For immediate release

DATABALL_

"Databall_" is a pinball machine that visualizes the flow of personal data, making kids aware of their online tracks in a playful way.

Children grow up in a digital world without understanding the true value of personal information. Through their smartphones and tablets they leave traces all over the internet without realizing it. This fun game shows the score and boosts awareness. Sixty balls represent the data, which cover all aspects of daily digital life – from chat history to photos and online purchases. They bounce past interested parties: data traders, the government, supervising authorities and criminals. Hitting the data trader pop-bumpers wins you points, but beware of getting hacked: then it's game over.

More information: www.felixmollinga.com/databall_

QUOTES

"Do we continue to play this game, knowing that we forfeit our data?"
"We communicate, and sometimes it goes wrong."

PROJECT BACKGROUND

When we communicate it can go wrong, and our messages can end up somewhere else than at the intended recipient. That is the essence of what children need to learn about personal data. This game teaches that data can get lost: to hackers, the government or other parties.

The game is made in the form of a pinball machine because of its very physical and visceral representation of flow. This game can be used to explain stories such as banks losing their customers' banking data, social media platforms leaking their users' behavior, or celebrities' photos being hacked. The elements in the game can take different roles depending on the projection, to tell different stories.

Data is abstract: there are no measurable units. While the digital landscape is transforming from a sorting to a signaling society, in which data is increasingly voluntarily disclosed for convenience, we need to be aware of its value. Do we continue to play the same game for fun, knowing we forfeit our data? Or do we not participate at all, excluding ourselves from many social occasions?

Perhaps there is a third option, in which players collaborate, and the high score becomes a mutual one. This is the scenario in which companies consider the interests of their users, and they are invited to the table as participants instead of products. But before this future becomes plausible, the coders and software engineers of tomorrow need to be educated.

ABOUT

Felix Mollinga is a Dutch product designer who follows the personal design mantra "Form Follows Future". He recently graduated cum-laude from Design Academy Eindhoven. His interest lies with designing products for the (near) future, driven by innovation, sustainability or ethical issues.

"Databall_" is nominated for the Icarus Design Award 2018. He has won the James Dyson Award NL (for innovative product concepts) with "Acoin", a device for a future without cash. His work has been published in FRAME, Eigen Huis & Interieur, Sprout, de Ingenieur, and has been exhibited in The Netherlands, New York, Singapore, and Indonesia.

DUTCH DESIGN WEEK

Databall_ will be exhibited at G18, during Dutch Design Week 2018
De Campina, Dirk Boutslaan 2, 5613LW Eindhoven, The Netherlands
20 Oct 13–18h, 21–28 Oct 11–18h

CONTACT

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