress and has great potentials if used with good intention. In this case being reachable everywhere can be very important in times you need help and are on your own, but can also be annoying when you want to be undisturbed. Since the digital revolution is quite young and still going on we have to learn how to deal with all its new possibilities. Working against it would just mean its denial and prevent it to move on to the next useful level.

2. If you need a smart phone are you really disconnected?
   If you had to switch off all your devices in order to disconnect it would be very hard to take that step. As well as I see disconnecting not only in order to calm down. Some freelancers for example have to be able to work and research online on their own devices and talk to clients. They need the internet and need to concentrate on their work and clients by times and do not want to be available for others. This is also one example for using the new media and its advantages.

3. Do I need a target group?
   Everyone is a potential receiver of a disconnection message, so is it possible to have a target group at all? I think that it was very important for me as it would have been impossible to design a global concept and object in the given time period. I wanted to work with an item and with persons who feel the need to take some time off. Also the users can react to other cultures themselves by using personal and polite messages. The receiver will just get to know the concept but does not have to use it by him- or herself.

4. Did I design a statement?
   Yes my project turned out to become a statement. I tried to enforce it with the target group, which should seem independent and strong in order to give the icon a positive feeling. It should make you dare to want your own peaktime.
5. How would I want my story to be told and reach others?
I argued with the fact that it on one hand would be delivered naturally by the icon, the present and people showing their status. By that others would get curious and check it out. On the other hand I thought also about the video as a potential teaser in the internet. I got the critique that the story of my video was told in a too linear way in order to catch my target group or even that a movie would not be the right media at all.
I thought about it and I agree now that it was not the right way to tell a story in the way I did to catch my target group. Preferably I should have designed an experience as described in 2.5.5. But as it becomes more and more popular to watch movies on our mobile devices (Herther, 2011) I still think it is the right media for our generation. The movie is good to explain my project during a presentation or an exhibition but probably not for advertisement.
One way could be to give the movie a handmade thus creating a street feeling as if someone else had filmed the situation with a smartphone and uploaded it on youtube.

6. Was it necessary to design a product and not only the application?
Considering the possibility that in the future everyone will have a smart phone maybe the app would work on its own. But the independent jewellery makes the act of disconnecting more personal, obvious and shows your status obviously.

7. Was I too quick developing my object and icon?
Of course the object could have many other shapes and appearances. But I think as a designer I considered many possibilities and choose the one I was convinced about and felt the most right according to the circumstances and needs. The next step to do would be a user study to develop it. But I am very satisfied with the icon for my concept.

8. Did I loose poetry in my project?
I think the poetry is there but I did not present my project in the right way. I should have involved more about the mountains and feelings and less about the background story. Also the brochures might appear too technical.

9. Would men wear my jewellery?
In my opinion the shape is neutral according gender but I agree that men seldom wear a brooch or even a necklace. Discussing my project with Carolina Claesson, the technician in the jewellery department, gave me an interesting point to think about. She told me that it is very difficult to make jewellery for the average man. Because for men to accept jewellery, it needs to have an explicit function as well as it has to be clear how it is worn, like for example a tie pin. My jewellery has a distinct function but it might miss an obvious way to be worn. I was thinking about placing the brooch on a shirt and by that bringing to mind the way a handkerchief might be worn in a suit’s pocket. To enforce this idea I am currently creating another jewellery with a clip on the back to clarify the position and by that justifying my jewellery for men to wear.

In total I got many new and interesting thoughts which I wanted to think further and try to develop, like how to advertise my project and how to tell my story in a shorter, clearer and by that more catchy way.
4.2 Further development

Having reflected on my work as well as on the examination I started focusing on the exhibition in June. In order to show my concept more concise and by that stronger I made two brochures out of the three. By giving the important background information in Peaktime_the application I will not have Peaktime_the short story anymore. I decided to show the logotype just as an outline an the covers blue coloured instead. With a screen printed logotype on them they now appear more precious and secretive.

4.3 Learning outcome

It was a very huge project for me as it was comprised of so many different parts that had to be taken care of. I also worked in for me new fields like film and jewellery. I learned to organise different parts simultaneously and to be flexible if something needed to be changed quickly like for example in the movie. I broadened my skills in several programs just like my knowledge in graphic design. It was my first time working with glass and titan which gave me a lot of experience with these materials.
5. References

5.1. Literature


5.2 Online articles, journals and newspapers


5.3 Podcasts and websites


5.4 Personal Communication


6. Appendix

6.1 Storyboard: product idea

*dis-connected _turn the off-button on*

storyboard

1.
 reachable by e-mail, telephone, sms,
 chat and social networks...

2.
 ...at any time and any place is most of
 the time very helpful.
3. But sometimes it gets too much.

4. In that case we just switch our devices off or make them soundless.
5. And if we need our smartphone again, we see all the missed calls, sms and e-mails we should answer by time.

6. If we need some time off with ourselves, without all the connections, we just leave our smartphone, tablet computer and notebook at home. But we know, that when we come back we have to check all our mailboxes to see if someone tried to reach us. If there is something we have to do.
7. That can be stressful and bothering. It is hard to calm downs. It would be so helpful sometimes to just turn on an "off-button".

8. ...that just acts like an answering equipment for all our contact possibilities.
I am not sure which components are needed. Does it have to be build up like a mini-computer?

Storyboard
dis-connected... turn the off button on

Needed components:
1. UMTS - MODUL
2. BLUETOOTH 2.0
3. OPERATING SYSTEM
4. APP
5. STORAGE
6. PROCESSOR
7. CHARGER CONTACTS
8. BATTERY
9. ...

Master thesis 2012, Caroline Haberkorn
Design IS, HDR, at Gothenburg University
6.2 Storyboard: movie

_Dis-connected_
movie storyboard._28-02-2012_

**Scene 1.1**
long shot
view from top of a mountain
time 4"

**Scene 1.2**
long shot
view from top of a mountain
girl with rucksack comes walking into scene
time 3"

**Scene 1.3**
knee shot
girl takes rucksack off and enjoys the view, is
happy, relaxed
time 5"

**Scene 1.4**
knee shot
girl knees down to rucksack and finds s.th.
time 3"
Scene 1.5
close up
girl takes the necklace, holds it up into air and admires it
time 8""

Scene 1.6
close up
girl places it around her neck, sits down and relaxes
time ""

Scene 2.1
long shot
city scene; boy waiting for girl; she enters the scene and walks towards him
time 8"

Scene 2.2
close up
look from behind the boy; girl wears necklace; both appear happy
time 3""
Scene 2.3
knee shot
they start walking together;
time 3"

Scene 2.4
knee shot
fragments of messages start to appear in the sky;
time 3"

Scene 2.5
knee shot
city gets faster as do the messages get more;
atmosphere gets dense; persons seem to get further away from each other;
time 15"

Scene 2.6
close up
girls seems to get caught by messages; she is afraid, looks around, looses control
object changed color!
time 10"
Scene 2.7
close up
girl breaks down; hands in front of face
time 10"

Scene 2.7
close up
she gets aware of the shining object; takes it; suddenly she seems secure; she knows what she does; she takes it with both hands; closes eyes; talks to it and takes a deep breath
time 10"

Scene 2.8
white
time 3"

Scene 3.1
same background as in 1st scene; girl appears in same position as in town; object changed again; she is relieved
time 4"
Scene 3.2
she stands up; boy walks into scene

time 4’’

Scene 3.3
the keep on walking

time 4’’

Scene 3.3
same scene as in beginnig

time 3’’
6.3 Storyboard: final movie

**Scene 1_1**
long shot
view from top of a mountain
time 4”

**Scene 1_2**
long shot
view from top of a mountain
girl with rucksack comes walking into scene
time 3”

**Scene 1_3**
knee shot
girl takes rucksack off and enjoys the view, is happy, relaxed
time 5”

**Scene 1_4**
knee shot
girl kneels down to rucksack and finds s.th.
time 3”
Scene 1.5
close up
girl takes the necklace, holds it up into air and admires it

time 8”

Scene 1.6
close up
girl places it around her neck, enjoys the view

time 3”

Scene 1.7
close up
girl looks at her phone, walks away

time 3”

Scene 2.1
long shot
city scene; girl talking on phone walking quickly

time 3”
Scene 2.2

girl walks to café, boy waiting for her; messages appear

time 3’’

Scene 2.3

ey say hello; messages pop up; he wears the same triangle

time 3’’

Scene 2.4

ey drink wine, talk; but are disturbed all the time

time 3’’

Scene 2.5

she says goodbye soon, is stressed, messages/things to think about get more

time 3’’
Scene 2_6
fast cuts; changes between longshot an
close ups
she walks through town, stressed; looking
at phone;
time 4”

Scene 2_7
fast cuts; changes between longshot an
close ups
she meets someone; just short hello;
holds jewellery tightly; stressed
time 4”

Scene 2_8
fast cuts; changes between longshot an
close ups
she keeps walking; messages much
stronger; town faster; hard to keep
pace
time 4”

Scene 3_9
close up jewellery
she stops, looks at the jewellery; takes
her time an decisively disconnects
time 4”
Scene 3.1
same background as in 1st scene; no messages; she appears calm
time 3"

Scene 3.2
she starts walking
time 4"

Scene 3.3
she sees boy sitting at a table; exactly as in the first scene;
time 4"

Scene 3.4
they start to enjoy their wine; both are disconnected; they are calm
time 3"
6.4 Survey

6.4.1 Summary

Which country are you from?
- Japan
- China
- Germany
- Sweden
- Skåne
- Germany
- Germany
- Germany
- Germany
- Germany
- Germany
- Germany

How old are you?
- 24
- 32
- 30
- 34
- 29
- 31
- 32
- 32
- 32
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- 32
- 32
- 32
- 32
- 26
- 26
- 61
- 29
- 27
- 23
- 29
- 32
- 32
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- 32
- 32
- 31
- 30
- 33

Are you female or male?
- Male: 17 (45%)
- Female: 21 (55%)

What is your profession?
- Designer
- Product Designer
- Architect
- Marketing
- Engineering
- Designer
- Design Student
- Mechanical Engineering
- 3D Artist
- PhD Student
- Communication Designer
- Dipl. Sozialpädagogin

Which of these products do you use regularly for communication?
- Landline: 16 (42%)
- Mobile Phone: 23 (61%)
- Smartphone: 19 (52%)
- Notebook: 30 (79%)
- Stationary Computer: 18 (47%)
- Tablet Computer: 5 (13%)
- Other: 2 (5%)

Which media do you use for communicating in your private life?
- Phone Call: 35 (92%)
- SMS: 36 (96%)
- Email: 36 (96%)
- Chat: 18 (47%)
- Video Call (Skype): 20 (53%)
- Social Network: 29 (78%)
- Twitter: 1 (3%)
- Other: 5 (13%)

Which of the named media do you use the most and which one not so often?
- Most: Phone Call, Email
- Not often: Chat, Video Call, Social Network, Twitter, Other

Manche Teilnehmer wählen mehr als ein Kontrollkästchen aus, sodass die einzelnen prozentualen Anteile insgesamt mehr als 100 % ergeben.
Which media do you use for communicating in your work life?

- phone call: 34, 99%
- e-mail: 36, 100%
- chat: 3, 8%
- social network: 5, 13%
- twitter: 1, 3%
- other: 3, 8%

Most: WhatsApp (Chat), Email, phone call. Seldom: Skype, social network.

Most: e-mail, then phone call, then social network, then video call (Skype). Seldom: SMS and phone call.

Which of the named media do you use most and which one not so often?

- most: e-mail, phone call
- not so often: phone call, chat, social network

How much time for digital communication do you spend on an average day?

- 1 hour: 6, 2%
- 2-3 hours: 1, 5%
- 2 hours: 89, 29%
- 1-2h: 30, 10%
- 6h: 21, 7%
- a lot: 5, 1%

Do you remember the time when you only had your landline available for communication?

- yes: 27, 97%
- no: 3, 3%

Are there situations where you wish that you would not be reachable by everyone at any place and any time?

- yes, if I could choose which persons: 15, 39%
- no: 8, 21%

Do you understand if someone sometimes needs time alone and does not want to be reachable?

- yes: 26, 95%
- no: 2, 5%
Do you need a reason from the person who does not want to be reached?

No, I think it's quite interesting and could even be some sort of event for people to meet and go "offline" together, so they really can be on their own. In general I think it's quite similar to turning the phone off and not reading emails, if one just wants to be left alone.

I need a reason. No. I'd assume they've gone...

If you call a friend but only reach the answering machine saying: "The person is not available right now, he/she won't see that you called and you should please try later again", do you feel rejected?

Yes.

Which information do you expect a private telephone answering machine to contain?

Just facts.

Do you prefer to hear the person's own voice on an answering machine?

No specially.

If you e-mail someone and you get the answer back that the person is not reachable right now, you won't see your e-mail and you should try again later, do you feel rejected?

Yes, because it is personal.

Which information do you expect a private telephone answering machine to contain?

Just facts, stating for how long the person won't be available.

How should such an automatic e-mail answer look like in order to be understood in a positive way?

It depend on the person (is it a reference, a friend, ...) but normally only facts.

Imagine you would just need some "off-time" to be able to calm down. How would you like to answer the "different" recoveries?

I switch off my device. I do not answer. That is my strong answer, I think, so I would send the same thing.

When you are cared of, can always reach me in any situation.

I need to practice to NOT to be reachable, to be disconnected!

Is it even would be kind a hard to me, not to get paranoid on having missed something. No, I think it's quite interesting and could even be some sort of event for people to meet and go "offline" together, so they really can be on their own. In general I think it's quite similar to turning the phone off and not reading emails, if one just wants to be left alone. I would not be kind a hard to me, not to get paranoid on having missed some
6.4.1 Complete survey
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<th>性別</th>
<th>お電話、メールの設定</th>
<th>1時間以内に返信する程度</th>
<th>1時間以上で返信する程度</th>
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注: 表中のYes/Noは、「はい」、「いいえ」の意味です。
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Design

2012-02-08 21:05:00

1. How old are you?
2. Are you male or female?
3. Which media do you use the most?
4. Which media do you use the most in your work life?
5. Which of the media do you use the most in your personal life?
6. What do you use the most?
7. Are you a student or an employee?
8. Are you a designer or an engineer?
9. How much time do you spend on an average working day?
10. How much time do you spend on an average non-working day?
11. What do you like to do during your off-time?
12. How do you spend your off-time?
13. Do you use your mobile phone, smartphone, computer, tablet, regular working phone, or do you have a landline?
14. Which of these do you use regularly for communication?
15. Which of these are used for entertainment?
16. Which of these are used for work?
17. Which of these are used for personal life?
18. Which of these are used for education?
19. Which of these are used for research?
20. Which of these are used for social networking?
21. Which of these are used for networking?
22. Which of these are used for entertainment?
23. Which of these are used for work?
24. Which of these are used for personal life?
25. Which of these are used for education?
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35. Which of these are used for networking?
36. Which of these are used for entertainment?