Developing a framework to humanize technology mediated interaction

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When do we humanize online interaction and how do we do so?

The research subject

When building online systems, designers have to make many decisions that impact user experience. One of said choices is when and how to humanize interaction. Making the right decision has increased in importance as more of our interactions are taking place online. The aim of this thesis is to discover if guidelines can be developed to facilitate designers when making these decisions

The challenge

Research is conducted by taking a new dating app called Breeze as a use case. This dating app is different compared to existing dating apps because it does not allow matches to chat, but automates the date arrangement process. The app faces the problem that many of the dates get canceled because users stop responding during the date arrangement process. User research reveals that, by having limited online interaction, this process has become impersonal, anonymous and inflexible which makes it easy to dehumanize your match. Dehumanization leads to loss of commitment when arranging the date.

The theory

Dehumanization is inevitable when interaction is mediated by technology. It can be mitigated by humanizing interaction. However simply humanizing interaction is not the solution because, apart from its advantages it too has disadvantages. The ideal balance between dehumanization and humanization depends on the type of platform in question.

The solution

Through conducting two Build-Measure-Learn loops, this thesis finds that the ideal balance does not only differ between platforms but also differs within the customer journey of one platform. Within each step of the journey, users have different interaction needs. Additionally the companies that build these systems also have (conflicting) needs, which depend on their strategy and available resources.

In order to find this ideal balance between humanization and dehumanization, this thesis proposes the Framework for humanized interaction. This framework is validated through conducting expert interviews, a pilot with an external company and by applying it to the use case. The latter results in new concepts and recommendations suitable for implementation by Breeze.

Marco van der Woude Humanizing Algorithmic Matching in an Online Dating App

September 11th 2020

MSc. Strategic Product Design

Goal Phase Steps Approach Build Interaction map of all relevant stakeholders Two canvasses were developed in collaboration with Breeze users and experts. These were validated within multiple rounds in order to suit the needs of UX/UI designers. 2.Select the stakeholders and interactions you wish to focus on Canvas 1 can be used to create the stakeholder map and Interaction profiles. These are meant to sensitize and expose potential interaction conflicts. Canvas 2 is used to create a vision for 3. Create Interaction profiles of the chosen humanized interaction and translate that into the Create the Humanization journey. Here current and desired stakeholders boundaries levels of humanization are mapped out. Create in which new humanized concepts will be design space developed. 4. Create vision for humanized interaction 5. Determine discrepancy between user's interaction expectations and current scenario. 0 the company has promount that company that company the company that company the company that company per the company part have purely p Opportunities 6. Ideate solutions based on vision and interaction map Ideation can be done by using well known Ideate Diverge and create ideation techniques like asking "How-Might-We' many possible solutions. humanized solutions 6. Ideate solutions based on vision and interaction map Cluster the chosen Select ideas based on perceived Impact, solutions and translate Confidence and Ease of implementation and **Build concepts** into concepts. synthesize into testable concepts. 4. Test concepts on fit with Test impact & Test solutions through interviews, usability tests, Humanized journey and surveys or observations. fit with design hypothesized impact. space

