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IMS 228 final project

Project name: Dont Fear the Reaper



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Emerging Technology in Business and Design

Introduction

In IMS 228, we were tasked with coming up with a project that could relate to a number of topics discussed throughout the semester. Social commentary, the evolution of media, moving against the grain of society, etc.

When coming up with a project idea, I had a number of choices. Futuristic clothing, commentary on capitalism, or something with scary movies. I landed on the topic of ghosting. Ghosting is when an individual doesn't receive a response from another individual. The reason for receiving this action can vary and is often unknown by the recipient. I have experienced ghosting many times throughout my life, therefore I had a personal connection with this project.

The final decision for the project was to display the responses from people who have been ghosted. The project would be presented in an ARHT hologram.

Goals/Objectives

Before beginning, a number of considerations had to be made for how this project should be presented. The following considerations were made,

- Find a program that can animate the project
- Collect responses
- Find ways to make it entertaining (Music, visuals, etc)
- Consider functions that fully utilize the hologram
- Fulfils requirements for the class

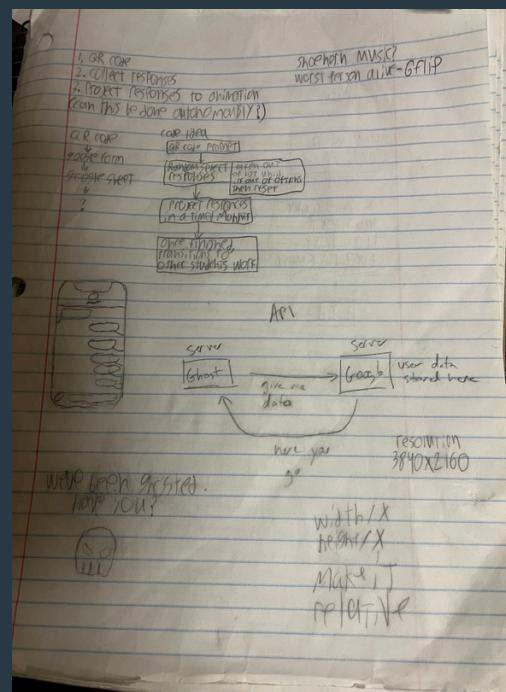
Development of the project

I started the project by developing a Google form that had a single prompt. “If you had the chance to send 1 last text to a person who ghosted you, what would it be?”. The text responses were copied into the main program to be displayed. After discussing the idea of the project, an instructor recommended the programming language P5.js (or P5 as its better known) to complete the project. P5 is a versatile programming language used to create visuals, animations, sounds and motion tracking. P5 was also compatible with displaying on a hologram.

The decision to present the responses was to have it on a phone via a texting app. Having this detail mirrors the ghosting experience as it is often done via digital communication such as texting. Furthermore, some cosmetics was needed in order to have this project stand out. An animated background was added in response as well as music

that relates to the topic. Another element that was considered was the use of P5's face tracking technology. I planned to have the hologram mirror the room with a glitching effect on the borders. When a user is close enough, the hologram will make a digital skull mask and have it display on the face of the user. At the top of the hologram text will appear reading “Were you promised heaven too?”. This was added to have the project be more visually appealing and attempt to connect to the user by asking if they have been ghosted.

Sketch's for the project

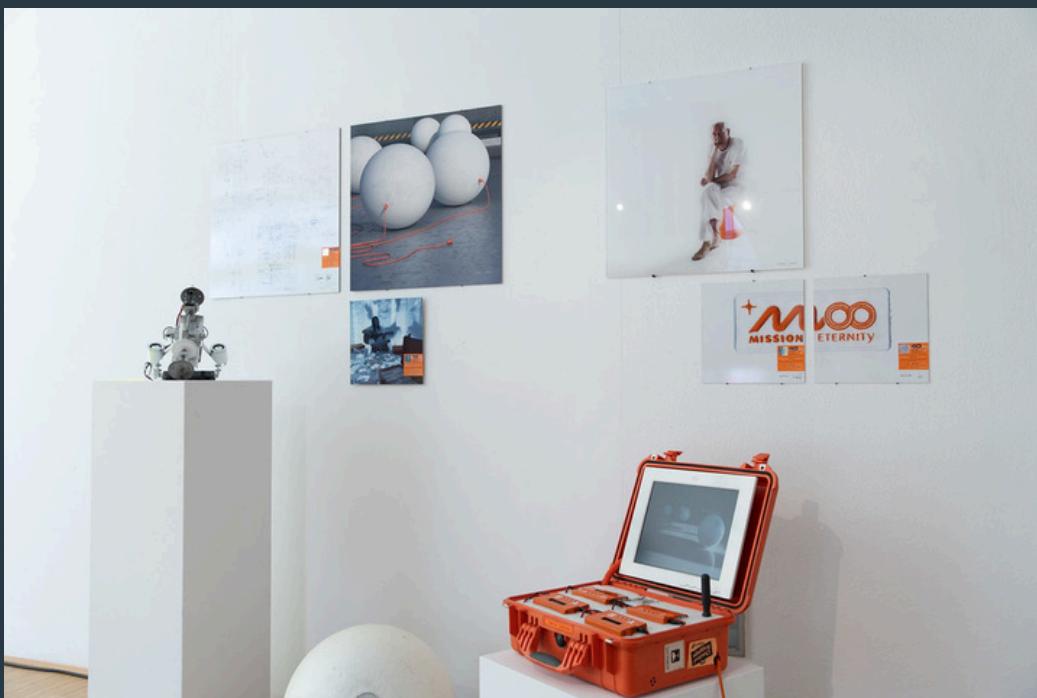


Relations to the class

This project relates to the content of IMS 228 by having social commentary on a contemporary issue. The project is also displayed on a modern phone, showcasing the irony in the nature of ghosting.

This project is reminiscent of Mission: Eternity. Mission: Eternity is a program where a deceased individual is memorialized via physical data. this includes photographs, voice recordings and other forms of digital media. The project preserves a range of data on the topic of ghosting; almost memorializing the effects ghosting has on people.

This project also relates to Le Guin's "The Carrier Bag Theory of Choice" by demonstrating alternative storytelling. According to Le Guin, alternative storytelling is when a story is centered around care and connection rather than heroics. Some of my responses tell stories in a single sentence. A story of betrayal and sadness. For example, a response that was received said "What didn't I have that she did ". This individual showed care for this other person and was left behind for someone else. Based on the other responses received, there are many more stories to be told.



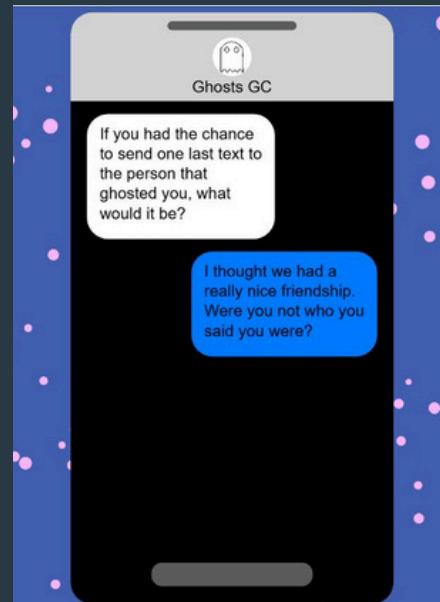
Mission: Eternity

Development of the final result

I started this project by posting QR codes across the McVey Data Science building and across Miami University. I spent evenings on the weekend asking people on Main street to fill out my survey which made up a large number of my responses.

Over the course of 2 months, I developed the program in P5. I started by making the phone and positioning it correctly. I then focused on making the animations for the responses to pop up and adapt based on the environment. Unfortunately, due to the sophistication of animations I needed for my project (i.e. having the text collapse when the bubbles reach a certain height), I used a number of generative AI's to accelerate the development process. When the phone was fully animated, I developed an eye catching background. The final result was bubbles that rise from bottom of the frame and a background that has a shifting gradient.

Some digital designs for this project were done in Adobe Illustrator for simplicity and better flexibility for styling. The biggest example was the start screen background. With illustrator, I was able to make a visually interesting start screen that otherwise wouldn't look the same if it was programmed with P5. For a time, I experimented with the digital skull mask. While the technology worked on my computer, it didn't scale properly during tests on the hologram and was that aspect of the project ultimately not ready for presentation.



Final results

The final result has the main element of the project fully operational. All responses are displayed on a 2D phone and is animated in a manner that reflects a real phone. The prompt was displayed in a message bubble on the left side of the screen and the responses were display on the right as if they were responding in the group chat. Music and an animated background were also included. A selection of rock songs were chosen in order convey the emotions that the people have towards ghosting. A major change was made to the final program. A start screen with a start button was added to execute the program. When the program finishes, it would return to the start screen. Unfortunately due to time restraints, the digital mask element was cut from the final project.

A strength of my project is its unique visuals and full functionality. The program worked as if it were a real phone and I felt it kept peoples attention given the content. A weakness for my project would be the color scheme seen in the start screen an background. I think there could have been a more appropriate color scheme that better represents ghosting.

I'm proud of the final result of my project. I felt as if I was touching on a topic that has not been discussed in depth. People talk about ghosting but never the effects it has on somebody. This project showcases the receiving end of ghosting and the wide range of emotions that come with it.

What I think could have improved is better utilizing the holograms capability. I could have utilized 3D models. I also could have done more with the data I collected. I could have attempted to obtain the statistics of the responses and have them categorized by emotion.

I learned a number of things during this creative journey. First, when I asked people to fill out my survey, some responded with "I have a boyfriend/girlfriend." I found this fascinating in that people automatically assumed ghosting only happens with potential partners and not between friends. I also learned that people have a range of emotions when dealing with ghosting. Based on the results provided, peoples reactions to ghosting varied from sadness to anger; some have even moved on.