

**Reflection, Daborah Pulles**

First of all, I would like to stress that **GUIDEMENTIA** is the result of a team effort. My three main learning points during this semester were (1) the way we involved the target group, (2) the development of skills that I need to become a professional product designer, and (3) taking the project to a higher level.

*Designing for the target group*

It is not the first time that I had a specific target group in the project: children with autism, lonely elderly and premature born babies. Normally, I talk with many different experts to get familiar with the target group throughout the process in combination with a short user with the target group at the end.

Since we had no prior knowledge about dementia, we talked to C. Datema (healing environment consultant) and W. de Kinderen-van Heeswijk (care counsellor at Netwerk Dementie Eindhoven). This is no different than my previous projects. However, after this we have conducted long-term user tests with the target group since the beginning of the process. Based on these user tests we adjusted the design to their needs and tested again. The reason why we were able to test early on was that we had a working prototype in the early phase of the project. Because of this process we were able to make a product that fulfils a multi-stakeholder perspective.

*Focus on product design to become a product designer*

After finishing my internship, I knew that I want to become a product designer with a focus on visual design. My FBP was a representation as it was a visually appealing and working design.

Within this project, I naturally was involved into the looks of

the design and resultantly felt responsible for the graphics. Because we had a working prototype so early on in the process, there was a lot to design from a visual designer perspective. I have designed all the visuals of the app for the caregiver, the UI of the device, the infographics, the presentation slides and the pictorial. Basically, I have designed the corporate identity of Guidementia. Now, the visuals of the device are based on the input of the participants of the user tests. However, to make the product useful for a large population, research has to be conducted into the rules about designing for elderly.

Looking at the bigger picture of product design, this was the first project in which I used 3D printed models within the prototyping phase. Even though I wasn't the one that was controlling the mouse within SolidWorks, I was involved in the decision-making process of the shape and measurements of the device. Furthermore, it was the first project in which I used CNC machined wood to make a good-looking prototype out of wood.

*Taking the project to a higher level*

Every project lasts for one semester. Within that time frame there is a limit to how far a product can be developed. This semester, I tried to get as far as possible by taking the project to a higher level. By the time that the Midterm Demo Day was held, we had a working prototype. In my previous projects I succeeded in that just before the end of the process. Thanks to this achievement, we were able to do multiple iterations. This gave me the possibility to experiment with NFC stickers and we even had time to create a wireless charging system. Due to the implementations of these extra features, I have got the feeling that we designed a finished product. Because of this finished product I had the confidence to compete in the "GGD innovatiebattle" and even in the Stanford Design Challenge.

I see a lot of potential in Guidementia. However, I know that there are some weaknesses in the product, e.g. the fact that the visuals are not based on scientific literature. That is why I would love to conduct research on one of these flaws and test them extensively with a larger participant sample (N>2).

*Conclusion*

From designing for a specific target group, I learned that it is important to do many long-term user tests. Only then users will test the product intensively. Next time it is important to test with multiple participants, especially with a specific target group that differs a lot between patients. However, to conduct multiple long-term user tests requires quite some time. As the FMP lasts for two semesters, it should be doable to accomplish this.

As a product designer, I need to use more literature in my design process as it is important to verify design decisions. Obviously doing user tests with multiple participants might help as well in that regard. Especially with these kind of specific target groups it is often more important to have a helpful design instead of a visually appealing design.

Next semester I will do a research project within the same squad. It is my intention to work out Guidementia in one aspect. One idea I have for my research semester is to focus on how to design for people with dementia. Not only would I focus on the visual aspects (colour use, font/screen size etc.), but also on the usability of physical objects (buttons and shape of the device).