
4

10x10

Place, Space, and the Mobile Interface

— Claudia Bernett
User Experience Lead

Turn Me On, Touch Me Everywhere

Marshall McLuhan famously said, “First we shape our tools, thereafter they shape us.” The way we live is being dramatically reshaped by our mobile devices. What are the implications and opportunities for brands in this new untethered, hyper-connected world?

Method

Place, Space, and the Mobile Interface

— Claudia Bennett, User Experience Lead

Changing the World

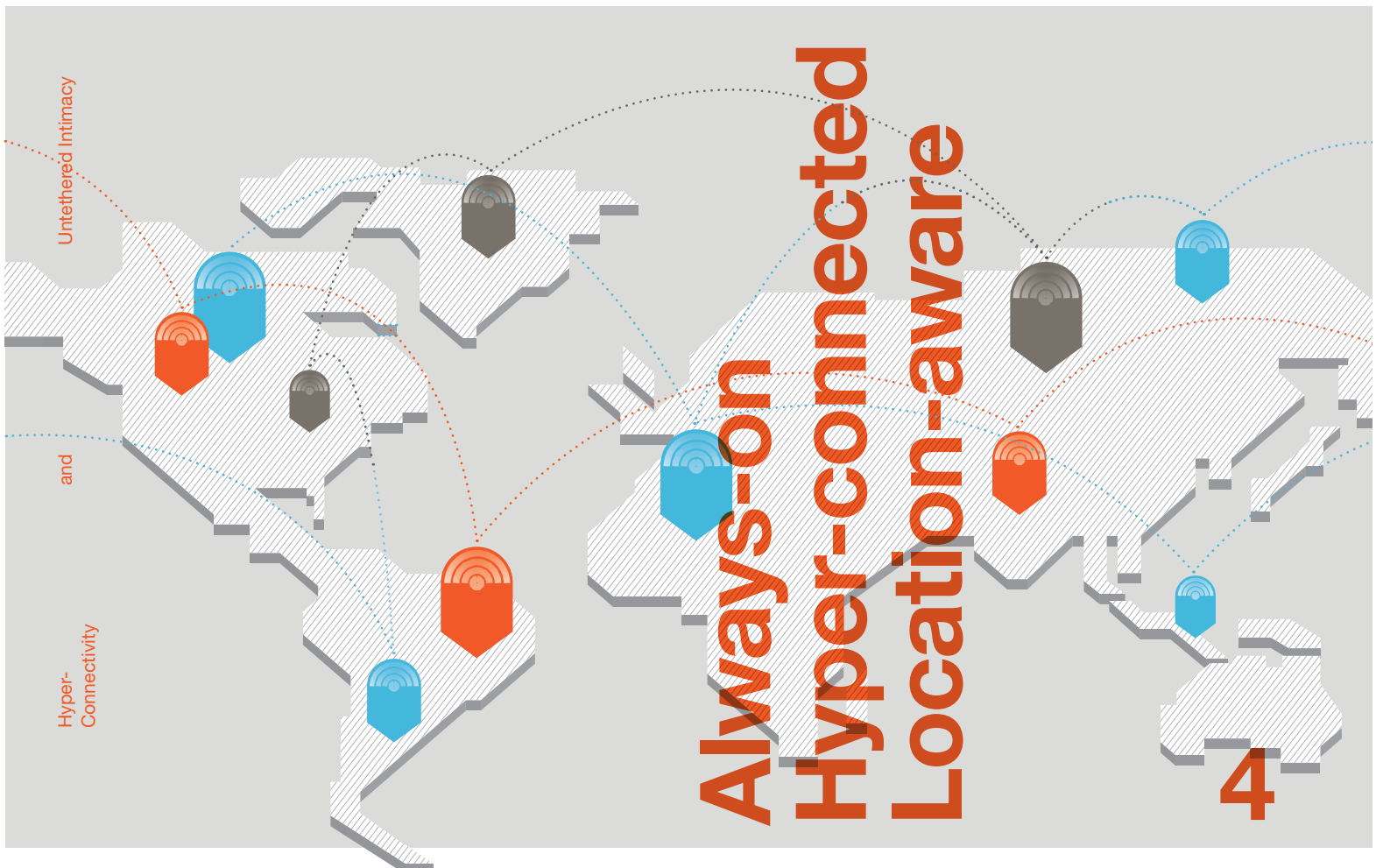
Mobile devices are changing the way we live. They have sparked a revolution in digital tools and toys, and are shaping our perception of and behavior in the world. They are always-on, hyper-connected digital extensions of ourselves that create a new landscape rich with opportunity for brands. Mobile experiences impact the way we work and live, and can help brands establish lasting, meaningful relationships with consumers.

A Trusted Confidante

We have an intimate relationship with our mobile devices. Until recently, our phones and computers were bound to locations by the wires that connected them. To communicate remotely and instantaneously—call a friend, search the web—required a connection with a place. Today, our phones and computers are converging into untethered, location-aware devices that are taking on ever more diverse roles while keeping us constantly connected to the world.

We rely on our mobile devices to facilitate the most fundamental of our daily activities. We use them to communicate via phone, text, and email. They act as our personal assistants and trainers, our music players and day planners. They are our cameras and photo albums. Increasingly, we use them to play games and watch video, TV, and even feature films.

Our mobile devices track our own activities and achieve our goals. Mobile applications such as iLose help us reach weight-loss goals by tracking what we eat, while the Mint mobile application allows us to manage our finances by tracking our spending on-the-go. The Nike+ experience combines shoe sensors, the iPod, and a web application to create a multi-dimensional running experience that motivates new and seasoned runners alike. We are leveraging our mobile devices to proactively change our own behavior.



“What we’re experiencing is a reversal of the early trajectory of civilization: We are evolving from being cultivators of personal knowledge to being hunters and gatherers in the electronic data forest.”

— Nicholas Carr
Author, *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*

The More They Do, The More We Change

In one of the biggest shifts, the mobile device is poised to replace the wallet. Our wallets hold the things most dear to us, and mobile experiences are beginning to replicate their role by emulating transit passes, enabling banking transactions, acting as identification, and even opening doors. We’ve begun carrying boarding passes on them, and New York’s transit system recently began a contactless payment trial for PayPass equipped credit cards and mobile phones.

We pay bills, transfer money, and view account statements via mobile. We can make and receive payments with a touch, or bump, of our device—the PayPal mobile application enables sending money directly to our list of contacts. And startups like Square have developed credit card scanners that connect to the phone, enabling anyone with a device and application to accept credit card payments.

They also help us to save. Applications like ShopSavvy instantly compare retailers’ prices, and Target’s mobile coupon program offers exclusive savings. In a new study by economists at Dartmouth, results show that mobile reminders helped people increase their savings balances by 6%.

The more our mobile devices do, the more we regard them as a trusted confidante and rely on them for our most important activities and experiences. This opens a new door through which brands can connect with consumers. By creating meaningful mobile experiences that intersect with consumers’ daily lives, brands can establish deeper, longer-lasting relationships with consumers than was previously possible.

This Must Be The Place

Our devices are also impacting our relationship to place and space. Mobile maps tell us where we are, how to get where we’re going, and even which way we’re facing. As a result, we are planning less, and improvising more. And we are capturing, sharing, and viewing location-based content along the way. Location—knowing it, using it, sharing it - is quickly becoming central to most mobile applications, and represents a huge opportunity for brand presence.

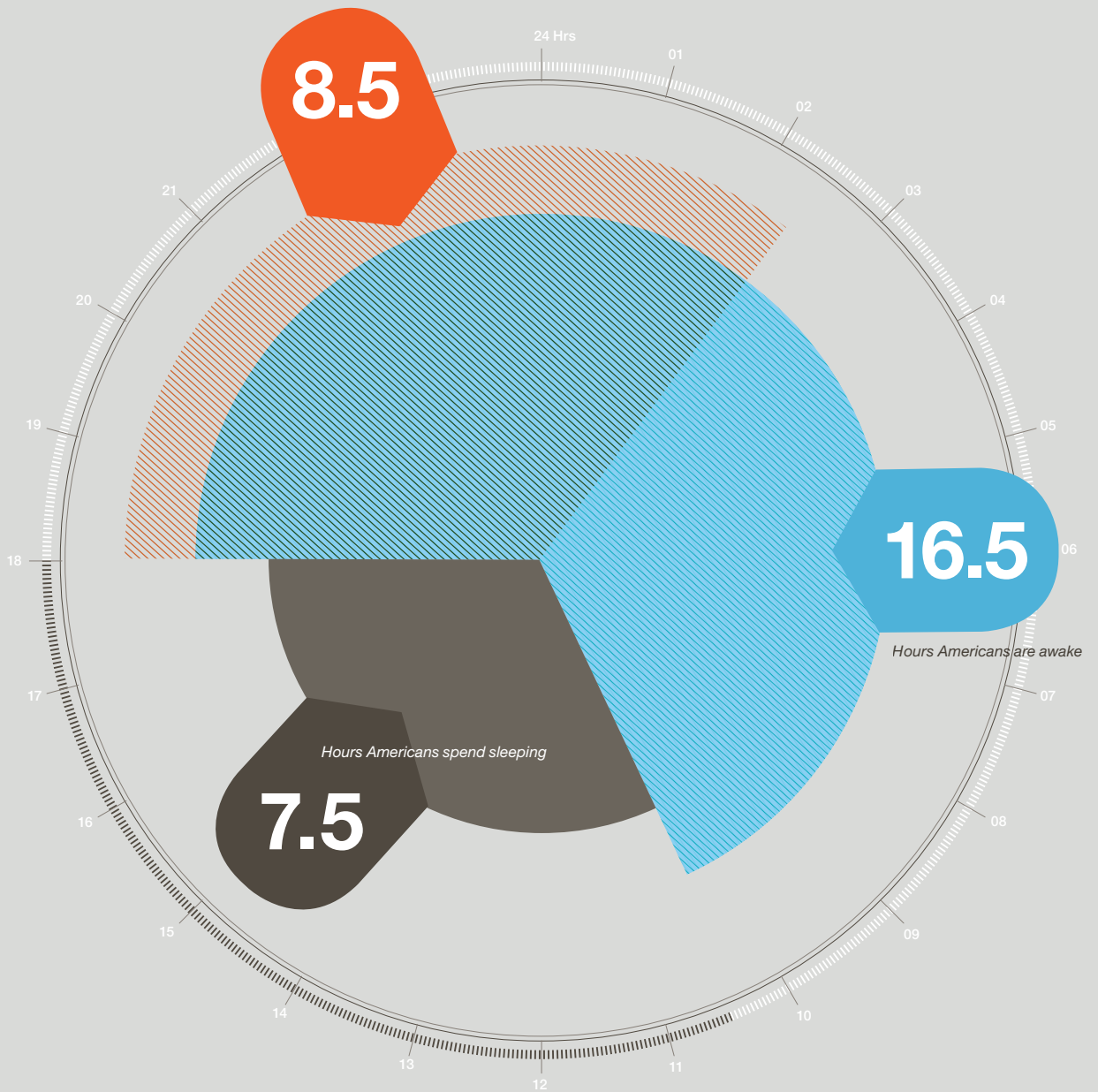
Our mobile devices enhance our experience with places. Local mobile search helps us find what we need nearby—1/3 of Google searches are for local information. Applications such as Yelp, with 26 million users, also tell us what people think of it. Augmented Reality applications overlay information about the world on our device’s view of it, revealing what can’t be seen. TwittAround displays nearby tweets and their origins, and Layar is a mobile browser that can overlay content from Yelp, Wikipedia, Google, and more on our view of the world.

Small businesses are both the drivers and beneficiaries of location-based mobile innovation. New gourmet food trucks are drawing crowds by announcing their current locations via Twitter, and local businesses are using Foursquare Mayor incentives to encourage customer loyalty. Google created a mobile coupon service for retailers in 2009, and analysts project that location-based mobile spending will top \$4 billion in 2014. Small and large businesses alike have an opportunity to connect with consumers by providing services and experiences that help them connect with brands through location.

Average daily device usage in America

/24^{Hrs}

Hours Americans spend on PCs, TVs, and smartphones



Tethered

vs

Mobile



Communication

Only receiving phonecalls at home.

25%

Landlines are proving archaic, with 25% of phone-owning American households only using mobile phones in 2010.

Entertainment

Watching shows and movies on TV or playing games on a console.

70% / 50%

Mobile subscribers watching video on mobile phones has increased 70% from 2008 to 2009. Games make up more than 50% of the billion downloads from the Apple App Store.

Networking

Catching up with friends and meeting new people.

400 Million

Facebook alone has over 400 million active users worldwide. An average of 50 million tweets are sent per day.

Discovery

Calling a friend for a recommendation or directions.

1 in 5

In May, 2010, about 1 call every 5 seconds to a business resulted from the Yelp iPhone App, and 1 million people got directions to local businesses using Yelp for mobile.

Mobile

vs

Tethered

“When people want to find a place to go out to dinner, they’re not searching they’re going into Yelp, they’re using apps to get to data on the internet.”

— Steve Jobs
Chairman and CEO of Apple Inc.

Let’s Get Physical

Our mobile devices are dimensional and sensitive—they come alive with interaction. The touch screen restores a tactile satisfaction we had lost in a world of pointing devices. We can zoom, rotate, and scroll with the touch of our fingers, physically manipulating our mobile experiences. Advertisers on the iPad are witnessing the relish for this tactile experience—click through rates are reported at 6 times higher than expected for the web.

We can also tilt, rotate, shake, and even speak to interact with our devices. Springing from this well are virtual experiences that invoke the physical—playing musical instruments, flipping pages, and drawing pictures. Ocarina transforms the iPhone into a flute, and numerous eBook applications respond to the swipe of a finger to flip a page. A May New Yorker magazine cover was created using the Brushes mobile application. The interaction possibilities of our mobile devices reinforce our comfort and trust in them, paving the way to richer mobile brand experiences.

Reach Out and Actually Touch Someone

More and more, in this new tactile, location-aware context, we are connecting with each other in the physical world via virtual means. Text messages are a primary mechanism for coordinating meetings. Mobile social applications like Loopt allow us to broadcast location-specific activities to our friends, alerting them when we are nearby. Loopt dating offshoot Loopt Mix connects the single, available, and nearby in real-time.

Foursquare uses a game-like check-in and reward system to connect people with locations and, as a result, to each other. All of this reflects a shifting social context, where virtual communication results in real-world connections.

Opportunities for brands abound in this new context of mobile social media. Recently, world-renowned footwear brand Jimmy Choo organized a real-time treasure hunt around London using Foursquare. The state of Pennsylvania is using Foursquare to guide tourists to state highlights. The spontaneity and serendipity that is introduced into our lives by mobile experiences presents brands with opportunities to connect with consumers in unexpected ways.

New School Tools

Marshall McLuhan famously said, “First we shape our tools, thereafter they shape us.” Our mobile devices are shaping us today. The convergence of location-awareness, mobility, and physicality is changing the way we live, and forever altering both the digital and physical landscapes. Mobile experiences are no longer afterthoughts or extensions—they are at the center of our lives. And, they must be at the center of brand experiences in the 21st century. Those brands that create meaningful mobile experiences that connect with consumers will be those that stay relevant in this rapidly changing world.

This is the
Fourth Issue

next

Mind the Gap

More to Come

4

Place, Space, and the Mobile Interface

By Claudia Bennett, User Experience Lead

About the Author

Claudia is a User Experience Lead in Method's New York studio. She collaborates with visual designers, technologists, and strategists to craft interactive experiences that cross platforms and media, and impact culture and behavior, for clients such as Comcast, Nokia, and AOL.

About 10x10

2010 marks Method's 10 year anniversary, and we are only looking forward. Written by our own industry leaders, we are launching the 10x10 series, which will focus on game changing topics that will fundamentally impact today's brands and their search for new revenue streams.

- 1 **Cable's Lost Generation**
- 2 **Unlocking the Infinite Library**
- 3 **Entertain Me Now**
- 4 **Place, Space and the Mobile Interface**
- 5 **Mind the Gap**
- 6 **Parenting 101**
- 7 **The Consumer as King(pin)**
- 8 **Wrap It, Pack It, and Stack It**
- 9 **Power to the People**
- 10 **Welcome to the Metaverse**

10x10

About Method

Method is a brand experience agency with offices based in San Francisco, New York and London. Our clients are best described as owners of progressive, era defining brands, and include Google, Comcast, Nordstrom, Sony, Samsung, Nokia, Microsoft, Time Warner, Intel, and BBC. Collaboratively, we help them create products, services and businesses that are smart, beautiful and extendable.

For more information visit www.method.com.

Method

Locations

San Francisco
New York
London

Contact

Lindsay Liu
Marketing Manager
lindsay@method.com
646.825.5242