



Trading personal information for personalized services

Most people are still careful to protect their personal information, but more and more of us are choosing to store our most intimate details online: financial information, health records, personal preferences, and even our schedules and location. This is not because we are more trusting, but because sharing information unlocks access to personalized services that support us in meaningful ways.

Services such as Flickr, Facebook, and Mint have created platforms to collect personal information and, in turn, have built value around their customers' willingness to provide it. Netflix

asks for direct input in exchange for personal recommendations, but the Toyota Prius works in the background, unobtrusively capturing our driving behavior and playing it back to us. Building on the power of information, these services can transform unintended consequences into intentional change.

As people share more, their expectations are evolving from archiving services to personalized services that adapt to them, and even anticipatory services that nudge them in positive ways. This has resulted in services that capture people's history, filter their information, and turn it into tailored recommendations, options, alerts, and connections.

TAKE ACTION – *designing for Life's Changes*

1.

Make people feel safe

Allow people to reveal themselves selectively and give them control over how their data is used. Let them experience different levels of customization and take ownership of their data.

2.

Support the moment of decision

Don't choose for people. Instead, support them in decision-making when it matters most. Reveal options, choices, and tradeoffs at the right time.

3.

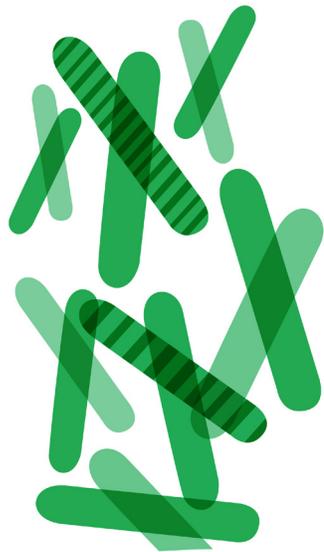
Nudge, don't push

Don't cross the threshold from nudging people to pushing them with heavy-handed advice. Allow information such as trends, comparisons, and accepted standards to inspire people toward outcomes that they themselves believe in.

4.

Don't be obtrusive

Design noninvasive and intuitive platforms to collect information, and be subtle when nudging people with choices or alerts. Provide ambient services that fit well into people's lives.



Surfacing the hidden

Leif is pushing 50 and some of his friends are already facing serious medical problems. So he decided it was time to start taking his own health needs more seriously. He looked into 23andMe.

Although it seemed like a credible service, he did have some reservations. What if he learned he carries a rogue gene? What if an insurance company uses this information against him in the future? But the benefits outweighed the risks, so he ordered a sampling kit. A month later, he was logging on to the 23andMe website and exploring his DNA sequence.

Leif discovered that he has an undiagnosed propensity toward glaucoma. The information from 23andme tells him what to pay attention to and nudges him toward preventive care.

How might we help people connect with the invisible, reflecting a new perspective? How might we allow our own history to introduce a new understanding of ourselves?

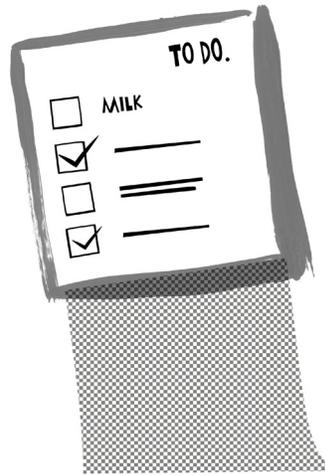
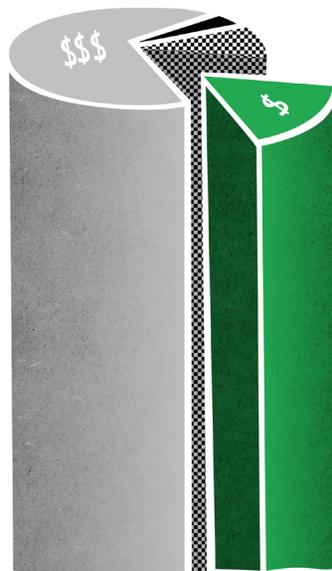
Informing decision-making

A year into her first real job, Claire had saved very little and knew she had to do something to keep her finances in check. Her best friend persuaded her to try Mint, an online financial tool that could help her track her spending patterns without the chore of budgeting.

What jumped out at her was the \$800 she spent that month just eating out—a full \$150 more than the average among young singles in the NYC area. She cut back, and a month later Mint confirmed that she had spent \$200 less on food.

Seeing her spending patterns and knowing how she compares with her peers gave her a powerful nudge. This new window into her financial life has made her feel more mature and more responsible.

How can we reveal the big picture across behaviors in order to inspire proactive change?



Managing the everyday

Karan is a physician at the Northwestern Hospital in Chicago, and he has a demanding schedule. He used to depend on a little notepad for organizing his life, but with a new baby at home he is having trouble keeping up with all of his daily errands.

When searching for some iPhone apps, he came across Remember The Milk, which promised to help him manage his tasks and never forget anything. Karan is now addicted to this service and cannot imagine going back to his notepad. It's almost as if he has a personal assistant. Remember The Milk helps Karan from feeling so overwhelmed all the time. And now he promotes the app to all his friends.

How might we make supportive services available in the right place, at the right time and through the right channel?

FoodFlex

Safeway's free online tool, FoodFlex, has really changed Karen's buying behavior. Generally, she and her husband think of themselves as healthy eaters, but FoodFlex flagged her sodium intake as exceeding USDA recommended guidelines. Karen's commitment to her Safeway Club Card has completely changed. It's no longer just a way of spotting bargains. She uses it to keep track of her family's food habits and hopes to slowly change her shopping pattern toward healthier choices.



ZumeLife

Dave follows a set regimen every morning for his meds, but last month his doctor doubled his medication for an acid blocker. At first, he would often miss the second dose because it was not part of his usual schedule. Fortunately, he now uses Zuri, a device from ZumeLife, which reminds him every day at 5:30 to take his second pill. It also lets him log his food intake and pain symptoms. After so many years, Dave has learned that however good your doctor, you still have to take responsibility for yourself.



Facebook Connect

The whole point of Facebook is to allow people to share personal information with their friends. Now members can bring their data with them to any website that supports Facebook Connect, enabling third-party services to provide focused, relevant information. For example, Workstir is an online service for finding work leads. Mike, a carpenter in San Jose, California, logs into Workstir with his Facebook account and regularly finds three or four work requests in his area.

PATTERNS are a collection of shared thoughts, insights, and observations gathered through our work and the world around us. We invite you to join the conversation, so we can raise the bar and develop richer design thinking experiences collectively.

Be a pattern spotter: Now that you've been exposed to a few different examples, don't be surprised if you start seeing *Life's Changes* patterns all around. Keep your eyes open and let us know what you find, especially if it's the next new pattern.

Guest authors: Jenny Comiskey, Aradhana Goel, Simon King.

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