DDM110 — Design for Behavioural Change
Individual Reflection
By Arthur Geel, 28-10-2019

Overview — Key Insights

Throughout this elective, I became better aware of the psychological theories and frameworks behind human behaviour. A thorough under-standing of these models (*e.g. the Theory of Planned Behaviour* [3]) allows us to understand and predict human behaviour by focusing on its details (*i.e. Attitude, Subjective Norm and Perceived Behavioural Control*). These insights can be applied in the design of products and systems that seek to cause behaviour change.

For example, an analysis of why a certain audience does not perform the target behaviour could conclude that the *intention* to perform the behaviour is low because they believe others likely do not perform the behaviour. This may seem paradoxical, yet is not unsolvable. *Design for Behavioural Change* or *Persuasive Design* can be used in the development of an *intervention* that addresses factors that cause behaviour change.

This elective has provided me with the knowledge required to analyse human behaviour and use the COM-B Model [2] to determine the need for change in either *Capability, Opportunity* or *Motivation*. I've learned to select an intervention function that might among others *persuade, incentivise* or *enable* the target audience to perform the desired behaviour change.

However, like any design process, I believe persuasive design benefits from an iterative approach and a critical mindset. While the theoretical frameworks introduced in this elective offer substantiated guidelines for performing persuasive design, it is essential that the designed intervention is evaluated well to validate its efficacy.

I've gained insights on how to extend my skills in evaluating designs on an interaction-level (as learned in the *User Experience and Theory* elective) to determine whether the behaviour change achieves its intended impact. By applying theories of human behaviour, I've learnt to establish determinants that illustrate dependencies of behavioural outcomes, and as such can be used in the evaluation of a persuasive design.

Nevertheless, designing for behavioural change comes with responsibilities, and the intervention should be evaluated ethically before deployed. One way to do so is through Stakeholder Analysis, which uses Value-Sensitive Design [1] to examine value loss- and gain for all stakeholders involved. However, I think that the best way to ensure ethical correctness is by adhering to human-centred design principles that fit in my professional identity such as undergoing a participatory design process.

Future Application

Reflecting on past design projects, behaviour change is a goal that is actually in everything I have intended to make: with any design I either tried to enable people to perform certain tasks, or persuade them to stop doing certain things for their own good.

Yet in the past, I often felt that the greatest result I achieved with the users was awareness rather than actual behaviour change. At the end of this elective I feel more confident in my ability to analyse behaviour and design for behaviour change that is both effective and ethically responsible.

References

1. Friedman, B., Kahn, P. H., Borning, A., & Huldtgren, A. (2013). Value sensitive design and information systems. In *Early engagement and new technologies: Opening up the laboratory* (pp. 55-95). Springer, Dordrecht.

2. Michie, S., Atkins, L., & West, R. (2014). *The behaviour change wheel: A guide to designing interventions.* London: Silverback Publishing.

3. Montano, D. E., & Kasprzyk, D. (2015). Theory of reasoned action, theory of planned behavior, and the integrated behavioral model. *Health behavior: Theory, research and practice, 70*(4), 231.