

A background image showing a person's hands holding a white smartphone. The person is wearing a white t-shirt and a silver metal-link wristwatch. In the background, a laptop and a pen are visible on a desk. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an indoor office or study environment.

DECO2014

VISUAL REPORT: Smartphone Distraction

Group 60: Anson, Yuki, Danika

HOW PHONE DISTRACTION IS AFFECTING REMOTE WORKERS



The working environment changed after COVID

Since the **outbreak of the pandemic**, people's working environment had changed from office to home. The pressure of being **monitored** has decreased.



Remote workers are distracted by their phones

The result from the context mapping section shows over 80% of participants are suffering from **phone distraction** while working from home. This leads to lower productivity as it is harder to stay focused on their work tasks.

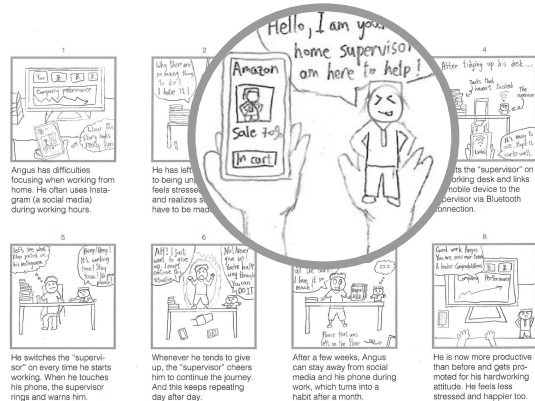


Working hours increase due to low work efficiency

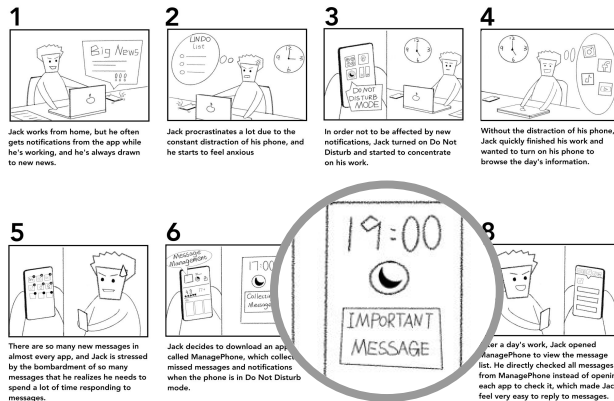
Respondents reported that they took longer to finish their working tasks, which is possibly due to **low productivity**. Longer working hours causes poor work life balance and thus a solution has to be introduced.

01

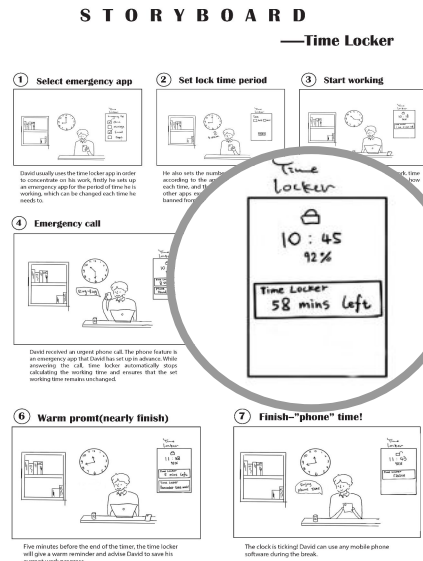
INITIAL IDEAS



A personal monitor that supervises the user when working



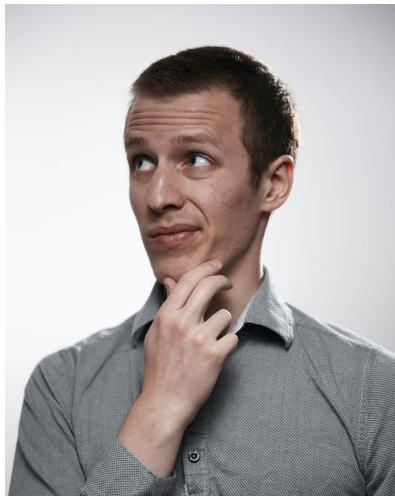
Message filter function that hides unimportant messages when on



Phone locker function that blocks social media app and games

02

IDEA RESEARCH



ANGUS JAMES

"I want to be more productivity and focus, but I can't stop myself from playing mobile games during work."



Obsessive gamer



24



Data analyst



Shanghai, China

GOALS

Motivates me to stay focused when working from home, rather than self-motivated.

NEEDS

I would love to have a game that pushes me to stay concentrated during work, which I can interact and play with afterwards.

Achievements and rewards are important aspects that encourage me to continue with the game.



Flora - Green Focus

Developer: AppFinca Inc.

WHAT IS IT?

Flora - Green Focus is an app that helps people to **manage their time** better and stay away from their smartphone while working. It also **blocks distracting apps** to help users focus on their task.

HOW IT WORKS?

When the user starts the timer, they start **growing a tree**. If they leave the app, the tree will die (Flora, n.d.). This encourages the user to stick to the app and **concentrate** on their work.



STRENGTH

- Users find it to be enjoyable and life changing, their productivities are boosted
- Users love the idea of planting REAL trees
- Users feel motivated as there are different milestones and achievements for them to unlock

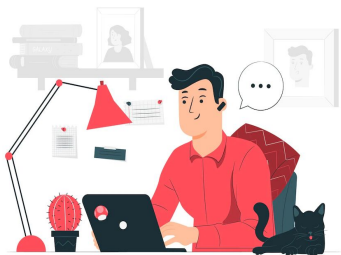


LIMITS

- Users cannot interact with the rewards or their results much (e.g. cannot see the REAL trees)
- The incentive and motivation may not be attractive for everyone

(See Appendix A)

Remote Worker (User)



Productivity



Stress levels

- How to increase my work productivity?
- How to be happy at my work ?
- How to make sure I would not give up the plan of staying focused after a day?
- How to keep myself away from work after working hours?
- How to reduce stress levels after working?

User's Friend



Relationship



Common topic

- How to stay connected with my friend (user) under the pandemic?
- How to show my support to my friend (user) when they are working?
- How to create common topic with my friend (user)?

User's Employer



Company Income



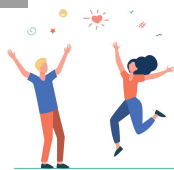
Employees' Loyalty

- How to increase my employees' productivity?
- How to make sure my employees' are focusing on their work tasks?
- How to increase my employees' work enjoyment?
- How to strengthen our relationship?

Implement Achievement System

Cause: Lack of extrinsic motivation

Our initial idea does not implement any features to encourage the users to stay focused and there is no gamification in the design. Users may lose their interest after a few weeks of using. Science Direct (n.d.) supported that gamification increases the engagement of a product, and achievement setting boosts the motivation.



Add Virtual Reality Function

Cause: Lack of interaction for the users

Our initial idea may make the users find no difference is made by the product as they have not much to do with the product. Therefore, we implemented the emerging technology of VR. Users can real time interact with the pet model using the VR function to feed and even play with it. With an increase of interactions, users may feel loved with their pets as well.



Redesign the Monitor Model

Cause: Lack of intrinsic motivation

Our initial idea may be hard for the users to be in love with and no belonging is established through the process of using. So, we turned the monitor model into a pet egg. Through the focusing process, the user can earn food for it and like taking care of a real pet. This cultivates a connection between the users and the “pet” and increases the user’s belonging.

Create Connection Between Users

Cause: No communication feature

Users may find it hard to start when they cannot use their phones during work. Without any help and encouragement from others, they may give up easily. According to Shah (n.d.) a good community can motivate users during hard times. As a result, we re-designed the product to allow users to share their results with friends or the community.

HOW VIRTUAL REALITY HELPS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM



Great Simulation

Acharya (2020) mentioned that VR provides a safe and great simulation. In other words, it can avoid dangers and sad scenario in the VR world.



Looks Real

VR industry is developing rapidly and it offers a more realistic environment, which enhances users' gaming experience (Vinukonda, 2018)



Cost Effective

A set of VR equipment is cheaper than having a real pet (Valamis, n.d.), which would not increase the users' financial stress and pressure.



No Travel Restriction

Pointintimestudios (n.d.) revealed that VR allows people to go places all across the world and even the outer space without limits.



Reduce Stress

Frontiers in Psychiatry (2021) said that if the VR scene is designed with natural setting, it helps the users reduce stress, feel calm and relax.



Egg Shell

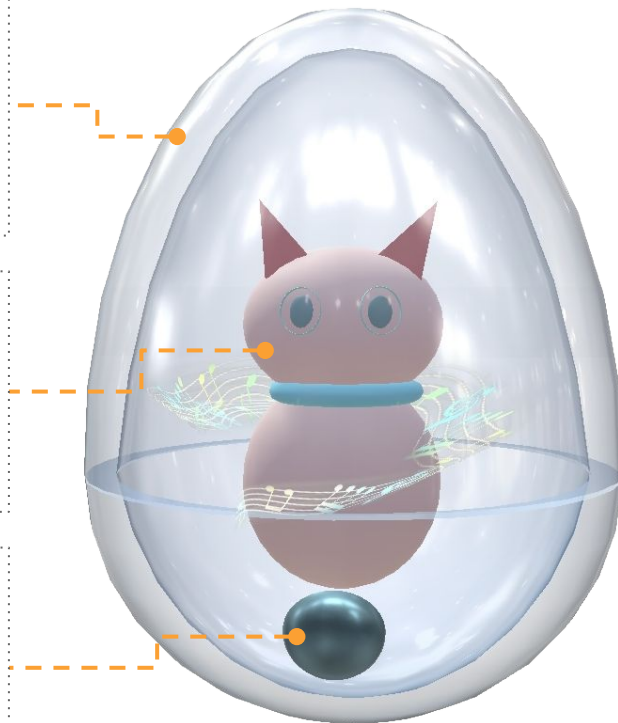
By default, it is not in transparent color. Through the process of users staying focused, it will become transparent, like an egg incubation

Pet Model

Every buyers / users will receive a different pet models, similar to blind box, which raises their curiosity

Button

Hold & Press: Connect to phone via Bluetooth
Press Twice: Connect to VR device via Bluetooth
Press: Start / End "Focus mode"



VR World Current Features

- Purchase pet food
- Purchase pet toys
- Interact with your pet
- Interacting with achievements

VR World Future Features

- More environment background
- Visiting friends home
- Decorating your pet home

HOW DOES THE DESIGN ADDRESS THE PROBLEM

BEFORE WORK



Provides alternative activity for users

People usually check their social media as they wake up because they are afraid of missing out (Khedkar, 2020). However, checking it before work **increases their stress levels**, which leads to poor work performance (Whitley, 2020). Therefore, we encourage the users to interact with their “pets” before work instead of **using social media**.

DURING WORK



Limits users' access to phones

According to the brief, users often **cannot resist themselves from using their phone** when working remotely. Thus, limiting their access to social media and games can stop users from being distracted by their phones directly. With a confirmation dialog to make them reconsider their choice before using them.

AFTER WORK



Mutes work messages for users

Users **feel anxious and stressed** when receiving work messages after work and during their free time. Muting those messages and asking them to feed and interact with their “pets” after work, can help users to switch their focus from work to life. This increases their **work-life balance, work enjoyment and productivity**.

APPENDIX A

X



FishNinja1497, 02/10/2022

My favorite time-keeping app!

So far this is the only time-keeping app that I've stuck with—which is saying something, as I've got severe ADHD and usually can't stick with anything. I like the variety of trees and plants you can grow in-app, it's not annoying so I can run it calmly in my background, and I can adjust the stakes as needed when I really need a kick to focus with the Real Money function. Plus it actually plants trees! I don't particularly like losing money but I'm satisfied that if I "do" mess up my focusing, the money is going to a good cause. And even if I don't mess up at all, I still get to plant trees periodically by focusing for certain amounts of time! It's kind of a win-win.

The subscriptions are essentially identical except you can plant real trees more often, so I don't mind paying for an app like this (I'm on the Basic plan because I'm a student with limited income—monthly it's about \$2 which adds up to around \$20 with the full-year percentage discount, which isn't bad at all). Without the subscription you still have 100% access to the app, it only means you plant more real trees.

All in all, between price, functionality, and environmental ethics, this is the perfect fit for me, and I'd definitely recommend trying it!

X



Tammicalot, 04/04/2022

Helped Keep me focused and Motivated

The timer feature itself was all I was looking for; but soon came to realize there was more. The app is cute and nicely laid out with easy tracking of focus time and break time. Every focus session grows little plants from different locations around the world using the "world tour" feature. This app won't let you leave the app and go do something else or else a tree or plant is "killed" so I bring myself back to focus. But not just digital plants are being grown, with a very small subscription, you can make it so that every focus session allows a real tree somewhere in their many locations worldwide to actually be planted, therefore a huge help to the environment and you get your work done. Generally a great tool. The only thing I think is unfair is you get penalized for canceling a session or pausing the timer. Sometimes, things happen for a while and we are unable to follow through. It could just be a bathroom break, a desperate drink, a call from a co-resident. A pause in the timer or a cancel of a session because you realized a bit late like, "Oh wait, I'm not actually starting work yet. I haven't done this or that. I'll start later." Otherwise it's a good tool and really adorable in design.

X



Boom70388, 05/16/2021

Changed my life

ny time I am trying to study Are use the Flora app and it can be used for anything and you can set reminders and your tree will grow and there's also a premium where you can actually plant real trees it's amazing and also this is how your tree grows you set a timer the lowest setting is five minutes and it goes all the way to ours so you can pick hours and minutes then if you go and open any other app then your tree will die and if you pause then your thing may not look at sk it goes all the way to ours so you can pick hours and minutes then if you go and open any other app then your tree will die also Florida is the best app you can friend people and you can grow trees together it's amazing I love this app so much but you do need to login with either Google Facebook or email but if you don't wanna spend any money then you don't have to it's a free amazing app all the sponsoring Youtubers and stuff they were right everything they said was right by the way this review is not sponsored

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Effy_wolf, 05/30/2018

Couple bugs

Pros: really does help me and my sister to focus on our work together and overall a really helpful app with lots of nice features. The all around the world feature is by far my favourite as well as the group planting aspect. Very helpful app overall if you just want to get off you phone.

Cons: there are a couple bugs which I feel need to be addressed. One is that sometimes when logging in with Facebook it'll say the login isn't associated with an account but opening the page in safari seems to let you log in as normal. Another con is the fact that it's Facebook only but I understand that the team is looking at adding more options soon so it's not that big a deal. Just a small feature I would like is for me to see on my lock screen the time remaining as a notification so that I don't have to unlock my phone but that's just a nitpick.

Overall: the app works great and gets the job done. Obviously there are downsides which many people see as having a big impact, but personally if you don't mind using an old Facebook or making a throwaway one, it helps a lot and I would highly recommend.

X



jMAOO, 01/06/2021

Effective and fun!

I've used many different productivity timer type apps and even some that lock me out of my phone for the duration. I've stopped using all of those because it was either too restrictive or too lax. Flora is the perfect happy medium - no one wants to kill a tree even if it's a cartoon one! That alone seems to motivate me enough to not switch to any other app on my phone during a timed session, unless I absolutely have to take a call or something. I like that I can be flexible in the work time I choose, so as to not stick to rigid time intervals such as pomodoro timers. And it's just so pleasant to "travel" around the world and plant different things. I have also opted to pay for the "plant a real tree" option for a certain number of hours worked. That's so creative and inspiring! Thanks for designing an awesome app. I wish there was a short pause function instead of all or nothing with killing the tree, but this is minor and not worth taking any stars off for.

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