BLENDING

AMSTERDAM

REALITY

EXPLORE THE HISTORY OF THE CITY

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Gemeente Amsterdam
Stadsarchief

Gemeente Amsterdam
Stadsdeel Centrum

CREATE-IT
APPLIED
RESEARCH
MEDIA, FASHION, IT

BEELD EN GELUID

WISEGUYS
urban art projects

media**LAB**amsterdam

Foreword

After going through the research phase and evaluating the first six weeks of working together in our multidisciplinary international team we moved on to the concept phase. It was time to brainstorm and come up with creative and innovative ideas! The research provided the team with a good perspective to start thinking about concepts, sketches and scenarios. With the help of our brainstorm partner Wiseguys we got the creative juices flowing. We started by coming up with a hundred different ideas in brainstorm sessions, without giving much attention to restrictions and relevance. Having had a good pool of ideas, we used some brainstorming and creative thinking methods like role-play and analogies to focus on making concepts realistic. We then combined literature, the results of our field research and the requirements of the assigner and the user to come up with creative solutions. Finally we converged all our ideas together to narrow down to three concepts which we will present in this document.

This document provides information about the results of the concept phase, presents the three concepts and will explain and visualize our concepts. After zeroing in one or a combination of concepts, we hope to connect with the users and the assigner to make this prototype. The prototype for this project is to be delivered at the end of January 2013. After the concept phase we move on to the next phase: Designing.

The latest version of all documents can be found on the project blog. Beside all up-to-date documentation, we also aim to provide more information, short clips, contact details and relevant links. A paper brochure containing a short summary of our project is also available.

Website | medialab.hva.nl/project-gemeente-amsterdam
**Blog** | http://medialab.hva.nl/gemeenteamsterdam

Introduction

Amsterdam has a lot of exceptional, crazy, beautiful and unexpected sights and history. This history is unknown to locals and visitors to Amsterdam. These many little-known gems are just waiting to be discovered. More than 65% of all tourists visit Amsterdam because of the city's history, culture and its canals (research ATCB, 2012). Beside books and websites, an alternative literary guide to the city could be handy, perhaps in the form of a Smartphone application offering a new perspective on landscapes, buildings and objects. History can also be made tangible (or touchable") by blending artifacts from history and reality with new media.

The city archive has a lot of archived materials and information. The EYE Institute, the Institute of Sound and Vision and other cultural and historical centers too have a huge pool of archives waiting to be showcased. Most of this content is digitized and can be showcased beautifully, turning it into an attraction for the city. The main question that needs to be answered here is, how can it be presented really well?

The key question six weeks ago was *"How to combine a marker (landmark) in the public space (or better said a series of landmarks) and an interactive information carrier - using the Smartphone or some other new medium and/or a physical object with each other to use digital historical information and current reality and blend it into /using an interactive medium".* We focused on two topics: 'history of

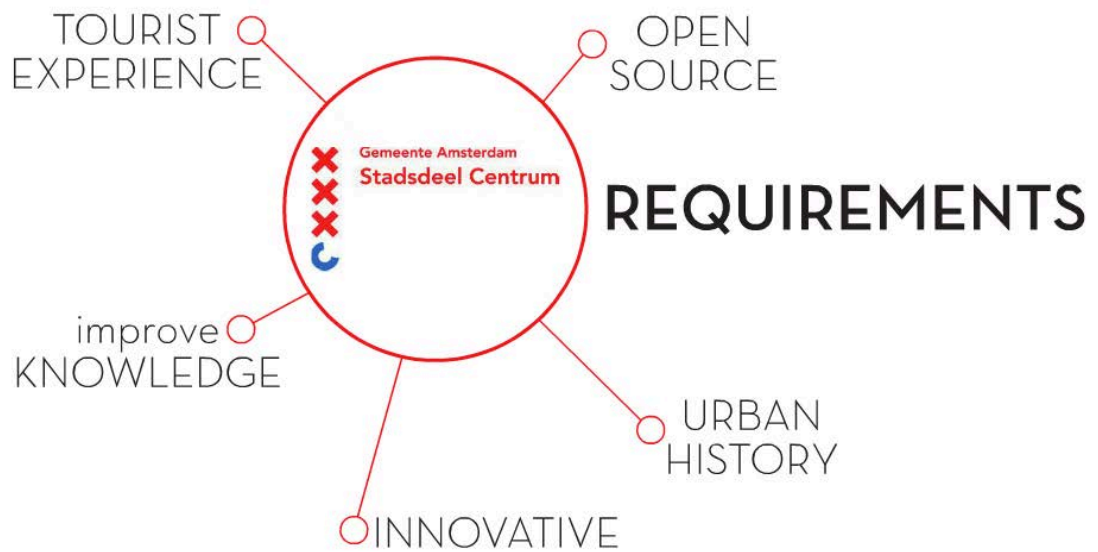the city: former city wall and its bolwerken and ports' and 'Famous Amsterdammers'.
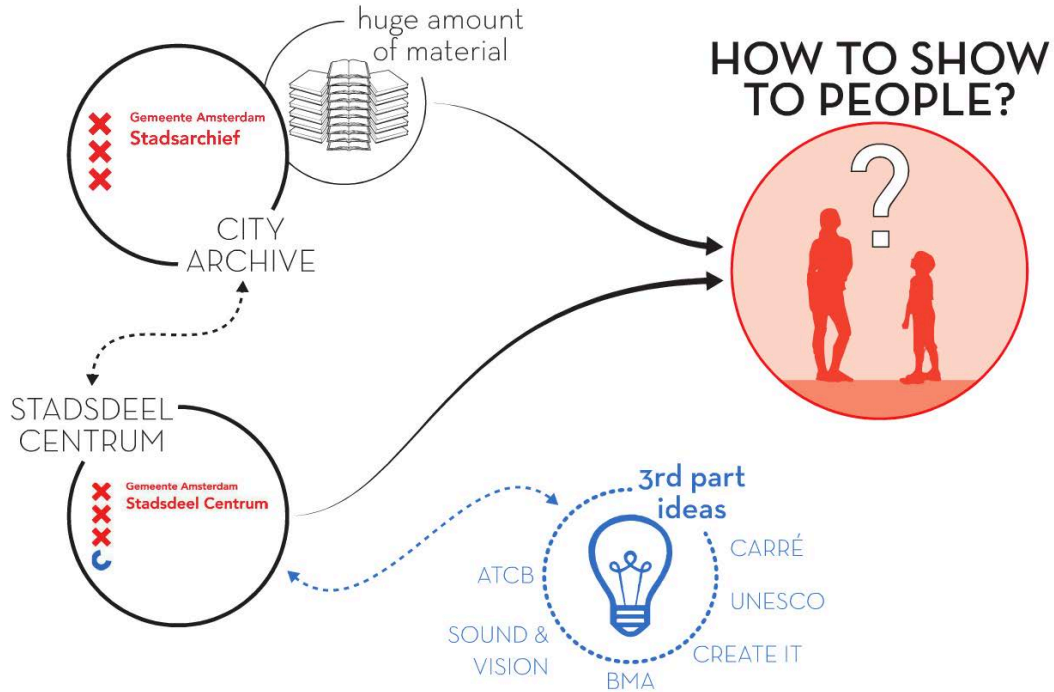
HUGE COLLECTION OF DIGITAL MATERIALS: HOW TO SHOW TO PEOPLE?

**FOCUS: FORMER CITYWALL AND FAMOUS AMSTERDAMMERS**

Requirements

With the concepts we present we hope to address the requirements for both, the users and Stadsdeel centrum. We summed up the requirements to give an overview:

Stadsdeel centrum
- Open source or interactive
- Re-usable platform
- Free to use
- Innovative
- Inform users
- Vandal-proof
- Experience

The user:
- Location specific (GPS)
- Free
- Experience
- Not too much reading
- Easy to use

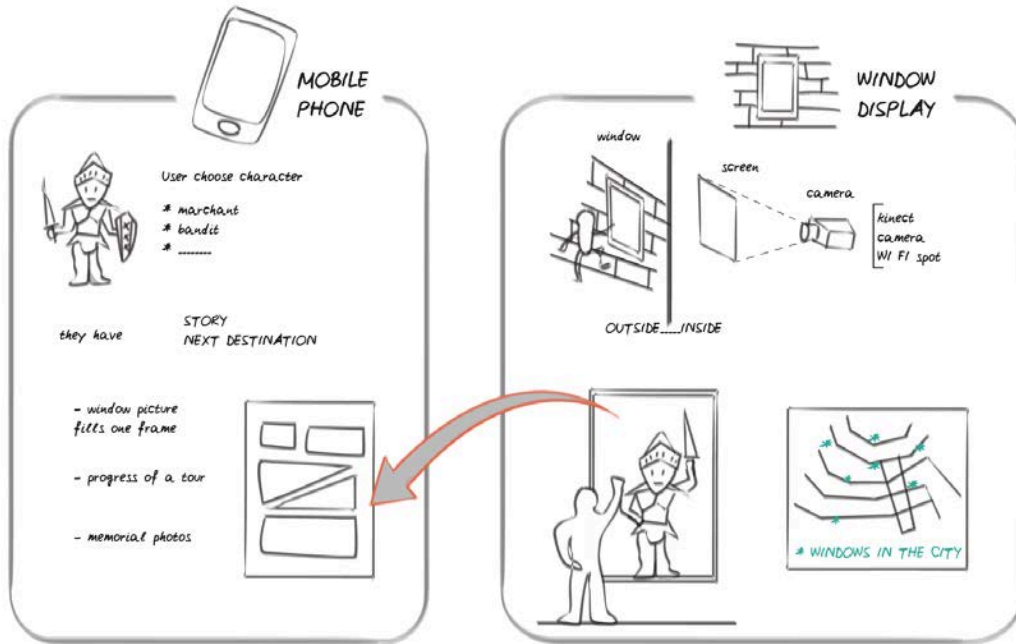**REDUCE HUNDRED IDEAS TO THREE SELECTED CONCEPTS**
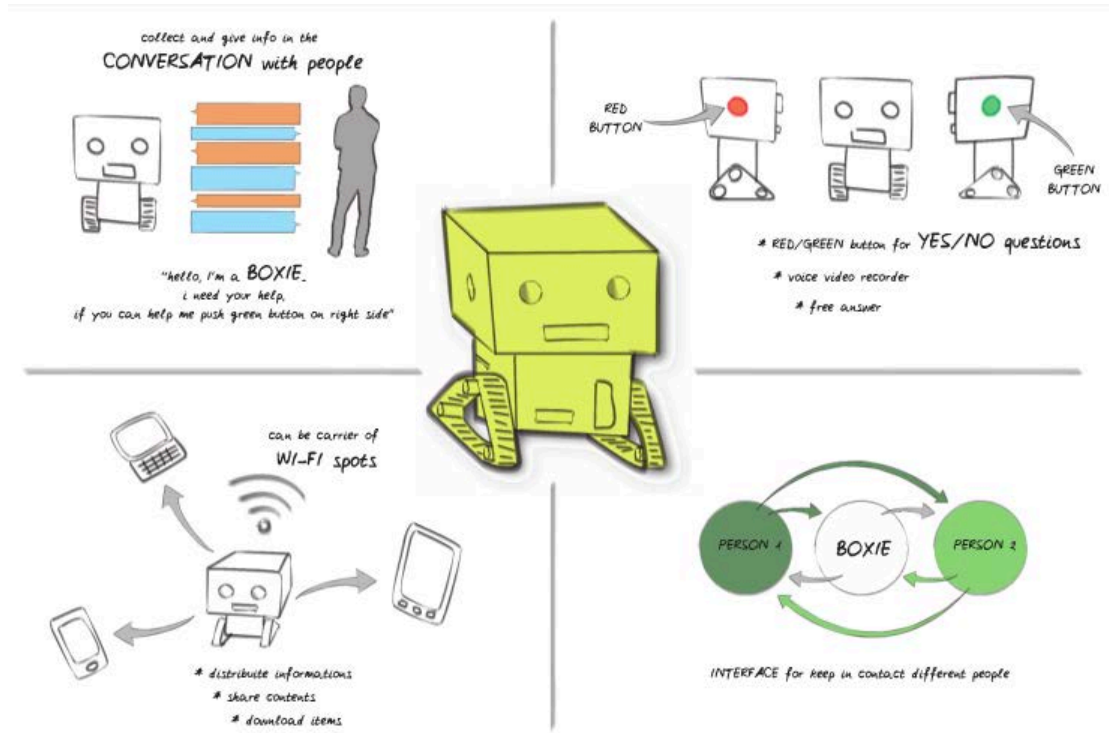
CONCEPT #1 : STORYBOT

A robot / object to gather user experiences and tell stories about history/famous people / places and find a good flow to wrap them together. What it can do :
1. Take a video of the user
2. Take feedback from the user in the form of yes / no questions
3. Make the user do activities, like go to some place, press buttons, act for the camera etc
4. Distribute media using a Piratebox
5. Provide an online platform to share on social media
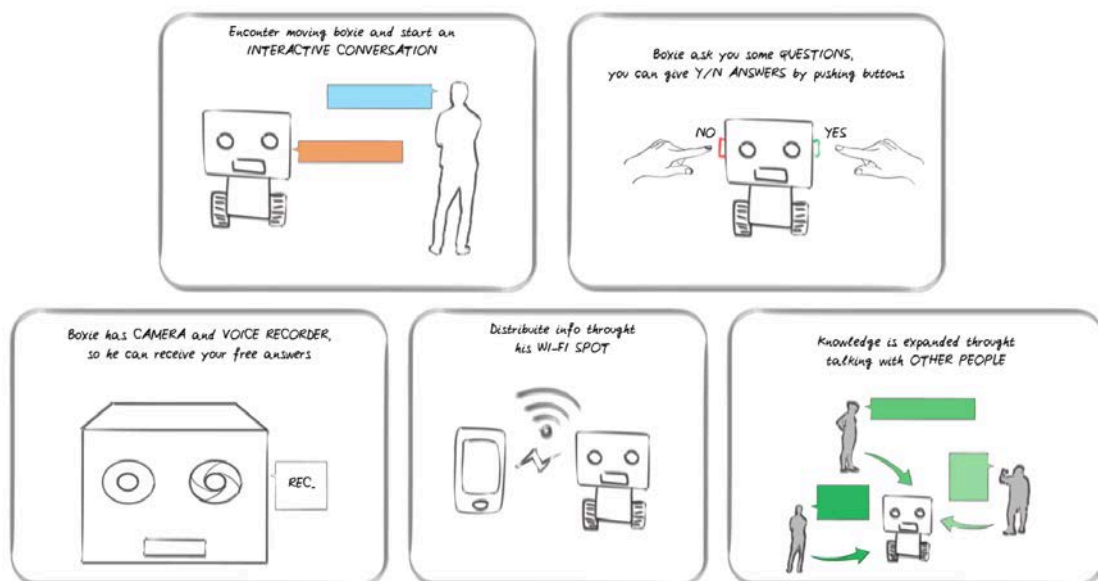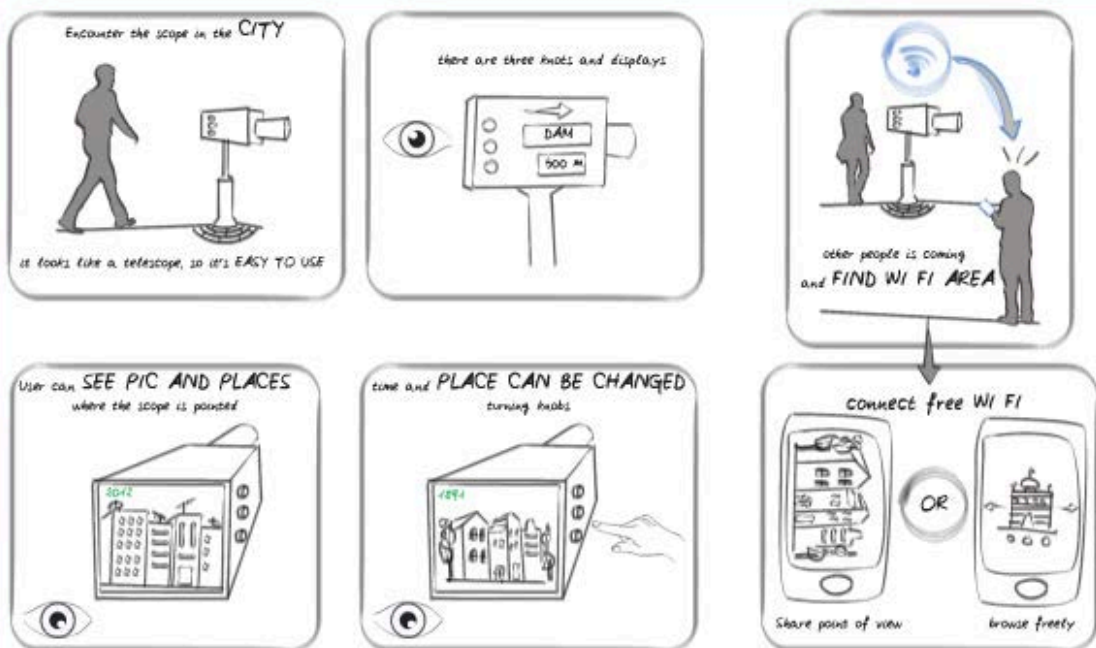
CONCEPT #2: EXPERIENCE THE LIFE IN THE PAST

This idea is a little vague as it offers a very wide range of possibilities, and a lot of ifs and buts. The basic idea is to have an app (and possibly a screen) and then let people have personalized profiles and at the same time showcase some other profiles of famous people so that they can see places in a similar light like they did many years ago. Also, some gameplay can be involved in the form of postcards or maybe comics, so as to keep the audience engaged. It could also be used to give some kind of guided non-linear tour.
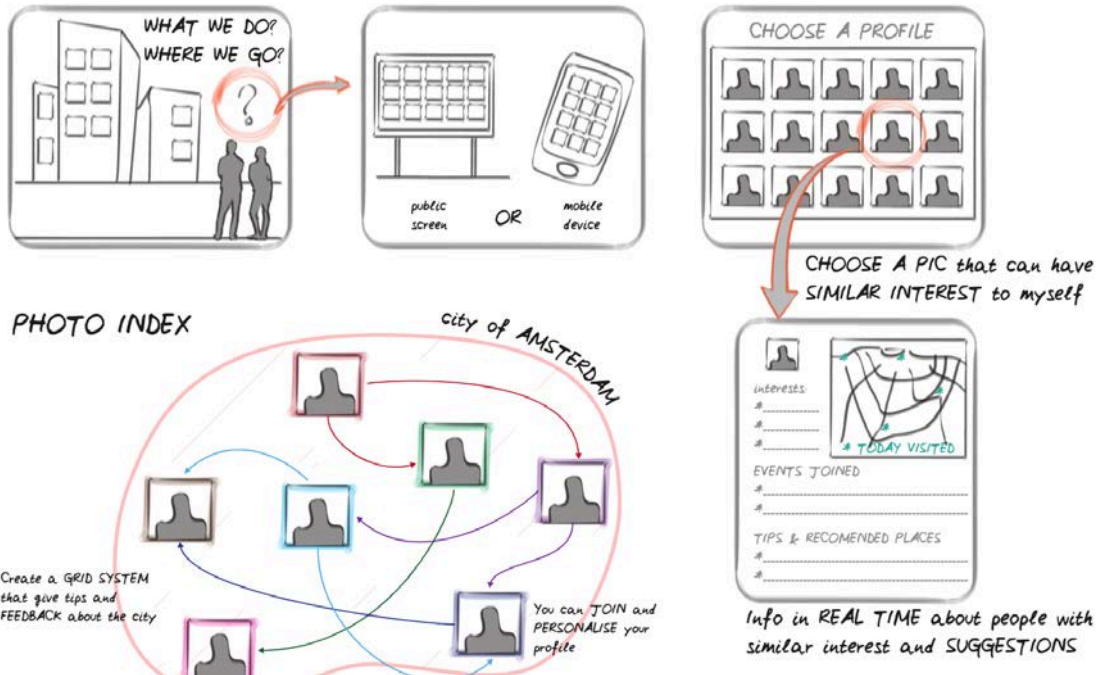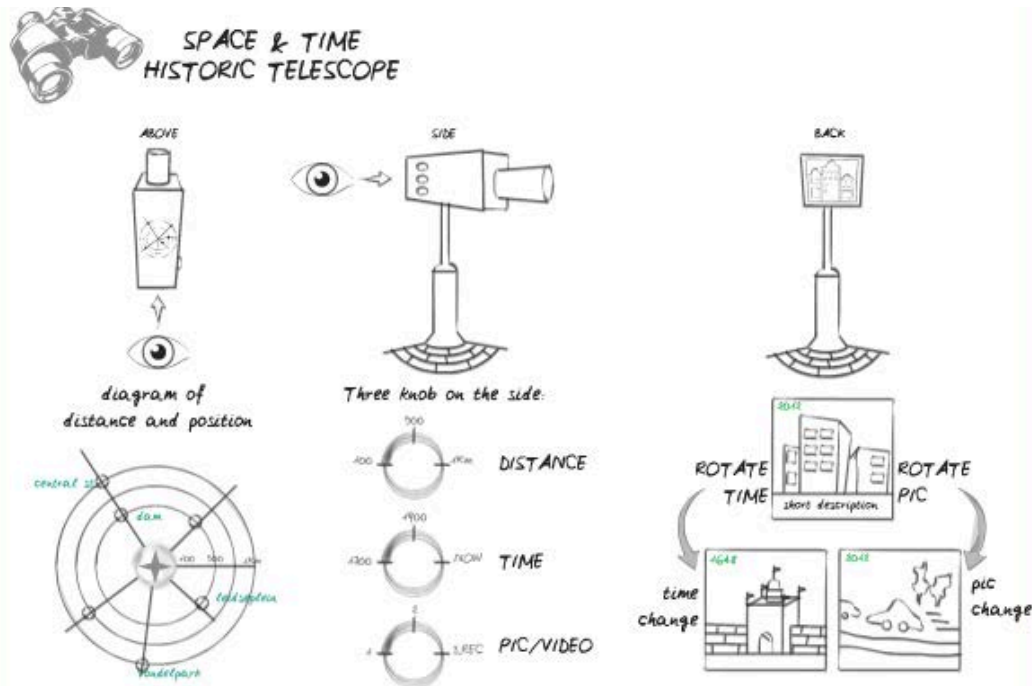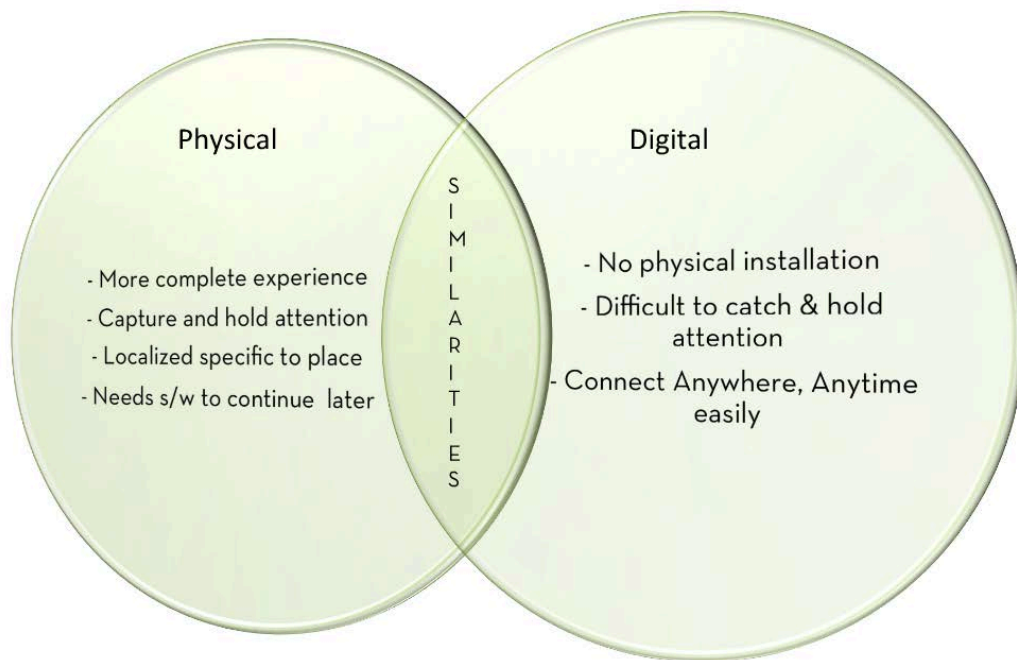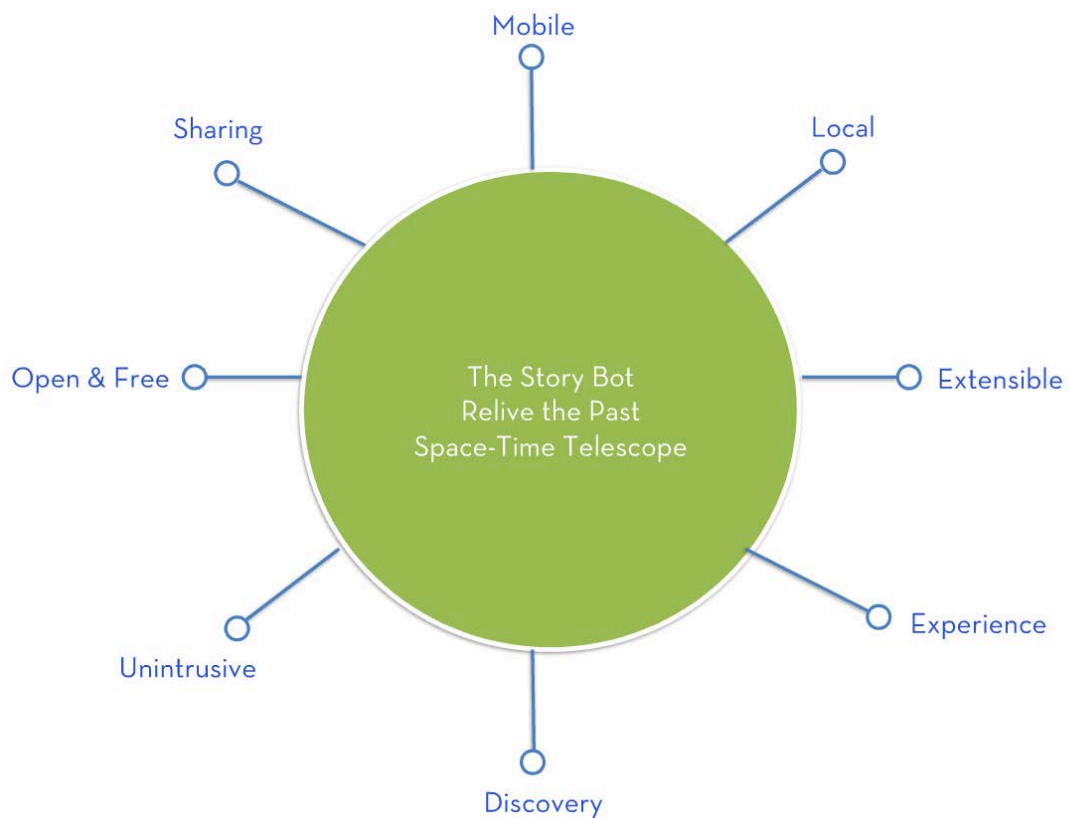
CONCEPT #3: SPACE-TIME TELESCOPE

A telescope is an object is associated with seeing some thing at a distance. This concept explores that it could be used to see far into both space AND time? This concept has a physical object in the form of a telescope, which can be pointed at different locations, like a compass, all the locations which are in the line of sight where the telescope is pointing can be displayed. Controls can be provided in the form of knobs to look nearer or farther along the same line and to look at a different point in time, like a few years before or after. It can also allow you to browse through multiple pictures of a particular point in space and time. This telescope would have a PirateBox (local Wi-Fi) so that people around can see the content too, without the telescope, allowing it to reach more people. The mobile solution can have two modes: one where the phone is used to explore independently, and one where the phone is connected to see what the telescope is displaying. This connection enables discovery using what others are seeing. The user could also download what is on the telescope or share it on Facebook or Twitter.

Physical

- More complete experience
- Capture and hold attention
- Localized specific to place
- Needs s/w to continue later

SIMILARITIES

Digital

- No physical installation
- Difficult to catch & hold attention
- Connect Anywhere, Anytime easily

Above are the differences and below the similarities.

Mobile

Sharing

Local

Open & Free

The Story Bot
Relive the Past
Space-Time Telescope

Extensible

Unintrusive

Experience

Discovery

Design phase

Every aspect of the concept is still flexible and very likely to change as we try to improve the concepts by putting our head together with Stadsdeel Centrum, third parties and the user as much as possible. After the 'go/ no go' decision on the final concept we will proceed to the designing phase. In this phase of two weeks the team shall discuss all possible options and finalize them to design the implementation details of the concept.