iPad, whyPad, howPad?

iPad user research

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Why, how, what...

Why

- iPad is all the rage these days, so we went out to see how people are using them, what they think of them, and how these 'hot' devices are changing consumer behaviour

- Disclaimer: we only scratched the surface!

How

- **In-home ethnographic interviews and visits**: we spent over two hours with each participant in their home taking a deep look at their iPad usage, where it fits into their lives, and in the context of other types of technology (phones, PCs, TVs, etc.) as well as their surroundings

- **'Guerrilla' research:** we spent several days doing ad-hoc research, which meant looking for and talking to iPad owners in train stations, libraries and shopping centres

What

- How do people perceive and use apps on tablets vs. apps on smartphones vs. websites?

- In what ways are tablets changing people's behaviour?

- How does the technology they had used previously affect their use?

- Do tablets lend themselves more to cloud computing?

Apple family

iPad = tablet

- Currently iPads **are** the tablet computers in the UK, people are not generally considering others
    - Even though the following drawbacks are usually mentioned: unsupported Flash, no USB drive

It's early days

- Many participants had only recently acquired iPads, so were using them in a fairly limited way

Platform knowledge differences

- Apple users don't think twice: the benefits of being familiar with the system, (assumed) ease of data synchronisation and shared chargers

- However, non-Apple users are at a disadvantage. For example, one participant didn't find an iBook reader because she didn't realise that iTunes wasn't just for music

"We just need to bring one charger for the iPad and our iPhones when we go away" (Denise, 36).

Giant iPhone?

Yes and no

- Some thought of the iPad as a *"giant iPhone"*, which helped them to grasp the general concept of the device

- Like the iPhone, people limit how much they type as they find the keyboard difficult to use

- However, the use of the iPhone and the iPad is completely different
  - Mostly due to the differences in where it's used (out and about versus at home)
  - iPads lend themselves more to entertainment, watching videos, and lengthier reading

- iPad may be taking time away from smartphones if both devices are taken outside the home
  - One participant talked about limiting his iPhone usage to just calls and texts to save the battery

Taking the fun away from laptops

- iPad is taking time away from laptops, especially when it comes to entertainment and media consumption
  - Word processing tasks are still left for the PC as are storage and spreadsheets

- iPads are purchased by some people instead of upgrading a laptop; so old laptops are kept in a corner and have limited uses, such as backing up photos

"I found it a little difficult at first. If you have a Mac the concept would be easier to get. At first I struggled. Then husband said use it as a giant iPhone. That made all the difference."
(Annette, 31)

iPad is the gateway to the Internet

Websites, not apps

- The vast majority of time is spent browsing the web (Seven and YouGov, 2011)
- Interestingly, iPad users haven't embraced apps very much even though they may use them a lot on their smartphone
  - This might change as the iPad is taken out of the home more: *"When I'm out and about, speed is more important."*

'In-and-out'

- As it's always on 'standby', the iPad has made it easier to pop in and out of the web, resulting in more frequent and shorter visits to websites

"Anything that I use an app for on the iPhone I will go and use a website on the iPad" (Annette, 31).

iPad used little for apps...

Why are apps not embraced?

- Apps are a fairly new thing, people need more introduction to apps and hand-holding because they don't know what's out there or what would be useful for them
  - Also, users don't like the poorer iPhone versions
- Some participants felt that the apps available are for the younger generation at the moment
- There is a feeling that information on apps is not as accurate as on a website
  - For example, one participant thought that the app version of an online store wouldn't have up-to-date stock information but the website would
- Websites are free, no download needed, information is just a Google search away – it's a seamless, easy experience. So why bother with apps?!

"How much more do I want to spend on my iPad? I'd just go online and get info. Plus, apps can be expensive."

- Companies should ask themselves whether an iPad app is necessary; it could be that for some things optimising the website for the tablet is enough (for now)
- If developing an app consider making customers aware of its existence/benefits of the app via the websites and in other ways

"I don't know what I want and I don't have the time... Do you call map an app? I've used that and it's amazing. Neither Apple nor Android market is good at introducing apps. I don't go to the store and look for things (Ben, 29).

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... and even less so for photos and music

Storage limitations

- Storage is a problem for some – this prevents people from using it for photos, videos and music extensively
    - May change with cloud computing
- iPad is used as a photo book when visiting friends, family
    - Though this is specific photo albums-only, and usually a tiny subset of the photo library

Difficulties with transfer and synchronisation

- The photo transfer process found to be difficult, you can't transfer photos directly to iPad from a camera, you have to download them on a computer first

- These are both HUGE pain points and GREAT opportunities
- Storing media in the cloud will be very useful for people if it's easy to do
- However, people need to be educated about cloud computing and its benefits

Stays at home (for now)

"A piece of sofa technology"

- If purchased for personal use, iPad currently doesn't get out much because
  - Smartphones are quite good time-fillers while on the go
  - People are concerned about theft
  - Many don't have 3G yet and don't want to pay for wi-fi hot spots
  - Those who are out and about use it more for work

Shared but mine

- iPad is shared in the household but the primary owner has a final say on what's put on it
- It's being passed to small children to amuse them – they know how to swipe and to pinch

"No need to take it out, not that I wouldn't. I have my phone. iPhone is the take-out version of it" (Denise, 36).

- More widespread ownership of 3G devices, better free wi-fi coverage and smaller size may bring more tablets out in public for personal use

- However, companies should keep in mind that how, and what, they will be used for is very different from a smartphone – don't just copy and paste your smartphone app!

Changing behaviour at home

Bedroom

- Due to its shape, size and powerful battery iPad has been invited into the bedroom – people spend more time browsing, reading or watching videos in the evenings
  - 69 % of Britons use their iPad in the bedroom (Seven and YouGov, 2011)
  - The iPad is used frequently for catch-up TV and news

Kitchen

- iPad is replacing cookbooks in some kitchens
  - It doesn't take up valuable working space, especially in small kitchens
  - 42% of iPad users (Seven and YouGov, 2011)

Bathroom

- Some participants use the iPad early in the morning, before and during breakfast and then leave it behind for other family members to use
- Men are more inclined to replace their newspapers and magazines with the iPad in the loo than women

Holiday gadget?

It's great on a plane but perhaps not on a street which is viewed as unsafe

- It's a gadget to take on holiday but for specific uses only
    - For a flight and when you get there, for entertainment for both kids and parents (games, films), reading books, magazines and newspapers and finding out local information

Changing travel behaviour

- Some users reported that iPad is changing their travel behaviour, as there's less need to plan ahead

- Travel apps and websites should be designed for iPad use, particularly to make travel planning and booking easy whilst on the go

- Provide information and content for users when they are travelling and when they are at their destination

Great expectations –

I want *"touchscreen everything"*

- iPad has really got people hooked and hungry for other touchscreen interactions
  - Laptops, cameras, you name it

I want my experience to be tailored for the device I use

- Users have different needs based on context and type of device (size matters!)

I want my devices to work together

- Seamless transfer of content between devices; reduced number of extraneous components (chargers, etc.)

I want Internet connection everywhere

- Or the illusion of it – pre-downloaded news, etc.

I want Flash

- People do want to watch videos via the Safari browser on their iPads; this is an opportunity for Apple competitors

Home comforts throughout the home

- People want information and entertainment at their fingertips, and not just while they are sitting on the couch; iPad spends time in every room (even the loo!)

Further explorations

What does this mean for your business?

- We would be happy to help you find answers to specific questions for your business. Let us know if you'd like to find out more!

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Thank you

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