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Mark 1: It's a Work in Progress

In the beginning, during the ideation phase, my group had no clue to what we wanted for our speculative design project (SDP). For the most part, we bounced around ideas, touching on topics such as stress relief, medicine and education. After picking the idea of creating a new gestural navigation system for all devices in order to replace the computer mouse, eventually, we fell back into the rhythm of critical making that was reminiscent of first semester: tinkering with materials, rapid sketching of ideas, conversing, and even challenging each other in a supportive manner to take risks in our understandings towards the speculation of our prototype (McGlashan 378; Ratto 253).

How our prototype functions, imagine it alike to how Tony Stark used his gestural computer interface when browsing S.H.I.E.L.D files in the Marvel movies. In order to bring this gestural controlled interface to life, the prototype will be a set of ten sensors that the user would be able to attach to any parts of their body (fingers, elbows, knees etc.). The sensors will be linked to a charging station with a set of dongles that will be connectable to any device the user wishes to control/ navigate. Upon connection, a prompt will appear, allowing the user to input whatever gestures they would want to use in order to control/navigate whatever function of a program/ device they would want.

With the device, accessibility will be simple: charging will function like today's Apple AirPods to their charging case and wire, the sensors will be placeable and adherable to any part of the body, and there will be a voice, light (from the charging case) and vibration signal when turning any of the sensors on or off. The sensors will also be weightless, allowing users to forget that they are even wearing the tech. Although, for those who prefer to not forget about their controllers, there will be a silicon-like and cotton-like coverings to choose from within the product package that will provide the sensors added weight while reminding users of their existence through its nonabrasive texture.

With this semester's theme building off of the tinkering mindset, it seems like there were many facets of speculative design that further outlined facets of the design process (ex. the ideation phase, audience connection and the idea communicating process). This belief is evident because with speculative design, much like how my group aimed to challenge the design of the computer mouse, it allows designers to consider and critique current practices and ideologies while still allowing for consideration of the future (James 11). Additionally, much like the referral to Tony Stark in the paragraph before, in order to properly convey ideas to each other in-group as well to the audience, speculative design allows for the referral of other mediums (Auger 11; Dunne and Raby 3).

Looking back, one of the main issues that my group encountered was crossing that perceptual bridge in order to make our audience understand what our prototype is (Auger 11). Part of the issue was due to the fact that at the beginning of our

presentation, our idea was not clearly set towards a proper environment (in-home and/or the office) nor was the context of the use for the device (for navigation, gaming or even designing) explicitly stated (Auger 13). That said, this issue can be easily fixed since we could say these points at the beginning of the presentation for the second generation of our prototype, The Mark 2.

Overall, besides the clarification of points for future presentation, The Mark 2 will have an aim to be a cleaner, sleeker prototype. Through widening the base of the sensors, ditching the putty-like mass the sensors were attached to, adding identifiers to each of the sensors, rendering Mark 2 as a three dimensional model in Premiere Rush with a wireframe for the prompt towards the programmable gestural interface in AdobeXD, and finding more intuitive ways for the sensors to be charged and used, for the second generation of Mark 1, Mark 2 will be aimed to bridge the perceptual gap in order to allow our audience to better understand what this device really is for.

Works Cited

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