SMART PHONES AND THEIR USERS

Are they overwhelmed by the Smartness of these Devices?

MASTER THESIS

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Abstract

There have been a number of studies concerning the access and usage patterns of mobile phones since the first cellular phone appeared in 1979. With the appearance of the smart phone a recent field of research emerges within media and communication. This study focuses on what role a particular smart phone plays within the users’ communication practices. Combining individuality and mobility with communication, the iPhone changes the users’ way of communication completely. In addition to that, the use of the iPhone comprises self-representational characteristics. The study aims to research what role the user ascribes to the iPhone.

A field observation of iPhone users combined with qualitative focus group interviews will present more insight in how the iPhone maintains the users’ interpersonal relationships and fulfills their communication motives. The field observation might bear some general aspects about usage patterns of the iPhone, especially in public spaces. Supplementing the field observation, the focus group interviews will give some information about personal usage patterns and about the iPhone’s status within individual perceptions.

The use of smart phones like the iPhone influences the user’s ways of communication in positive as well as in negative ways. A constant access to various networks establishes a permanent availability, which entails major changes in the users’ way of communication and the users’ perception of time and space. In addition to that, the design and look of the gadget is a main appeal for iPhone users. Here the smart phone turns out to be an accessory with which people make statements to their surrounding. These statements can be of different nature. They can be based on image, fashion or design conscious in the user’s perception. This study intends to bring up new topics about the relationship between a technical device and its user.
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1. Introduction

The use of mobile phones has become integral to our daily lives. Communication without mobile phones is something that is hard to imagine for many people nowadays. This leads to mobile communication being a continuously growing field of research within media and communication studies.

With the appearance of the iPhone the regular mobile phone turns into a medium that one could describe as multifunctional technical device – or simply ‘smart phone’. One could define a smart phone as a multifunctional cell phone whose functions go beyond voice communication and text-messaging capabilities. The iPhone is such a device, designed and merchandised by Apple Inc. In the first place, the iPhone is a mobile phone with the 'standard' functions of a mobile phone (voice call, SMS). The iPhone enables the user not only to access the Internet everywhere (with e-mail, web browsing and Wi-Fi connectivity), but it also functions as a camera and a media player. Offering all these functions, the iPhone is a very interesting medium that leads into a research field within mobile communications. The advertising slogan: “iPhone. Your life in your pocket. The ultimate digital device” is already exemplifying the assumption that the iPhone is always with the user and ready to use at any time. Combining personality and mobility with communication, the iPhone changes the way of communication in establishing different ways of connection. One the one hand, it builds up a connection between the user and his network and, on the other hand, it connects the user to the technological item itself.

This study aims at researching what role the iPhone plays within the users’ communication practices. A field observation of iPhone users combined with qualitative focus group interviews presents more insight in how the iPhone maintains the users’ interpersonal relationships and fulfils her or his communication motives. Reflecting the topic from user’s perspective, one can also ask: "What role does the user ascribe to the iPhone?"

Chapter 2 of this thesis provides an overview of studies focusing on impacts of mobile communication on society. The proliferation of mobile communication redefines the terms time and space. Using mobile technology communication takes place in a new time and space context, especially the time being "available" or "online" together with the location, where the user is available (e.g. at the working
place, the private sphere, etc.). As a consequence, mobile communication devices modify the communication process and with it its circumstances. Most of the studies that have been conducted within mobile communication research focus on a 'standard' cell phone as object of research. Up to now, smart phones have been explored in the field of computer science or within studies about customer satisfaction. Little research has been done with smart phones in the field of media and communication. Therefore, I try to position the smart phone within the field of mobile communication devices. This topic is addressed in section 2.4. Characterizing a smart phone as "wearable computer" might provide a basis to establish a distinction between mobile and smart phones. The definition of a so-called "wearable computer" is addressed in paragraph 2.5, while the differences between cell and smart phones are subsequently discussed in section 2.6. Section 2.7 introduces negative aspects that are attended by the use of smart phones. In the following chapter 3, the research questions of the present study on iPhones are presented. The next chapter 4 describes the two methods applied within this study, closing with the discussion about the possibilities and drawbacks of these methods. A presentation and discussion of the findings follow in chapter 5 of the thesis. Two main topics are discussed: personalisation of the iPhone and connectivity. The iPhone’s personalisation concerning the internal aspects of the device as well as the external adjustments that can be added form the first section of chapter 5. Further in this chapter I describe two different ways of connection. On the one hand, I comment on the access to the user’s network that the smart phone offers its user every time and everywhere. On the other hand, I want to point out the connection the user has to the device itself. Both aspects - personalisation and connection - bear positive as well as negative issues. In addition to that there are differences between men and women regarding the user-device relationship. This issue is addressed in section 5.3. Finally, the possibilities and the drawbacks of the methods applied in this study are discussed. Within the conclusion in chapter 6, the main findings that emerged from the study will be summarized and possible topics for forthcoming research studies are suggested.
2. Theory of Wireless Communication and its Effects

“People are going to stop carrying around things like laptops. More and more devices are going to fit in your pocket. People will discover that their mobile can handle video, work like a Palm Pilot and be a phone. It's much more powerful than what they have at home. And what will we call these new non-phones? We're calling them communicators”. Jan Uddenfeldt, chief technology officer at Ericsson (2000 for the Scientist).

Current information technology aims at developing devices, which merge many functions in one gadget, e.g. the "living house" control, which steers not only heating and house security systems, but also monitors the contents of the refrigerator and other house keeping devices, or car navigation technology, which implements information on traffic jams or car maintenance schedules, or, last but not least, cell phones: “The cell phone is currently the leading example of such a device, and is also the best example in history” (Levinson 2005:9).

We start with the personal computer, which appeared in the 1980s and drew a lot of attention. Once it was connected with the Internet, it became “one of the most integrated and integrating media in human history” (Levinson 2005:11). Reading newspapers, books or magazines, listening to radio, watching television or talking to another person via messenger, the Internet combines all forms of media in one. With the appearance of the notebook the user could move and still use the computer and the Internet whenever needed. The freedom in movement was still restricted by the size of the notebook, its limited battery charge and the need of network or telephone cables to connect to the transportable computer. After the introduction of wireless networks for cell phone the latter restriction was overcome. The cell phone already represents a device, which combines several means of communication. But, although Gerard Goggin calls it “a networked communication device” the mobile phone is first and foremost designed for voice calls and the computer mainly to use the Internet (2006:8). In this respect, the smart phone unifies the notebook and the mobile phone.

There is still no clear distinction between a cell phone and a smart phone, but in general, a smart phone is a multifunctional cell phone that provides not only voice communication and text-messaging capabilities. While cell phones transmit digitalized voice only or text as SMS, smart phones can access and process any data type transferred via the Internet. Thus, it can offer e.g. graphical interfaces. Furthermore, together with the wireless technology used, it is also possible to locate the smart phone position in the world (which is as well possible for a cell phone) and
transmit this information to the user (a function which ordinary cell phones do not provide). Since the smart phone is the result of continuous development in communication technology, “old and new media coexist and are embedded in each other, at the same time as they balance between ‘no longer’ and ‘not yet’ in time and space” (Fornäs, et al.2007:51). Old media will always be a guide for producing new media. So are the mobile phone and the notebook prototypes for the smart phone. It is ‘no longer’ a cell phone and ‘not yet’ a notebook. Jay David Bolter and Richard Gusin call the recurring process of imitating old media, trying to improve them, to finally design a new gadget, ‘remediation’ (1999:55).

The Internet connects personal computers, mobile phones, notebooks, smart phones and many other technical devices that have an Internet access with each other. Thereby wireless communication becomes a more and more integrated part of the daily routine. “Mobile machines are found in most places where people move (Fornäs, et al.2007:112). When investigating the social impact of mobile technical devices it is obvious that they influence the society and the individuals’ communication behaviour in a considerable fashion. Mobile telephones have become an accepted part of our social life, a fact that applies to almost all parts of the world. In the context of Manuel Castells’ research on personal portable communication gadgets reflecting the worldwide use of such devices, the term ‘network society’ was introduced. The term describes a society, in which social and media networks shape not only the main modes of organisation, but also the most important structures. With the development of mobile communication technology Castells’ ‘network society’ became a ‘mobile network society’. The idea behind this term is a theoretical framework that deepens the network society with the help of wireless communication (Castells 2006:245). Next to Manuel Castells, Gerard Goggin (2007) uses a similar term to describe the involvement of mobile communication technologies in our everyday practices. His study focuses on cultural dimensions of mobile phones around the world. Stating that mobile technology plays an inalienable role in the users everyday life, Goggin believes that various cultural activities are nowadays tied together with the use of mobile communication technologies: “staying in constant contact, text messaging, fashion, identity-construction, music, mundane daily work routines, remote parenting, interacting with television programs, watching videos, surfing the Internet, meeting new people, dating, flirting, loving, bullying, mobile commerce and locating people”. For him, technical gadgets like mobile phones
“come to be associated with qualities of mobility, portability and customisation”. The devices offer new ways of deploying the own personality and identity within or beyond a social group for example when visiting social platforms like Facebook. In addition mobile communication technologies create new ways of structuring one’s modes of life and business, e.g. offering a calendar function. Providing Internet access any time of the day and anywhere, mobile devices also enable the user to gain information or education and to cultivate social networks (2006:2). Being relevant for the main sectors of social practices one could consider a mobile device as an artefact. Studying the smart phone will therefore be an approach to understand the modern way of life.

Three most notable general impacts of mobile technology on society can be identified and will be discussed in the framework of this thesis:

- Shift of time and space
- Mediatisation
- Change of communication modes

2.1. Time and Space Compression

The impacts of mobile communication redefine the terms time and space. Here, the term space has a more abstract connotation than the term place. De Certeau explains both the difference and the connection between space and place: “space is a practiced place thus the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into space by walkers” (1984:117). Space is thus a place, were life takes place. In the context of mobile media, space is where communication takes place. After clarifying the term space, the question arises which role the media play here? Media, especially the mobile media change the meaning of time and space by not only connecting different places in one space, the space of communication, but also by accelerating the process of gaining information in less time. Hence, time acquires a new meaning as well. As Terhi Rantanen points out:

“Electronic communication and news, first by the telegraph and later by radio, television and the Internet, created a new concept of time that hastened the space of life by constantly reminding people that something was happening - not here, then somewhere else” (2005:50).
The four scholars Manuel Castells, Fernández-Ardèvol, Jack Linchuan Qiu and Araba Sey dealt with wireless digital communication technology and also recognized that communication takes place in a new space context and a different time dimension (Castells, et al. 2005). The fact that technology allows its user to make use of the portable device anywhere and at any time, modifies the definition of time and space in any communication situation over and over again, and hence restructures our daily life (Leopoldina Fortunati 2002, 2005, James E. Katz 2004, Joshua Meyrowitz 2004). Communicating individuals are no longer dependent on a predetermined time and space but they create their own time and space in choosing when and where to communicate. Since wireless devices “link social practices in multiple places” (Castells, et al. 2005:171) they not only restructure the daily life of a single individual but every individual’s life, the moment mobile communication technology is used. Due to the fact that the distribution of wireless mobile communication will still increase, impacts reach also social structures in general. As a consequence mobile communication blurs and simultaneously redefines social practices within a multiplicity of different contexts of time and space (Castells, et al. 2005:250).

2.2. Mediatisation

James E. Katz and Mark A. Aakhus (2002) believe that mobile phones have an impact on both our private and work life, either directly or indirectly. At this point it is important to position the term ‘mediatisation’. Mediatisation is the direct implication of media use within most of today’s social and cultural issues (Fornäs, et al. 2007:2). Using mobile technology is therefore a double-sided interdependency. Since we use media in an experienced manner, “media technologies are today integrated into almost all other technologies and all social practices, and media forms tend to mix and blend in increasingly complex ways” (Fornäs, ibid).
2.3. Change of Communication

‘The human being is a connecting creature, who must always separate and cannot connect without separating’ and ‘the bordering creature who has no border’ - Georg Simmel (in Johan Fornäs et al. 2007: 1).

Taking place in different space contexts and new time dimensions it is clear that the communication process itself changes as well. The anthropologist Arjun Appadurai points out that new electronic technology has changed the conditions of the communication process in their old sense. New media transform the old process of sending and receiving messages (Rantanen 2006: 9). Certainly communication has become more intensive but also more experienced, meaning that people use the new ways to communicate in a more and more natural way. In other words: How people communicate has changed. The use of technical devices that offer the possibility to use the Internet or contact someone at any time and anywhere is the reason for this change. The more possibilities or channels such a mobile device offers its user to communicate, the more the user’s way of communication will change.

2.4. The Role of Smart Phones within Mobile Communication

In the field of mobile communication one can find a number of studies that examine how communication technologies, in particular cell phones, reflect the cultural and social world in which they are used. Claude S. Fischer (1992), James E. Katz (1999), Diane Zimmerman Umble (1996), Amy Sarch (1993), Ithiel de Sola Pool (1977), and Robert Hopper (1992) present studies on social effects of the mobile telephone. The aim of the conducted studies is to understand the social and cultural context, in which mobile media are used rather than researching the effects of mobile technology. This important aspect focuses on how people use cell phones.

Recently Göran Bolin and Oscar Vestlund (2009) conducted a study amongst three generations to define the role of mobile technology within the Swedish society. Bolin and Vestlund verified what was found by other studies (Emile Durkheim, Erving Goffman, Randall Collins, Rich Ling): Mobile communication and social cohesion are strongly connected to each other and people within our society assign special values to the mobile phone. Horst Heather and Daniel Miller (2006) consider the impact of cell phones from a different angle. Cell phones can help to escape depression or
loneliness, being the base for global concerns and modern economy. Furthermore, they state that the mobile phone has become relevant to be able to establish and maintain social networks in every part of our daily life.

In his book "Machines that Become Us": 'The Social Context of Personal Communication Technology' James E. Katz et al. discuss the relationship between personal communication technologies and social control. They argue that there is a complex interplay between fashion, the human body, social groups and the communication technology (Katz and Aakhus, 2002). Furthermore, Katz points out that the concern of technology taking over society is arbitrary and such approaches underestimate society being able to handle communication technologies (Baron 2006:159). As well, Mizuko Ito conducted a study on Japanese youth and mobile technologies. Like Katz and Aakhus, Ito (2003) relates mobile communication technology to fashion, but she also links the use of mobile technology to organisations that do social work for Japanese teenagers and even to rescue of parental control.

However, within the field of media and communication the object of research has always been a ‘standard’ cell phone. There has been little research on smart phones so far. The research to date on smart phones has focused mainly on computer development or electronic engineering. The obtained results shed light on the use of smart phones from a mere technical point of view, focusing on the technical capabilities of the smart phone. Looking at the results of mobile phone studies within the field of media and communication, there is no doubt that some findings apply to smart phones as well. Most of the effects of mobile phones on society tend to be more intense with smart phones, which provide even more functions than mobile phones. Due to the numerous functions, smart phones range between mobile phones and portable computers.
2.5. Wearable Computers

Mobile communication research provides a starting point to move on to findings about portable or so called wearable computers in order to combine the existing literature on mobile communication and portable computers, and refer them to the role of smartphones. Before discussing the term "wearable computers", it is important to introduce the term 'ubiquitous computing'.

Mark Weiser, based on his research within the field of computer science in 1996, predicted a third era in the history of computers. The first era, called ‘mainframes’ was a time when many people had to share one computer. Mainly experts had the know-how to run computers. The personal computing era was the second phase, characterized by “person and machine starring uneasily at each other across the desktop” (Weiser 1996). Each user had an own personal computer. The third and present age is called ubiquitous computing or “the age of calm technology” (Weiser ibid.). Here, technology seems to disappear in the background of our lives and a single individual uses more than one computer. From this it follows that computers became a natural part of our daily life and no longer belong to a distant reality. Thus, ubiquitous computing is exactly the opposite of virtual reality. “Where virtual reality puts people inside a computer-generated world, ubiquitous computing forces the computer to live out here in the world with people” (Weiser ibid.). According to Mark Weiser’s idea computers should be designed completely enclosed in the physical world and literally ubiquitous but still not recognizable. His goal was visionary: “A less-travelled path I call the "invisible"; its highest ideal is to make a computer so embedded, so fitting, so natural, that we use it without even thinking about it” (Weiser ibid.). Accordingly, the problem concerning PCs was their visibility, whereas a state of the art tool should be "invisible".

Transferring the ideas of Weiser to mobile communication, that means that in an ideal case we are still aware of mobile phones but they do not require our full attention, since they appear familiar to us. Within a telephone conversation on a cell phone the users’ attention lies on the conversational partner and the conversation rather than on the cell phone itself. The cell phone becomes transparent. In other words, technology aims at designing devices that do not hinder the communication act. In doing so, mobile gadgets have to be close to the body in order to become natural and transparent.
In sum, cell phones and also smart phones have become the most successful wearable computer up to now, because they are the most personal devices. This might also be a reason, why Katz, Aakhus (2002) and Ito (2003) consider the cell phone as a fashion item. In order to refer all findings back to smart phones the term "wearable computer" should be defined.

More than ten years ago Steve Mann (1998) already described a wearable computer as follows:

“Wearable computing facilitates a new form of human-computer interaction comprising a small body-worn computer (e.g. user-programmable device) that is always on and always ready and accessible. In this regard, the new computational framework differs from that of hand held devices, laptop computers and personal digital assistants (PDAs). The ‘always ready' capability leads to a new form of synergy between human and computer, characterized by long-term adaptation through constancy of user—interface” (Mann 1998).

With his backpack-mounted computer, Steve Mann (1996) contributed to the first inventions within the field of wearable computers. At that time he already stated three main characteristics of wearable computers. First of all, the device is part of the users' self, and not a separate object. Second, the gadget is controlled by its wearer. And third, the wearable computer has to be constant: it is always active. When the user does not make use of it, the gadget switches into the sleep function, but it turns itself on again when needed.

The three main characteristics can be applied to both, cell phones and smart phones. Since all three points do fit to mobile technical devices, one can define cell - and smart phones as wearable computers. Especially the third characteristic, the constant usability, is something that people count on nowadays - one of the main reasons why mobile devices became so important. Due to the fact that the device is always ready to use, people rely on it and use it to connect the user with a range of networks, in order to be a part of the modern society.

The previously demonstrated findings showed that mobile devices became a part of our lives, not only because the social meaning of the gadgets themselves increased with its capabilities, but also because more and more transparent and convenient devices, in terms of look, size and handling, were designed in the meantime.
2.6. Cell phones versus Smart Phones

There are two main characteristics that cause the increasing embedding of technical gadgets in our lives. The first one is the fact that the device is mobile. “When a computer can be carried around it becomes an intrinsic part of our lives, for there is no longer the need to go to a computer - it is always with us” (De Souza e Silva 2005:23). The second characteristic can be called ‘multi-communication’, which is the possibility of communicating through different channels. The main difference between mobile technology and wearable computing devices is the ability to communicate with a network rather than one person only. Mobile devices have multiplied the telephone’s basic function, the possibility of a two-way communication. Connecting with digital data and whole communities, cell phones no longer belong to the family of two-way communication devices.

As well, since smart phones are designed to communicate in many ways, they were never meant to be a two-way communication device only. Smart phones feature so-called third generation technology (3G), in contrast to mobile phones built on a second generation (2G) technology. Goggin predicted characteristics concerning the development from the second-generation technology to the third generation technology that offers:

- A global access
- A service profile that is personalized
- The capability to determine locations
- An integrated smart card (serves for identification, certification and storage space for data).

The attributes of a third generational mobile communication gadget apply especially to smart phones. In Gerard Goggin’s opinion these characteristics not only distinguish a mobile from a smart phone, they are also key characteristics that define an information society (2006:189). Moreover, another characteristic can be added, which will be important for the following part of this thesis: The smart phone is more expensive than a cell phone.
2.7. Digital Divide and the Formation of new social Rules

“(…) Technologies are both constructive and constructed by historical, social, and cultural contexts, and they argue against the analytical separation of the social and the technical.” (Ito 2005:6).

Mizuko Ito indicates that technologies are embedded in our society. Further she criticises the presumption that “society and culture are irreducibly variable but technologies are universal“. (2005: ibid) According to Ito, one can assume that technologies are socially constructed, which means that the social and the technical constantly interact with each other. When technologies are incorporated within a society it also entails negative aspects. Due to the fact that people are supposed to be constantly connected and available the need for devices that offer these characteristics increases. With the use of smart phones like the iPhone one will sooner or later be confronted with the issue of the developing digital elite. Users tend to become dependent very quickly and rely on the smart phones. Similar to the cell phones the technology of smart phones is a technology, which has been adopted very fast. The adoption even reaches a stage, in which the device becomes indispensable for the users’ life. Considering these circumstances, it is an important condition to provide every person within this society full and equal access to every network. Similar to the right to access a library, there has to be a right for affordable and authentic access to networks. Apple’s iPhone is expensive compared to other smart phones. The cost of the device itself and the cost of usage are still too high for a majority of the society. As a consequence, the privilege to buy and use high standard technique is reserved for the people who can afford it. In line with Manuel Castells et al. one could ask: Is mobile communication a privilege for people of higher socioeconomic status? (2006:55). The answer to this question is that people need equal admission to hardware in order to get access and/or produce various forms of media content. Of course this asks for time as well as skills and primarily costs money. Certainly, the smart phone is not yet as common as the cell phone. Being without a cell phone is hard to imagine nowadays. Nevertheless, what does it mean to be without the newest technology in a society where everyone is supposed to know all the recent TV-shows and latest websites? People who do not have access to the important networks within society that provide information, empowerment, discussion, entertainment recreation and amusement, are simply excluded from most of the modern social practices (Fornäs et.al. 2007:155pp).
Another occurring problem with the use of smart phones goes hand in hand with constant availability. Using smart phones and simultaneously being available everywhere and at any time might be a positive thing at first sight. Paul Levinson uses an adequate example for this issue. He calls it the ‘window-open’ example: assuming that a window is a remedial invention, it “let people look out without rain and wind coming in”. But the window also creates a problem: “it not only let dwellers look out, but let strangers on the outside look in”. This example can be applied to the remedial medium of the smart phone (Levinson 2006: 16). Smart phone users see an advantage in being connected and accessing their networks at any time of the day, everywhere. Thereby they forget that they are in turn also available for their network. Ringing cell phones at places like a theatre or the cinema is a situation, which is still annoying for many people. Since the smart phone blurs and mixes the variety of social practices even more than a cell phone, one has to think about a redefinition of social rules and forms of behaviour. Castells et.al point out the need for a new etiquette: the formation of a mobile etiquette, meaning rules that implement the use of mobile communication technique in public locations, such as restaurants, theatres, cinemas, libraries or public transport systems. Castells et al. describe this as a process in which we learn how to handle the constant availability a technical device offers. The scholars argue that the change of sociability due to the distribution of mobile communication technology indicates a change of configurations between the individual and the collective. This change of configurations can be seen as a strengthening of interactions between friends, families working colleagues or other personal relationships (2006:97). In contrast Paul Levinson points out:

“It is indeed distracting to hear a cell phone ring when you’re enjoying a play or a movie, but no more so than a person snoring loudly right behind you, and there are no laws against that. Informal custom seems a far better way of regulating such social annoyances” (2006:16).

However, the use of smart phones like the iPhone is a driving force speeding up the process of dividing the society into two parts: the connected and the disconnected. In addition to that, the devices provide a reason to reorder the existent forms of individual behaviour with the gadgets within the public sphere.
3. **Formulation of the Research Questions**

This thesis focuses on how the use of a particular smart phone affects its users. At the moment there is no comparable device that is as popular as the iPhone. The natural handling of mobile phones or smart phones came with the development of the technique itself. With the range of functions the fascination and also the question of necessity grew. For example: "Is it necessary that a mobile phone can tell you where you are or where to go?" Due to the convenient and user-friendly applications resulting from this function its usefulness cannot be disregarded. Thus, the question arises, which new role do smart phones really play in our society? Or the other way around: "What role does the user ascribe to the iPhone?"

As mentioned above, two main reasons why mobile technical devices become more and more common in everyday life are the ‘multi-communication’ functions connecting not only single individuals but entire networks of people, as well as the mobility, following from the fact that the device is wireless. This presumption leads to my first research question:

1. **How does the iPhone affect the process of communication and social interaction?**

   Wireless technology supports not only the mobility of every user. Considering all the functions of the iPhone (telephone, mp3 player, photo and video camera, Internet, and organizing all kinds of information through the applications) one gets the impression, the device acts like a little organizer that helps its user to manage not only work, but also the private life. Therefore my second question is:

2. **In what way does the iPhone change its users’ relation to ‘time and space’?**

   Due to the fact that within media and communications there is so far no current publication that focuses on a specific smart phone, I find it very interesting to investigate this gadget from a self-representational point of view. The iPhone is a very modern designed device and being a wearable computer my third research question is:

3. **What is the iPhones’ status as a visual object in the user’s perception?**
In order to obtain an answer to the above research questions, I applied two different methods: First a field observation was conducted followed by three focus group interviews. The two methods will be further discussed in the next chapter.

4. Methods

In this chapter I present the two methods applied for my case study and illustrate how the two methods complement each other. Firstly I conducted a field observation combined with short follow up interviews and secondly I carried out three focus group interviews. Since many qualitative case studies combine observation with interviewing, I found it an adequate combination of methods for my research (Silverman 2005:121). In a later section of this thesis I will discuss the advantages and drawbacks of the two methods.

Conducting a field observation is useful for gathering rich data, especially to examine processes in everyday contexts. Three focus group interviews with iPhone users complement the field observation and help to find out more about motives of using the iPhone and to obtain background information that might explain the participants’ behaviour I observed within the field before. The combination of the two methods provides information obtained from an external perspective (field observation) and on the other hand about the participants’ inner circumstances like perceptions, feelings or opinions (focus group interview).

According to John W. Creswell one of the main characteristics of qualitative research is to use multiple sources of data. Rather than relying on a single data source, it is advisable to gather multiple forms of data (2003:176). For this reason I chose two methods from which I hope to gain a broad range of data. In order to obtain a first impression of who uses an iPhone and what my population looks like, it seemed reasonable to me to carry out the field observation combined with short questions first, and do the focus group interviews afterwards. Reasonable in that sense that I expected certain topics to emerge from the observation and the following conversations with the participants, the obtained knowledge helping to formulate some guiding questions for the focus groups. In line with Sam D. Sieber I agree, “(...) fieldwork is useful for identifying the most suitable collectives or individuals to be surveyed”. (1973:1359) As Robert T. Bower states: “The best way to find out what
people think is to ask them” (Bower in Klaus Bruhn Jensen 1973:240), the qualitative focus group interviews seem to me like an appropriate method for this topic. Due to the fact that I want to explore a phenomenon that cannot be justified simply or briefly, I need to ask people to explain their answers, give examples or describe their experiences. Within this sort of interview “the interviewee is conceived as a representative for one or more social and cultural categories (Jensen 2002:240).

“By using two phases, sequential transformative researcher may be able to give voice to diverse perspectives, to better advocate for participants, or to better understand a phenomenon or process that is changing as a result of being studied.” (Creswell 2003:213).

Creswell calls the designing of the two methods I applied a “sequential transformative study”, which is a two phase project. The initial phase in this case was the field observation followed by a second phase, the focus group interviews.

4.1. Field Observation

To gain information about the individuals’ natural behaviour within a natural setting, observing people is a suitable method. Besides, field observation gives the researcher an impression of “reality“. At this point it is important to mention that the scholars I quote within this methodology chapter, as well as myself, use the word ‘natural’ in the sense of describing an ordinary behaviour within everyday situations.

I conducted my field observation in four different public places in Stockholm. In line with Uwe Flick, the observation of people in public spaces is a good way to observe events as they naturally occur (Flick 2006:235). Earlier in this thesis, I already mentioned Manuel Castells et al. studies about wireless technology all over the world. The reason why I chose my target group is based on one of their findings. In almost all societies they examined, wireless technologies were initially marketed to allure people of the business community. In addition to that “across the globe, adolescents and young adults are emerging as playing a very active role in adopting and appropriating mobile services” (Castells et. al 2005:40). For that reason I thought that young professionals between 25 and 35 would use iPhones the most. It also seemed evident to me that professionals are most likely to have an iPhone because they can afford it. Secondly, being a business person it is not very exceptional that one has to be reachable and updated throughout the day. Since the iPhone offers its
user access to a broad range of communication channels, it could be useful for every businessperson. Based on that, I chose to observe the area around Stureplan. More precisely, in front of Sturegallerian, at an installation that is better known as “Svampen”, a place where business people tend to meet. The second field I monitored was the central station in Stockholm, where a more diverse society could be observed. The entrance of the department store Åhlens in Stockholm was my third field in the city. All three places are common meeting places, places of public transit and busy at every time of the day. In order to find out, if the iPhone is as present in the areas around Stockholm as it is in Stockholm downtown, I conducted a fourth field observation in Skärholmen. Skärholmen is about 25 minutes away from Stockholm city, an area that is dominated by working class people, where a majority of the residents are first or second generation immigrants. Observing there I intended to compare the presence of the iPhone within different social classes.

In sum, I observed 17 iPhone users. During my observation I approached all of the users in a fairly systematic way. Acting on Uwe Flick’s suggestion I took field notes immediately after the observation (2006:296). In addition to field notes, documenting all the fields I visited, I took pictures of every participant and her or his surroundings. “Photographs would first provide a form of visual field notes, straightforward visual descriptions of what the place and its people looked like” (Becker 2000:102). Primarily I thought of the photographs as a moment of documentary, since iPhone users are hard to catch and most of the time busy with their iPhone when I talked to them. However, the photographs helped me capture the moment. I could describe it like a kind of transfer line between the participants and myself. I am aware of the fact that the photographs do not simply illustrate the field notes and the field notes are not everything that has been said or done within the field: “Rather images and words contextualize each other, forming not a complete record of the research but a set of different representations and strands of it” (Pink 2007:120).

In addition to that I used the act of photographing to get some distance, which is very important when one needs to be reflexive. Taking pictures was an activity within the fields that was to some extent ironic. Being in a field that is a public place under permanent display, I became an actor myself who was under constant observation as well. In a way I showed the participants what I did, while they were looking at me.
4.2. Focus Group Interviews

The focus groups, like the field observation, are a member of the qualitative research family. This method was originally called “focussed” interview and was used for the first time at the end of the 1940s in order to conduct survey research. (Stewart, Shamdasani, Rook 2006) I chose the method of focused group interviews in order to explore what iPhone users think about their use of the device. The direct contact with the iPhone user is a central aspect of this study. Both methods - the field observation and the focus group interviews - supplied me with a firsthand contact.

I decided to perform group interviews rather then face-to-face interviews with iPhone users, since focus group interviews seek group interaction (Bloor et al. 2001:43). Furthermore, Werner Mangold considers group discussion as the best method to study “collective fixed attitudes” (1960:49). It is not my intention to produce comparable and generalised data, but to get an idea about how people talk and think about the iPhone. As Flick states “group discussions (...) correspond to the way in which opinions are produced, expressed and exchanged in everyday life” (2002:114).

With this method the researcher is able to collect material in a social context. The main reason why I chose this method is the interactive character of focus group interviews. “The idea behind the focus group method is that group processes can help people to explore and clarify their views in ways that would be less easily accessible in a one to one interview” (Kitzinger 1995:23).

Altogether I carried out three focus group interviews. I designed the groups as follows: A female group with four women, a male group with four men and a mixed group with two women and two men. In line with Ellen Brandth, (1996) Birgitta Höijer and Ulrika Olausson (2003) it is an adequate way to organize small gender-homogeneous groups of individuals with similar social experiences. Applying David L. Morgan’s strategy to come across diversity, I created two groups with a maximum of similarity amongst the participants to be able to recognize the differences between the groups. The more homogenous a group is, the more comfortable the participants feel to talk. Groups with different types of participants, in that case the mixed group, represents a ‘control-group’ that allows me to see how different or similar the distinct categories of group members are (1998:59). Furthermore, I carried out the interviews in English, which is everybody’s second language.
There are main characteristics all interview participants shared. They are:

- Young adults between 25 and 35
- Employed
- Using an iPhone
- Pre-existing group: work colleagues

The term ‘pre-existing group’ has to be commented upon here. First of all, recruiting a group that is already a part of a certain social network alleviated the recruitment process in general. Furthermore, pre-existing groups may also be of advantage considering the willingness to participate in a focus group interview. Showing up for the interview is comparable with a shared obligation (Bloor et al.2001:23). The fact that the interview participants are working colleagues defines them as a pre-existing group. They already know each other, which made a contribution to the atmosphere being more relaxed and natural, especially at the beginning of the interviews.

It was of great advantage to ease the interview situation to use self-completion questionnaire at the beginning. Every group member had to fill in the questionnaire, giving me basic information about their names, their exact age and the participants’ educational level. The self-completion questionnaire was not only necessary, but also helpful to prevent uncomfortable silence (Bloor et al.2001:39). The data gathered from the self-completion questionnaire plays an important role in particular if the interview is a part of a ‘multi-method research design’. In this case the information offers the possibility to compare in what way the individuals differ from the samples generated from other methods applied within the design (Bloor et al.2001:40). The population of the focus group interview mirrors the sample I gained within the field observation in all the three locations in central Stockholm.

I conducted the interviews at the groups’ work place in a conference room. “Where pre-existing social groups are being recruited (such as a school peer group), then the ideal venue will be in the natural setting of the group (such as the school) (Bloor et al.2001:53). The choice of venue accounted for a natural setting and very open and convenient atmosphere.
Considering the size of each group, Michael Bloor et al. state that “there is no consensus on the ideal number of participants per group and this may vary by topic and by study population” (2001:92). Nevertheless, I considered the number of four participants per group a convenient size to demand an adequate contribution for every participant (Morgan 1988:43). In terms of background, education and perspective the groups have been quite homogenous. Due to the homogeneity the design of this method did not demand a great number of participants (Morgan 1988:42).

When I structured the interview I divided the questions into four main topics. The interview started with questions about their general attitude towards the iPhone. The second part addressed the usage of the iPhone, for example, which functions (telephone, internet, mp3 player, camera etc.) were used the most, distinguishing between the use for work and use for private reasons. The third part of the interview focuses on the comparison of the iPhone with other smart phones. Finally the interview addressed questions about disconnection. Designing the questionnaire, I followed the suggestion of Stuart et al. to order the questions from the more general to the more specific (1999:61). Questions that are more general and unstructured are positioned at the beginning, while specific questions are placed towards the end. Beyond that, within the more general questions, I asked the questions of importance relatively early and the less meaningful questions towards the end.

To make sure I include different types of questions in the questioning route, I decided to follow the procedure of Richard A. Krueger et al. in “Developing questions for focus groups”. The authors suggest comprising certain sorts of questions. Hereafter, I will illustrate these suggested questions with examples from my own questioning route.

-Opening questions: What do you think about the iPhone?
-Introductory questions: Do you like it or not?
-Transition questions: Can you tell me about a typical day of using the iPhone?
-Key questions: Is it like other smart phones or is it different? If so, in what way? Would you recommend the iPhone to other people? Why do you think other people would buy the iPhone?
Ending questions: Is there anything else you would like to add? Do you have any questions? (1998:21).

The analysis and interpretation of the collected data is the next part of the thesis. A way to analyze data after having applied a qualitative method that Creswell suggests is the inductive data analysis: applying the inductive analysis the researcher tries to build certain patterns, categories and themes from the bottom up and structures the information in becoming more and more abstract. In doing so it is important to look at the collected data over and over again (Creswell 2003: 175). Concerning the field observation my data collection was fairly open, open in the sense that I made notes and took pictures of situations that I personally found interesting in the context of iPhone use in public, without having a certain structure. Certain patterns and structures were only emerging during or even after the field observation.

The photos could be used in an analytical rather than for their aesthetic value, since a lot of pictures were out of focus or too dark. The pictures offered me a lot of additional information about how the actors expose their iPhone to the public or about their behaviour with the iPhone in general. These are details I only discovered when looking at the pictures back home. When analysing the visual material that emerged from the field observation, I used Sarah Pinks work “Doing Visual Ethnography” where she stresses the necessity of a reflexive approach while classifying, analyzing and interpreting visual data. (Pink 2007:118). Pinks’ approach of a continuous analysis throughout the whole process of research is what I found relevant for my own work. Rather than assuming that the process of analysing starts, the moment you sit down right after the field observation, it is important to understand that it is impossible to look at each photograph separately and try to give the information a beginning and an end. Similar to the field observation Karin Becker stated the photos turned out to be helpful to sharpen some questions or insights that had arisen during later phases of my fieldwork (Becker 2000:103). The results are discussed below in chapter five.
5. Characteristics of iPhone use: Presentation and Discussion of Results

In the following section I present the results gained from the field observation and the focus group interviews. In doing so, I plan to subsequently discuss the obtained findings within the same section. All findings are interrelated to two main topics that emerged from this study. In the first place, the personalisation of the iPhone: I define personalisation as the possibility to modify the gadget in adjusting internal functions to ones’ needs and also changing the external appearance. Secondly, the connection that the iPhone offers its user and the connection the user has to the device itself. Within that two main topics the findings are presented from the less significant to the most striking results. In this context it is important to mention that a cell phone and a smart phone share several characteristics in terms of personalisation and connection. Nevertheless being a smart phone, the iPhone intensifies its characteristics in offering more possibilities of personalisation and connection.

5.1. Personalisation of the Device and personal Statements with the Device

One of the main characteristics of the iPhone is the broad range of customisation possibilities it provides to its user. The user can adjust the functions and applications to her or his needs and, in addition, can change the iPhone’s external appearance. The field observations and the focus group interviews showed that both aspects are important for the users.

5.1.1. Internal Functions

The iPhone has a wide range of applications. When buying an iPhone it has already about 20 pre-installed applications. These are “basic” applications like GPS, News Update, E-mail or the Internet. During the focus group interview with the male participants, one of them, Rodrigo, pointed out:

“The best thing with the iPhone is anyway that you can customize. And it’s so easy to set up. You can customize your own way. So the use, the easiness gives you a big leap forward to use the stuff (...) you make it more yours. And with other smart phones you have to follow their kind of track”.

Especially the part of the statement: “to make it more yours” is striking. It seems to be a main feature of the iPhone to be capable of being customized the way the user
wants. Like one would set up the desktop on a computer. Katrin gave a similar statement, within the mixed group interview:

**Bettina:** “But is the fun part that it is so easy to handle?”

**Katrin:** “I would say it is the possibility to personalize a telephone. You can download all the applications you want. I don’t know, but that’s at least what I like so much about it. That makes it fun. It is really like your computer, where you install what you want”.

The possibility to personalize the iPhone is one of the main reasons, why iPhone users are enthusiastic about this gadget. Within a society where people are more and more busy with themselves trying to be individual, the iPhone is a device with which one can express that way of individualisation.

According to the findings Manuel Castells et al. present in their work *Mobile Communication and Society: A Global Perspective*, the scholars point out that communication is essential in the formation and preservation of young people’s collective identity. They observed a trend of ‘personalisation’ within the youth culture. Parallel to the strengthening of a collective identity there is also an affirmation of individual identity as a distinctive characteristic of the collective. In other words: it is a community of individuals. In order to stress the own individuality within the community there are signs of individualism in every process of communication. Therefore, each member of the community personalizes his or her message and sender or receiver position within the process of communication. In addition to that, the scholars argue that consumption is a crucial value in our society. Seeking status through symbols is an important dimension of youth consumerism. In that context fashion is connected to collective identity but it is not the same thing:

“Both identity and fashion are embodied that are defined collectively. But identity comes first and expresses itself in fashion. Fashions change, collective identity is more stable” (Castells et al.2006:144 pp).

Applying this approach to the customisation of the iPhone this means that having the device is a symbol to show that the user is a part of a collective identity. Though being a part of the community, the possibility to change the devices’ inner life according to every users’ needs is a way to stress the own individuality. Using different applications, arranging them or just changing the colour of the background are all expressions of individualisation to highlight the distinction within the community.
5.1.2. External Appearance

Looking at the pictures that arose from the field observation, it is noticeable that iPhone users are dressed in a manner that one could describe as fashion-conscious. On the one hand, this might come from the fact that a lot of iPhone users I observed are business people. On the other hand, iPhone users, who were more casually dressed, were still fashionable in an obvious way. It would definitely go beyond the scope of this thesis to analyse all the pictures I took. The whole visual material I collected within the field observations is compiled in the appendix. The first picture emerged from the field observation in Stockholm city, where I found a great number of iPhone users. For comparison, I will show a second photograph, which I took within the field in Skärholmen, a suburb of Stockholm where the presence of cell phones was remarkable, but where I could not find a single iPhone user. I chose these two pictures because they show iPhone users, which are typical for each place.

Fig. 1 Stockholm, Central Station, 2010-02-10
One can see that the woman, with the iPhone at Stockholm’s central station is wearing make-up, has fashionable shoes and a light scarf, which acts as an eye-catcher within the rather dark outfit she wears. Furthermore, she holds her iPhone in her hands, which also shows that she wants to be seen with the device, a pattern that repeated itself often in the field. Most iPhone users I observed hold the device in their hands in front of themselves. After a couple of hours of observation I understood that iPhone users can be recognized due to the fact that they wear white headphones (like the women on the picture at the central station) and hold the device in their hands, similar as one would hold a book or a map.

On the other hand, the woman on the picture that I took in Skärholmen does not wear make-up, is ordinarily dressed and does not particularly stick out from other people around her. A remarkable difference between the two women is also that the iPhone user is younger than the cell phone user. One could indicate that the iPhone attracts more young people. Since the population I observed and interviewed is between 25 and 35 years old, it is difficult to affirm this presumption. In line with Karin Becker, I am aware of the fact that “photographs are by their nature ambiguous; the importance of context in giving photographs their meaning” (1998: 84). The problems that arose while analysing the pictures will be discussed below. This is where the possibilities and drawbacks of the applied methods are addressed.
The analysis of the pictures leads back to one of the main characteristics of the iPhone: its appearance. When I asked the interviewees to compare the iPhone to other smart or cell phones, Andrea said:

“For me, I had a smart phone before as well but I think working with the iPhone is so much easier and faster. And of course the look. So look and easiness”.

The importance of the design within mobile communication has already become apparent with cell phones. Gerard Goggin argues:

“These communication devices have become not only mediators of much conversation and exchange but also bearers of many meanings, to do with identity, fashion, belonging, and the symbols and images that mark out collective and overarching aspects of our cultures” (2006:207).

Design can be seen as a meeting point for practices and innovations that mainly have to do with aesthetics, but also with prestige, functionality, economics and even marketing. Related to Goggin, Katz and Satomi Sugiyama also point out the importance of the design. They state: “It is not only a tool of communication but also a miniature aesthetic statement about its owner” (2005: 64). For iPhone users the look definitely also plays a role. Katz and Sugiyama discuss cell phones, but in that case this statement can be referred back to the iPhone as well. Andrea said: “and of course the look”. This information shows that the device looks good in her opinion and that she is not alone with that opinion, when she says “of course”, then it means that this is common sense from her point of view.


I would take this approach a step further, since I found out that the iPhone is apparently a kind of image or status symbol for its users and not only an addition to the clothing. A dialogue from the interview:

**Bettina:** “How come your company decided to give you all an iPhone?”
**Carl-Johan:** “I think it is an image thing. For showing that we are an innovative company, modern and young”.
The focus group interviewees all worked for the same company. Every employee got an iPhone. During the interviews, most of the interview partners put their iPhone on the table. I could see that except from one person all interviewees had a case around the device, which is supposed to save it from scratches or other external influences, like liquids, dust etc. The cases the interviewees had were all different. They had various colours, materials and one person even had a case from a well-known fashion designer. That displays that the personalisation not only concerns the ‘inner life’ of the technical device, with all the special functions and applications, but also the appearance. In contrast to that there was one participant Melanie, who did not have a case. I asked her:

“But, Melanie, why do you not have such a case around your iPhone like your colleagues?”

**Melanie:** “Yes, I know. We were told that we have to use it, but it really destroys the design”.

In this context I would like to mention another aspect. Considering all communication technologies in general, the cell phone or the smart phone is the one closest to the body. When not using the devices women carry them in their handbags and men in their jeans or suit pockets, to reach them as quickly as possible when necessary. The gadget becomes an accessory. However, the moment people stay longer at a certain place they put their cell phones on the tables (like most of the interviewees) or somewhere else. Yet the ability to wear communication devices is limited by the device itself. There is no adequate place for the gadget, especially not when the user is always on the move and wants to notice when there is an incoming call or whether someone sent an e-mail. Therefore, people tend to carry the device in the handbag or the jeans pocket.

The cases for the iPhone I mentioned before can also be seen as an attempt to make a communication gadget more wearable. In covering them in special designed cases, or specifically for the iPhone designed cases, they look better, at least from the user’s perspective. Putting a case around the iPhone is again making it more yours.

Earlier in this thesis I dealt with the concept of wearable computers, claiming that: (...) "wearable computers can also be regarded as tools". Adriana De Souza e Silva points out those tools can become transparent (2005:22). When using a device the user focuses in most cases on the person he or she talks to on the other end of the line, rather than on the device itself. For that reason one can consider the device
being transparent. The iPhone is quite big compared to other smart phones, but the
design compensates for the inconvenient size. The gadget becomes transparent
since it has a relatively flat design, while the display is very big. Two examples from
the focus group interview:

Bettina: “What do you think about the iPhone? What is your first association?”
Melanie: “Great design”.
Rachel: “iPhone is trendy and looks good”.
Åsa: “But Apple always has a great design. I am in to a lot of Apple products because of its
design”.
Bettina: “What especially do you like about the Apple design?”
Åsa: “It is very simple and at the same time appealing. Some design things, especially
technique stuff is so stylish that you don’t dare to touch them. But the iPhone has a good
middle, you feel good when you have it in your hands and you are not afraid to break
something” (laugh).

Bettina: “What do you think about the iPhone’s appearance? Especially, when you think
about the design and its shape?”
Andrea: “I love it”.
Katrin: “Me too” (the two men are nodding).

Due to the fact that one could regard the iPhone as a wearable computer, I would like
to bring up three points De Souza e Silva uses to clarify what wearable computers
and computers have in common:

They are:

1. Transparent

and they provide:

2. Constant Connection

3. Change of Perception

De Souza e Silvas concept of wearable computers includes fashion and clothing. Apart
from that, wearable computers are also related to personality and identity like
the computer they are also meant to be transparent. In other words: the user should
not be aware of the presence of the apparatus. The possibility to shift the digital
space into the physical reality provides the user a constant connection. Finally,
through blending digital data inside of the device it changes our sense for the
physical world (2005:22). The constant connection and change of our perception of
the physical space will be discussed in the next section.
5.2. Connection and Dependence on Connectivity

The second, most striking results emerging from my methods concern connection. Beforehand, I noticed two different ways of connection. First, the iPhone connects the user with all kinds of networks (social, business), and second the user also establishes a connection to the gadget itself.

An extract of one of the focus group interviews will exemplify the connection the gadget offers its user:

**Andrea:** “I think it’s like you said Katrin, it’s like a mini computer”.
**Harald:** “You have everything in it, you can listen to music, you have different apps, it’s just so convenient”.

To my mind, convenience is the key word here. Because of the broad range of functions, the user gets used to the convenience. Therefore, it is hard to abandon this convenience:

**Melanie:** “Some people leave it home on weekends. I would never leave it at home. There is always something you can use it for *(laugh everyone)*”.

In this regard Manuel Castells et al. state that games, entertainment, and the media are important elements in youth culture. Following the same scheme as other activities or services they take up a main part of the user’s wireless surroundings: “mobile entertainment is a leisure activity that rivals other activities” (Castells et al. 2006: 144). As Melanie’s statement shows her iPhones, seem to be more a hobby than a device one uses for an intended purpose.

Since I wanted to find out in what way the user is connected to the device, I wondered what happens when the user is disconnected. Therefore, I already asked the participants in the field what their reaction is when they do not have a connection, or the iPhone’s battery is empty. They answered that they get very stressed especially when they just wanted to check their e-mails or make a phone call. During the field observation I noticed that women seemed to become more stressed than men when the iPhone does not work. The gender differences I noticed in terms of connection will be discussed more thoroughly below. I illustrate the connection issue with an example from the women’s group interview:

**Bettina:** “My last question is: where and when do you switch the iPhone off?” *(laugh everyone)*
**Merriam:** “Only on the airplane”.

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Asia: “Yes, or even there I put it on airplane modus”.
Melanie: “I never switch it off, I guess”.
Rachel: “Me neither, I can always put it on silence, if I don’t like to pick up a phone call”.
Merriam: “Well, it is not like switching off a telephone, when you switch it off, you also switch off your little computer”.
Rachel: “Exactly, when you switch it off, you switch off the access to the outside world (laugh).”
Bettina: “I see.”
Rachel: “At one of my friend’s house, there is a really bad connection, and I don’t like to be there because I always think I have to check my e-mails. It is insane, I know (...). If the connection would be fine I wouldn’t have that feeling I am quite sure. But just to know that I cannot check everything when I want to, makes me feel uncomfortable. You get used to it so easy, that it makes it even harder to be without it”.
Åsa: “Ah, these kind of situations are really annoying. I know that”.

At another point of the interview Melanie states:

“It is also about having the possibility to check it. Not necessarily that I want to check it, but just that I know I have the possibility, any time and everywhere”.

These statements show clearly that it is apparently enough to know that the device works. It is the plain possibility of accessing networks at any time that makes the user content.

Ironically, the connection simultaneously disconnects the user from the physical world and the events in the surrounding. According to De Souza e Silva’s opinion, mobile communication technologies merge the digital and the physical space we live in. These hybrid spaces are formed by the constant mobility of the user. Users have these portable gadgets with them at all times and are connected to the Internet at any time of the day. From this it follows that mobile communication devices separate the user from the physical world around them. For instance: when talking on the phone, the user does not perceive the reality the same way as without the phone. In fact the user is present in a virtual space in the moment of using these machines. Observing the actors in the fields, I noticed that some of the users did not even notice that I took a picture of them since they were busy with their iPhone. The immersion in this virtual world is intensified by the iPhone’s screen. It not only changes the way of communication but also changes our perception of the reality or our connection to the physical space. De Souza e Silva calls that hybrid space.

In that context De Souza e Silva brings up a very important aspect: The way how people use mobile technology is not only dependent on the technical innovation, but also depends on the social context, the moment we make use of these apparatuses
(2005: 40). I already mentioned the separation of technical and social in paragraph 2.7. In line with Mizuko Ito it becomes clear that it is impossible to separate the social and the technical. Both scholars, Adriana De Souza e Silva and Mizuko Ito led me to an issue that became clear after posing the same questions over and over again: Does the smart phone change the society by offering such a range of communication and entertainment opportunities to the user? Or does the society change itself by inventing and making use of smart phones like the iPhone. Here one has to realize that human beings invent new technologies like the smart phone and develop it when making use of it, rather than just giving such a device to society and seeing what happens. Thus, describing the development of the technical device and its effect on society is governed by feedback loops, which exclude an analysis, which considers simple "cause and consequence" sequences only. To get deeper into that approach I use the constructivist social theory of Peter M. Hejl. Hejl uses the radical constructivism approach and its premises to describe social systems. His social theory demands for the attempt to think of social systems as a process, in which individuals construct their realities. In doing so, these realities are the base of acting and communicating successfully within society (1985). Regarding this study, Hejl’s idea would mean that the use of multi-communication devices like the iPhone is a way to construct a base for social acting and communicating. Phenomena like the use of smart phones are therefore only understandable by linking the technical and the social aspect. In addition to that, it is wrong to think that culture and society are minimally variable and technologies are universally valid (Ito 2005: 7).

The author Joanne K. Rowling describes the case of a circular self-referencing sequence in a very nice way:

“They climbed in tight, dizzying circles; Harry had never been up here before. At last they reached a door. There was no handle and no keyhole: nothing but a plain expanse of aged wood, and a bronze knocker in the shape an eagle. Luna reached out a pale hand, which looked eerie floating in midair, unconnected to arm or body. She knocked once, and in the silence it sounded to Harry like a cannon blast. At once the beak of the eagle opened, but instead of a bird’s called, a soft, musical voice said, "Which came first, the phoenix or the flame?"

"Hmm ... What do you think, Harry?" said Luna, looking thoughtful. "What? Isn’t there a password?"

"Oh no, you’ve got to answer a question," said Luna. "What if you get it wrong?"

"Well, you have to wait for somebody who gets it right," said Luna. "That way you learn, you see?"

"Yeah ... Trouble is, we can’t really afford to wait for anyone else, Luna."

"No, I see what you mean," said Luna seriously. "Well then, I think the answer is that a
After having addressed the difficulty of tracking back the effect of smart phones on society in general to a simple cause and consequence sequence, I focus on the status of the iPhone for the individual user and the relationship she (or he) develops with the device. Here one has to understand the meaning the device has for the user.

In the first part of this chapter I already tried to clarify in what way the user is connected to the smart phone: In constantly offering the user a broad range of communication possibilities, the user gets accustomed to this convenience. What the iPhone means to the interviewees became very clear:

**Bettina:** “What do you think about the iPhone? Just in general. What comes to your mind when you think about the iPhone?”

**Walter:** “Jesus Phone”.

As well the already given example of the interview on page 29 manifests how important the device is to the interviewed people.

Due to the fact that mobile communication technology is “personal, portable, pedestrian” (Ito et al.2005), the user adopts the devices relatively quickly, like a watch (Richard Seyler Ling 2001, Leopoldina Fortunati and Anna Maria Manganelli 2002, Virpi Oksman and Pirjo Rautiainen 2002, Eija-Liisa Kasesniemi 2003). Mobile phones are an integral part of everyday life. Therefore users tend to feel lost, because of the dependency relationship that has developed with the technology, when the devices withhold (Castells et al.2006:77). Within mobile communication research there are approaches, which state that mobile phones become part of our bodies since we have them with us all the time. No other technical device is permanently that close to the body as a cell phone. When something becomes part of the body it has a certain function. It possibly extends or substitutes an individual’s sense. The cell phone already substitutes a lot of senses. An appropriate example would be the wristwatch. Many people use their cell phone as a timekeeper and don’t wear watches anymore. As a consequence one looses the sense for time, since the gadget is able to constantly tell its user what time it is. Furthermore, the user relies on the device’s information or function. This is the general point with technical devices that become a permanent part of everyday life, such as the example of the wristwatch, the telephone, individual and public transportation system, etc.
Considering smart phones, the effect of loosing a "sense" and becoming dependent on a technical device that substitutes this sense becomes more enhanced. To take a single example: through mobile machines, like the iPhone, the user not only unlearns to estimate the time of the day, but also the sense for locality when the GPS function tells the user where she or he is. How does the user know that this is really the place the device tells it should be? Can we count on the information the gadget gives the user? Conducting the field observation in Stureplan, I watched a man using the iPhone’s GPS function to find a street. I interviewed him afterwards and asked why he does not use a map. He answered: “Why? I have everything in here” (pointing on the iPhone). In other words, he did not really care about the validity of the iPhone’s information, since his fascination for the technology was larger and he completely relied on the correct function of the device.

In the 1960s Marshall Mc Luhan introduced the concept of media hardware being the extension of the body, rather than media software. It is not the text, but the technical apparatus itself that expand the human senses and skills. The fusion of human and machine shapes the ‘cyborg’. Focusing on the human perception, technical devices interact with the senses and enlarge their capabilities. Capabilities like creating texts without being bound to a certain place or communicating all around the globe (Fornäs et al.2007:111). Smart phones work in concert with our ears, eyes, hands and voice. For this reason, the extension of the user’s self is particularly successful with relatively small machines, like the iPhone that can be applied to the body. Apart from the fact that smart phones can be seen as an extension of the body, it also restrains users to remain occupied with their own business. Based on the permanent offer to contact someone or to use applications, the user does not have to focus on her- or himself. I got the following answer when I asked an interviewee to try to describe a typical day of using the iPhone:

**Rodrigo:** “The alarm clock rings”.
**Carl-Johan:** “I first check my e-mail, then I use it on my way to work to listen to music. Then I check my e-mail on the train again. And then when I arrive here I make a lot of phone calls with it. Basically all day long. I check my e-mails during the day. And on my way home is listen to music again and then I use it for games” *(laugh everyone)*.

The iPhone prevents the user from doing nothing. It therefore not only functions as communicator, but also as entertainment apparatus. In the context of viewing at
television screens in public places, Anna Mc Carthy considers the act of looking at a screen as a sensory isolation from the present environment. Similar to De Souza e Silva’s idea of a hybrid space, Mc Carthy points out that when looking at a screen in public places the actor travels to another place. Screens in her opinion have a privatizing function, which serves to deviate the person from other technical influences in public places, like ringing cell phones or the voice of their users (2001: 137). In the case of the iPhone one could use this approach to state that people use the iPhone in public places to isolate themselves from the public space. In addition to that, the iPhone in its appearance is nothing than a screen with one button. Within Anna Mc Carthy’s study the objects of investigation are fixed installations in public places, whereas I consider the iPhone to be a private portable screen. Paradoxically, keeping oneself busy with mobile technologies like the iPhone in public places is an action that shows a desire for privacy within places where actors are under constant public display.

Continuing that thread, the fields I observed are common public meeting places in Stockholm. To remind you, the fields I visited were: the main station, the entrance of a department store and a kind of public installation in Stockholm. Such places implicate that one possibly has to wait for a train to depart or a person to arrive. The following picture exemplifies such a waiting situation, where an iPhone user uses the screen to isolate from the public.

Fig. 3 Stockholm, Stureplan , 2010-02-12
Although we understand mobile communication devices as gadgets that connect us, they are simultaneously taking their user out of the physical surrounding and segregate the user. As a consequence, communication technologies like the smartphone have two different aspects: on the one hand the device supports a communication process, but on the other hand it also offers its user isolation (De Souza e Silva 2005:230).

Related to that thread I would like to hint at another aspect. In contacting social networks or taking care of business relations the question arises whether the iPhone is a medium to keep social relationships intact or if the user just thinks so. To take the example of social network platforms: the iPhone enables the user to contact her or his friends everywhere at any time of the day. But how does the user really know that this is a real interaction? Is approaching ones network not a sign of being alone rather than an expression of maintaining relationships? Due to the fact that the communication takes places in a digital space there is no ‘real’ confirmation that the user really takes care for his social relations. What I am aiming at is the fact that the iPhone imitates a feeling of communicating without an actual interaction. A similar question came up earlier, when I discussed the losing of location sense because of the GPS function. Here again I am convinced that the user is not aware of the fact that it is not ‘real’ and besides the answer depends on the point of view of the observer. If people rely on technology, then there is no question that they believe the information the device gives them. There are also people who do not rely on technology and want to convince themselves where they are and look at a street map. Concerning my research, I have to point out that every single iPhone user I observed or interviewed relied on the technical device and the information that it offers.

To support this statement, I will make use of another example from the focus group interview:

**Rodrigo:** “You know, I think the best thing on the iPhone is, expanding on Carl-Johan now, is not only the web itself (...) but also that I can have my calendar connected to my private e-mail application and then I can integrate that with the calendar from my office. So I can simultaneously see what’s going on in my private life and at work.”

This extract shows that the iPhone structures Rodrigo’s day. If the iPhone tells the user that there is a meeting at 02:00 pm the user will rely on it. I am aware of the fact that in most cases the user itself created the note in the device to not forget it. Still it
is striking how the iPhone becomes a little manager or secretary for its user. At the same time it blurs the boundaries between private and business life. Constant connection to all networks allows the family and friends’ life to spill over into the office or the other way around (Castells et al.2006:83 pp). The persistent possibility to access every kind of network is a special characteristic of smart phones. Special in the sense that with smart phones one can also produce, receive and work on written text. Statements and information become more engaging when one has it in written form. For the smart phone user this implies not only new dimensions of communication, but also the rethinking of formal requirements for example in business life: the privacy of correspondence does not include e-mails. In sum, the characteristics the iPhone use brings with it are not only positive. There is no doubt that the broad range of functions a smart phone offers, calls for further research from various points of view.

5.3. Gender Differences

Within my analysis of the data that emerged from the field observation, I found it very conspicuous that I saw women talking on the phone more often than men. In comparison to the women, men were mostly busy with the Internet or various applications. When talking to the actors in the field, it was also remarkable what men or women answered to the question: “Could you say how many hours per day you use the iPhone?” Men tried to give me numerical data and said things like: “Oh, about two or three hours a day”. In contrast almost every woman answered that question with: “All the time” or “I can’t tell you, I always use it”. Primarily, this finding proved my suspicion that there are differences of use between men and women. The men tend to distance themselves more from the technical device, whereas the women admitted that they really want to use the iPhone. The same findings appeared within my second method: the focus group interviews. One of the female interview participant states:

Åsa: “I actually have it with me all the time. In the office it lies on the table or I use it, when I am somewhere then it is always in my handbag”.

Looking through the findings from other scholars within the field of mobile communication concerning the gender differences regarding the use of cell phones, they came to the conclusion that: “across Europe, male workers were the early
adopters of wireless technology (Richard Seyler Ling 1999; Valerie Frissen 2000; Leopoldina Fortunati and Anna Maria Manganelli 2002; Jon Agar 2003; Hazel Lacohée et al. 2003). Although the gap is not that wide anymore, a study carried out in the UK found that predominantly men use mobile phones initially (60 percent of all cell phone owners), whereas women were twice as likely to use someone else’s mobile telephone at least occasionally. Furthermore, the results showed that the women often own mobile phones for security reasons. Being the person who buys a cell phone for the girlfriend, wife or daughter men fulfil their role as protectors (Scott et al. 2009, David B. Johnson 2003, Sadie Plant 2003, Kenneth J. Gergen 2005, Dafna Lemish and Akiba. A. Cohen 2005) (Castells 2006:41pp).

Within this study I came up with similar results. Women often said that they only bought the iPhone because their boyfriend recommended it to them. Yet I got to hear such comments only within the field observations. The participants of the focus group interviews are not representative for that finding, since the company bought the iPhone for the interviewed employees. Nevertheless I asked the male group at the end of the interview if they would recommend the iPhone to other people. One man told me that he thought about buying an iPhone for his girlfriend, but he was not sure yet if she would not get an “Android” (a smart phone from the company Google) instead. He argued that he wanted his girlfriend to have the newest technology. Furthermore, the members within the male group told me more technical details about the iPhone than the women within the female group. Christian for example showed that he had some experience in using smart phones. When the discussion was about the differences between an iPhone and other smart phones he pointed out:

Christian: “The difference between this one and other smart phones is that this is actually the very first smart phone which is really smart. Other smart phones are not really smart (...) I have used pretty much all the smart phones from Sony Ericsson and Nokia. They are so slow. Especially on web browsing, but also sending e-mails, all of that is so very slow (...) I had both, with a real keyboard and with a, you know, without keyboard. They are a mess in comparison to the iPhone. What takes you about 30 seconds on the iPhone takes like one minute, or a minute and a half on a smart phone for example from Nokia (...) the iPhone is so quick”.

A woman from another group commented the following on the same topic:

Meriem: “It is completely different. You can do much more and it is very easy to handle. I never had a smart phone before, just a normal cell phone but I once saw a Blackberry (...) and that is so complicated in comparison to the iPhone”.
This indicates that men tend to be more conscious about the functions, whereas the design and handling is more important for women. Min and Yan (2005) came up with a related result. In line with them, men are more concerned with evident usefulness, while it is essential for women that the use is easy (Castells et al.2006:48).

Nonetheless, I came to no explicit conclusion. I got the impression that the iPhone combines the masculine technology awareness with the feminine aesthetic or design conscious.

5.4. Possibilities and Drawbacks of the applied Methods

In his work: Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches John W. Creswell points out the advantages and disadvantages of qualitative observation. Having conducted my field observation, I can actually confirm that it is advantageous to get a first-hand experience with the participants, to record the information as it occurs and to be able to notice unusual aspects during the observation. In other words: the field observation was a good way to enter the topic and get a first impression of the iPhone users’ acting and behaviour. When considering the limitations of qualitative observations, there is no doubt that there is a risk of leaving an intrusive impression (Creswell 2003:179). Looking at the process of analyzing the pictures I took in the field, there is no question that there are various ways to interpret the pictures. Consistent to the question Gillian Rose poses: would someone else decode the images in the same way? (143:2007). Indeed, one should not forget that: “the photograph is ultimately an extension of the photographer not of the technology and the technique of photography” (Adelman 1998:148). My perception might differ from that of other researchers. But in the end I agree with Winston arguing that: “a photographic image is good evidence of the reality it captures” (1998:61).

The fact that I combined short interviews with the field observation helped me to enrich the data collection, especially because I got access to more background information. Certainly the interviews I carried out within the field overlapped with the focus group interviews in some points. This overlapping could be understood as an enrichment of the data more than a drawback.
As already mentioned, the performed focus group interviews offer the possibility to follow the group interaction within a given topic. The interaction among the group members supports the interaction with the interviewer, which leads to an enhancement of every group members’ opinion. In comparison to an individual interview, which also includes interaction, the focus group interview gives the lead over the conversation to the participants more than to the interviewer (Morgan 1988:17pp). Furthermore, David L. Morgan argues that conducting focus group interviews is the composition of the most prevalently used modes of collecting data. On the one hand, it is more controlled than a participant observation, on the other hand, it is less controlled than individual interviewing, because of its group dynamic character (1988:21pp). One of the key points and drawbacks of interviewing in general is the difficulty “(...) that people do not always say what they think, or mean what they say” (Jensen 2002:240).

Another issue one should be aware of is the different form of discourse within a gender homogenous and a mixed gender group. Being a woman myself, I might have influenced the way the participants acted within the interviews. The members of the male group tended to talk more about technical details of the iPhone. I got the impression that they wanted to explain the technical details, assuming that I did not understand the technology as well as they did. On the other hand, the female group members told me ‘secrets’, since we were only women. For example one woman said: “I am a bit embarrassed to say that but I check my e-mails when I am still in my bed. And right after that I check what happened on Facebook. Then I get up”. Within the mixed group the interview partners were very open, about their private use of the iPhone as well, but it took a bit more time until they talked about it.

The field observation and the interview supplemented each other in a good manner. Sam D. Sieber states: “the opinions held by a large population can be measured only by survey techniques; the unverbalized normative pattern of a small group might be measurable only by observation” (Sieber 1973:1337). In general, the field observation allows examining everyday situations and gives the researcher a “natural” view of “reality”. I consider the field observation as a framework within I could conduct the focus group interviews afterwards. The fact that I linked the field observation to short follow-up interviews within the field helped not only to
understand the actors’ behaviour, but it also supported the process of interpretation after the collection of the data.

It is clear that using two methods is of great advantage. The fact that the role of the researcher can never be removed from the final results of the study is no argument not to try to consider phenomena from different angles. As a matter of fact, combining methods is an adequate way to see if one tends to interpret results in a one-sided way. As there might appear “main findings”, a second method might show that these were not the most important topics of all, and even if so, they might not be interpreted in the same way. In line with Norman Denzin, I agree that triangulation is one of the potential solutions to get the possibility to move beyond personal biases descending from single methodologies (1928: 294).

Nevertheless, Creswell notes that the process of interpretation is a main characteristic of qualitative research. The researcher’s values and opinions are a main part of the interpretational work. Moreover the interpretation of everything that the researcher sees, hears and understands belongs to qualitative research (2003: 176). Most importantly, it lies in the nature of qualitative research that one can never generalize the discovered findings. After all it is possible to apply the findings emerging from this study to the observed and interviewed iPhone users.
6. Conclusion

A key feature in wireless communication with smart phones is connectivity, not mobility. Although communication takes place in rather constant areas, like the home or the office, smart phones are used everywhere and the accessibility, and with it the availability, functions at every time. Since mobile communication devices like the smart phone blur the access to computer networks, information systems and the Internet at any place, one defines the communication with such devices as universal and constant than as mobile. The aspect of connectivity changes a lot for the user. Basically it changes the way of communication connotatively. The connection with networks like family, friends, business partners, or with entertainment propositions, entails the effect that people build unique networks, which they remodel as soon as something changes in social or business life. The possibility to personalize the iPhone is a main characteristic when looking at usage patterns. Every iPhone user I studied saw it as a great advantage that one can adjust the smart phones’ ‘inner’ life to one’s personal preferences. The adaption mechanism gives the user room to modify the device. Hence, the smart phone fits in with their individual practices matching to their interests, values, needs and their demands. The smart phone offers the user to participate in a pervasive system of communication, where mobile communication technology mediates social practice in all sectors of human life. In fact, people shape technologies, but technologies also shape their users. It could be regarded as a circular flow rather than a linear process of cause and consequence. Therefore it is evident that the iPhone, with its broad offer of connection opportunities, supports the communication process in an essential manner. At the same time the use of the iPhone is in a way paradoxical: the device isolates its users from their immediate surrounding the moment they use the device and all its possibilities to connect. The user dives into a digital space, which disconnects her or him from the immediate presence. Thus the iPhone supports the communication process as well as it interferes with communication especially in the public sphere. Due to the connection to all kinds of networks the iPhone feeds the user with such a broad range of information that the user does not have the time to reflect on all the information.

The use of the iPhone does not only change the ways of communication, but it also is a medium that structures the users’ daily life. Due to that the iPhone changes the
user’s relation to time and space. Along with the huge range of communication and information opportunities the user gets used to the convenience and strongly relies on the device. Already using the iPhone as an alarm clock in the mornings, finding the way or knowing when the next meeting is are definitely practices of use that organizes a main part of the user’s life. The risk of relying too much on the device exists. As a consequence, the user feels stressed or lost when the device fails, because the battery is empty or there is no network. Since the iPhone is the connecting medium to almost every network in the user’s life, a breakdown can have unpleasant consequences that can affect main parts of her or his private and business life. It follows that through all the convenience the gadget offers its user, one unlearns how to structure or organize everyday situations without the smart phone. Besides, the question arises whether the user is aware of the fact that she or he puts her or himself in a dependency, which they created themselves by using the device. What if the alarm clock function does not wake up the user in the morning? Or the user is not able to access her or his e-mails in the morning? When the device fails, the user lacks creativity to solve basic issues or situations without the gadget. The convenience the gadget offers leads to a dependency. The user expects the device to always work. Relying on a machine that works continuously pushes the demand for immediacy. The iPhone can be seen as an extension of the users’ mind since it contains so much private information. Therefore it captures a part of the user’s identity. When the device fails, the user sees it a personal failure too.

In addition to that, the design and look of the gadget is a main appeal for iPhone users. Here the smart phone turns out to be an accessory with which people make statements to their surrounding. These statements can be of different nature. They can be based on image, fashion or design conscious in the user’s perception. Due to the design, which is very appealing to many users and the high technology standard that it offers, the iPhone seems to be a trend object. The iPhone creates a tension between individualisation and community. To trace back to the statement that the iPhone can be personalized and hence offers a form of expressing one’s individuality, it can be seen as a kind of image statement too. Being part of a community of iPhone owners it is especially important to stress the individuality within that community. As a result the use of iPhones develops a gap between the people who own one and the people who do not. Thereto I expected to find a significant gender difference within the use of smart phones. It is interesting that the only
noticeable difference between men and women using the iPhone is the fact that men are more aware of the broad range of functions the iPhone provides whereas women tend to be more attracted by the design and the appearance of the device.

However, new communication devices are double sided. The smart phone is a tool of communication within a lot of people’s network that is constantly switched on. Therefore it is an adequate medium to broaden the scope from personal to social matters. Through its multiple channels people can observe and share happenings in reality with their networks. The use of smart phones like the iPhone influences the ways of communication in positive as well as in negative ways. Due to the speed of the information streams, networks can be used to spread genuine but also inaccurate information in the same way. One could argue that this is the same case with mobile phones or other media, but not as up-to-date, not with the possibility to reach people everywhere and without any constraints. Anyhow, the price smart phone users pay to be able to reach anyone at every time of the day is that they are themselves constantly reachable for their networks too. Being available twenty-four hours a day even forces the user to explain why she or he did not answer the call or the e-mail or the text message.

Within this thesis I have tried to identify the emerging patterns and characteristics when using an iPhone. Instead of perceiving the smart phone as an alternative medium of communication, one should view it as a complementary one. A wireless communication device like the smart phone adds an eminent aspect to new forms of communication. A number of trends, but also negative concomitants, indicate the building of ubiquitous networks within a broad range of communication channels. The development of this universal network is, in turn, one of the characteristics of the network society.

Since wireless communication in general has become such a big part of our lives, a cell phone or smart phone is involved in almost every aspect of social practices. The problems that occur within a society that is constantly connected and available are first of all the risk of widening the gap of the digital divide and secondly the development of new rules of behaviour - as pointed out above, in section 2.7. Apple’s iPhone is, compared to other smart phones, expensive. For a majority of the society the cost of the device - and the cost of usage - is still too high. As it seems now, using the iPhone is still a privilege, reserved for the people who can afford it. Using
an iPhone can be seen as an elite practice. According to the results of the field observation I conducted, the iPhone does not even exist in places where the majority of the population is part of the working class. It is important that people have equal admission to hardware in order to get access and/or produce diverse forms of media content. People with no access to the important networks within society that provide information, empowerment, discussion, entertainment recreation and amusement are simply excluded from most of the modern social practices. Looking at the formation of a mobile etiquette with focus on smart phones could be a possible issue to gain more insight about mobile communication practices and their effects. Besides, effects like the digital divide should not be forgotten when suggesting forthcoming research topics. Basically there are still issues to be worked on in the development of wireless communication technologies and the use of smart phones. These issues concern especially investment on education of the user and the affordability for more people.

When evaluating a new technical device like the iPhone, one needs to weigh the positives and negatives. Concerning the iPhone users, referring to them I studied within this thesis, I have the impression that they are overwhelmed by the iPhone. The iPhone offers them such a broad range of functions, and with it a flood of information, that users are not able to not reflect on possible negative aspects yet. If this finding is true for a broader range of iPhone users, it is also a thread that could be continued within further research.
Bibliographic Details


Appendix A

Field Notes

Stureplan, (Svampen) Mushroom, 16.00-19.00 h

Åhlens Entrance, 17.00-19.30 h

Centralstation, 16.30-19.00 h

Questions:

-What did you just do with your iPhone?

-How long would you say you use the iPhone a day?

-Do you use it preferably as a telephone or for something else? Which functions do you use the most?

-Would you say you use the iPhone more for business or private reasons?

-Do you feel uncomfortable when you do not have a network connection and the iPhone is not working?

Stureplan

Women, 28 she stands in front of Sturegallerian and waits for someone. She has her iPhone in her hands and earphones in her ears. She listens to music and checks her e-mails simultaneously. She says she uses the iPhone “all the time”. She uses the iPhone more for business than for private reasons. She feels very uncomfortable when the iPhone is switched off or she does not have a connection. She would say she uses the iPhone more as a telephone and music player than to surf on the Internet. She also told me that all of her friends are having iPhones and they are also always busy with it.

Man, 34 he walks towards Sturegallerian and has his iPhone in his hands. He just checked his e-mails. He says he uses the iPhone around 1½ hours a day. He says he has the impression that he saves a lot of time with it because when he is waiting for something or in the airplane he can do it there and does not have to spend his precious spare time with it. He is happy that he can save time this way. He uses the iPhone only for the Internet and mainly to work with his e-mails. To call people he
has a second cell phone. He would say he uses the iPhone mainly for business reasons.

**Man, 34** he crosses the street at Stureplan and at the traffic light he uses his iPhone. I talk to him while we are crossing the street. He just sent an e-mail. He uses the iPhone around 3 hours a day. He uses it more for business than for private reasons. When he is offline he just checks everything a bit later.

**Man, 32** I observed him walking around the Svampen with his iPhone in his hands and with him is a woman who talks to him at the same time. He wants to find a street and uses the GPS application of his iPhone. He says he uses the iPhone more for such things than for calling people. He thinks that the iPhone is very convenient for him because he has everything in one device. He assumes that he uses the iPhone around 4 hours a day.

**Åhlens**

**Man, 35** stands at Åhlens and sends a text message to someone. He uses the iPhone 12-14 hours a day. He is not very content with the iPhone since the telephone is not good in his opinion. The connection is often very bad and he can’t understand the other person very often. He is a bit angry because the iPhone was very expensive and he thinks for that amount of money it really should work. When he doesn't have a connection he is very annoyed.

**Women, 28** she stands at the entrance and waits for someone. She has her iPhone in her hands. She just wrote a text message. She is not able to tell me how many hours a day she is using the iPhone. She says, “I use it all the time”. She uses the iPhone for phone calls as well as for the Internet. She also uses it more for business than for private reasons. When she is offline she thinks: “Oh my god, I have to check my iPhone”

**Man, 35** he waits at the stairs to the Tunnelbana. He has his iPhone in his hands and just wanted to call someone. He uses the iPhone around 1 to 2 hours a day. He uses it equally for calls and for the Internet. When he is disconnected he does not have a problem, he uses his iPhone anyway only when he “needs” to.

**Women, 29** she waits for a friend and just sent her last work e-mail for the day. She says she is happy she has the iPhone and that she can work with it everywhere. If
she weren’t able to send this e-mail she would still sit in her office and send e-mails, and finally come to late to this meeting here at Åhlens. With the iPhone she could do her e-mails in the Tunnelbana and on the way to Åhlens and is not dependent on the place. She said she uses the iPhone the whole day. When she doesn’t have a network or the battery is empty she gets very stressed.

Centralstation

Woman, 29 waits for 15 min and keeps herself busy with her iPhone and a book. She just sent an e-mail. She uses the iPhone around 1-2 hours a day. Mainly for e-mails and to call people. But she would say that she is sometimes glad being in a meeting and the iPhone is switched off.

Man, 28 stands at the main entrance with his friend, he has a conversation with him and meanwhile he uses his iPhone. He used it to check his e-mails. He spends about 1 hour a day “on” the iPhone. He prefers to use the iPhone for the Internet than as a telephone. He uses the iPhone for business and for private reasons even.

Man, 31 waits outside the Pressbyrån within T-Centralen and sends e-mail. He waits for a colleague who buys cigarettes. He says he spends about 3-4 hours a day with the iPhone. He mainly uses the iPhone for the Internet access and applications. He does not use it as a telephone that often.

Woman, 33 she waits for a phone call and doesn’t want to go to the trains because it is too loud on the platform. She has to make a phone call now that’s why she can’t really talk to me anymore. She uses it mainly for business reasons.

Man, 29 just got off work and takes the Pendeltåg home. He uses the iPhone to find out when the next bus is running from the Pendeltåg station he has to get off. He says he uses the iPhone around 4 hours a day and when he does not have any network connection he waits until it works again. He uses the iPhone for application, telephone and Internet. He never uses the camera because the quality is too bad.

Man, 45 walks around with headphones and the iPhone in his hands. He said he waits for the train and looked up which platform it has to be (standing in front of the information board that says where and when the trains leaving) He says he uses the iPhone more for work than for private reasons.
**Man, 29** he also waits for the train and walks around in the main hall while he made a phone call. He does not like to use the headset only when he listens to music. He thinks the iPhone is very stylish and in addition to that convenient.

**Women, 27** she listens to music while she waits for someone to pick her up. She really likes the iPhone, especially the applications. She uses it more for private than for business reasons. She also has a green case around the iPhone because she thinks it looks nicer. While she listens to music she holds the phone in her hand because she wants to see it immediately if something happens.

**Man, 31** he just arrived in Stockholm and checks out the fastest connection from T-Centralen to his work place. He uses the iPhone more for work. He says that he does everything with it. He adds: “I love it”.

**Skärholmen**

12:00-14:00h Tunnelbana Exit/ Shopping Centre: meeting point and busy place

Cell phones everywhere but no iPhone

At least every second person has a cell phone: either talking on the phone or texting etc. iPhones are different to recognize from a distance- because people using two hands with the iPhone, “normal” cell phones are used with one hand

The presence of mobile phones is enormous but still no iPhone, also striking that in Skärholmen every age group has a mobile phone
Appendix B

Pictures:

Stockholm, Central Station, 2010-02-10

Stockholm, Department Store Åhlens, 2010-02-13

Stockholm, Central Station, 2010-02-10
Stockholm, Stureplan: 2010-02-12

Stockholm, Sturegallerian 2010-02-11

Stockholm, Skärholmen 2010-02-02
Appendix C
Details Interviewees

Dumont, Rachel
Age: 28
Profession: Lead Advisor
Current Educational Level: Bachelor
Has an iPhone for: 9 Months
Average time of use a day: 12 hours
Contact: rachel.dumont@projectplace.com

Farnstrom, Carl-Johan
Age: 28
Profession: Account Manager/Salesman
Current Educational Level: Bachelor of Business Administration
Has an iPhone for: 5 Months
Average time of use a day: 10 hours
Contact: carl-johan.farnstrom@projectplace.com

Grote, Melanie
Age: 31
Profession: Accountent
Current Educational Level: University, Master Degree
Has an iPhone for: 1 year
Average time of use a day: 10 hours
Contact: melanie.schrahe@projectplace.com

Holmblad, Meriem
Age: 39
Profession: Customer Relation
Current Educational Level: University
Has an iPhone for: 6 Months
Average time of use a day: 14 hours
Contact: meriem.holmlad@projectplace.com

Indgul, Harald
Age: 30
Profession: Customer Relation
Current Educational Level: Master
Has an iPhone for: 10 Months
Average time of use a day: 13 hours
Contact: harald.indgul@projectplace.com

Knötter, Katrin
Age: 25
Profession: Customer Relations Representative
Current Educational Level: University Degree
Has an iPhone for: 7 Months
Average time of use a day: 13 hours
Contact: katrin.knötter@projectplace.com

Kögel, Andrea
Age: 32
Profession: Customer Relation
Current Educational Level: Master of Business Administration
Has an iPhone for: 7 Months
Average time of use a day: 10 hours
Contact: andrea.koegel@projectplace.com
Moscoso, Christian
Age: 32
Profession: IT- Technician
Current Educational Level: Bachelor
Has an iPhone for: 10 Months
Average time of use a day: 8 hours
Contact: christian.moscoso@projectplace.com

Munoz, Rodrigo
Age: 34
Profession: Sales Representative
Current Educational Level: University
Has an iPhone for: 4 Months
Average time of use a day: 8-12 hours
Contact: rodrigo.munoz@projectplace.com

Rudberg, Åsa
Age: 26
Profession: Technical Writer
Current Educational Level: University
Has an iPhone for: 6 Months
Average time of use a day: 2 hours
Contact: åse.rudberg@projectplace.com

Tang, Ching-Ho
Age: 27
Profession: Business Controller
Current Educational Level: Master Degree
Has an iPhone for: 5-6 Months
Average time of use a day: 8 hours
Werner, Walter
Age: 33
Profession: Head of Information Security
Current Educational Level: Master
Has an iPhone for: 8 Months
Average time of use a day: 14 hours
Contact: walter.werner@projectplace.com

Appendix D

Self-Completion Questionnaire: Focus Group Interviews

Name:
Surname:
Age:
Profession:
Current Educational Level:
For how long have you had an iPhone?
For how long do you use it now?
Could you roughly say how many hours a day you are using the iPhone?

THANK YOU!
Appendix E

Central Questions for Focus Group Interviews

Criteria: Man or woman

Using an iPhone, employed

Young adult (25-35)

First of all, I want to thank all of you for your willingness to participate in that study. Within my Master studies I do research about media use. More precisely, I want to know more about mobile media. I am interested in how people use their iPhones. I contacted you because I know that you have an iPhone, and I consider you to be a good group to talk to about this topic. I will start with some general questions.

ASSOCIATIONS WITH THE IPHONE

-What do you think about the iPhone?

-Do you like it or not?

-Do you all plan to continue using the iPhone?

-Why did you choose to have a black/white iPhone?

-Why did your company choose to give you an iPhone? Does this have any special reasons?

-What do you think about the iPhone’s size?

-What do you think about the iPhone’s appearance? (shape, design)

USAGE PATTERNS

General iPhone use

-Tell me about a typical day of using your iPhone?

-What kind of functions do you use the most? (telephone, internet, mp3 player, camera etc.)

-Where are you mainly when you use the iPhone?
Where do you keep your iPhone mostly? (handbag, pockets). (Is it important to reach it as soon as possible when you receive something?)

**iPhone use while working**

-Which functions of your iPhone do you use the most when you are working? (telephone, Internet)

**iPhone use in leisure time**

-Which function is it that you use for private reasons the most?

-Do you have the impression that you save leisure time with your iPhone?

**COMPARISON: ADVANTAGES/DRAWBACKS**

-If you were to compare the iPhone to other or your previous mobile device(s):

-Is it like other smart phones or is it different? If so, in what way?

-Do you know any other people who have an iPhone?

-What do they say about differences in using the iPhone?

-Would you recommend the iPhone to other people? Why do you think other people would buy the iPhone?

**DISCONNECTION:**

Can you try to describe what do you think when you do not have a connection with your iPhone. For example when you are in an airplane, a meeting or a place where the reception is bad. Do you feel comfortable/uncomfortable?

-What do you do then?

-When and where do you switch off your iPhone?

Thank you for your time and for helping me conducting this research.

-Is there anything else you would like to add?

-Do you have any questions?
Appendix F

Interviewtranscripts

1. Mixed group: Andrea Kögel, Katrin Knötter, Harald Indgul, Walter Werner
   Tuesday, 16th of February, 17.00 h- 17.25 h

Bettina: First of all, I want to thank all of you for your willingness to participate in that study. Within my Master studies I do research about media use. More precisely, I want to know more about mobile media. I am interested in how people use their iPhones. I contacted you because I know that you have an iPhone, and I consider you to be a good group to talk to about this topic. I will start with some general questions.

(They all have their iPhones on the table in front of themselves during the whole interview, it was striking when someone talks, then sometimes they ‘played’ with it during they talk about it)

Bettina: What do you think about the iPhone? Just in general. What comes to your mind when you think about the iPhone?
Walter: Jesus Phone.
Harald: (laugh)
Bettina: Okay, what do you mean by that?
Walter: It’s actually something that was, ehm it’s a term that was coined by an IT-Website called ‘The Register’. And they always call it Jesus phone because when once Steve Jobs presented the iPhone everybody was like that (he puts his arms in the air and imitates worshippers and their gestures).
Bettina: And you would agree with that term.
Walter: Yes, definitely.
Andrea: I wouldn’t, ehm I mean, I can understand it. I would never go back to a normal mobile phone. I’m so used to it. After one week already I said: Yes- iPhone this is it, I will never go back to something else (laugh). So, now I can also understand my friends who already told me that before.
Bettina: And, Katrin and Harald, what do you think about it?
Kartin: I would describe it like a small computer in my pocket.
Walter: Yes, exactly. This is what it is. A small computer you always have with you.
Bettina: Does it mean that you all like the iPhone? Or is there anything you are not content with?
Harald: I would say I like it but the only thing that is disturbing is the battery. It could last a bit longer.
Katrin: Yes, the battery lifetime is really too short.
Bettina: The battery lifetime, how long does it last until you have to charge it again?
Harald: Usually you charge it every day. So it lasts for exactly one day.
Andrea: I charge it every night, when I don’t use it (laugh).
Katrin: (laugh).
Andrea: Especially with our job, because we really call a lot of customers, they call us a lot of times so I charge it every day.
Bettina: Do you have a landline on your desk, like a usual office telephone?
Harald: No, we do everything with the iPhone.
Andrea: Yes, everything, every day (everyone nods and laughs).
Bettina: Do you all plan to continue using the iPhone?
Katrin: Yes, we have to as long as we work here. (I only found out during this first interview, that their company bought them an iPhone and they have to have it)
Walter: Mhh.
Harald: Yes, that’s true.
Bettina: Why did you choose to have a black/white iPhone? (everyone holds the iPhone in their hands and looks at it, they all have a black iPhone. Another striking thing is that they all have such plastic covers around it, in different colours) Ah, I see you all have a black one. Why?
Andrea: It is very much nicer. I like the style much more.
Katrin: White looks cheap.
Harald: I would say black is more elegant and more discreet.
Bettina: And you all have these cases around it.
Walter: Yes, they are company ensuranced.
Bettina: I see. (laugh everyone)
Andrea: Actually, we have to have it.
Bettina: How come you bought an iPhone? (I only realized now, that they got the iPhone from the company)
Harald: The company bought it for us.
**Walter:** The whole company switched all phones to the iPhone. We made a deal with ‘Telenor’. In the deal the iPhones were included so we got a flat fee for phone, and a flat fee for Datacom and the phone with it.

**Bettina:** What do you think about the iPhone’s size? How do you like it? When you also think about the display, working with your fingers on it.

**Kartin:** I think it’s a good size. In the beginning I thought, oh it’s huge. Especially with this protection around it and everything but now it’s okay. Anyhow I always have a bag with me so I don’t really care, *but it shouldn’t be* bigger.

**Bettina:** And with the touch screen is that okay as well?

**Kartin:** Sometimes it is too small. But in general it is a good size.

**Andrea:** Sometimes with sms I think the pad is too small but if this is the case then I just turn it around so I can see it better *(While she says that she demonstrates it with her own iPhone in her hands).* Then it is much bigger and I can also use my two thumbs. But apart from that I think it is a really good size. It’s strange in the beginning you say, oh it’s too big especially when you compare it with the normal mobile phone I had before. (...) And now it’s the other way around when I have a normal phone in my hands I think: Oh, what’s that?

**Bettina:** Okay.

**Andrea:** I think it’s like you said Katrin, it’s like a mini computer.

**Harald:** You have everything in it, you can listen to music, you have different apps, it’s just so convenient. I actually can go on the Internet, I even can read really practically and I don’t think it should be *smaller.*

**Walter:** I also think it’s a perfect size.

**Bettina:** What do you think about the iPhone’s appearance? Especially when you think about the design and its shape?

**Andrea:** *I love it.*

**Katrin:** Me too *(the two men are noding).*

**Bettina:** Tell me about a typical day of using your iPhone? What kind of functions do you use the most?

**Katrin:** Well, since it’s my alarm, it is the first thing I have in my hands.

**Harald:** The most is telephone and e-mail push.

**Walter:** Because we getting all our e-mails on our iPhone.

**Andrea:** Then I would say it’s Internet and then sms function.

**Kartin:** And the calendar function is very important, every day.
**Walter:** Do you only mean the stuff that is built in or also the applications you can download.

**Bettina:** I mean everything.

**Walter:** Then it’s a Sudoku game *(laugh)*. Followed by phone and sms and the alarm clock of course.

**Bettina:** Where are you mainly when you use the iPhone?

**Kartin:** Everywhere.

**Walter:** Yes, everywhere.

**Harald:** Mhh.

**Andrea:** As you work nine to five every day and Monday to Friday, most of the time is naturally at work but I have it on me all the time. Just when I want to look up something on the Internet for example.

**Kartin:** Booking my gym class *(laugh)*.

**Bettina:** Do you have the impression you save leisure time, since you can check your e-mails everywhere for example and you don’t have to go to your office to do that.

**Walter:** No. Not at all *(laugh)*.

**Katrin:** I would say it’s quite the oppsosite. You wake up and your check your e-mails. I already try to stop doing that because I loose time. But I am just too curious I want to know what happened and then I shut off my alarm and check my e-mails, and then my Facebook.

**Harald:** The morning starts quite slow.

**Andrea:** But I think I save time, because sure, you wake up with your work already but you can stop that. The good thing is that I can start working in the Tunnelbana maybe. There I am just sitting around and wait until I come to my office. So I can really check my e-mail inbox (...). And when I arrive at work I don’t have to do it anymore.

**Walter:** Ja, it saves working time.

**Bettina:** Are you able to separate the work and the private use?

**Harald:** I check my e-mails on the weekend *(laugh)*.

**Andrea:** So do I. Sometimes. But when I am out skiing then I don’t have it with me. And then I don’t check my iPhone.

**Kartin:** Yes. But I also have some periods when I just leave it at home.
Walter: This is very different from person to person. I would have it with me when I ski.
Bettina: When you compare it to other smart phones. What is different?
Harald: It is very different.
Bettina: In what way?
Harald: Eh, well the whole interface is very different because it wasn’t a touch screen. It was with a regular keyboard. Yes, it had Mail integrated it had a music player and so on. So it was okay. But this is much more of a fun device (He hold it in his hands and looks at it when he says that).
Walter: That’s true.
Harald: It is only that it has everything. You have Facebook, you have Twitter, you can even watch TV on it if you want. That makes quite a difference I would say.
Bettina: But is the fun part, that it is so easy to handle?
Kartin: I would say it is the possibility to personalize a telephone. You can download all the applications you want. I don’t know but that’s at least what I like so much about it. That makes it fun. It is really like your computer where you install what you want.
Walter: As long as it is approved by Apple (laugh everyone).
Andrea: For me, I had a smart phone before as well but I think working with the iPhone is so much easier and faster. And of course the look. So, look and easiness.
Bettina: Would you recommend it to other people?
Kartin: Depending on what you want to do with it. But probably yes, I would recommend it.
Bettina: No we are turning to the last part of the interview. When and where do you switch your iPhone off?
Katrin: I can’t breath, I feel cold sweat when it is switched off (She makes fun of it. Laugh everyone).
Walter: Only in an airplane.
Harald: As often as I can. Which is not often because I am always on call (laugh everyone).
Andrea: Yes, I switch it off only in an airplane.
Kartin: Yes me too.
Bettina: Okay then. We are at the end. Do you have any questions? Do you like to add anything?
Walter: No, the iPhone is nice.
Harald: Nej, no queetions.
(Katrin and Andrea shake their head)
Bettina: Thank you very much.
Andrea: You are welcome.
Walter: No problem.

2. Male group: Ching-Ho Tang, Christian Moscoso, Rodrigo Munoz, Carl-Johan Farnstrom
Wednesday, 17th of February, 17.00 h- 17.35 h

Bettina: First of all, I want to thank all of you for your willingness to participate in that study. Within my Master studies I do research about media use. More precisely, I want to know more about mobile media. I am interested in how people use their iPhones. I contacted you because I know that you have an iPhone, and I consider you to be a good group to talk to about this topic. I will start with some general questions.
(Two persons have their iPhones on the table in front of themselves during the whole interview, when someone talks, then sometimes they 'played' with it during they talk about it).

Bettina: What do you think about the iPhone? Just in general. Your first association
Ching-Ho: I think about Steve Jobs.
Rodrigo: Work. That’s my first association with the iPhone (laugh).
Bettina: Okay, maybe you can explain me something now in the beginning. How come your company decided to give you all an iPhone?
Carl-Johan: I think it is an image thing. For showing that we are an innovative company, modern and young.
Rodrigo: I think that’s true. I never saw it that way.
Carl-Johan: Ja, well Christian is our IT man here. He decided to have one mobile phone for the whole company, right?
Christian: Yes.
Bettina: Why did you choose an iPhone?
Christian: Because the iPhone is the best. For e-mailing, for applications, and because also we as a company, we are developing applications for no, not applications. Ehm, we have an extension of our service in the form of an application especially for the iPhone. So you know, it felt right from the beginning on. If you know what I mean.

Carl-Johan: And people want to have an iPhone (laugh everyone). And despite from that we really save a lot of money, each of us. If we choose to have an iPhone.

Rodrigo: But people also wanted an iPhone.

Carl-Johan: That’s true.

Christian: Ja, but they don’t decide. You can want as much as you..you can want it for one year and we will not buy it. But we decided at the IT department that the iPhone would actually be better for us, because of the application we are developing for it.

Bettina: Did you take other devices into consideration?

Christian: Yes, once, and that was the Blackberry.

Bettina: Why was it the iPhone in the end?

Christian: Blackberry is too complicated. The iPhone is easier to use.

Bettina: Do you all like the iPhone?

Carl-Johan: Mh, ja.

Rodrigo: Ja, it works well.

Ching-Ho: Except from the battery. But it is like a small mini computer you can use everywhere and anywhere. Or at lest everywhere you have Internet connection (laugh).

Carl-Johan: Ja, I also think that the best thing is that you have full web access everywhere. Of course the game and the other stuff is cool (...) but that really makes my work more efficient.

Bettina: And what colour do you all have? I see you have a black one (talking to one of the two persons who have their iPhone on the table).

Carl-Johan: Black.

Christian: Black.

Ching-Ho: Ja, black.

Rodrigo: Titanium

Bettina: Oh, I never saw that one. Could you decide to have that one?

Rodrigo: No, but I bought this myself. It is not from the company.
Bettina: Why did the rest of you decide to have a black one?
Carl-Johan: I just thought it looks very much nicer.
Ching-Ho: More elegant.
Rodrigo: You know, I think the best thing on the iPhone is, expanding on Carl-Johan now, is not only the web itself (...) but also that I can have my calendar connected to my private e-mail application and then I can integrate that with the calendar from my office. So I can simultaneously see what’s going on in my private life and at work.
Bettina: Can you separate from the work use and the private use? What about weekends, do you check your e-mail then as often as during the week?
Rodrigo: I don’t use it very much on the weekends. Unless I check stuff up. Like when is the traffic, you know the local traffic status or what is the name of the restaurant. Yes, sometimes I check I my work e-mail but usually it is not that important. We don’t work in such a manner that it is really important to pick it up during the weekend. So I don’t have to (...) but you know, if I want to I can.
Bettina: And where do you keep your iPhone usually?
Ching-Ho: In the pocket of my jacket or suit.
Carl-Johan: Ja, in the jeans.
Christian: Ja
Rodrigo: Here, in the jeans (shows the left pocket of his jeans).
Bettina: Okay, and what do you think about the iPhone’s size?
Carl-Johan: I mean it could be a little, little bit smaller. The screen could be a little bit smaller but just a centimetre in each direction or something like that. But smaller than that would be unpractical I think. To really, really use it.
Rodrigo: Ja. A little bit smaller.
Carl-Johan: And then it could be a little bit slimer, like the iPod touch. It is not as thick as this one. (Again, when they talk about it hey hold it in their hands and explain it to me with parallel demonstration)
Christian: Ja.
Bettina: What do you think about its design? The appearance of the iPhone?
Rodrigo: Since mine is titanium I of course like it (laugh everyone).
Ching-Ho: I think it looks very nice. Very plain but still classy design.
Carl-Johan: Ja, that’s true.
Christian: Mhh.
Bettina: And can you tell me about a typical day of using the iPhone?
Rodrigo: The alarm clock rings.

Carl-Johan: I first check my e-mail, then I use it on my way to work to listen to music. Then I check my e-mail on the train again. And then when I arrive here I make a lot of phone calls with it. Basically all day long. I check my e-mails during the day. And on my way home is listen to music again and then I use it for games *(laugh everyone)*.

Christian: For me it looks kind of the same but during work, I also play games *(laugh everyone)*.

Rodrigo: For me it starts with the alarm and then it is the IT-news in the morning from an app. And then on the train to work it is either the radio, web radio or some kind of music platforms like Spotify. I don’t check my e-mails until I am at work.

Bettina: Do you feel like you save time with the iPhone?

Rodrigo: Totally.

Carl-Johan: It is more efficient when you can look through your mails and you know what to do before you come to work. You feel like you are a little bit better prepared. And as a nice side effect you have some music on.

Rodrigo: Ah that’s actually something to improve. It would be very nice if you could multitask on it.

Ching-Ho: That would be very cool.

Bettina: What functions do you mainly use?

Ching-Ho: I use it as a telephone. If I am for example in the office I don’t use the iPhone for e-mails. I think it’s more convenient to write e-mails on the computer. And I am not like the sales guys. I don’t have to travel around.

Carl-Johan: Yes. For me as a sales person I mainly use it to send e-mails and to browse in the web. Then I use it for a special sales system.

Rodrigo: I use it for private communication with sms during the day and for discreet communication with colleagues during meetings (...). And also an app that is like a company wide MSN.

Ching-Ho: It is also a bit like a Facebook wall where you can comment on. Or Twitter.

Carl-Johan: Ja, it is more like Twitter. But with a company focus.

Bettina: And when you compare it to other smart phones? What is different with the iPhone? Maybe you had a smart phone before?
Ching-Ho: No, this is my first one, so. But I think in comparison to a cell phone the camera is better, the battery lasts longer and the best thing is the use of Internet wherever you are.

Christian: The difference between this one and other smart phones is, that this is actually the very first smart phone which is really smart. Other smart phones are not really smart (...) I have used pretty much all the smart phones from Sony Ericsson and Nokia. They are so slow. Especially on web browsing, but also sending e-mails, all of that is so very slow (...) I had both, with a real keyboard and with a, you know, without keyboard. They are a mess in comparison to the iPhone. What takes you about 30 seconds on the iPhone takes like one minute, or a minute and a half on a smart phone for example from Nokia (...) the iPhone is so quick.

Bettina: Do you think it also has to do something with the fact that its so easy to handle?

Christian: No, it is the phone itself. It is the fact that the iPhone is not multitasking (...) if you work on something than it is faster because you only work on one thing, right. Other smart phones are trying to multitask and that makes them very slow. The phone looses a lot of performance then. Not so with the iPhone.

Bettina: I see.

Christian: I mean this phone can do a lot of stuff at the same time *(he demonstrates with his iPhone how he goes on the Internet)* you see all the power concentrates on what you do at the moment. Instead of keeping stuff open and becoming slow.

Carl-Johan: But what I also like about the iPhone is how its clever and easy to use compared to other phones. When you want to install an e-mail account on your iPhone it takes *under* a minute.

Rodrigo: Yeah.

Carl-Johan: Whereas in a normal phone or the other phones I used, that is a day’s project *(laugh everyone)*. (...) And then also with my 3G modem I just have to plug the iPhone in my computer and that works instantly and I have everything I need on my computer.

Rodrigo: When it comes to that I had a Nokia 6600 slide phone and once you set it up it is very easy to use but I have to admit it is not as easy as with the iPhone. (...) As a smart phone a *big plus* is the easiness of the usage.

Christian: I used a Blackberry, but didn’t like it either.

Ching-Ho: I also don’t like how the Blackberry looks like.
Rodrigo: The best thing with the iPhone is anyway that you can customize. And it’s so easy to set up. You can customize your own way. So the use, the easiness gives you a big leap forward to use the stuff (...) you make it more yours. And with other smart phones you have to follow their kind of track.

Bettina: Would you recommend the iPhone to other people?

Rodrigo: I would say yes but my girlfriend is actually thinking of a smart phone and I am thinking of getting her another device called Android.

Bettina: How come?

Rodrigo: Because the Android is not locked down when it comes to apps.

Carl-Johan: I would say it is the best phone I have ever used.

Ching-Ho: Ja, me too.

Christian: Definitely. I would never go back to another phone.

Rodrigo: But it is not an option to go back. (...) It’s the question to move perhaps forward.

Ching-Ho: But I don’t know if I could recommend this for everybody. For example my parents are not really technical. Of course it is easy but they just want to call someone you know, maybe text messaging but that’s basically it.

Carl-Johan: But I mean you see people in the sixties on the subway using an iPhone.

Bettina: The last question I have is: when and where do you switch your iPhone off?

Carl-Johan: I never switch it off (laugh).

Rodrigo: I never had the habit of switching phones off. Ever. If its off it is only because of the battery.

Bettina: And when the battery is empty?

Rodrigo: I can always use my computer. There I have everything.

Christian: I have to ask you something. Who switches phones off nowadays?

Bettina: I do it sometimes. When I don’t want to hear and see anything.

Christian: Mhh.

Carl-Johan: That’s because you use the iPhone for so many other things than just calling, so you don’t switch it off. With a cell phone, I would turn it off and think, no I don’t feel like being available at the moment. But here it is just one app, you know (laugh everyone).

Rodrigo: It has so many features, you never turn it off. I mean, I can see that something is happening but still I don’t need to pick it up.
Bettina: You have it on silent.
Carl-Johan: I mean I just don’t bring it all the time but I never switch it off. And also if I want to listen to music, you know. I don’t switch it off.
Rodrigo: I think the more things you have the more you tend to not switch it off.
Christian: So, you know that this is the only phone where you can’t take away the battery (...) you can’t open it (*shows the backside of the iPhone*) once it froze and I had to wait until the battery is empty to restart it, since this button here with which you turn it on and off was broken. That was bad. I had to wait a day (*laugh everyone*).
Rodrigo: But yeah, we have our computers here at arm’s length, we just have to use them then.
Bettina: Okay, then I thank you very much. Do you have any questions? Anything you would like to add?
Carl-Johan: No.
Christian: Nothing.
Ching-Ho: Mhh.
Rodrigo: No.
Bettina: Then thank you for your time.

3. Female group: Melanie Grothe, Rachel Dumont, Meriem Holmblad, Åsa Rudberg
Monday, 22nd of February, 17.00 h- 17.30 h

Bettina: First of all, I want to thank all of you for your willingness to participate in that study. Within my Master studies I do research about media use. More precisely, I want to know more about mobile media. I am interested in how people use their iPhones. I contacted you because I know that you have an iPhone, and I consider you to be a good group to talk to about this topic. I will start with some general questions. (*iPhones lying on the table in front of every person*)
Bettina: What do you think about the iPhone? What is your first association?
Melanie: Great design.
Rachel: iPhone is trendy and looks good.
Åsa: But Apple always has a great design. I am in to a lot of Apple products because of its design.
Bettina: What especially do you like about the Apple design?
Åsa: It is very simple and at the same time appealing. Some design things, especially technique stuff is so stylish that you don’t dare to touch them. But the iPhone has a good middle, you feel good when you have it in your hands and you are not afraid to break something (laugh).
Meriem: The iPhone is a little computer you have with you the whole day, I would say.
Bettina: Do you like it or not?
Meriem: Yes, absolutely.
Rachel: I love it.
Melanie: I would call myself an iPhone geek (laugh everyone).
Rachel: I really like it as well. It is the best phone I ever had.
Åsa: Ja, that’s really true.
Bettina: What is it, you like so much?
Rachel: You know, since I have the iPhone I hardly use my computer anymore at home because I have everything here (tipping on the iPhone while she says it).
Melanie: It simply combines everything you need.
Åsa: It is the perfect device for so many things. It doesn’t matter if it’s e-mail, the mp3 player or the camera, you can always use it.
Bettina: What else do you do with your iPhone?
Meriem: I very often read books.
Melanie: Or the newspaper in the morning when I have breakfast.
Rachel: And the work stuff is on it as well, so if you want you can read your work e-mails on the way to work in the Tunnelbana. Or my calendar is there I just have to look things up once. Before we got the iPhone I always had to write everything in my notebook, now I just plug the iPhone in the computer and let it synchronize, ready. It’s so easy.
Melanie: I also look up directions on the map sometimes.
Bettina: And why did you choose to have a black one? (The iPhones are on the table so I can see which colour they have)
Meriem: I just think the white one looks too girly (laugh)
Rachel: We are all grown up women, black looks a bit more serious (laugh everyone).
Bettina: But, Melanie, why do you not have such a case around your iPhone like your colleagues? (Apparently they have to have a case around it since the company bought the iPhone and it is company insured)

Melanie: Yes, I know (laugh everyone). We were told that we have to use it, but it really destroys the design.

Åsa: Yes, but better than to buy a new one when it breaks (laugh).

Bettina: What do you think about the iPhone’s size?

Rachel: For me it’s a good size.

Meriem: I would say the screen is good. It is a little bit too big, it could be a bit smaller but still it’s nice to have a big screen to watch photos and also to surf on the Internet.

Melanie: In the beginning I thought it is way too big. But now I am used to it.

Bettina: Where do you keep it?

Åsa: I actually have it with me all the time. In the office it lies on the table or I use it, when I am somewhere then it is always in my handbag. It is not too big if you keep it there.

Meriem: Ja, I also carry it in my handbag

Rachel: Sometimes the screen is a bit too small, especially when you surf on the Internet.

Åsa: But then, you just turn it across.

Rachel: Yes, that’s true.

Bettina: Can you tell me about a typical day of using the iPhone? When is the first time you have it in your hands?

Melanie: Well, I charge it next to my bed, so I wake up with its alarm (laugh).

Bettina: Ja.

Melanie: I am a bit embarrassed to say that but I check my e-mails when I am still in my bed. And right after that I check what happened on Facebook. Then I get up.

Meriem: I do the same.

Åsa: Me too (laugh everyone).

Bettina: How does your day continue?

Melanie: While I walk to work I probably make a phone call (...). And when I arrive at work, (laugh) this is embarrassing too, I use an application called ‘four square’, where you ‘check-in’ different places. So when I arrive at work I check-in to work. This is really sad (laugh).
Bettina: I am not sure if I got that. It is an application that your friends see where you are at the moment?
Melanie: Yes, exactly. Ja, and at work I sit in front of the computer, so I don’t use it that much, but of course for phone calls I use it.
Meriem: My day looks pretty much similar to Melanie’s but I also play some games during the day.
Ása: And I text my boyfriend every now and then during the working day.
Bettina: What about your use on weekends? Would you say you use the iPhone different then?
Rachel: No, I still check my e-mails on the weekend. I don’t call that much but still I use it as often as during work. Maybe I surf a bit more on the Internet.
Ása: The Internet use, and the games is more than during the week.
Meriem: I also use it to check the traffic or the fastest connection from one place to another.
Melanie: Some people leave it home on weekends. I would never leave it at home. There is always something you can use it for (laugh everyone).
Bettina: Which functions do you use the most?
Meriem: That is very hard to say. All? (laugh everyone).
Melanie: I think because of work it is probably the actual calling function. And perhaps text messaging.
Rachel: Calling and the Internet.
Meriem: And Facebook.
Bettina: Where are you mostly when you use the iPhone?
Ása: At work.
Meriem: Everywhere.
Melanie: At work and at home, probably in the same way.
Bettina: Do you have the impression that you save leisure time with using the iPhone?
Rachel: Ah I don’t know. I mean it doesn’t make a difference if I use my computer or my iPhone, timewise at least. I think there is no difference.
Meriem: When I wait somewhere then I would say, yes. But on the other hand I don’t know if I would call it time saving. I only check my e-mails and Facebook once more a day, just because I wait somewhere and have the time. I would say you are quicker up to date with the iPhone.
Åsa: I agree with Meriem. It’s not a question of time saving, it’s about being updated.

Melanie: It is also about having the possibility to check it. Not necessarily that I want to check it but just that I know I have the possibility, *any time* and *everywhere*.

Bettina: Okay.

Melanie: And when you think about starting a computer somewhere, it’s just quicker with the iPhone. Maybe in that way you save time.

Bettina: Is the iPhone like other smart phones?

Meriem: It is completely different. You can do much more and it is very easy to handle. I never had a smart phone before, just a normal cell phone but I once saw a Blackberry (...) and that is so complicated in comparison to the iPhone.

Åsa: It also looks like a calculator *(laugh everyone)*.

Rachel: I had a smart phone before, and it was crap. It was very slow and the battery was empty very soon.

Bettina: But I heard the battery lifetime of an iPhone is also not very long.

Melanie: Well, the battery lasts a day. But I usually sleep next to a power outlet, so. That’s okay, I charge it at night.

Meriem: You also have to keep in mind that we use it as a work phone. For that, one day of battery lifetime is really okay.

Åsa: *That* is true. Before we got the iPhone from the company I had the old model of the iPhone.

Bettina: What is the difference with the new one?

Åsa: The battery lasts a bit longer. And this one has the compass. The voice control. But to be honest it does not get my voice for some reason, so I don’t use it *(laugh)*. What else has it? Mhh ah, ja it has the copy and paste function which is quite convenient. So basically there is not a huge difference. It is a bit more improved.

Meriem: In comparison to my old cell phone it can be used for so much more. I used my old cell phone just to send text messages and to call someone (...) I never used the camera for example because the quality was bad and the display too small. It was no fun to take pictures. Now, with the iPhone I often take some snapshots.

Rachel: I even recorded a little movie once with the iPhone. It worked really well and was interesting. I always thought I am not able to do such stuff. But now I can use it for everything.
Åsa: I guess the main thing about the iPhone is the applications. You have an application for almost everything. That is incredible and makes it even more fun to use.

Bettina: Which applications do you use then?
Åsa: I download new ones every week. But all kind of games are my favourites. I find it very exciting to see what new games are out there.

Bettina: Would you recommend the iPhone to other people?
Melanie: Absolutely.

Bettina: What would you say about it?
Åsa: I actually gave my old iPhone to a friend of mine. She is slowly getting used to it.

Bettina: What does she say about it?
Åsa: She thinks its great. She says she can kill any slight boredom in every situation with it. Especially when you wait for something you can always kill time with the iPhone.

Melanie: You can read the news or play a game. That`s what I do when I wait. But, yes, I would recommend it too, definitely.

Bettina: My last question is: where and when do you switch the iPhone off? *(laugh everyone)*

Meriem: Only on the airplane.
Åsa: Yes, or even there I put it on airplane modus.

Melanie: I never switch it off, I guess.

Rachel: Me neither, I can always put it on silence, if I don’t like to pick up a phone call.

Meriem: Well, it is not like switching off a telephone, when you switch it off, you also switch off your little computer.

Rachel: Exactly, when you switch it off, you switch off the access to the outside world *(laugh)*.

Bettina: I see.

Rachel: At one of my friend’ house, there is a really bad connection, and I don’t like to be there because I always think I have to check my e-mails. It is insane, I know *(...)*. If the connection would be fine I wouldn’t have that feeling I am quite sure. But just to know that I cannot check everything when I want to, makes me feel
uncomfortable. You get used to it so easy, that it makes it even harder to be without it.

Åsa: Ah, these kind of situations are really annoying. I know that.

Melanie: Yes, right. Especially when it happens when you want to call someone or contact someone (*laugh*). I am so impatient.

Meriem: But with a normal cell phone it is the same, bad connection is always unpleasant these days.

Rachel: Mhh.

Bettina: Is there anything you would like to add? Do you have any questions?

Melanie: Get an iPhone, people (*laugh everyone*).

Rachel: No, but I will never give my iPhone away.

Meriem: Once you had it you don’t want to change it to a cell phone anymore.

Melanie: *It’s just great.*

Rachel: Ja.

Bettina: Okay, then I thank you very much for your participation and especially for your time.

Melanie: No, problem.

Rachel: Any time.