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Project Gad-Savvy:
A Health Communications Campaign
Educating Tertiary Students in Singapore about Gadget Dependency

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A Final Year Project submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements
for the Bachelor of Communication Studies with Honours 2010/2011
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- The counselors from the polytechnics and local universities,
- The media, for their strong interest and support.
- Our family and friends, for their continuous encouragement and help throughout the course of the project.
ABSTRACT

This paper presents the ‘Gad-Savvy’ project, a social health campaign by four undergraduates from the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information. This communication campaign aims to raise awareness on the issue of gadget dependency among Singaporean Youths, aged 17-25 years old. The literature review explores the rising trend of gadget (or portable electronic device) ownership and usage in the light of technological advancements. The report outlines the communication plans and key strategies used. The effectiveness of the campaign is assessed by process and outcome evaluation, and future recommendations are provided.
LIST OF CONTENT

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW .................................................................................................................. 1
1.1 Introduction ............................................................................................................................. 1
1.2 Strategic Partner - iGrow Singapore ......................................................................................... 2
1.3 Youth Change Makers (YCM) Grant ....................................................................................... 2

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW ......................................................................................... 3
2.1 The Evolution of Gadgets .......................................................................................................... 3
2.2 Global Landscape: The Rise in Gadget Ownership ................................................................. 5
2.3 Gadget Usage and its Motivations: The Uses and Gratification Theory .......................... 6
2.4 Gadget Usage and its Effects ..................................................................................................... 7
2.5 Classification: Over-dependency or Addiction? ....................................................................... 9
2.6 Past Campaigns pertaining to gadget usage and behavior ..................................................... 9

CHAPTER 3: FORMATIVE RESEARCH .............................................................................................. 12
3.1 Current Situation in Singapore ............................................................................................... 12
3.2 Target Audience ...................................................................................................................... 14
3.3 Conducting Primary Research ................................................................................................ 16

CHAPTER 4: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN ............................................................ 22
4.1 Issue Identification and Definition ............................................................................................ 22
4.2 Campaign Goals & Objectives ................................................................................................. 22
4.3 Campaign Strategy ................................................................................................................... 23

CHAPTER 5: CAMPAIGN EXECUTION ............................................................................................. 28
5.1 Phase I: Building Identity of Campaign .................................................................................. 28
5.2 Phase II: Establishing identity of campaign ........................................................................... 30
5.3 Phase III: Campaign Climax .................................................................................................... 34

CHAPTER 6: CAMPAIGN EVALUATION ........................................................................................... 38
6.1 Campaign Evaluation Methodology ......................................................................................... 38
6.2 Evaluation of Objectives .......................................................................................................... 40
6.3 Post-Campaign Survey Evaluation .......................................................................................... 46
6.4 Other Key Findings .................................................................................................................. 47

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION ............................................................................................................... 48
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Future Directions</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF APPENDICES

<p>| Appendix 1 | Past Media Coverage in Singapore |
| Appendix 2 | News that was contributed by the community forum, STOMP |
| Appendix 3 | Transcription of Interview with Dr Ho Kok Yuen |
| Appendix 4 | Transcription of Interview with Nicholas Gabriel Lim |
| Appendix 5 | Transcription of Interview with Prof Arul Indrasen Chib |
| Appendix 6 | Transcription of Interview with Mr Zaqy Mohamad |
| Appendix 7 | Survey Questionnaire |
| Appendix 8 | Survey Findings |
| Appendix 9 | Pre-Campaign Questionnaire |
| Appendix 10 | Pre-Campaign Findings |
| Appendix 11 | Timeline of Campaign |
| Appendix 12 | Criteria and details of the photo competition, “In Search of the Ultimate Gadget Junkie” |
| Appendix 13 | Facebook interactions of the photo competition, “In Search of the Ultimate Gadget Junkie” |
| Appendix 14 | Announcement of results of the photo competition on the campaign website: <a href="http://www.gad-savvy.com">www.gad-savvy.com</a> |
| Appendix 15 | “In Search of the Ultimate Gadget Junkie” photo competition publicity posters |
| Appendix 16 | Publicity posters of the photo competition in tertiary institutions |
| Appendix 17 | Website main page and the main categories |
| Appendix 18 | Webisode_The Third Party- Lover’s Edition |
| Appendix 19 | Webisode_The Third Party- Family Edition |
| Appendix 20 | Webisode_The Third Party- Friends’ Edition |
| Appendix 21 | Twitter profile of @GadSavvy |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 22</td>
<td>Targeted Media List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 23</td>
<td>Press Release</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 24</td>
<td>Event posters and EDM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 25</td>
<td>Informational Booklet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 26</td>
<td>Event informational boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 27</td>
<td>Event pledging materials and Instant photo template</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 28</td>
<td>Campus Road show at NTU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 29</td>
<td>Campus Road show at NUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 30</td>
<td>Campus Road show at SMU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 31</td>
<td>Event publicity materials and Campaign T-Shirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 32</td>
<td>Event Coverage Video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 33</td>
<td>Media Clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 34</td>
<td>Ad-Value Equivalent report for press coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 35</td>
<td>Twitter mentions of @GadSavvy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 36</td>
<td>Opinion pieces by the campaign ambassadors on the website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 37</td>
<td>Responses from various counseling centers from both polytechnics and local universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 38</td>
<td>Post-Campaign Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 39</td>
<td>Post-Campaign Findings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

In this report, the term “gadget” refers to the portable electronic devices that belong to either one or more of the following categories: mobile phones, MP3 players, game consoles or any other wireless-enabled devices. This comprises a variety of devices including notebooks, tablets and iTouch.

Globally, an increasing number of people own more than one gadget. In America, young adults aged 18 to 29 years old own four gadgets on average in 2010 (A. Lenhart; et al, 2010). A 2006 poll conducted by the Marketing Insight in Korea revealed that an alarming 23.7% of the 9,836 respondents were obsessive mobile phone users, and found it difficult to part with their gadgets for even a second (The Korea Times, 2005). This phenomenon is expected to have been aggravated over the last five years with the entrance of smart phones and new edge gadgets like the iPads.

A review on the current literature shows that there is no standard definition for the term, gadget dependency. Hence, we define gadget dependency as ‘the compulsive usage of gadgets even when individuals know their usage affects them and others around them – psychologically, socially, emotionally and physically.’ (iGrow, 2011). Our primary and secondary research indicates that such over-reliance on gadgets will lead to possible negative implications.

Despite the increasing attention given to the adverse effects of gadgets in the local media, there are no substantial efforts initiated by any organizational body to increase awareness on gadget dependency. Hence, this project aims to address the issue and its implications.
1.2 Strategic Partner - iGrow Singapore

iGROW Pte Ltd is a Psychological Consultancy Firm which specializes in the areas of psychological, social and emotional well-being of the individual. One of the areas of specialization includes mitigating the exposure and effects of new media and Internet technologies. The team consists of psychologists, counselors, coaches and youth workers.

iGROW is appointed by the Inter-Ministry Cyber Wellness Steering Committee (ICSC) to be the service provider of Cyber Wellness programs, especially Junior Colleges in Singapore. Hence, iGROW is a strategic fit for our campaign due to the highly similar target audience. In addition, iGROW is well equipped to provide us with the relevant expertise and would also lend credibility to the health information disseminated in the campaign. This campaign proposal was timely as the objective of our campaign is well aligned with iGROW Pte Ltd’s outreach to the tertiary institutions.

1.3 Youth Change Makers (YCM) Grant

The YoungChange Makers (YCM) is a sub-committee under the National Youth Council (NYC). The YCM grant supports youth initiated projects that benefit the Singapore community and society at large. After submitting an application and going through the formal presentation, we successfully received $3k, the full amount of the grant.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Evolution of Gadgets

2.1.1 Portability and Functionality

Previously known as “portables” (SearchCRM, 1999), the bulky and heavy computer has evolved to today’s modern day laptop. Besides significant decrease in size and weight, similar gadgets, namely the netbook and tablet have also been innovated. Similarly, for mobile phones, the modern day smart phones are lightweight and aesthetically pleasing (BBC, 2010). The first handheld cellular phone, the Motorola DynaTAC 8000X was 33 cm long without its antenna, 3 times the length of the iPhone (Newscientist, 2008).

In addition, these gadgets can perform a far greater variety of functions than before and have stronger and better capabilities. Mobile phones, for instance, have been transformed into multi-functional devices with cameras, radio/mp3, wireless technology connectivity and more (D.Lee, 2005). Gaming applications have also been introduced into several gadgets, including the third-generation of iPods, iPads and smartphones (B.Gallaway, 2009).

2.1.1 The Advent of Wireless Internet Access

With the evolution of the mobile communication technology, the utility rate of connecting a wireless-enabled device has also increased (Chu & Liang, 2009). In addition, the International Telecommunication Union forecasts that the mobile Web access via laptops and smart mobile devices will overtake the desktop within the next five years (ITU, 2010).
2.1.2 3G Technology

Since the second generation (2G) digital cellular networks, the wireless market has been experiencing a phenomenal growth (Halonen, Romero & Melero, 2003). The current 3G mobile technology enables mobiles to offer high-speed Internet access and data (Krishna, 2010), including multimedia connectivity which supports improved services such as video calling and streaming, mobile gaming and fast internet browsing (Mishra, 2010).

According to the International Data Corporation (2010), mobile Internet users will surpass 1.5 billion worldwide in 2012. Currently in the U.S, there are 60.7 million mobile web users, a 33% increase from 2008 (Nielson, 2010). A study conducted by A.T. Kearney Inc. and the University of Cambridge shows that Japan takes the lead in mobile data usage with South Korea and Australia following closely behind (J. Reimer, 2005). In Singapore, 44.8% of mobile users subscribe to 3G technology (IDA, 2009).

The proliferation of 3G technology or Mobile Internet (Phuangthong & Malisawan, 2005) will provide ubiquity, convenience, localization, and personalization (Clarke, 2000) for the users participating in mobile communications and service activities.

2.1.4 Wi-Fi

Wireless networking, often known as Wi-Fi, connects gadgets to the broadband connection via an inbuilt wireless transmitter that receives information from the Internet (BBC, 2010). Across the world, Wi-Fi use is growing at a rapidly accelerating rate (Datamation, 2007), with 46% annual growth (iPass, 2008).

Europe and North America constitutes 47% and 45% respectively to the worldwide Wi-Fi hotspot usage, and Asia Pacific (6%) has an annual growth rate of 54% (iPass, 2008). For example, the rate of adoption of Wi-Fi is also gaining momentum in China, driven by increased use of broadband and dropping prices for Wi-Fi enabled laptops (Information Week, 2006).
Singapore is one of the world's most-connected cities with a well-developed telecommunications infrastructure. The wireless broadband network, Wireless@SG, is provided free-of-charge across 34 different areas in Singapore (Infocomm, 2010). In 2010, the Infocomm Development Authority (IDA) announced new services and enhancements, providing users with faster and easier access at the Wireless@SG hotspots across the country (Infocomm, 2010).

A pervasive and evolving technology, the Wi-Fi will continue to proliferate across consumer electronics, as the rising demand and increasing hotspot deployments will stimulate global Wi-Fi enabled consumer electronic products market to reach 3.7 billion units (PRWeb, 2010).

2.2 Global Landscape: The Rise in Gadget Ownership

Research has shown that there is an exponential increase in gadget ownership. In present times most people listen to portable music, need a computer to work, and own a mobile number (Moreira, 2006). Globally, 67.6 % of people own a mobile phone out of a population of approximately 6 billion, taking into consideration the Third World countries where mobile phones are not commonly accessible and affordable (M. Aulia, 2010). Global sales of mobile devices have shot up in 2010 with smartphone sales displaying the highest growth with an increase of 67.6 % (MobiThinking, 2011). Moreover, in Asia especially, affordable substitutes of mobile devices such as iPhone and Blackberry are available in the market, making them accessible to people of varied financial status (TechnoGue, 2010).

Countries like Russia, Germany and the UK have an overwhelming figure, exceeding 100% of their mobile phone ownership statistics (M. Aulia, 2010). In Europe, Italy takes the lead with 47% of Italian youths aged 15-24 owning a smartphone (Nielson, 2010).
The surge in gadget ownership is evident in the high sales volume of gadgets. Globally, the shipment of tablets is estimated to reach 81 million by 2015, and sales to quadruple in the North American and Western European regions (Marketing Charts, 2011). Apple Incorporation has reported a record revenue of $15.7 billion and 33% unit increase in laptop sales in the third quarter (Apple, 2010), where Japan contributed $1.433 billion in sales, a 83% increase and Asia Pacific contributed $4.987 billion in sales, a 175% increase (R. Pendola, 2011).

Similar to global trends, the top three gadgets owned by Singaporeans are the mobile/smart phone, laptop/notebook, and game consoles (IDA, 2009). According to a regional survey on youths conducted by Synovate (2010), Singaporean youths aged 8 to 24 years old are the most technologically savvy in Asia. They were ranked second in terms of mobile phone ownership (85%), and first in place for laptops (47% as compared to the 18% region average) and game consoles (40% as compared to the 16% region average).

2.3 **Gadget Usage and its Motivations: The Uses and Gratification Theory**

The Uses and Gratification theory (U&G) seeks to explain the motives behind certain media usage and the needs that the media uses satisfy (Katz et al., 1974). For example, a study done on college students found that escape was a significant predictor that motivated the use of MP3 players (Ferguson, 2007). The U&G approach assumes that the individual actively selects and uses media depending on their social and psychological needs, as well as gratification-seeking motives (Katz et al., 1974). In a study that investigated the gratifications of the mobile phone, it was found that the use of mobile phones gratify the user’s need for mobility and immediate access, as well as other intrinsic factors such as affection and sociability (Leung, Ran, 2000).
2.4 Gadget Usage and its Effects

We identified adverse social, psychological, emotional and physiological effects that may arise due to the increasing amount of time – duration and frequency - spent on gadgets.

2.4.1 Emotional

Gadgets, particularly mobile phones, have played an instrumental role in our lives such that we developed feelings towards them (Vincent, 2006). A research revealed that respondents use emotional language when describing their mobile usage. This demonstrated how people appear to gratify their emotional needs through their mobile phones. For instance, respondents expressed panic when separated from their mobile phones, felt strange with those who do and do not have mobile phones and experienced a thrill while multi-tasking (Vincent and Harper, 2003).

2.4.2 Psychological

The increasing rate of mobile phone penetration also developed a ‘mobile phone culture’, where everyone is predominantly the engineer of his/her own connections (Larsen, Urry, & Axhausen, 2008). Larsen, Urry, & Axhausen (2008) seem to suggest that mobile phone users, especially young adults, have developed this constant need to stay connected at all times. Young adults were said to be highly dependable on their mobile phones such that their mobile phones are always at-hand (Fortunati, 2005). Being separated from their mobile phones would cause them to feel ‘disabled’- both psychologically and emotionally (Larsen, Urry, & Axhausen, 2008).

2.4.3 Social

The ease of mobile internet access has enabled users to maintain relationships through a routine of nomadic intimacy. Users are now able to remain embedded in their personal social networks as it is possible for communication to take place ‘any time, any place’, independent of physical space (Geser,
2004). Gadgets have also enabled users to be emancipated from their immediate social surroundings as gadget-mediated activities that the users engage in can fulfill many material and psychological needs "without relating to any others in their vicinity" (Plant, 2000).

Users isolate themselves socially by disengaging from their physical settings. They insulate themselves with an ‘interactional bubble’ that prevents them from chance encounters with people they have not specifically spoken to, leading to the lack of interest in the aspect of public civility (Cameron, 2000).

2.4.4 Physiological

Excessive and prolonged use of gadgets would also result in a series of physiological effects on the users. Research has shown that headache, impaired concentration and memory, and fatigue are some of the adverse effects of excessive mobile phone usage (Khan, 2008). A series of local media reports have also highlighted the increasing number of Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) cases – commonly experienced by athletes but increasingly among gadget users due to excessive and prolonged gadget use. Intensive thumb movements can cause RSI, inflammation of the wrist and hand tendons as well as prolonged improper posture (Reuters, 2006).

Nevertheless, medical professionals have indicated that RSI can extend to affect other areas of the body such as the neck and back, due to the overuse of gadgets (TODAY, 2010). Said to be “a disease of modern times”, RSI is detrimental to the whole body and have “the potential to become more hazardous as the technology advances” (Reuters, 2006). Users might neglect these subtle signs, as they are not perceived as life threatening.
2.5 Classification: Over-dependency or Addiction?

Evidently, effects of gadget usage identified in the previous section, such as intentional social isolation and avoidance, feeling the constant need to stay connected at all times, feeling ‘disabled’ in their absence and the continued usage despite physiological pain - seem to indicate that there is behavioral addiction towards gadgets.

However, in order to classify the behavioral use of gadgets as a clinical addiction, there is a need to test it against other established addiction frameworks like the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (known as DSM) established by American Psychiatric Association (APA) (1994).

A brief cross-analysis of the list of conditions extracted from APA for studies on mobile phone addiction by Leung (2008) and the effects identified by prior secondary literature seems to suggest that it is more appropriate to label the current situation as a "dependence" rather than "addiction". The cross analysis drew attention to the absence of several significant symptoms that one would usually associate with an addiction, namely: withdrawal, productivity loss, anxiety and craving. Nonetheless, this hypothesis will be tested in our surveys (see Section 3.5). “Gadget dependency” is also the preferred term due to the negative stigma associated with the terminology “addiction”. The term “gadget dependency” will be used throughout this report for consistency.

2.6 Past Campaigns pertaining to gadget usage and behavior

There are many social campaigns in overseas countries such as Korea, Thailand and the U.S on the issue of internet and computer addiction. However, efforts pertaining to gadget use are not extensive.
Korea is said to be the first country in the world to have a program in place to curb mobile phone addiction (Korea Times, 2007). The program – a collaboration between SK Telecom, Agency for Digital Opportunity and Promotion and a civic group “School Beautiful Movement” – aimed to prevent mobile phone addiction through research and education. The pilot program was carried out in 12 elementary, middle and high schools. Discussions were initiated among the young on mobile phone addiction over a period of two months. Participating schools had cell phone lockers for students who would voluntarily deposit their cell phones to prevent inappropriate use during class.

Thailand’s second largest mobile service provider, Total Access Communication Public Company Limited (DTAC), created the television commercial, “Disconnect to Connect”. Targeted at the Thais, it has inadvertently become a topic of interest on Facebook, YouTube, and numerous weblogs in Singapore and other parts of the world. The commercial was very well received, with more than 800,000 views on the original video on YouTube. The message conveyed through the video also garnered positive feedback as it resonated well with the viewers - the fact that people may neglect their physical surroundings and their ties with others as a result of being overly engrossed with their mobile phones.

In America, “A Thin Line” was initiated by Music Television (MTV) in 2009 to raise awareness on digital abuse pertaining to the Web and cell phone among American youths. Aimed at preventing cyber bullying, ‘sexting’ and other “digital abuses”, the campaign was a joint collaboration with social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace and Twitter, violence prevention and Internet safety organizations. Apart from a specially tailored episode on a documentary series, other communication tactics include running public service announcements, utilizing online and mobile tools as well as holding awareness events.

Noticeably, among all types of portable electronic gadgets, cell phones remain as the top concern for gadget addiction overseas. The recent undertaking of this issue through education and discussion indicates
that this new-age technology problem would persist on for years. Most importantly, these countries have been adopting a two-pronged approach, using education and discussion to tackle this issue of growing concern.
CHAPTER 3: FORMATIVE RESEARCH

3.1 Current Situation in Singapore

As there has not been any extensive initiative pertaining to gadget usage done in Singapore, there is no direct reference available. Hence, our situation analysis consists of a media scan over a period of three years and a study of the usage patterns of gadget owners in Singapore.

3.1.1 Past Media Coverage

Over the course of three years, there is also a steady increase in media coverage on gadgets, its adverse effects and ill-mannered gadget usage behavior (See Appendix 1). In 2008, a British research findings covered by MyPaper revealed that excessive gadget usage could lead to skin allergy. In 2009, there were 2 articles touching on the popularity and convenience of portable gadgets - 1 on laptops in particular. There was also a report on youths being the targeted segment of telecommunication companies due to their keen interest for mobile communication (Straits Times, 2009). In 2010, there were 5 articles on adverse health effects of gadget usage, 5 opinion articles on ill-mannered gadget usage behavior, 2 articles on the popularity of iPads and 1 forecasting that mobility and connectivity would drive sales relating to technology.

In the opinion articles, it was mentioned that such ill-mannered gadget usage behavior has been increasingly common, as seen “during meals, business meetings and first dates, actually - especially first dates” (Straits Times, 2010). It was also said that technological devices have led to “greater degree of incivility, a trend that is damaging our workplace relationships” despite the fact that the portability of devices have enhanced connectedness at work (My Paper, 2010). Another writer has gone further to label
it as an “obnoxious, insulting behavior that says a lot about the warped values and habits that communications technology has wrought” (Straits Times, 2010).

News that has been contributed by the community relating to compulsive usage and usage behavior of gadgets has also been surfacing (See Appendix 2). In the first quarter of 2011 alone, STOMP- an online portal/forum has gathered people to discuss about the appropriateness of gadget usage and behavior in response to three posts by its members. In early February, a member shared her account as a girlfriend of a phone-obsessed partner, alerting fellow members of “the dangers of neglecting loved ones”. A few days later, another member shared a video post of a 10-year-old Milanese boy falling into the train tracks, as he was reportedly over-engrossed in playing on his PlayStation Portable. In the post, the member mentioned that this “should serve as a good warning to all people who are obsessed with their mobile phones/PSP/iPads etc… don’t let your obsession with tech (sic) gadgets kill you.” A similar post was uploaded in early April, with photos showing a family seated together at a hawker centre without interacting with each other as each of them was busy with their individual activities on their gadgets. Labeling it as “Family time – Singapore style”, the member questioned the impact of technology on quality family time.

In comparison with other countries, the negative impact of gadgets and its technological advancements on Singapore is evidently lesser. It is, however, noted that it could only be a matter of time before the real impact is felt, given the rising popularity of portable gadgets and the ‘technological-savviness’ of users/owners.

3.1.2 Usage Patterns of Gadget Owners

According to IDA’s Annual Survey on Infocomm Usage in Households and by Individuals (2009), there has been an annual increase of approximately 10% in the use of gadgets over a period of three years
across the whole population, with the use of laptop and notebook has increased by 17% from 2007 to 2009 while there is a 9% increase in the use of mobile phones and smartphones.

In addition to basic functions such as sending or receiving SMS and e-mailing, residents engage in more popular activities on gadgets like playing/downloading computer or video games (20%), instant messaging (17%), paying for goods and services (13%), downloading or listening to music (13%) and reading online newspapers (13%).

It is observed that the segment with heaviest gadget usage are particularly youths aged 15 to 24 years old, be it for communication, transactional or working/learning purposes. Apart from the basic functions, the most popular activities for this segment are instant messaging (36%), playing/downloading computer or video games (35%), downloading or listening to online music (31%), and downloading or watching movies, short films or images (29%).

3.2 Target Audience

3.2.1 Theory of Planned Behavior

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) acts as a guide to predict and explain social behaviors, where the individuals’ intentions are the proximal determinants of their behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). Intention is then determined by the individual’s evaluation (good or bad), perceived influences of (significant others) and perceived control towards the performance/execution of a particular social behavior (Chatzisarantis et al., 2006).

The TPB theory has been applied extensively and successfully to the prediction of communication technology-based behaviors (Yaobin et al., 2009). Recently, a study by Pelling and White (2009) used the TPB to investigate predictive factors of high-level social networking sites use among a sample of young
people aged 17 to 24 years. The standard variables of attitude and subjective norm significantly helped in identifying intentions, which in turn aid in predicting behavior among our target audience.

Young people whom mobile phone use positively reinforces their self-concept are most likely to become highly involved with communication technology tools (Walsh et al., 2010). Studies have also shown that if young people become reliant on the mobile phone for feelings of belonging and self-esteem, they may not develop alternate strategies to facilitate social connection and their ability to manage their self-esteem may be reduced (Loonis et al., 2000). Thus, over time the benefits of positive feelings may be negated by a reliance on the device as the primary method to produce this outcome. These addictive patterns of behavior develop in adolescence often continue into adulthood (Piko, 2006).

3.2.2 Primary Target Audience

The primary target audiences identified for this campaign are youths aged 17 – 25 years. In Asia, 89% of the youth, aged 15-24 years own at least one mobile phone, 61% own a laptop or PC and 48% of them own a portable music player (Young Asians, 2009). According to Annual Survey on Infocomm Usage in Households and by Individuals 2009 by IDA, among the different age groups surveyed, respondents that fall within age groups 15 - 24 years and 25 - 34 years make up the highest proportion of users of laptop/notebook and mobile phone/smartphone. 99% and 78% of respondents from these 2 groups are users of laptop/notebook and mobile phone/smartphone respectively.

Nevertheless, research has also shown that older respondents aged 25-29 years old had lower ownership rates for portable music devices than the youths, with three-quarters of 18-24 years old owning an mp3 player (A.Lenhart; et al, 2010). The older adults also have a higher tendency to utilize their gadgets for efficient purposes instead of entertainment and social networking purposes as evident with the Youths. This trend is supported by our interview with individuals in the older age range, such as Mr Zaqy Mohammad in his mid-thirties who uses his gadgets to “maximize (his) productivity”.
3.2.3 Secondary Target Audience

Two groups of secondary target audience are identified – educators and the mass media. The media has the ability to shape public opinion and will serve as channels to disseminate our campaign’s message to the general public. Media relations will be utilized to reach out to the media.

Educators will also serve as secondary influences of youths and teenagers who are quickly picking up the trend. Strategic collaborations with iGROW were pitched to all polytechnics and universities to offer psychological consultation services to help students who are at risk. Reaching out to these two groups of secondary target audience is especially necessary as gadget dependency is a relatively new area of concern, which requires relevant opinion leaders to engage our primary audience in message recall.

3.3 Conducting Primary Research

Currently, there is a lack of local data pertaining to gadget usage and behavior that would be instrumental in the strategy formulation of our campaign. Hence, we see a need to conduct primary research to obtain valuable insights pertaining to the issue and the current situation in Singapore. We conducted qualitative research (in-depth interviews) as a precursor to quantitative research (survey).

3.3.1 Purpose of conducting in-depth interviews

We conducted face-to-face in-depth interviews for the first part of our data collection. This to further explore the literature and information gathered from secondary research on the 4 health aspects of gadget dependency. As compared to topics such as Internet addiction, gadget dependency is relatively new and few publications exist on the subject. Hence, face-to-face in-depth interviews serve as a ideal method as we would be able to explore the topic in depth, clarify and adapt questions along the way to increase the likelihood of useful responses to gain rich insights (National Science Foundation, 2007). We interviewed experts from different professional fields to obtain more information on the issue of gadget dependency pertaining to Singapore.
3.3.2 Interview Insights

In addition to headache, impaired memory and concentration, and fatigue found from secondary research (Khan, 2008), Dr. Ho Kok Yuen, Anesthesiologist and Clinical Director of Pain Management Centre at Raffles Medical also shared his inputs for physiological effects of gadget over-dependency (see Appendix 3). One of the points mentioned was the high possibility of gadget users suffering from Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI), especially when they tend to grip their phones with the head bent forward in a hunch position. However, the thumbs are not designed for typing. Maintaining such unnatural position for frequent and prolonged periods would eventually lead to muscle pain, spasm, stiffness and tension in the neck and back. Apart from revealing that white-collar working professionals form the bulk and that youths form 5% of his patients, Dr. Ho also stressed that this growing concern has not evolved to a stage where it can be clinically recognized as an addiction.

Our strategic collaborator, iGROW Pte Ltd shared their insights in the psychological aspect (see Appendix 4). They have clearly defined gadget dependency to be: “The compulsive usage of gadgets even when individuals know their usage affects them and others around them – psychologically, socially, emotionally, and physically.”

Mr. Nicholas Gabriel Lim, Psychologist and Director of iGROW Pte Ltd added, “Gadget Over-dependency may be a larger problem than you think as people are oblivious to the extent of their gadget usage as they tend to lie – subconsciously or not – to conceal the extent of their gadget usage”. Some of the impact on users includes isolation and avoidance of people, inability to maintain relationships and lack of focus on studies, feeling restless and moody without gadgets, preoccupation and compulsive checking.

Dr. Arul Chib, a teaching professor at NTU WKWSCI whose research interests largely revolve around information and communication technologies also shared his point of view on the society at large (see
Appendix 5). In his interview, he mentioned that “there is no right or wrong” in determining the appropriateness of gadget usage and behavior as it is an ongoing socialization process - but deemed certain gadget-mediated acts ill-mannered – such as initiating a break-up via email and constantly engrossed in gadgets during a date.

Having to deal with youths for both work and leisure purposes as a Member of Parliament of Hong Kah Grass-roots Constituency and Vice-Chairman of Young People’s Action Party, Mr Zaqy Mohamed said that using gadgets can maximize one’s productivity, but one should not underestimate social interactions and relationships “as it builds the trust element” (see Appendix 6).

We managed to compile information gathered from primary and secondary research so far as a list of symptoms of gadget dependency, which includes: Preoccupation, Increasing Usage, Aches, Impaired Memory and Concentration, Time distortion and loss of control, Compulsive checking, Isolation and Avoidance of people, Telling lies and Escape to the Gadget-realm.

3.3.3 Purpose of conducting surveys

The literature and information gathered from primary and secondary research have provided extensive knowledge on gadget dependency. With that, we came up with a list of symptoms for gadget dependency and identified three social settings of which appropriateness of gadget usage and behavior should be applicable to.

We administered surveys to test the prevalence of the list of signs and symptoms that was compiled based on secondary and primary research as well as specific behavioral trends. The surveys could also further test the hypothesis that the current situation is in the state of dependency rather than addiction. A closer analysis should be done with the results that we have obtained from qualitative research and the survey
findings that will enable the narrowing down of possible directions the campaign can head towards (Experiment-sources, 2008).

Three research questions were constructed for the survey:

*RQ1:* What is the percentage of our target audience exhibiting prevailing signs and symptoms of gadget dependency among our target audience?

*RQ2:* What is the percentage of our target audience exhibiting specific behavioral trends pertaining to gadget usage?

*RQ3:* What is the current level of gadget addiction amongst our target audience?

For RQ3, we have specifically allocated 10 questions (Q15 to Q24, see Appendix 7) that are adapted from the framework, DSM-IV established by American Psychiatric Association (1994).

3.3.4 Methodology of survey

Taking into account the accessibility of subjects, as well as the time and cost of survey administration, convenience sampling method was used. The survey was personally administered by the Gad-Savvy team on the campus grounds of three polytechnics (Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Singapore Polytechnic, Temasek Polytechnic) and three universities (Nanyang Technological University, National University of Singapore and Singapore Management University) over three days in the first week of January 2011.

3.5.3 Discussion of Survey

600 surveys were collected and tabulated which provided key insights on the issue of gadget dependency among tertiary students. These findings were also revealed in our media articles, information booklets and online, which will be elaborated in the later part of the report. For the analysis of the survey questions, the percentages reflect the options “All the time”, “Sometimes” and “Occasionally”, for the 5-point likert scale (1-All the time, 2-Sometimes 3-Occasionally, 4-Seldom, 5-Never) For questions with options Yes, No and Sometimes, the percentages reflect the options “Yes” and “Sometimes”.
The significant findings for our survey are as follows (see Appendix 8):

**RQ1:** What is the percentage of our target audience exhibiting prevailing signs and symptoms of gadget over-dependency among our target audience?

Among the list of eight signs and symptoms, the most prevailing ones are compulsive checking of gadgets, isolation and avoidance of people and escape to the gadget-realm. 83.2% of the respondents said that they have the habit of checking their gadgets periodically, even when there is no update/notification of sort. 79.2% said that they use gadgets during awkward circumstances as a way to deal with the situation. 69.7% said that they have used electronic gadgets to escape from problems, bad feelings or stress. Evidently, the psychosocial effects are most prevailing ones among our target audience.

**RQ2:** What is the percentage of our target audience exhibiting specific behavioral trends pertaining to gadget usage?

91.2% of the respondents said that they bring their mobile phones with them wherever they go – including the toilet. Resonating well with secondary findings, this behavioral trend could be a result of our target audience being psychologically over-dependent on gadgets, and seem to indicate that the mobile phone has indeed become a psychological crutch for many, as suggested by Larsen, Urry, & Axhausen (2008).

88.2% of the respondents indicated their preference to communicate with their friends using technology like Windows Live Messenger, phone text messaging, and messaging via applications like WhatsApp. In addition, with 68.8% indicating that it is easier to communicate with others online than face-to-face,
gadget-mediated communication seems to be the preferred choice, although this does not indicate that gadget-mediated communication has displaced the importance of face-to-face communication.

84.8% of the respondents said their friends tend to be distracted with using their gadgets when hanging out with others, and 63.3% feel neglected due to friends using their mobile phones or handheld gaming devices when they are with them. These findings correlates with the opinion articles published by local media on certain inappropriate usage behavior and seem to indicate that there are valid grounds to discuss the appropriateness of gadget usage and behavior.

*RQ3: What is the current level of gadget addiction amongst our target audience?*

Adapting the point allocation system from a study on video-gaming addiction among Singaporean youths (Choo, Gentile, Sim et al, 2010), where 1.0 point is allocated to the option “yes”, 0.5 point to the option “sometimes” and zero point to the option “no”, the average score of an individual was found to be 3.4.

The hypothesis of the level of gadget addiction being too low to be clinically classified as an addiction is reaffirmed with the average individual score, 3.4 out of 10. Hence, it would be factually more accurate to use the term “Gadget Over-dependency” instead of “Gadget Addiction”.

3.5.5 Limitation

With a non-representative sample size of 600 and the inherent sampling bias of the convenience sampling method, it might be inaccurate to generalize the results to be reflective of Singaporean youths.
CHAPTER 4: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

4.1 Issue Identification and Definition

Based on our formative research and definition, we have identified the following issues:

1. There is a rising trend of gadget dependency among our target audience
2. There is a lack of awareness regarding the issue of gadget dependency, as well as the adverse effects of gadget dependency
3. There is a lack of initiatives in this area, and have not been addressed by any organizational body

4.2 Campaign Goals & Objectives

To educate our target audience on the issue of gadget dependency and its effects, and to inform them of the professional help available.

Objectives:

1. Increase awareness of gadget dependency among our target audience through mass media by achieving $250,000 worth of PR coverage and a sum of 10 million audiences exposed to media messages appearing in relevant target media from the period February 2011 to April 2011
2. Increase awareness of gadget dependency among target audience through online tools by achieving a sum of at least 20,000 contact points from the period January 2011 to March 2011
3. Increase awareness of issue of gadget dependency among our target audience through offline tools by achieve a sum of 6000 contact points from the period March 2011 to April 2011
4. Identify and recruit 15 youths aged 17 – 25 as ambassadors of the Gad-Savvy campaign in order to engage and advocate the campaign message to their peers

5. Identify and form strategic collaborations with two relevant organizations or experts for content creation

6. Increase awareness of gadget dependency and its effects and consequences among Singaporean youth aged 17 - 25 by achieving a 70% campaign message recall from target audience from the period January 2011 to April 2011

4.3 Campaign Strategy

To ensure that our target audience is receptive towards our campaign message, it is essential that we develop a campaign strategy based on a clear understanding of our target audience’s behavior and mindset towards gadget usage. In order to develop an effective strategy, it is important to recognize that audience resistance barriers exist at each stage of response, from exposure to behavioral implementation. These barriers include misperception of susceptibility to negative outcomes, denial of applicability to self and rejection of unappealing recommendations (Atkin, 2001). The key findings of our pre-campaign survey has indicated that less than 40% of the respondents feel that it is important to strike a healthy balance when it comes to gadget usage (see Appendix 9 & 10). Evidently, it will be an uphill task to achieve attitudinal change if our strategy does not appeal to our target audience.

Instead of adopting the usual top-down campaign approach often practiced in Singapore, we used a three-pronged approach: self-realization, engagement and empowerment. In order to gain our target audience’s attention, the first step was to get them to acknowledge the problem of gadget dependency. This is necessary as our target audience tend to be more skeptical of communication messages, especially if they feel that the messages do not speak to them or portray them in a less than ideal way (Nottage, 2007).
Next, we engaged the target audience through various communication tools, as “a variety of means must be used to reach young people” (The World Youth Report, 2003). Finally, to empower our target audience for change, we provided simple tips on self-moderation of gadget usage and informed them of the professional help available for those at risk.

4.3.1 Campaign Approach

With global trends indicating an exponential increase in gadget ownership, it would not be feasible to encourage the target audience to discontinue or disengage in the use of gadgets. This could result in unfavorable response and even backlash. Furthermore, young people want technology to add value to their lifestyles, satisfy their social and leisure needs and reinforce their group identity (Carroll, Howard, Vetere, Peck, Murphy, 2002).

Rather than simply persuading individuals to reduce gadget usage, we agree with Atkin (2001) that it is preferable to present messages that links desired health behavior to valued attributes, behavior to valued attributes, or consequences that serve as positive incentives. The campaign revolves around the message of “being savvy”. By being savvy in the use of gadgets, one can achieve a healthy balance between gadget usage and other aspects of life. The word savvy implies knowledge and skill (Combes, 2006), and it is used here to associate the valuable attributes of being knowledgeable and skillful with the desired behavior of striking a healthy balance.

4.3.2 Elaboration Likelihood Model

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) is useful in the conceptualization of the persuasion process. The model posits that the amount and nature of the thinking that a person does about a persuasive message has an important influence on the kind of persuasion that occurs (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981). Depending on the degree of elaboration, two different kinds of persuasion process can be engaged – the
central route which involves systematic thinking and the peripheral route which involves cognitive shortcuts (O’Keefe, 2008).

As attitude changes resulting from the peripheral route are less likely to last than that of the central route (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981), our communication messages were crafted in a manner that requires significant consideration on the part of our target audiences. One of the best ways to motivate people to take the central route is to make the message personally relevant to them (Changing Minds, n.d.), and this is consistently applied throughout our campaign, such as the use of personal anecdotes for audiences to relate to, and videos that illustrate the various circumstances that our target audiences are likely to face. The videos demonstrated positive outcomes that resulted from the behavioral change that our campaign encourages.

The peripheral route uses cues, such as visuals and catchy phrases to aid the audience to make a prompt decision when deciding to accept the position advocated in the message (Perlof, 2003). The ELM model also posits that striking a balance between both routes effectively communicates a message across to young adults, creating message retention and salience (Te’eni-Harari, Lampert & Lehman-Wilzig, 2007). Hence, in our communication strategy, both routes are utilized to maximize the impact of our communication messages.

4.3.3 Campaign Slogan & Theme

The slogan of our campaign is “Gad-Savvy”, a play of words and metaphorical expression for the end goal of our project: for our target audience to be well informed and perceptive of their gadget usage and behavior at all times. An easy recall, the slogan is featured in all campaign collaterals, to ensure consistency and maximum touch points. It also serves as the domain name of our website, www.gad-savvy.com. The tone of the campaign is youthful, vibrant and dynamic, appropriate for a youth-for-youth campaign.
4.3.4 Campaign Message

To ensure that the target audience acts according to the desired behavior, there are many factors to be considered when crafting the campaign message. It is important that our target audience does not perceive the campaign message as an enforced call to action. Recognizing that positive appeals enhance the persuasiveness of the message through the association of the desired behavior with positive images (Atkin, 2001), we derived the campaign message: “Get Smart with Gad-Savvy”.

4.3.5 Campaign Timeline

The Gad-Savvy campaign was developed and implemented based on Strong’s (1925) AIDA model of communication characterized by four stages – Attention, Interest, Desire and Action.

The Gad-Savvy campaign was executed in four phases across a period of four months:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Event/Activity</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Period/Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Campaign teaser</td>
<td>Building identity of the campaign</td>
<td>Jan 2011 – Feb 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Online and offline engagement</td>
<td>Establishing identity of campaign</td>
<td>Feb 2011 – Mar 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Campus road shows</td>
<td>Driving home campaign messages</td>
<td>March 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Follow up and post-campaign evaluation</td>
<td>Awareness campaign closure and evaluation</td>
<td>April 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase 1 aims to capture the attention of the target audience, while phase 2 aims to sustain interest and encourage participation among the target audience. Activities in phase 3 were seeks to motivate a call to action while phase 4 was used to reinforce campaign messages. Further details on the execution of the
campaign will be elaborated in the following chapter. For a detailed timeline of the campaign, please see Appendix 11.
CHAPTER 5: CAMPAIGN EXECUTION

5.1 Phase I: Building Identity of Campaign

5.1.1 Campaign Teaser: Photo Competition

We kick-started the campaign with an online photo competition titled ‘In Search of the Ultimate Gadget Junkie’. Held on our Facebook page, this photo competition served as a campaign teaser before the campaign reached the climax in Phase II and III. Users were encouraged to participate either by submitting a photo or to vote for their favorite picture by simply utilizing the “like” function on the page. The total number of votes would account for 40% of the results while aesthetics and creativity stood at 30% each (see Appendix 12). A higher weightage for votes was allocated with two purposes in mind: To motivate participants to rally for more votes and encourage users to vote for their friends. This would help to direct traffic to our Facebook page, hence creating more awareness for our photo competition and campaign (see Appendix 13). The results of the competition were announced on the website instead of the Facebook page (see Appendix 14), so as to direct the traffic from the Facebook Page to the official website after its launch.

5.1.2 Rationale and Purpose

The term “Gadget Junkie” in In Search of the Ultimate Gadget Junkie, was meant to be a term open for varied interpretations. As it is a seemingly new topic, opening it up for interpretations would allow us to understand our target audiences’ preconceived notions of the term “Gadget Junkie”, prior the exposure to our campaign message.

Most importantly, several visual elements were introduced during the photo competition such as our campaign name, “Gad-Savvy” and our mascot (see Appendix 15). These elements were consistently used
throughout the campaign as it helped establish our campaign identity across multiple online and offline platforms. However, the purpose of the campaign was withheld in Phase 1. This is because our target audience would not be receptive to campaign messages that are presented “in the face” and hence the need to frame our message to achieve the intended result. Message framing catered to a specific group of target audience can drastically enhance a campaign success (Randolph & Viswanath, 2004).

Moreover, it is crucial that our target audience relates to the issues that are highlighted without feeling embarrassed or ostracized. This would increase audience receptivity and prepare the target audience for the campaign message presented on a later date.

5.1.3 Facebook as a platform

Instead of our website, Facebook was the chosen platform to host the photo competition. The website was not launched during Phase I to create a sense of suspense, which would then translate to an element of surprise. Facebook was our primary communication tool due to its interactivity and wide reach. With more than 500 million active users and interactive features – such as its ‘like’ function, Facebook enables audience engagement and interaction (Facebook statistics, 2011). Moreover, Facebook, is the top most visited social networking website among youths aged 15-34 years old in Singapore (Singapore Polytechnic, 2009).

These reasons also explain why Facebook played an instrumental role throughout the entire campaign. It would serve as a platform to create hype and disseminate key information such as the latest happenings and event updates.

5.1.4 Publicity Efforts

Other online efforts include the setting up of a Twitter account. The Twitter account is linked to our Facebook page, such that updates can be done consecutively on both social networking platforms.
Moreover, the frequent updates on the Facebook Page and Twitter have also led to ‘re-tweets’ or ‘re-posts’ on other individual accounts and blogs.

In addition, offline publicity efforts were also employed to complement the efforts of the online mediums. Extending to 6 tertiary institutions across Singapore, posters of the photo competition (see Appendix 16) were displayed at prominent locations in the institutions between the start of February to mid-February. Details of the competition and the prizes to be won were stated on the posters to generate interest and traffic to the Facebook Page.

5.2 Phase II: Establishing identity of campaign

In Phase II, we adopted the use of similar online and offline medium to publicize our campaign activities. There was the emphasis on a unified message, distinctive color scheme and regular mascot appearance across all collaterals. This seeks to achieve a sense of continuation and consistency between phases I and II.

Online initiatives

5.2.1 Gad-Savvy Website

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 4, our campaign aims to raise awareness of gadget dependency by providing relevant health information and professional help advice to empower our target audience to make informed decisions. Hence, our website, www.gad-savvy.com serves as an official, long-standing online platform where key messages are delivered across to our target audience. The research and informational content on gadget dependency are delivered in different digestible formats - opinion pieces, videos, quizzes and fun facts for more effective results. The content was then categorized into ‘Blog’, ‘Features’, ‘Webisodes’, ‘The Movement’, ‘Media’ and ‘Certified Gadget Junkie’ (see Appendix 17).
a) Features: Fact and Opinion

As identified in Chapter 4, we are faced with the challenge of effecting attitude and behavioral change among our target audience due to their characteristics and the nature of the topic. We hence, appointed opinion leaders as campaign ambassadors to educate their peers on gadget dependency. The rationale for using peer education is that social networks can influence young people’s behavior to achieve positive outcomes. (Alexander, Piazza, Mekos et al, 2001; Turner & Shepherd, 1999). Existing literature has also suggested that influential peers can act as opinion leaders to encourage behavioral change (Valente & Davis, 1999).

Therefore, opinion pieces written by four campaign ambassadors were uploaded on the website. The articles elaborated on how gadgets have benefited their lives but nevertheless, recognized the need to use one’s gadgets in moderation. As these ambassadors are opinion leaders among their peers in school, their anecdotes of their personal experiences with gadgets make it easier for our target audience to identify with. Other entries by the Gad-Savvy team were written in a light-hearted manner, laden with bite-sized facts for readers to digest.

b) Webisodes

We adopted the use of videos to deliver the inherent message in a more light-hearted manner. The four aspects of gadget-dependency were also demonstrated in our three webisodes, which were also uploaded on Youtube and Facebook. Each video highlights different aspects (see Appendix 18 to 20), and narrates a story with the underlying themes of family, friends and boy-girl relationships respectively. This communicates our message simply and effectively, which may be difficult to explain in words. Research has show that inserting messages within an entertainment context is an efficient way to capture the attention of low involvement audiences (Igartua, Cheng, Lopes, 2003). Moreover, in order to sustain our target audience interest in the videos, we staggered the videos to be uploaded weekly instead of uploading them all at once.
5.2.2 Twitter

Acknowledging that Twitter’s popularity has been growing exponentially since the first half of 2009 (Kichatov & Mihajlovski, 2010), the Gad-Savvy campaign also leveraged on its user-friendly interface which requires little time in increasing buzz online (Zarrella, 2010). However, as Twitter is in itself a micro-blog (Kichatov & Mihajlovski, 2010), we took into account that audience engagement and interactivity is not comparable to that of Facebook and the strength of Twitter lies in the announcement of offers, events or to keep readers updated with links to important news stories. This social media tool was used as a complement to Facebook for our campaign where we announced bite-sized news about our campaign to direct our followers to our website, Facebook fan page or news related to gadget dependency.

Similarly, our twitter account - “Gad-Savvy”, was utilized to provide timely and informative updates on our campaign (see Appendix 21). For instance, real-time updates were posted on twitter during our campus roadshows. As the Twitter account was linked to the Facebook page and Gad-Savvy website, it served to update audiences respectively on both sites. In addition, tweets on interesting bite-sized facts about gadget-related news were posted to encourage re-tweets and maximize exposure. Thus, as our twitter account was a platform for campaign updates and sharing of information, little interaction was required from the audiences.

Offline efforts

5.2.3 Media

As gadget dependency is a very new field of interest that has not been addressed as an issue of concern among the public before, achieving media presence is the fastest way to achieve awareness among a wide audience. Media coverage helps to increase issue salience (Shaw & McCombs, 1977) and awareness in the minds of audience members (Taversky & Kahneman, 1973). News in the media can also stimulate interpersonal discussion between friends, family, colleagues and neighbors (Chaffee & Mutz, 1988). Recognizing the media coverage can lead to public discourse and organizational mobilization (Katz &
Lazarsfeld, 1955; Tichenor, Donohue & Olien, 1980), our campaign utilized media relations to reach out to the public.

A media pitch was done on 23rd February in correlation to the website launch, to signify the launch of the campaign. The launch of the website seeks to provide a point of reference for the media. In preparation for the media pitch, a targeted media list was drawn out (see Appendix 22). Media materials such as press release, fact sheet on Gadget Dependency, profiles of heavy gadget users, breakdown of survey results and the analysis were also prepared for the pitch (see Appendix 23) to ensure that the media gains a better understanding of this issue in Singapore. Key spokespeople of our partners, iGROW Pte Ltd and Raffles Hospital were identified and briefed on what to expect when interacting with the members of the media.

In order to elicit favorable responses from the various targeted media, we first reviewed the journalists’ interest in the topic through phone calls. To ensure maximum relevance to the individual publications, we customized the media pitches accordingly, based on the characteristics of their publication, general story angles of the news covered and writing style of the journalists. Once the journalist has indicated his interest, the media materials were then sent across. Subsequently, our team followed up with media calls to ensure that sufficient information was provided. Due to the time-sensitive nature of news reports, it was crucial that the team was constantly available to provide information to the journalists when it is required to. Media monitoring was done over the course of 2 weeks after the media coverage was secured.

5.2.4 Electronic mailers

After the news coverage was out, we contacted the counseling units of the 6 polytechnics and 3 local universities via email. Such individual outreach to the respective schools allows us to establish the ‘Gad-Savvy’ identity within each school itself. This was done as a follow-up, where educators are the primary influencers of our target audience. Besides publicizing our campaign, we also provided useful contacts in which the schools can refer their students to.
Our campus roving events in Phase III hereafter also adopted the use of online medium and offline publicity, in the form of posters (see Appendix 24). Similarly, electronic mailers were sent out to the student body twice - one week and 2 days before the date of the campus roving in NTU, NUS and SMU.

Evidently, our campaign in Phase II has tapped on the integrated use of online and offline media for updates of events, which has sustained the audience interest across a period of 2 weeks. These marketing communication tactics would also be applied to Phase III of our campaign.

5.3 Phase III: Campaign Climax

5.3.1 Gad-Savvy Information Booklets

There has been a pertinent need to package the heavy and serious content of gadget dependency in a more appealing and digestible manner. Moreover, as the issue of gadget dependency is a new topic, it is necessary to create interest among our target audience. Hence, an information booklet written and designed in the lifestyle magazine manner would be appropriate in driving home key messages to our target audience, in a digestible and enjoyable manner.

Health content on the physiological and psychological aspects generated from prior research was then compiled and edited to produce a version specially for print. In addition, we also included lifestyle-oriented features with a celebrity (“Gad Close with Joanne Peh”) and business figures like Mr. James Lee who shares their take on gadget dependency and how they utilize their gadgets. Quizzes, tips and trivial on gadget dependency were also available in the booklet to sustain readers’ interest (see Appendix 25).

The design and layout of the booklet was also important in making it appealing to our target audience. The color scheme used was similar to our campaign colors for purpose of consistency as mentioned in the
earlier phases. The layout of the booklet also consisted of more visuals and pictures instead of merely words. Instead of Serif fonts, Sans Serif fonts were used to complement the informal style of the booklet. We also made use of graphic style typeface to capture the attention of our target audience.

An electronic format was made available on our website to reach out to the online audience in which we may have missed out during our road shows. In addition, the links of other online platforms (FB, Twitter) were listed on the booklet, where viewers are able to find out more about the campaign online.

5.3.2 Event: School Rovings

Campus road shows and mobile rovings were done in NTU, NUS and SMU. The details of the venue, date and location are available in Appendix 24. Instead of having a main event held outside the premises of the campuses, campus road shows were chosen due to its captive audience. In addition, to reach out to our target audiences who have not stopped by our booth, we also conducted mobile roving to complement the physical road shows.

The campus road shows consisted of various elements, which include informational boards, television screen showing our videos and news coverage, collaterals and mascot for easy identification and consistency, as well as photo booth and pledging installation to attract attention and motivate a call-for-action (see Appendix 26 & 27).

These elements can be classified into three key components:

a) Informational components:

The information components include the dissemination of the booklets, demonstration of the content through the information boards at the booth and screening of the three webisodes and news coverage on a LCD TV. We also had our campaign ambassadors and Gad-Savvy team on-site to explain the key messages our campaign and important implications of gadget dependency.
b) Call-to-action components

Participants were encouraged to pledge by writing a message that begins with “I will moderate my gadget usage by ______” on plastic balls to fill up a 900cm by 600cm by 250cm wired structure of the letters “G”, “A” and “D” to complete the giant installation of our campaign name “Gad-Savvy” (See Appendix 28 & 29). By pledging, the participants are encouraged to stop engaging in an activity that may suggest signs of gadget dependency. An example of these messages is “I will moderate my gadget usage by not texting at the dinner table”. The photo booth also served an interactive function as it encouraged our target audience to take a picture with our pledge board. This also facilitated a follow-up to our road show as a mini contest would be held after all photos taken at the photo booth were uploaded onto Facebook. All that was required of the participants was to tag themselves in the photos in order for the tagged person with the wackiest shot to win a Starbucks voucher.

c) Publicity components

Fifty floor stickers in the shape of a foot were pasted all around the perimeters of the location that we were at. The floor stickers include enticing phrases like ‘Stand a Chance to win Attractive Prizes’ to attract people to our booth (see Appendix 31). We also had our campaign logo with the address of our website printed on rubber stamps of which we would use on the hands of our participants to drive traffic to our website. The stamps also aided event publicity, as the logos are visible on participants who have visited our road shows, hence, instilling a form of mobile identity. Lastly, as mentioned, we also conducted a mobile roving in the schools. This proactive move is to ensure that we are maximizing our outreach efforts instead of adopting a reactive approach in reaching out to our target audience. Our mobile roving team consists of ambassadors in our Gad-Savvy shirts, Gad-Savvy team and a camera crew who filmed the entire process of the mobile roving and short random interviews with attendees. All these footages were then edited and made into an event video in which would be further elaborated in our last phase (see Appendix 32).
5.4 Phase IV: Campaign closure

Lastly, as a follow-up to our campus road show, the event video was posted on Facebook, together with the question, “What are the steps that you take to be more gadget savvy?” to evoke thought among our target audience. The video itself consists of footages of interviews with participants at the road shows, with questions like: “How dependent are you on your gadgets?” and ‘Do you know what gadget dependency is?”’, as well as shots of people signing the pledges and taking pictures at the photo booth to demonstrate a successful call-for-action. This video on event coverage garnered 695 impressions and served as a closure to our campaign as it provides a recap to our campus road shows.
CHAPTER 6: CAMPAIGN EVALUATION

It is difficult to evaluate public communication campaigns due to challenges faced in communication evaluation. These challenges include context and confounding influences where isolating the effects of campaigns on outcomes that are bombarded by many competing influences is difficult (Weiss & Tschirhart, 1994). Hornik (2007) has also expounded using the model of effect, explaining that campaigns can have effects because they directly persuade individuals and/or because their messages are diffused through social networks and/or because they influence policy decisions in institutions.

Other problems in communication evaluation are time lag for effects to take place (Evaluating communication campaigns, 2007), lack of knowledge or precision about outcomes where outcomes such as change in attitudes or behavior, can be quite tricky to measure and lack of appropriate methods for assessing communication technologies and understanding what method fits best. All these problems can lead to claims of success based on inappropriate assessment (Weiss & Tschirhart, 1994).

Despite the lack of universal guidelines to measure campaign effectiveness (Coffman, 2002), researchers such as Coffman (2002) and Hornik (2003) have developed certain methodologies based on theories for evaluation.

6.1 Campaign Evaluation Methodology

Based on existing proposed guidelines, we first identified the “Gad-Savvy” campaign as an individual behavior-change campaign with the objectives of influencing “beliefs and knowledge about a behavior and its consequences” and “affect intentions to perform the behavior” (Coffman, 2002). There are two types of public communication campaigns – individual behavior change and public wellness campaigns,
and various scholars have been established the distinctions between the two. (Dungan-Seaver, 1999; Henry & Reivera, 1998). Individual behavior change campaigns are defined as public information or public education campaigns that “strive to change individuals behaviors that lead to social problems or the behaviors that will improve individual or social well-being” (Coffman, 2002). This is aligned with our campaign aim to encourage moderation in gadget usage among our target audience so as to improve their overall well-being.

According to Coffman (2002), evaluation can be categorized into four basic types – formative, process, outcome and impact evaluation, where formative refers to front end evaluation while the other three types represent back end evaluation.

For our “Gad-Savvy” campaign, we have applied formative, process and outcome evaluation to measure the effectiveness of our communication tools and messages. Formative evaluation has been done prior to the launch of the campaign where we collected information to identify the scope of the problem, formulate key messages and campaign strategies (Valente, 2001). Formation evaluation is a process of four stages in preproduction research where we first identified the target audiences (Who is at risk? Who can influence others at risk?), then we specified the target behavior. Next we elaborated the intermediate steps between exposure and change in behavior. Lastly, we ascertained which kind of media or channel to use to reach our target audiences (Rice & Atkin, 2009). This allowed us to shape the campaign during the creative design phase (Coffman, 2002). For our campaign, process evaluation includes media coverage, distribution of campaign booklets, pledges and other youth engagement activities.

To evaluate the effectiveness of our campaign implementation, we conducted process and outcome evaluation based on the objectives outlined in the previous chapter – Strategic Communication Campaign. Process evaluation accesses how well a campaign was delivered based on direct outputs of the campaign while outcome evaluation measures effect and changes that result from the campaign (Coffman, 2002).
As described by Coffman (2002), outcome evaluation usually involves measurements before (pre) and after (post) the campaign’s implementation and often at several points in between. We administered pre and post-campaign surveys to 150 tertiary students across the 3 universities to measure change in attitudes and behaviors.

Impact evaluation that measure long term results and establish causal relationships between campaign and changes among target audience was not conducted due to several reasons. These resources include the lack of time to administer an extensive research methodology to make comparisons across a significant period and budget limitations in extending the duration of the campaign to achieve greater impact. However, this campaign still aims to have long-term impact in terms of attitudes and behaviors of gadget usage among our target audience.

6.2 Evaluation of Objectives

Objective 1: Increase awareness of gadget dependency among our target audience through mass media by achieving $250,000 worth of PR coverage and a sum of 10 million audiences exposed to media messages appearing in relevant target media from the period February 2011 to April 2011.

6.2.1 Media Coverage

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 5, media coverage helps to increase issue salience. A total of 16.1 million audiences and $382,886.66 worth of PR coverage was generated on mainstream and consumer-generated media from the Gad-Savvy campaign.

We identified an opportunity in raising awareness of gadget dependency as an issue of concern by releasing the survey results of the gadget usage behavior and attitudes of our primary target audience to the media. This survey was administered to 600 respondents from six tertiary institutions – Nanyang
Technological University (NTU), National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore Management University (SMU), Temasek Polytechnic (TP), Nanyang Polytechnic (NP) and Singapore Polytechnic (SP).

Key media picked up the survey results, which provided us with the opportunity to raise awareness of our initiative. Tier 1 media Straits Times featured our survey results in the Prime News section (see Appendix 33). Other significant media coverage includes a half-page article in MyPaper which enabled us to reach out to the commuters and morning traffic. An interview with The New Paper saw a 2-page spread on our campaign in The New Paper Weekend. In addition, we managed to garner media coverage on key broadcast media such as Channel 8 news and Channel U news during prime time viewing despite heightened media interest in the upcoming 2011 elections. Chinese radio station 95.8FM also covered our campaign in the prime time morning slot. Consumer-generated media includes STOMP and OMY.sg. Agence France Presse (AFP) Singapore also promised a regional coverage on the survey that we administered which will be published by the end of April (see Appendix 34). The total number of media clippings amounted to a readership/viewership of 16,120,000.

Our media coverage generated amounted to an Advertising-value equivalent (AVE) of S$127,628.89 and PR value of S$382,886.67. Despite the debate of its reliability and validity, advertising-value equivalency is a popular method and remains an industry standard, which allows media relations practitioners to compare their results with advertising by putting a dollar sign to media coverage (Jeffries-Fox, 2003). The AVEs of our media coverage was computed based on the definition provided by The Institute of Public Relations:

AVEs are calculated by measuring the column inches for print media, or second (in the case of broadcast media) and multiplying these figures by the respective medium’s advertising rates (per inch or per second). The resulting number is what it would have cost to place and advertisement of that size in that
medium. (Jeffries-Fox, 2003). Based on industry practices, the estimated PR value is a mark up of the advertising value by a factor of three.

**Objective 2: Increase awareness of gadget dependency among TA through online tools by achieving a sum of at least 20,000 contact points from the period January 2011 to March 2011**

### 6.2.2 Website

As our main communication platform, the campaign website [www.gad-savvy.com](http://www.gad-savvy.com) provided tools for youth to learn more about gadget dependency, to seek professional help if at risk and entertaining features to sustain website traffic. The website link was being shared through electronic word-of-mouth via our Gad-Savvy Facebook fan page and Twitter as well as through collaterals such as event posters and the Gad-Savvy informational booklet. As a result, we achieved a total of 5000 impressions on Facebook, 900 unique website hits and 1500 pages views over a period of three months.

### 6.2.3 Social Media

Recognizing that youths are increasingly using social media for gratification purposes, we utilized social media tools – Facebook, Youtube and Twitter to maximize our reach to our target audience. Our Facebook fan page garnered an overall total of 500 fans within a period of 4 months. Our Facebook fan page activity experienced a peak in early March where much of the hype was created by the photos uploaded from the campus road shows. These photos include photos from the instant photo booth as well as behind-the-scenes photos. The impressions of all the photo albums reached a total of 12,000, with more than 200 fans being tagged in the photos. This justifies our strategy to increase the reach of our campaign via the Facebook platform by encouraging people to tag themselves in the photos.

In addition, our series of three webisodes garnered a total of 1,400 unique hits in terms of viewership on YouTube while achieving a sum of 3000 impressions on our Facebook fan page. 34 announcements were
made via our Twitter account @GadSavvy. Although the number of subscribers was not very high, a total of six mentions were made (see Appendix 35). To further substantiate the success of the online tools in increasing awareness of the campaign, the post-campaign survey revealed that 98% of the respondents who are aware of the campaign got to know about it through Facebook and Youtube. In total, 24,300 contact points have been achieved with online tools—exceeding the targeted figure of 20,000 contact points.

**Objective 3: Increase awareness of issue of gadget dependency among our target audience through offline tools by achieve a sum of 6000 contact points from the period March 2011 to April 2011.**

### 6.2.4 Distribution of Gad-Savvy Informational Booklets

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 5, a 24-page informational booklet on gadget dependency—symptoms, guidelines on moderating usage and professional help was produced. A total of 4000 copies were given out, with 2400 copies distributed to the students during the campus road shows at the 3 universities. Distribution at the campus road shows allowed us to explain the rationale of the booklet to the students and provide them with a better understanding of gadget dependency as an issue of concern. In addition, 400 copies were placed at each of the 3 polytechnics—NP, SP and TP. The schools administrative officers were supportive and receptive in disseminating information that can improve the well being of their students.

To reach out to the audience beyond the students of the 6 tertiary institutions, an electronic copy of the booklet is available for download on the campaign website. This allows us to provide the content to online users as well. Since its upload in early March, it has achieved a total of 200 reads and 2000 impressions on the Gad-Savvy Facebook fan page. The remaining 400 physical copies were distributed by our strategic partner iGROW Pte Ltd to their clients who are in remand. 100 copies were given out in
conjunction with a training conducted by iGROW Pte Ltd for their clients. This strategic alliance ensures visibility of our campaign among the trusted networks of iGROW Pte Ltd.

6.2.5 **Gad-Savvy Pledges**

A total number of 816 pledges were collected from the campus road shows that were held in the three universities to fill up the 900cm by 600cm by 250cm wired structure of the letters “G”, “A” and “D”. This pledging exercise prompts the youths to reflect on personal gadget usage and behaviors that exhibit gadget dependency and places much emphasis on spreading the key message of our campaign which is to encourage youths to moderate their gadget usage to improve their overall well-being. In total, 7016 contact points for offline tools have been achieved, surpassing the targeted figure of 6000.

*Objective 4: Identify and recruit 15 youths aged 17 – 25 as ambassadors of the Gad-Savvy campaign in order to engage and advocate the campaign message to their peers*

6.2.6 **Campaign Ambassadors**

As mentioned in Chapter 5, peer education is necessary in influencing positive behavioral outcomes. We identified 25 opinion leaders – “people who are most popular, well-liked and trusted by others” (Kelly JA, 2004) to be our campaign ambassadors. Instead of engaging popular bloggers online, these 25 opinion leaders were identified through snowball sampling from each of the universities so that our target audience could directly relate to them. In addition, engaging bloggers is costly and since our campaign aims to change attitudes instead of promoting products, paid blog advertorials may prove to be ineffective.

Four of the ambassadors were invited to write an opinion piece about the issue on our website (SEE Appendix 36). This move aims to bridge the gap between our campaign and online users. The rest of the 21 ambassadors were recruited as advocates of the campaign within each of the three universities where the road show was held. We also collaborated with the NUS Computing Club in terms of spreading the
message within the NUS campus as they recognized the relevance of gadget dependency as an issue affecting their peers. Hence, they volunteered to be ambassadors of the campaign by helping us distribute the informational booklets during the NUS road show as well as identifying peers who exhibit signs of gadget dependency to get in touch with us or approach us during the road show to find out more about how they can help themselves.

Objective 5: Identify and engage two relevant organizations or experts to form strategic collaborations for content creation

Our team collaborated with two relevant organizations - iGROW Pte Ltd and of Raffles Hospital, to raise awareness on gadget dependency and advocate the moderation of gadget usage. These two organizations were identified for two main reasons - to provide health advice to our target audience with regards to gadget dependency and to be identified as professional outlets of help that are easily accessible to our target audience. The strategic collaboration enabled us to leverage on the goodwill and reputation of these two organisations as they brought credibility to the health information disseminated by us. While iGROW Pte Ltd provided our team with health information on the psychological and emotional well-being of the individual, Pain Management Service of Raffles Hospital provided our team with professional physiological advice and helpline for gadget users who are at risk. All these information were used for content creation for our website, informational booklet and other collaterals in reaching out to our target audience.

Furthermore, in hope of a long-term positive impact on our target audience, our team approached counselling centres of six tertiary institutions to propose collaboration between iGROW Pte Ltd and the schools so that outlets for psychological and emotional help would be readily available on campus for gadget users who are potentially at risk. To date, three schools- Singapore Polytechnic, Ngee Ann Polytechnic and SMU have expressed interest in engaging iGROW’s services for the well-being of their
students and are currently in talks with regards to the services to be provided within the schools (see Appendix 37). Our main sponsor iGROW does not only provide us with the necessary expertise and to create credible health-related content, the organization is also our financial sponsor.

**Objective 6: Increase awareness of gadget dependency and its effects and consequences among Singaporean youth aged 17 - 25 by achieving a 80% campaign message recall from target audience from the period January 2011 to April 2011.**

### 6.3 Post-Campaign Survey Evaluation

A post-campaign survey was done as a follow-up to the pre-campaign survey as part of our outcome evaluation. The changes that resulted from our campaign will allow us to measure the effectiveness of our campaign outreach in terms of level of awareness and message recall. The post-campaign survey is an online survey done by 150 undergraduates, aged 17-25 years from NTU, NUS and SMU respectively, selected using snowball sampling (see Appendix 38 for survey questionnaire). These students are from the three schools in which we have conducted our campus road shows (see Appendix 39 for survey findings).

The survey results revealed that our campaign has achieved a campaign message recall of 80%, where 90% of the respondents could successfully recall the definition of Gadget Dependency. The message with similar high rate of recall (90% of the respondents) is the importance in striking a balance when it comes to gadget usage. Most importantly, more than half of the surveyed audiences are aware of the negative implications caused by over-reliance of gadgets. Despite the success in achieving high message recall of gadget dependency as an issue, 67% of the respondents are still not aware of the professional help they can approach if found to be at risk.
6.4 Other Key Findings

Besides message recall, the post-campaign survey also revealed favourable attitudes towards the publicity tools. A majority of the respondents who have came across the website found it to be “engaging” (90%) and “informative” (75%) while 70% and 88% of the respondents who have came across the informational booklet found it “useful” and “entertaining” respectively.

Although the main aim of our campaign is to create awareness, the survey revealed interesting findings which may indicate attitudinal change among the respondents. 74% of the surveyed target audience recognizes a need to seek professional help if they find themselves overly dependent on their gadgets.
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 Limitations

The greatest limitation lies in the nature of the topic itself. Given the current state of matters, most individuals and commercial organizations are cautious about associating themselves with our campaign cause. Despite attempts to convince prospective sponsors of the ultimate aim of striking a healthy balance, many were wary of the plausible negative impression reflected upon their corporate identities.

Furthermore, gadget dependency has not reached the stage where it can be clinically recognized as an addiction. In such a situation, the presence of a government-related organization would have most likely led to an exponential increase in terms of impact.

In addition, attitudinal and behavioral change among individuals requires a substantial period of time. For example, the Council for Third Age was set up in 2007 to promote active ageing for seniors to achieve a better quality of life, yet the concept of active ageing has gain prominence only in recent years. Therefore, Project Gad-Savvy serves well as a pilot study for greater endeavors.

7.2 Future Directions

Due to the infancy of the topic, there is plenty of room for creativity. The targeted reach of the campaign can be widened to include polytechnic students for the full-fledged communication activities, especially since administrators of the polytechnics expressed positive feedback on our campaign.
In light of the rising trends highlighted in the report, there is immense potential for more in-depth research to be done. A proper, validated set of questions can be constructed to gauge the level of dependence in Singapore more accurately.
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http://www.newscientist.com/blog/technology/2008/05/evolution-of-gadget-design.html


http://changingminds.org/explanations/theories/elaboration_likelihood.htm


http://www.prweb.com/releases/wifi_enabled_electronics/mobile_phones/prweb3734934.htm


## Appendix 1: Past Media Coverage in Singapore

<table>
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<th>Publication Name</th>
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<td>Got an angry rahs on your ears or cheeks- Cellphone could be the cause</td>
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<td>Straits Times</td>
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Appendix 2: News that was contributed by the community forum, STOMP

1st February 2011: ‘Am I less interesting than what’s on phone?’: BF plays with phone on date

7 February 2011: Unplug, or you could die: Boy so engrossed with playing PSP, he falls onto tracks

1st April 2011: Family enjoys time together – with mobile phones and laptop

Appendix 3: Transcription of Interview with Dr Ho Kok Yuen

**Interviewee:** Dr Ho Kok Yuen, Clinical Director, Raffles Hospital Pain Management Service

> Dr Ho is an Anaesthesiologist. He obtained his MBBS and Master of Medicine in Anaesthesiology from NUS. Thereafter, he completed a Pain Management Fellowship at Duke University Hospital in Durham, North Carolina, USA.

**What are some of the common physical symptoms that patients face due to excessive gadget usage that you’ve come across?**

Dr Ho: Physical symptoms. 2 big groups, number 1 presenting with neck symptoms or even headaches. The other big group with finger related pain in the wrist or fingers against stiffness as well.

**Are there any prevalent or subtle symptoms that people face due to over-excessive use of gadget usage but they don’t realize it?**

Dr Ho: Usually they present with tiredness or neck stiffness towards the end of the day, after a long day of using their devices.

**Maybe you can briefly tell us what are the main causes of RSI and how do you see the usage of gadget devices playing a role in causing a direct impact on RSI itself?**

Dr Ho: Basically RSI is repetitive Stress Injury which means any kind of activity that a person does over a period of time will get a condition called RSI. It can be a factory worker or someone using the phone or laptop for a long duration. Not exactly addiction. When we use addiction in medical term, it means a compulsive behavioral change or a compulsive behavior to want to continue using the device despite causing harm to the body. So most people who continue using their gadgets do not realize that they will get RSI. In a sense, this compulsive use of device can lead to that.

**When did RSI become common in Singapore with relation to device usage and how does Raffles Hospital attend to such cases?**

Dr Ho: Device related I would say that it starts to occur in the last 5 years or so when smartphones became more prevalent. But as I’ve said, the problem has exist for a long time, as many kind of repetitive work can lead to that. And how did Raffles Hospital attend to such cases: Most of them will be seen by the GPs or Polyclinics. Most of them would rest with some simple pain killers so we rarely see them. Of course, severe ones come to us, the pain clinic or they end up with the orthopedic surgeons.

**What do you usually recommend to patients to alleviate the pain? Or maybe address this issue?**

Dr Ho: A few things. For one, the immediate period, the acute stage when they have pain, they should have enough rest, stop whatever they are doing to allow the part of the body to rest, to recover. Number 2, to basically observe they posture and find out what is the trigger for their pain
and to avoid those triggers. So let’s say if they are using their device for long, observe their head postures. Using when they are playing with their phones and all that, it’s a hunch position, and the head is always forward.

We call that the anterior head posturing, whereby the neck muscles are actually stretched. And in that posture, the neck muscles are actually in spasm. They are stretched and very tight. So with time, the neck muscles will be painful. So they need to watch their posture when doing activities. And of course, work place economics get a good chair, good back support, all these are important.

Other things will be physiotherapy or splints for their wrist pain. And the severe ones of course we will do injections. Cortico steroids injections into the tendons for eg. to reduce inflammation and pain.

And of course another big group will be medical treatment, they take pain-killers, anti-inflammatory injections.

Who makes up the majority of your patients?

Only 5% of my patients are RSI injuries. Made up of mainly working class people. Youths will mostly go to University clinics.

Do you think this health injuries/implications due to over-excessive use of gadget usage is common amongst the Youths?

Amongst the Youths…I would think so. I believe all of you have iPhones.

Do you think this health problems will further affect the Youths in future? Maybe next 5 years?

Not only the Youths but I think everybody in general. As of now I see, more and more younger people are getting chronic pain problems, because of the work, because we are all tied to the computers and our devices, so we used to see 60,70 years old people getting pain due to degeneration after wear and tear. And now, because we are doing much of this things way earlier, we get all these problems earlier.

What preventive measures do you think they should adopt?

For one, limit the duration a person spends on any device. You know, our thumbs are actually not designed to do typing because our thumb is actually more for griping. So those who use Blackberry phones actually get a lot of pain at the end of the thumb. So if you really have to type, you should adjust the phone in such a way that you do not have to use your thumb. (Insert picture if applicable). So that’s one way to avoid it.

Again, limit duration on your device, half an hour each time. Erm of course other things like that, connect it to a proper keyboard, that would be better.

How serious can RSI be for gadget addicts? What are the consequences?

It can be very serious. The tendinitis, acute pain initially and of course, if the inflammation around the tendon or the neck areas doesn’t resolve, they can actually get a chronic pain problem.
Do you have any patients suffering from neck strains here because of all the heavy laptop using etc. Do they make up quite a bulk of your overall patients?

Yes. Definitely. As I’ve said, I do see a lot of younger people. Most of my patients are working class people so the common group groups are the bankers, the financial analysts who come, the accountants, the lawyers.

How do you recommend that they seek help when they face such a problem?

See family doctors first. If it gets serious, see a specialist, an orthopedic surgeon, see a pain doctor/ pain specialist.
Firstly, in your professional capacity, can you define what constitutes to Gadget Over-dependency?

Nicholas: Actually this whole area is a relatively new field. It is not a widely used term, nor is it a recognized disorder, not even by the American Psychiatric Association’s DSM. I would say that Gadget Over-dependency is the compulsive usage of gadgets even when individuals know their usage affects them and others around them — psychologically, socially, emotionally, and physically.

Can you elaborate?

Nicholas: Basically for the affected people, using the gadget is all they can think about and all they want to do, no matter the consequences. It is any gadget-usage behaviour that disrupt daily life — If one is preoccupied with gadget usage, spending more and more time on it, neglecting friends and families, spending unnecessary money on it, work and/or studies are affected, or health conditions deteriorates, one is said to have “gadget over-dependency” problems.

So do you think there is any segment in particular that would be prone to being gadget over-dependent?

Nicholas: Although any one of us can become dependent, some trends do exist. Some people are drawn to a “faceless community,” one where a person can enter into multiple cyber-relationships with anonymity and create one or multiple new paradigm personas. Certainly persons with quite a lot of discretionary time on their hands are susceptible, including homebound people or college students adjusting to the new schedule on a university campus.

It has come to iGrow’s attention that youths are getting increasingly influenced and affected by technology, which was why we have resources allocated specially for this segment who are early adopters of technology.

We understand that iGrow is the appointed service-provider for cyber-wellness programmes to secondary and junior college students. Do you see a link between cyber-wellness and gadget over-dependency?

Nicholas: Definitely, but the thing is it is not that clear-cut as each part has both its causes and effects on other parts and vice versa. You can possibly view it as over-dependence pertaining to
technology, which has 5 specific types: cybersexual dependence, cyber-relationship dependence, net compulsions, information overload, gadget dependence.

Can you elaborate?

Nicholas: Oh no worry, I have prepared a information kit for you. You can refer to it.

You mentioned some aspects of gadget over-dependency earlier. Can you elaborate on them?

Nicholas: I’d just give you a brief description since it’s an interview. I will provide you with more details via e-mail. For psychological impact, it can be compulsive checking, preoccupation, loss of control over usage. For social impact, it can cause isolation and avoidance of people, family quarrels and broken marriages. For emotional impact, it may cause depression, restlessness and moodiness.

So what are some extreme behaviors which are indicative of gadget over-dependency?

Nicholas: Telling lies to conceal one’s amount of gadget usage, for example. Exhibiting risky behaviors such as jeopardizing exams because of gadget use, inability to stop, and experiencing withdrawal symptoms when one attempts to cut or stop usage- all these are indicative of gadget over-dependency.
Appendix 5: Transcription of Interview with Prof Arul Indrasen Chib

**Interviewee:** Assist Professor Arul Indrasen Chib, Nanyang Technological University, Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Division of Public & Promotional Communication

Prof Arul is also the assistant director of the Singapore Internet Research Center, and his interests include information and communication technologies for development and social campaigns.

Research areas: Use of technology in resource constraint context in developing countries and marginalized people.

*Would you like to elaborate on your research areas?*

Prof Arul: By that I mean people who are primarily poor, don’t have access to sources such as education, health, economics. People who live in constrained situations such as the handicapped, migrant workers.

So for these people, I think technology has changed remarkably. If you were to look at the advent of mobile phone, to get this to these people means it would completely change the way each of these individuals to access education, market pricing (and then improve their livelihoods).

A couple of decades ago, for those people living in remote rural areas, the physical infrastructure did not allow them to have access to technology. However with the advent of mobile phones and the falling prices, these people now have the ability to not just access but also to use these devices to reach their goals.

I think the discussion is going to move from digital divide to what do you do once you have the device - content and software issues.

*How has the change of technology actually affect the way people communicate?*

Prof Arul: In our context, we can’t function without these technologies anymore. However for those people that I study, a phone call can make a lot of differences. When the tsunami hit on Boxing Day in 2004, it killed about 180,000 approximately. On the west coast of India, about 20,000 people died. One of the people from these villages came to Singapore as a migrant worker. Because the tsunami hit Indonesia and Thailand before it hit India, people in Singapore came to find out about it early. What was different for Tamil Nadu was a tele-centre where one phone has to be shared by the community- people don’t have individual phones. The migrant worker heard of it through some other means and called back with his cell phone to the village. An announcement was then made over the announcement system which the temple usually has (to announce prayers) and people were evacuated. Compared to the 20,000 who died up and
down the west coast of India, there was not a single loss of life in Tamil Nadu. So for purely instrumental ways like co-coordinating day-to-day activities, the mobile phone also has potential to be life-saving. There are uses that are day-to-day and uses that are extraordinary.

We can barely coordinate our lives without electronic gadgets now. It has instrumental purposes like coordination, but there is also what it is known as Hyper coordination by Ling and Campbell in a sense that phones are not just there for functional uses of communication but now they have become part of our personalities. So the reason why you’re using smart phones is that you won’t be caught dead with a $150 phone.

Psychological crutches. The phone you have says a lot about who you are.

Do you feel that there is an over-reliance on these gadgets?

Prof Arul: There are downsides to using these gadgets- people are suffering from internet addiction, game addiction; people have huge bills because they are calling and downloading all kind of stuff. But the society has adapted to the point that what is labeled as ‘over-reliance’ from the previous generation is now being socialized to our daily behavior. So the fact that students check smses in class has just been socialized.

What are some of your pet peeves (technology-related)?

Prof Arul: Well, I ask people to put their phones away but they don’t. I have to get used to the fact that most people are getting socialized- you just have to check your facebook updates every 5 minutes, otherwise you’d blow your fuse. If there is a lecture going on and you choose to live your life in cyberspace, then that is your choice. I treat students like adults.

Does technology reduce the need for F2F communication?

Prof Arul: Technology has both supplanted and supplemented F2F communication. In some cases you get to avoid f2f communication, otherwise it merely adds on to whatever communication methods you have. In some cases where FTF is not possible, then it’s possible to communicate through these devices.

One - It offers the notion of anonymity; you can talk to someone without having to see them. You don’t even need to give your real name. The type of stuff that one has the ability to say- specifically flaming- it is very doubtful you would use such tone and language f2f, but it is perfectly fine online.

Two - It offers the displacement of time: It allows you to reply emails or smses as and when you feel like doing it. You can’t just pick up a trail of conversation later.

Three - Allows you to take time to formulate your reply. If you meet a guy for the first time f2f, you could have commented something nicer if you have time to think through what you wanted to say.
Four - Allows you to get an ‘out’. It is difficult to say no when it is f2f, but if it is in virtual space it is easier to reject or say no than f2f. What tech allows us to do sometimes is not to reply you.

In some ways, the use of devices allows you to conduct activities that could be done f2f but there are other activities that cannot be done so with devices. For example, if you want to break up with somebody, you cannot possibly do it via email otherwise you will be considered ill-mannered. You still need the FTF meeting to do; the fact that you’re doing it f2f means you’re able to face up to it. Or it can be the opposite- depends on the norms in your group. But there are specific things that allow you to do. It has specific elements/characteristics that are different from f2f which allow to be used in this manner.

*What gadgets do you own personally?*

Prof Arul: HTC desire android, open source, I had the Wii.

*Is there any gadget usage behavior of youths that you cannot comprehend?*

Prof Arul: I can totally comprehend that! If you use Facebook in my class, I totally understand why you’re doing it. I mean, I am on Facebook, I get emails- I’m using the same technologies. It’s just that I think I’m more in control of it. Like, I don’t display addictive behavior- I do have addictive behavior but I do not display it. When I wake up in the morning, the first thing I do is to reach out for my phone. I look at my emails, I look at Facebook, I read the news- all of these before I get out of bed. It’s just that when I am sitting with you, I do not use my phone- I see students doing it.

I think it’s pretty stupid to do so, because you’re going out to the workforce in the future. It’s the same thing as sleeping in a meeting. Should such behavior be condone? It’s a waste of each other’s time- if we’re not engaged during a meeting, and then don’t waste each other’s time.

*Do you think this is addiction? Or is it more of an over-reliance such that they do this even in formal settings?*

Prof Arul: I think it’s a socialization process for youths to be socially acceptable to be having a conversation with somebody f2f, and be connected to the phone at the same time. But that’s not acceptable in other situations, like a job interview, a meeting. Right now as students, the consequences won’t be great, but it is not going to last forever, especially when youths are out in the workforce. The addiction can be solved very easily- you just need something very harsh to learn your lesson.

My pet peeve is when I am out, I notice couples using mobile phones when they are out on a date. I’m like, “why are you out on a date?” If I went on a date, and the girl keeps smsing and playing games, I would pay for the meal and leave right away. I won’t want to date her. She doesn’t get the distinction between the purpose of the date and her personal behavior. This behavior could translate into other areas of life.
It happens in group settings too and I usually point out to these people. I guess this is just changing social standards.

I actually make a choice not to meet those friends who are always using their gadgets. I have friends who are 24/7 on their jobs—they receive emails, they receive calls. They can get busy with their jobs—I’d rather not meet them.

*Do you have any personal guidelines for yourself? If so, what are they?*

Prof Arul: I have my own guidelines. You have to get the distinction between private and public space. In your own private space, you can do whatever you want. But when you’re in public space, when you’re engaged with somebody else, you should know. I mean, we don’t pick our noses in public right? I mean, we could but we don’t because it’s socialized that that is not the behavior. So it’s the same thing with the phone. Don’t be with the other person that you’re smsing, but be with the person that you’re hanging out with.

*Where do you draw the line?*

Prof Arul: I think there’s a shifting line. They have beneficial values—educational outcomes, self-efficacy. It’s up to the social groups to develop social norms. Each individual should have their rules. Who’s to say what is good or bad? It’s a shifting norm. More and more people are living their lives online. Very difficult to prescribe a norm for now. As a student, if you’re so absorbed such that your grades are going down, then some intervention should be made. You’d still have to eat, get a job—you can’t be fully absorbed in cyberspace. That’s for now, but who knows about the future?
Appendix 6: Transcription of Interview with Mr Zaqy Mohamad

Interviewee: Mr Zaqy Mohamad, a Member of Parliament for Hong Kah GRC since 2006.

He is also the vice-chairman for the Young PAP and is in-charge of the YP Media sub-committee, which takes charge of Young PAP’s new media engagement. He also serves as Chairman for the Government Parliamentary Committee (GPC) for Information, Communication and the Arts.

Do you use electronic gadgets more for work or play?

Mr Zaqy: I use them more for work. For myself, I do not sit at my desk much. My laptop serves for serious work like preparing a document, report, spreadsheet or Power Point slides. Mostly I am on the move, off the desk, so gadgets are important because they offer me the mobility that I need.

Can you name one electronic gadget that you cannot live without and why?

Mr Zaqy: My iPhone. I use it for everything. I’ve got my notes in there. Because of the way I configure all my notes, the notes that I take down during meetings on my iPad, it goes to my iPhone, so it’s all synced. When you have speeches and events, things will be recorded on my 2 gadgets, depending on how I do it. Emails are the most important things that I check on my gadgets. Then, when you are out and about, you take photos, MMS, that is how you stay connected on the move.

Besides work, do you use your electronic gadgets for personal reasons?

Mr Zaqy: Sometimes I play around with iPhone games and social networking applications, things like Facebook or Linked in. But mostly I use more applications like emails.”

I only use the phone unless necessary or in times of emergency.

How much time do you spend on your portable electronic devices?

Mr Zaqy: Laptop will be based on my workload. Usually in the daytime, it takes about 1-2 hours. But in the night, because I may have to catch up with emails and other work, it could be another 1-2 hours. For iPhone, it will be along the way, as and when I need it. Maybe sometimes when I’m in the car, if necessary I will have to use the hands-free set to answer calls or return calls, when I have to get from one meeting to another.”
Could you share with us an occasion where you vividly remembered that you were thankful for the invention of technology (portable gadgets wise)?

Mr Zaqy: Yes, there will be occasion when you need access to quick information. One instance will be a dialogue that I was in and someone threw a difficult question. I managed to check my G-mail and search through my past notes and found something that was useful in helping me answer the question. Those five minutes were crucial because in a dialogue there were many people in the theatre. Sometimes when you are doing a dialogue in mother tongue, you may need the dictionary or translator in your phone to help you with some words that you have in mind but you can’t think of it off hand. Without such access through your devices, you may be stuck there, not knowing what to say. It is also good to have technology at your fingertips. So you can do research on the go as well.

What do you think are some of the unacceptable behaviors that people display while using their mobile phones/ portable electronic devices?

Mr Zaqy: One pet peeve I have in meetings is when people stuff their face into their laptops. It can be very irritating because they may not be paying attention. During family gatherings, I think it is the other way around because people tend to be irritated with me using my electronic devices. But I don’t have a choice, when people start SMS-ing or calling you for important or urgent stuff.

But I do make it a discipline on many occasions to not respond unless absolutely necessary.”

Do you think that there is a certain over-reliance on technology in the way the current generation communicates and how does it affect the future generation?

Mr Zaqy: Yes, I think people use it nowadays to not get emotionally involved in potential conflict like maybe settle issues through SMS instead. But I always find that it is better to confront it face to face because sometimes things that you take ten email threads to settle will probably take only three seconds face to face.

What advice would you give to the Youths on the usage of electronic gadget devices?

Mr Zaqy: Use it when you can maximize your productivity. But at the same time, do not underestimate the power of face-to-face interaction. At the end of the day, when it comes to work, closing a deal or getting people to work for/with you, it boils down to trust. Face-to-face element is important because people would want to see if you are sincere or if you are trustworthy. This is hard to tell simply based on emails. Face-to-face is normally how people assess. That’s part of the real world.

I think the social interaction aspect is important but it builds the trust element. For one, your email may get misinterpreted. Two, you may say something through your email, but I can’t immediately clarify with what you have just said or I may not be able to sum up if you are being, so my response could be very different. I might react differently if I know that I could trust you to withhold certain information.

So am I right to say that we need a mixture of both face-to-face interaction and black and white?
Well, you can never finish if you are just replying on black and white. It also depends on situation. If it is on social networking site, simply communicating online through black and white, it is fine. But when it comes to work, when it is time-sensitive and there are businesses that need to be done, it is not advisable to simply leave out the face-to-face element.
Appendix 7: Survey Questionnaire

We are a group of students from Nanyang Technological University, Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information. For this survey, we would like to find out about the youth’s usage and attitudes towards the electronic gadget devices ownership and usage.

Please note that the term “gadgets” comprises of ALL electronic handheld devices such as MP3s, Game consoles, mobile phones, etc.

Kindly tick the options you choose.

1. How much time do you spend on your mobile phone, on a daily basis?
   □ Less than 1 hour
   □ 1 – 2 hours
   □ 2 – 4 hours
   □ More than 4 hours

For the following questions, please circle the one option only:

2. I bring my mobile phone with me wherever I go – including the toilet.
   All the time | Frequently | Occasionally | Seldom | Never

3. I prefer communicating with my friends using technology (eg. msn, sms).
   All the time | Frequently | Occasionally | Seldom | Never

4. I find it easier communicating with others online than face-to-face.
   All the time | Frequently | Occasionally | Seldom | Never

5. I use my mobile phone when I have meals with my family/friends.
   All the time | Frequently | Occasionally | Seldom | Never

6. I have the habit of checking my laptop, mobile phone, or game console periodically, even when there is no update/notification of sort.
   All the time | Frequently | Occasionally | Seldom | Never
7. I have the habit of checking my mobile phone for Facebook or Twitter updates first thing in the morning when I wake up.
   All the time | Frequently | Occasionally | Seldom | Never

8. I use my phone during awkward circumstances as a way to deal with the situation.
   All the time | Frequently | Occasionally | Seldom | Never

9. I experience finger or wrist aches and strains after prolonged usage of my mobile phone, game consoles or computers.
   All the time | Frequently | Occasionally | Seldom | Never

10. Has anyone told you to put aside your gadget, and pay attention to them (who are physically with you)?
    All the time | Frequently | Occasionally | Seldom | Never

11. How often do you feel neglected due to your friend using their mobile phones or handheld gaming devices when they are with you?
    All the time | Frequently | Occasionally | Seldom | Never

12. How often do you use your phone and talk to others at the same time?
    All the time | Frequently | Occasionally | Seldom | Never

13. I tune out to my friends who are physically with me when I am using my mobile phone.
    All the time | Frequently | Occasionally | Seldom | Never

14. Do your friends tend to be distracted with using their gadgets when hanging out with others?
    All the time | Frequently | Occasionally | Seldom | Never

15. Has your schoolwork suffered because you spent too much time on your electronic gadgets (i.e. mobile phone, MP3 player, hand-held gaming devices)?
    Yes | Sometimes | No

16. Have you used electronic gadgets to escape from problems, bad feelings or stress?
    Yes | Sometimes | No

17. Are you thinking about electronic gadgets more and more?
    Yes | Sometimes | No
18. Have you stolen an electronic gadget from a store or a friend, or stolen money in order to buy an electronic gadget?
   Yes  |  Sometimes  |  No

19. Have you tried to use electronic gadgets less often or for shorter periods of time, but are unsuccessful?
   Yes  |  Sometimes  |  No

20. Have you become restless or irritable when trying to cut down on electronic gadget usage?
   Yes  |  Sometimes  |  No

21. Have you ever compromised your studies or co-curricular activities to use electronic gadgets?
   Yes  |  Sometimes  |  No

22. Does spending more time and/or money on electronic gadgets allow you to feel a level of excitement?
   Yes  |  Sometimes  |  No

23. Have you ever lied to your family or friends about how much you use electronic gadgets?
   Yes  |  Sometimes  |  No

24. Have you ever needed to borrow money so you could get electronic gadgets?
   Yes  |  Sometimes  |  No

_We have come to the end of our survey. Thank you for your participation!_
Appendix 8: Survey Findings

1. How much time do you spend on your mobile phone, on a daily basis?

![Survey Findings Chart]

Across 600 respondents

- 42% <1 hour
- 18% 1-2 hours
- 19% 2-4 hours
- 21% >4 hours

By schools

- NTU: 7% <1 hour, 24% 1-2 hours, 15% 2-4 hours, 18% >4 hours
- NUS: 23% <1 hour, 21% 1-2 hours, 20% 2-4 hours, 14% >4 hours
- SMU: 12% <1 hour, 25% 1-2 hours, 23% 2-4 hours, 18% >4 hours
- NP: 50% <1 hour, 50% 2-4 hours
- SP: 30% <1 hour, 30% 2-4 hours
- TP: 39% <1 hour, 21% 2-4 hours
2. I bring my mobile phone with me wherever I go – including the toilet.

![Pie chart showing the percentage of respondents doing so.]

**Across 600 respondents**

- 43% All the time
- 36% Frequently
- 12% Occasionally
- 7% Seldom
- 2% Never

**By schools**

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3. I prefer communicating with my friends using technology (eg. msn, sms).
4. I find it easier communicating with others online than face-to-face.
5. I use my mobile phone when I have meals with my family/ friends.

Across 600 respondents

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6. I have the habit of checking my laptop, mobile phone, or game console periodically, even when there is no update/notification of sort.
7. I have the habit of checking my mobile phone for Facebook or Twitter updates first thing in the morning when I wake up.
8. I use my phone during awkward circumstances as a way to deal with the situation.
9. I experience finger or wrist aches and strains after prolonged usage of my mobile phone, game consoles or computers.
10. Has anyone told you to put aside your gadget, and pay attention to them (who are physically with you)?

Across 600 respondents

By schools

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11. How often do you feel neglected due to your friend using their mobile phones or handheld gaming devices when they are with you?

### Across 600 respondents

- **41%** Never
- **30%** Occasionally
- **16%** Seldom
- **6%** Frequently
- **7%** All the time

### By schools

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12. How often do you use your phone and talk to others at the same time?

**Across 600 respondents**

- 42% Occasionally
- 35% Seldom
- 12% Frequently
- 9% Never
- 2% All the time

**By schools**

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13. I tune out to my friends who are physically with me when I am using my mobile phone.

### Across 600 respondents

- All the time: 34%
- Frequently: 42%
- Occasionally: 13%
- Seldom: 9%
- Never: 2%

### By schools

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14. Do your friends tend to be distracted with using their gadgets when hanging out with others?

Across 600 respondents

By schools

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15. Has your schoolwork suffered because you spent too much time on your electronic gadgets (i.e. mobile phone, MP3 player, hand-held gaming devices)?

16. Have you used electronic gadgets to escape from problems, bad feelings or stress?
17. Are you thinking about electronic gadgets more and more?

18. Have you stolen an electronic gadget from a store or a friend, or stolen money in order to buy an electronic gadget?
19. Have you tried to use electronic gadgets less often or for shorter periods of time, but are unsuccessful?

![Bar chart showing responses by schools for question 19.]

20. Have you become restless or irritable when trying to cut down on electronic gadget usage?

![Bar chart showing responses by schools for question 20.]

21. Have you ever compromised your studies or co-curricular activities to use electronic gadgets?

22. Does spending more time and/or money on electronic gadgets allow you to feel a level of excitement?
23. Have you ever lied to your family or friends about how much you use electronic gadgets?

![By schools chart for question 23]

24. Have you ever needed to borrow money so you could get electronic gadgets?

![By schools chart for question 24]

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Average score for Gadget dependency - Set of 10 validated questions

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<td>3.5</td>
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<td>Average score across the 6 tertiary institutions**</td>
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### Note:
*Average score refers to the following formula:

\[
\text{Average score} = \frac{\text{Sum of the Individual Score of 100 respondents per school}}{100}
\]

where:
- Each 'Yes' response constitutes 1 point.
- Each 'Sometimes' response constitutes 0.5 point.

** Average score across the 6 tertiary institutions refers to the following formula:

\[
\text{Average score across the 6 tertiary institutions} = \frac{\text{Sum of Average Score}}{6}
\]
Appendix 9: Pre-Campaign Questionnaire

We are a group of students from Nanyang Technological University, Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information. For this survey, we would like to find out more about the attitudes and beliefs of Singaporean youths pertaining to gadget usage.

Please note that the term “gadgets” comprises of ALL electronic handheld devices such as MP3s, Gaming devices, mobile phones, notebook etc.

Please kindly circle or tick your answer where applicable. From a scale of 1-5, the numerals will represent the following:

Strongly agree          Somewhat agree        Neutral        Somewhat disagree       Strongly disagree
5                              4                         3                              2                              1

1. I have heard of the term “gadget dependency”.
   □ Yes
   □ No

2. Gadget dependency is the compulsive need to use gadgets.
   5                              4                         3                              2                              1

3. It is important to strike a healthy balance when it comes to gadget usage.
   5                              4                         3                              2                              1

4. Excessive gadget usage will lead to negative consequence
   5                              4                         3                              2                              1

5. There is a need to seek professional help if my gadget usage goes out of hand.
   5                              4                         3                              2                              1

6. I know where to seek professional help if my gadget usage goes out of hand.
   5                              4                         3                              2                              1
Appendix 10: Pre-Campaign Findings

1. I have heard of the term "gadget dependency"

2. "Gadget dependency" is the compulsive need to use gadgets.
3. It is important to strike a healthy balance when it comes to gadget usage.

4. Excessive gadget usage will lead to negative consequences.
5. There is a need to seek professional help if my gadget usage goes out of hand.

6. I know where to seek professional help if my gadget usage goes out of hand.
## Appendix 11: Timeline of Campaign

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<th>April</th>
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<td><strong>Phase 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Phase 3</strong></td>
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<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
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<td>Week 1 &amp; 2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conduct Survey</strong></td>
<td>Facebook ‘In Search of the Ultimate Gadget Junkie’ competition</td>
<td>Media Pitching</td>
<td>Post Campaign Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare/ send Media pitches and Press Release</td>
<td>Website Launch</td>
<td>NTU Campus road show (Distribute booklets)</td>
<td>NUS campus road show (Distribute booklets)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SMU road show (Distribute booklets)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building up identity and preparation for campus road shows</td>
<td>Wrap up event coverage and surveys evaluation</td>
<td>Start post campaign survey</td>
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</table>
Appendix 12: Criteria and details of the photo competition, “In Search of the Ultimate Gadget Junkie”

Rules and regulations

1. Each submission has to be original.
2. Each submission must feature people and gadgets.
3. Any individual may submit more than 1 entry.
4. Submission is to be done via Facebook (uploaded as fan photos on the FB fan page)
5. Winners will be decided based on the following criteria:
   - Popularity i.e. most number of 'likes' (40%)
   - Creativity (30%)
   - Aesthetics (30%)
6. Each submission is to be accompanied with a caption (10 words or less) and a short write-up (no more than 150 words).
7. The deadline for entry submission is 17 February 2011, 2359 hours.

Terms and Conditions

1. The Gad-Savvy team owns all copyright to the entries submitted, and entries may be used for publication.
2. The Gad-Savvy team's decision is final.
3. The Gad-Savvy team has the right to remove any photos deemed inappropriate, or disqualify any participant.
Appendix 13: Facebook Interactions of the photo competition, “In Search of the Ultimate Gadget Junkie”
Appendix 14: Announcement of results of the photo competition on the campaign website: [www.gad-savvy.com](http://www.gad-savvy.com)
Appendix 145: “In Search of the Ultimate Gadget Junkie” photo competition publicity posters
Appendix 16: Publicity posters of the photo competition in tertiary institutions
Appendix 17: Website main page and the main categories
Appendix 18: Webisode_The Third Party- Lover’s Edition
Appendix 19: Webisode_The Third Party- Family Edition
Appendix 20: Webisode_The Third Party- Friends’ Edition
Appendix 21: Twitter profile of @GadSavvy
# Appendix 22: Targeted Media List

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**Broadcast**

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Appendix 23: Press Release

For Immediate Release 17 February 2011

Survey Shows Rising Trend of Gadget Over-dependency Among Youths

Constantly check your laptop, mobile phone, game console even as you put them aside for other activities? Check. Bring your mobile phone wherever you go- even the toilet? Check. Use handheld gadgets to deal with awkward social settings? Check. Sounds familiar? You are not alone. Along with more than three-quarters of Singaporean youths, you form the new generation of gadget junkies.

In a recent survey conducted by final-year students of Nanyang Technological University Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information (NTU WKWSCI) amongst 600 youths across 6 tertiary institutions, at least 79% of them displayed signs of gadget over-dependency.

“Gadget over-dependency may be a larger problem than you think as people are oblivious to the effects of their gadget usage – subconsciously or not – and how it influences their psychological, social and emotional well-being”, says Mr. Nicholas Gabriel Lim, Psychologist and Director of iGROW Pte Ltd.

That’s not all. If you have also been experiencing nagging head, neck and thumb aches for weeks and losing track of time each time you use your mobile phone, laptop or game console, it is time to seek help.

“When your usage turns compulsive, it robs you of the ability to know what controls you and what you control”, he adds. Over-dependency on gadgets can also implicate your working and personal relationships with others. You keep telling yourself that it is going to be a quick game, but the five minutes you had initially allocated for the quick game often extended longer than it should- causing you to miss your meals or activities that were lined up, or be late for meetings. Furthermore, when gadgets become too much of a psychological crutch, you would develop a preference to drown yourself in activities on your gadgets instead of interacting with others, resulting in an inability to maintain real relationships.

“Most people who continue using their gadgets do not realise that their usage patterns can have very serious impact on their physical well-being. If the inflammation around the tendon or the neck areas that arise from strains doesn’t resolve, they can actually get a chronic pain problem,” says Dr. Ho Kok Yuen, an anaesthesiologist and clinical director for pain management at Raffles Hospital. He added that more and more younger people are getting chronic pain problems- an issue that doctors used to see for people aged 60 and above due to degeneration after wear and tear.

Dr. Ho advises to avoid typing lengthy messages on your handheld gadgets, observe your head posture while using gadgets and have ample rest for the part(s) of the body to recover when one experiences pain.

Yet, apart from moderating the length and frequency of one’s gadget usage, it is difficult to draw the line for gadget usage as it largely depends on the lifestyle of the individual, especially for social settings.
“It’s up to the social groups to develop social norms. Each individual should have their rules. Who’s to say what is good or bad? It’s a shifting norm,” says Dr. Arul Indrasen Chib, Assistant Professor at NTU Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information whose research interests include information and communication technologies for development.

About Project Gad-Savvy

Gad-Savvy is a student-initiated campaign by 4 final-year students of NTU Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, targeted at young adults and other users of handheld electronic gadgets, i.e. mobile phones, laptops, portable gaming devices, music players.

This campaign aims to raise awareness on gadget dependency from a health angle. Ultimately 'Gad-Savvy' serves as a reminder for all to moderate one's gadget usage behavior and to have a healthy balance between gadget usage and face-to-face communication. This initiative kicks-starts the level of awareness in Singapore in light of the rising trends of exponential increase in ownership and usage of electronic gadgets. This initiative is sponsored by iGROW Singapore and funded by the Youth ChangeMakers of National Youth Council.

About iGrow Pte Ltd

iGROW is a psychological consultancy firm with a dynamic team of psychologists, counsellors, coaches and youth workers, who have an avid interest in the psychological well-being of every human being.

iGROW is one of the supported service providers by the Inter-Ministry Cyber Wellness Steering Committee (ICSC), in the area of Cyber Wellness.

For more information, kindly contact:
Christine Tan
Mobile number: 9653 3164
E-mail: christinet.work@gmail.com
OR
Koh Ming Xiu
Mobile number: 9682 3973
E-mail: mingxiukoh@gmail.com

Attachments:
1. Fact Sheet on Gadget Over-dependency
2. Survey Questions and Results
3. Bibliography
1. Fact Sheet on Gadget Over-dependency

**Symptoms of Gadget Over-dependency**

1. Preoccupation
2. Increased Use
3. Inability to Stop
4. Withdrawal Symptoms
5. Lost Sense of Time
6. Risky Behaviors
7. Lies
8. Escape to the gadget-realm
9. Recurring strains (thumb, neck, lower back)
10. Impaired concentration and memory (Khan, 2008)

**Adverse effects of Gadget Dependency (Gadget Over-dependency)**

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<td>• Family quarrels</td>
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<td>• Broken marriages</td>
<td>• Loss of control</td>
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<td>• Unable to maintain relationships</td>
<td>• Preoccupation</td>
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<td>• Unable to keep a job or focus on study</td>
<td>• Compulsive checking</td>
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**Tips to keep Gadget Over-dependency at bay**

- Avoid typing lengthy messages on your handheld gadgets and observe your head posture
- Moderate the length and frequency of your gadget usage
- Keep in mind the appropriateness of gadget usage in social setting

**Professional help for Gadget Over-dependency**

Raffles Medical Group, Pain Management Centre (physiological)
- Treatment
- Physiotherapy

iGROW Pte Ltd (social, emotional, psychological)
- Gadget Dependency Test
- Psychologists, counsellors, coaches
- Workshops and Programmes
2. Survey Questions and Results

The survey is a component “Gad-Savvy”, the campaign which aims to find out the signs of gadget over-dependency amongst youths.

The survey is administered by 4 final-year students of Nanyang Technological University Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information. The group went down to 6 tertiary institutions- Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Temasek Polytechnic, Singapore Polytechnic, Nanyang Technological University, National University of Singapore and Singapore Management University- to collect 100 responses from each institution in early February 2011.

For the purpose of this survey, the term “gadgets” largely comprises of any handheld electronic devices such as music players, game consoles, mobile phones and laptops.

The most significant findings are as follows:

i. I bring my mobile phone with me whenever I go – including the toilet

   Number of respondents that answered:
   All the time, Frequently, Occasionally - 546 (91.2%)
   Seldom, Never – 54 (8.8%)

ii. I prefer communicating with my friends using technology (e.g MSN, SMS, Whatsapp).

   Number of respondents that answered:
   All the time, Frequently, Occasionally – 529 (88.2%)
   Seldom, Never – 71 (11.8%)

iii. I have the habit of checking my laptop, mobile phone, or game console periodically, even when there is no update/notification of sort.

   Number of respondents that answered:
   All the time, Frequently, Occasionally – 499 (83.2%)
   Seldom, Never - 101 (16.8%)

iv. I use my gadgets during awkward circumstances as a way to deal with the situation.

   Number of respondents that answered:
   All the time, Frequently, Occasionally – 475 (79.2%)
   Seldom, Never – 125 (20.8%)

3. Bibliography

Appendix 24: Event posters and EDM

**TEAM gad-Savvy TOURS NTU!**

(aka Pulau Nanyang)

Be part of the Gad-Savvy movement by striking a pose for our cameras to pledge against gadget over-dependency! We have prizes in-store for our top 2 wackiest shots!

So, show us what you've got at our booth located near LT1 (directly above 7-Eleven along North Spine)

Our mobile CREW will also be walking around in this awesome t-shirt with crazily huge handheld gadgets!

Don't say cheese, say Gad-Savvy!

---

**TEAM gad-Savvy TOURS NUS!**

SNAP and WIN!

8TH MARCH 2011
SCH OF COMPUTING LEVEL 2

Strike a pose with our cameras and the top two wackiest shots stand to win great prizes!!!

Our mobile CREW will also be walking around with some crazily huge gadgets!

Don't say cheese, say Gad-Savvy!
Appendix 25: Informational Booklet

www.gad-savvy.com
www.facebook.com/GadSavvy
Follow us on twitter @GadSavvy
Get Smart. Gad-Savvy.

CONTENTS

The Gadget Junkie Meter Test 4
Gadget Dependency: Why you should be worried 6
Junking on Gadget Use 7
Understanding Gadget Dependency 8
Watch those Tell-tale Signs! 9
Some tips and pointers 13
Professional Help 14
About iGROW Singapore 15
Trivia 16
Gad Savy with Zagy 17
Gad Close and Personal with Joanne 19
Gadget Hour with James 21

The Gad-Savvy campaign is an initiative by four final year students from Nanyang Technological University's Kent Ridge School of Communication and Information, targeted at users of handheld electronic gadgets.

In light of rising trends of an exponential increase in ownership and usage of electronic gadgets, the campaign serves as a timely reminder to moderate one’s gadget usage and to strike a healthy balance between gadget dependency and face-to-face communication. This initiative is sponsored by iGROW Singapore and funded by the Young ChangeMakers under National Health Council.

Gadgets can ameliorate; they can also overpower.
Get Smart. Gad-Savvy.
9. How often do you become defensive or secretive when anyone asks you what you are doing with your gadget?

10. How often do you block out disturbing thoughts about your life with soothing thoughts using your gadget?

11. How often do you find yourself anticipating when you will be using your gadget again?

12. How often do you think that the absence of your gadget would be boring, empty, and joyless?

13. How often do you snap, yell, or act annoyed if someone bothers you while you are using your gadget?

14. How often do you lose sleep due to late-night gadget usage?

15. How often do you feel preoccupied with your gadget or fantasize about it when you do not have it with you?

16. How often do you find yourself saying “just a few more minutes” or “I’ll put it down in a second” when using it?

17. How often do you try to cut down the amount of time using your gadget and fail?

18. How often do you try to hide how long you’ve been using your gadget?

19. How often do you choose to spend more time with your gadget over going out with others?

20. How often do you feel depressed, moody, or nervous when you are not using your gadget, which goes away once you start using it again?

---

**THE GADGET JUNKIE METER TEST**

Put yourself through the test and find out if you are addicted!

To assess your level of addiction, the following questions using the scale (NOTE: The number after each item) 1 = Rarely 2 = Occasionally 3 = Frequently 4 = Often 5 = Always

1. How often do you find that you stay with your gadget longer than you intended?
2. How often do you neglect household chores to spend more time with your gadget?
3. How often do you prefer the excitement of using your gadget to quality time with your boyfriend/girlfriend/partner?
4. How often do you form new relationships with fellow gadget users?
5. How often do others in your life complain to you about the amount of time you spend using your gadget?
6. How often do your grades or schoolwork suffer because of the amount of time you spend with your gadget?
7. How often do you check your email or online communication before something else that you need to do?
8. How often does your job/school performance or productivity suffer because of your gadget usage?

---

**JUNKING ON GADGET USE**

Has it ever occurred to you that you might be over-dependent on your mobile phone, laptop and game console? With at least 79% of youths exhibiting signs of gadget over-dependency, it is highly likely that you form the generations of gadget junkies.

As you yawn, you reach out for your mobile phone every morning. You check unread text messages, notifications before you brush your teeth, in school, you watch videos on your laptop, laugh at how silly some tweets can get and your buddies up for a crazy night out. During dinner, two friends are engrossed with games on their phones; two others are in the midst of a phone conversation, while you are raving about this awesome photography application you bought to another friend.

With the advancement of technology and advent of gadget ownership, you can hardly live each day without depending on your mobile phone, notebook, and game console.

Yet, as we embrace the notion of using technology to improve our lives, has it ever occurred to you that you may have been overly-dependent on your gadgets?
UNDERSTANDING GADGET DEPENDENCY

MYTH OR FACT?!

Gadget Over-Dependent. Sounds unlikely, right? How can the use of a positive, dynamic force like gadgets become a negative, debilitating factor in someone’s life? Gadgets are anything that adds a person to go into a parasitism—cyclic gaming applications, videos, music, etc.—other than the real world.

Simple, just like the use of food, the drinking of alcohol, or even the purchasing of materials things can escalate into misuse and abuse. Therefore, one’s interest in and preoccupation with using gadgets, can lead to a dependence on it.

What is gadget over-dependence?

It is the compulsive usage of gadgets even when individuals know their usage affects them and others around them—psychologically, socially, emotionally, physically and even spiritually. Using the gadget is all they can think about and all they want to do, no matter the consequences. It is any gadget usage behaviors that disturb daily life— if one is preoccupied with gadget usage, spending more and more time on it; neglecting friends and families; spending unnecessary money on it; work and or studies are affected; at health conditions deteriorate; one is unable to have “gadget over-dependency” problems.

Watch these TELL-TALE SIGNS!

1. Preoccupation
   - You constantly think about the activities on your gadget, and if you fail to do so, you feel distressed.
   - You experience a decrease in your daily activities due to your dependence on your gadget.

2. Increased Usage
   - You notice yourself spending more time on your gadget than you used to.
   - You experience a decrease in your daily activities due to your increased usage of your gadget.

3. Impaired Memory & Concentration
   - You have difficulty remembering important details.
   - You experience a decrease in your daily activities due to your impaired memory and concentration.

4. Time Distortion & Loss of Control
   - You keep telling yourself that it is going to be a quick game, but the 3 minutes you had initially turned into an hour.
   - You experience a decrease in your daily activities due to your time distortion and loss of control.

I’m Guilty!

Another commonly overlooked symptom is losing track of time. If you find yourself constantly displacing your priorities due to gadget usage, it’s time to pay some attention to the list of symptoms we have compiled for you!

Find out more about these...

Tell-tale signs!
Compulsive checking
You repeatedly check your messages, emails, social media apps, or other online activities.

Isolation and Avoidance of People
Research has shown that using devices like our mobile phones can isolate us and lead to feelings of loneliness. When you choose to engage in activities on your gadget instead of interacting with others, you might experience feelings of isolation.

Telling lies
You tend to tell—subconsciously or not—lies, or say things you don’t mean, possibly because of the frequency and duration of your gadget usage. This can be harmful to your relationships.

Escape to the Gadget-realm
You use your gadget as a way to avoid thinking about problems, or to delay decisions or feelings of helplessness. Research shows that more than 40% of adults use gadgets during challenging circumstances as a way to deal with stress.

If you are experiencing any of the above, you are not alone. The information provided is for educational purposes only and should not replace professional advice. If you need help, consider consulting a mental health professional or seeking support from community resources.

About iGROW Singapore
The official sponsor and partner of the Gad-Savvy campaign, iGROW Pte Ltd, is a psychological consultancy firm with a dynamic team of psychologists, counselors, coaches, and youth workers.

iGROW has developed the ‘CyberFit‘ wellness program, which provides essential help to promote well-being and youth development during digital interactions for parents, educators, and all who work with youth. The program includes classroom-based training as part of its cyber wellness program (CWP), character development program and coaching and counseling.

Samuel Lim, who underwent the cyber-wellness programme

It was an exceptionally excellent learning experience and a great opportunity to the mind and soul of the mind. I have read a lot about the dangers and negative aspects of cyber bullying, but this program provided a comprehensive overview of the current state of affairs. I have learned the importance of effective communication and how to navigate the digital world safely. The program was very well structured, and the staff was very approachable and understanding. I would highly recommend this program to anyone who wants to learn how to protect themselves from cyber bullying.
During family gatherings, I think it is the other way around because people tend to be introverted with me. Using my electronic devices. But I don’t have a choice, when people start talking or calling me for important or urgent stuff. If I do make a decision to stay away from my devices, it’s usually because I’m tired, or I just need some alone time. I find that it’s important to have some quiet moments to focus on other things. My phone can become a more important tool for me when I need to disconnect and allow my mind to wander.

What advice would you give to the future about the use of electronic gadgets?

"Use it when you want to maximize your productivity. But never use it to the point where you start neglecting your social relationships. Keep a balance between technology and human interaction."

ZAQY MOHAMAD

He also added that, “I think the social interaction aspect is important but it builds the trust among colleagues. In my daily routine, we use our phones to communicate. I may say something through my phone, but I am not able to see if you are smiling or frowning. It is not possible to fully understand someone through text.”

So am I right to say that we need a mixture of both face-to-face interaction and electronic devices?

"Yes, I believe so. It really depends on the situation. For instance, when I’m having a meeting, I prefer to use my phone to communicate with colleagues. But when I’m with friends, I prefer to use my phone to keep in touch with them. It makes it easier to keep track of what we’re discussing."

I agree, but sometimes it can be a bit overwhelming. How do you handle that?

"I try to find a balance. I usually have a designated time to check my phone each day, and I try to limit my usage during that time. I also make sure to take breaks to disconnect and relax."
What mobile gadgets do you own?

"I use iPod, iPhone & Google Nexus One and Pad."

With such an extensive collection of electronic devices, we wonder how much time he actually spends on them a day.

"It probably adds up to twice to six hours depending on how much I’m on my Facebook or if I’m working." 

Well, with such a hectic filming schedule, it’s hard to expect answers to be using his electronic devices all the time. However, being an actor means often away from home, the actors seem to have no problem keeping in touch with his loved ones through the mobile phone.

"There are so many apps that allow you to text and call with WhatsApp so you can see on their phone bill, I don’t use any other apps to make video calls. Communication is much faster and more straightforward. With Twitter and Facebook, you can pretty much be kept in the loop of what’s happening in your life." When asked if he uses mobile phones more for work or play, James admits to playing games on his mobile phone but at the same time, meeting the demands of his work through his phone.

"Both, I check my work schedules, communicate with my manager and answer emails for play. I tweet which will automatically allow my Facebook to have the same status update. I used to play games like Candy Story, Restaurant Story and City Story, which takes up a lot of time. I have since quit these games."

Wow, good time management there, James! A perfect example of balancing work and leisure. The actor seems to have a balanced lifestyle with such admirable discipline on gadget usage, I’m sure we are all dying to find out what mobile gadget he plans to use next.

"I’m going to watch a movie at the cinema. Inevitable notification anxiousness from social networking sites that can be pretty discipline and annoying." - END

With 40 years of committed service under his belt, Mr. James Lee now assumes the role of Senior Advisor at Wing Tai Holdings. Wing Tai is a leading developer highly respected for its quality property developments and popular retail brands such as fastfood, Dairy Farm, Peters, Warehouse, Niki Sellidge, Ben Sherman, Karen Millen and Uniqlo.

He sat down with James for a chat. His spritely 70-year-old who has received many awards including the prestigious 2009 Raby Day Award, shares with us his insights on an engaging conversation peppered with wit, wisdom and charm.

Let’s find out what he has to say in this gadget hour.

GADGET HOUR WITH JAMES

When asked how many portable electronic devices he owns, he chuckled. He recited his list of devices. "I have a phone, a pad, a laptop. I would love to have a laptop, I refuse to have one, I don’t want to get into it. I use my phone now, I was using a regular Nokia phone which was old and was decided to be beyond repair that the iPhone was a true replacement that came with my wedding celebration with the family."

He prefers using only one very basic cellphone in hisrm. "I use my iPhone to call and send text messages only. I love SMS-ing because I can see what’s happening in my phone, I like to keep things simple."
Appendix 26: Event informational boards

Understanding Gadget Dependency

Myth or Fact?!

Gadget Over-Dependence sounds unlikely, right? How can the use of a positive dynamic force like gadgets become a negative, debilitating factor in someone’s life? Gadget dependency is anything that causes a person to go into a paradigm—cyber gaming, applications, videos, music, etc.—other than the real world.

Simple. Just like the use of food, the drinking of alcohol, or even the purchasing of material things, one can become dependent on devices. In this case, one is referred to as dependent on using gadgets, can lead to a dependence of it.

What is gadget over-dependence?

It is the compulsive usage of gadgets even when individuals know their usage affects their own lives around them—psycho-socially, socially, emotionally, physically and even spiritually. Using the gadget is all they can think about and all they want to do; numbing the consequences. Is it true gadget usage behaviors that don’t add value?—it is one is preoccupied with gadget usage, spending more and more time on it, neglecting friends and families, spending unnecessary money on it, work and or studies are affected, or health conditions deteriorates, one is said to have “gadget over-dependency” problems.

“Over the past few years, we’ve witnessed the rise of a new addiction—gadget addiction.”

—Michael Cindrich, Co-founder & CEO of Gymbash!

WATCH those social, emotional, psychological and physiological TELL-TALE SIGNS!

1. Preoccupation
   You continuously think about the activities on your gadgets and look forward to the next use of your gadgets. Some people even come to use their gadgets as a “shoe deodorant” to quench their addiction.

2. Increase Usage
   You need to spend increasing amounts of time on your gadgets. You may notice your usage patterns are getting even more and more. You find that you spend more time on your gadgets than you did before.

3. Achy, Impaired Memory & Concentration
   Some individuals find that they are more prone to having mental lapses in their recall, forgetfulness, and concentration. This is often due to distraction, lack of focus and too many notifications.

4. Time distortion and loss of control
   You keep telling yourself that it is going to be “just a quick game,” but you end up spending hours on your device, longer than planned, causing you to miss your needs for other planned activities.

5. Compulsive checking
   You constantly check and refresh your social media accounts for “likes,” comments and other notifications.

6. Isolation and Avoidance of People
   Research has shown that individuals with gadget addiction are more likely to isolate themselves from others on their gadgets instead of interacting with others, resulting in an inability to maintain real relationships.

7. Telling lies
   You are aware of the—subconscious or not—about the frequency and duration of your gadget usage. But, you are found gadgets to use it anyway, even if you know you have, and there are adverse effects to it.

8. Escape to the Gadget-realm
   You use your gadget as a way to avoid/escape from debilitating feelings, events, situations or problems. It is a way to avoid thoughts, feelings and situations that you find uncomfortable. But what is the price you pay for your emotional, social and mental well-being?
Appendix 27: Event pledging materials and instant photo template
Appendix 28: Campus Roadshow at NTU
Appendix 29: Campus Roadshow at NUS
Appendix 30: Campus Roadshow at SMU
Appendix 31: Event publicity materials and Campaign T-Shirt

Front

Back

are you ready to get savvy?

Find us at CanopyN @LT1

Stand to WIN great prizes!
Appendix 32: Event Coverage Video
Gen Y too dependent on gadgets, finds survey

BY GAOXIAN NG

UNDERGRADUATE

Carly Phua feels constantly with her smartphone, surfing the Internet and checking her social networking account.

But the 26-year-old is not alone. When she catches up with friends at social gatherings, there are often moments of silence when her friends, too, are glued to their mobile devices.

Mr Phua said: "Friends might be sitting across from me, but we would be having a conversation over Twitter, instead of a real one."

A recent Nanyang Technological University survey showed that three-quarters of its 1,000 respondents, aged 17 to 23, suffer from gadget overdependence.

The survey was conducted by final-year students from the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information.

About half of those surveyed said they preferred communicating using technology rather than face-to-face.

Psychologists warn that overdependence on gadgets may impede the development of social skills.

"They may have difficulty dealing with real-life situations, especially difficult ones like confrontations or aggression. It's much easier to hide behind a gadget," said psychologist Nicholas Gabriel Lai.

The survey found that an increasing number of young people are seeking treatment for chronic pain caused by gadget use. Some of the more common complaints are back and neckache, as well as injury to the thumb due to repeated typing.

When the paper asked Ms Phua if she could do without her gadgets, she said: "I would be very frustrated. It would feel like a part of me was missing."

name@spk.com.sg

HELPDESK

SPH wants cross-media ideas to sell a brand

FROM PAGE A3

is to conceptualise a cross-media campaign that leverages on SPH's entire media platforms. They are print, broadcast media, online, mobile, outdoor media and events.

These include 17 newspapers titles and more than 100 magazine titles, online channels such as LaniOne, SSTD and BuzzTV, SPH Mediacorp Office, radio stations Radio 100.3 and 81.3FM; and SingaporePollock.

The purpose of calling for The Pitch is to raise the bar with regard to integrated media initiatives, said Mr Geoff Tan, SPH's senior vice-president and head of strategic marketing.

He said: "Instead of just combining various media options to deliver a cross-media activation, we want to challenge our agency partners to bring their most potent ideas to the table and to seamlessly weave these together to form a powerful, connected and engaging campaign."

Aside from the Golden Cleaver Award, the winning team will receive $20,000 cash and $250,000 worth of advertising on SPH media.

The first and second runners-up will get, respectively, $10,000 cash and $150,000 worth of advertising spots on SPH media. There is no limit to the number of teams each agency can send.

But each team must have an appointed account director as strategic planner, a creative director and a media director.

The "clever" in the award reflects the competitive nature of the industry. The launch ad for the contest features a hanged lamb hanging upside down.

"We urge participants to be innovative and think outside the box," he said.

Agencies which are keen to join The Pitch can log on to www.announcer.com.sg for more information and register by March 30 for a briefing.

The specific brief which contestants are expected to work on will be unveiled two days later, on April 11.

The closing date for submission of proposals is March 30.
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Students find call of gadgets irresistible

Three-quarters in study dependent on them, with some suffering negative side effects

By Chua Han Hoy

TELLING out of habit Singapore’s habit-uaed teenagers have just a few seconds after breakfast to check their mobile phones or laptops, suffering physically and socially as a result. In a survey of 600 polytechnic and university students, three-quarters admitted to constantly checking with their mobile phones and other electronic gadgets.

Many of the respondents aged 17 to 25 checked their phones or laptops every few seconds, and took those gadgets with them wherever they went. Technology has become so integrated into their daily lives, including the home, that one in five respondents admitted to getting ‘stressed during class time’ for ignoring those around them in favour of their gadgets.

Miss Christine Tan, a third-year student at Nanyang Technological University’s Nanyang School of Computing and Information, said her family had decided to look into the issue as they were worried about her reaction when she was on her gadget.

While her parents had many concerns over her habit of staying up late to play social networking sites, Miss Tan said her family wanted to test their limits as to how much technology she was exposed to.

While ignoring the calls of young people on compulsively dependent on their gadgets to satisfy their physical and social needs, it is also important to take steps to ensure the well-being of the users.

According to a New York Times article, those constantly exposed to a deluge of information that is impossible to process and understand in less obvious ways as well. This is likely to cause a constant state of stress that in turn affects daily life. In a study conducted by NIKKEI, a Tokyo-based financial newspaper, participants were asked to focus on a task while concentrating on a computer screen displaying images and sounds.

Participants were given a series of tasks, such as distinguishing between different colors and sounds, while also being asked to multitask with several other tasks.

The results showed that participants were unable to concentrate on any of the tasks, even when they were able to perform them individually. The study also found that participants were more likely to make mistakes when they were asked to perform multiple tasks at once.

The results suggest that multitasking and constant exposure to a deluge of information can negatively affect cognitive and emotional performance.

In conclusion, it is important for individuals to be aware of the potential negative effects of constantly checking and using their gadgets, and to take steps to reduce their exposure to these technologies. This can include setting aside specific times for gadget use, taking breaks and engaging in other activities that promote mental and emotional well-being.

It is also important for individuals to be aware of the potential negative effects of constantly checking and using their gadgets, and to take steps to reduce their exposure to these technologies. This can include setting aside specific times for gadget use, taking breaks and engaging in other activities that promote mental and emotional well-being.

Additionally, it is important for parents and caregivers to be aware of the potential negative effects of constant gadget use, and to take steps to ensure that their children and loved ones are not exposed to these technologies in ways that can negatively affect their development and well-being.

To address these issues, it is important for individuals to be aware of the potential negative effects of constantly checking and using their gadgets, and to take steps to reduce their exposure to these technologies. This can include setting aside specific times for gadget use, taking breaks and engaging in other activities that promote mental and emotional well-being.
Students find call of gadgets irresistible

Three-quarters in study dependent on them, with some suffering negative side effects;

by Cheah Yan Hui

In a survey of 600 polytechnic and university students, three-quarters of respondents admitted to constantly fiddling with their mobile phones and other electronic gadgets. — ST FILE PHOTO

THREE out of four of Singapore's tech-savvy youngsters may be just a bit too fond of their electronic gadgets, suffering physically and socially as a result.

In a survey of 600 polytechnic and university students, three-quarters admitted to constantly fiddling with their mobile phones and other electronic gadgets.

Many of the respondents aged 17 to 23 checked their phones or laptops every few seconds and took their gadgets with them wherever they went.

More than two in five, for instance, took their mobile phones everywhere - including the toilet. And nine in 10 respondents admitted to getting chided at the time for ignoring those around them in favour of their gadgets.

Miss Christine Tan, a final-year undergraduate at Nanyang Technological University's Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, said her four-person team decided to look into the issue because 'we saw it in ourselves and our peers...where nothing else matters when we are on our gadgets'.

While technology had many proven benefits, like allowing users to work away from the office and increasing productivity, Miss Tan and her team wanted to re-ignite what they believed was a rise in the number of young people being compulsively dependent on their gadgets that they suffered negative side effects.

Read the full story in Thursday's edition of The Straits Times.

chyanhi@stpb.com.sg

Singapore contractor fined for damaging electricity cable 6:00 AM

traditional Chinese medicine a prickly issue here 6:00 AM

Opposition's training done informally 5:00 AM

Man fined for importing puppy without licence 5:00 AM

More young women with tongue cancer 5:00 AM

PAP training potential faces for media debate 5:00 AM

Initiation in Singapore hits two-year high 6:00 AM

students find call of gadgets irresistible 6:00 AM

surgery inflated 8,400 bill to $211,000 5:00 AM

Medical council changes rule to target docs, say lawyers 5:00 AM

HSA warns public to avoid 3 health products 5:00 AM

Singapore's SCDF: 55-man rescue team to Christchurch 6:00 AM

new guide to foster harmony at workplace 6:00 AM

Tharman budget not an election ploy 5:00 AM

a online sex syndicates in private flats busted 5:00 AM

COE prices up, Cat A & B see biggest increase 5:00 AM

SAP's 16-man team assists in Christchurch 5:00 AM

Most Popular
Name of Publication: The New Paper
Date of Publication: 26 February 2011
Page/Time-slot/URL: 6, 7
Headline: Face to face? I’d rather Facebook
**Name of Publication:** The New Paper  
**Date of Publication:** 27 February 2011  
**Page/Time-slot/URL:** 20  
**Headline:** Set time budget for kid’s gadget

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## The Buzz

Set time budget for kid’s gadget

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**Comment:** Jeanne Soh  
jeanne@hyp.com.sg

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**Q:** Do you think you are ever addicted to electronic gadgets such as the mobile phone or laptop?  
**A:** My parents always use my phone as an alarm. It’s very convenient.  
— Mohammed, 31, personal trainer

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**Q:** Do you think you are ever addicted to electronic gadgets such as the mobile phone or laptop?  
**A:** I don’t have much use for these devices because I only use them to contact my family.  
— Kemala Dewi, 53, housewife

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**YES**  
65%

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**NO**  
35%
Gen Y too dependent on gadgets, finds survey

Mr Lim said: "Gadget overdependency may be a larger problem than you think, as people are oblivious to the effects of their gadget use and behaviour." He added: "They don't think it is a problem. So, parents or teachers usually have to seek help for them.

The physical well-being of gadget users can also be affected. The study found that an
Gen Y too dependent on gadgets, finds survey

By Guendolyn Ng

Gen Y too dependent on gadgets, finds survey

1/3/2011

DigitalOne - Gen Y too dependent on gadgets, finds survey

UNDERGRADUATE Candy Phua fiddles constantly with her smartphone, surfing the Internet and checking her social-networking account.

But the 23-year-old is not alone. When she catches up with friends at social gatherings, there are often moments of silence when her friends, too, are glued to their mobile devices.

Ms Phua said: "Friends might be sitting across from me, but we would be having a conversation over Twitter, instead of a real one."

A recent Nanyang Technological University survey showed that three quarters of its 560 respondents, aged 17 to 25, suffer from gadget overdependence.

The survey was conducted by final-year students from the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information.

About half of those surveyed said they preferred communicating using technology rather than face-to-face.

Psychologists warn that overdependence on gadgets may impede the development of social skills.

Said psychologist Nicholas Gabriel Lim: "They may have difficulty dealing with real-life situations, especially difficult ones like confrontations or aggression.

It's much easier to hide behind a gadget."}

This coincides with the survey's findings in which 79.2 per cent of respondents said they would use gadgets to deal with an awkward situation.

About 48 per cent of respondents were found to turn to gadgets to escape from problems, negative feelings or stress.

Often, the youth in question are oblivious to the problem.

Mr Lim said: "Gadget overdependency may be a larger problem than you think, as people are oblivious to the effects of their gadget use and behaviour." He added: "They don't think it is a problem. So, parents or teachers usually have to seek help for them."

The physical well-being of gadget users can also be affected.

The study found that an increasing number of young people are seeking treatment for chronic pain caused by gadget use. Some of the more common complaints are back and neck aches, as well as injury to the thumb due to repetitive typing.

When my paper asked Ms Phua if she could do without her gadgets, she said: "I would be very frustrated. It would feel like a part of me was missing."

For more my paper stories click here.
### Name of Publication:
REACH.gov.sg

### Date of Publication:
24 February 2011

### Page/Time-slot/URL:
http://www.reach.gov.sg/YourSay/DiscussionForum/tabid/101/mode/3/Default.aspx?ssFormAction=%5B%5BssBlogThread_VIEW%5D%5D&tid=%5B%5B1795%5D%5D

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Gen Y too dependent on gadgets, finds survey
Name of Publication: Channel 8
Date of Publication: 3 April 2011
Page/Time-slot/URL: 630pm, 10pm
Headline: Study shows youths are over-dependent on gadgets
Name of Publication: Channel U
Date of Publication: 3 April 2011
Page/Time-slot/URL: 11pm
Headline: Study shows youths are over-dependent on gadgets
Appendix 34: Ad-Value Equivalent report of press coverage

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<td>24-Feb-11</td>
<td>REACH.news</td>
<td>Students find call of gadgets irresistible</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Press Release</td>
<td>180000</td>
<td>810000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>24-Feb-11</td>
<td>Stoneline.com</td>
<td>Students find call of gadgets irresistible</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Press Release</td>
<td>210000</td>
<td>420000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>24-Feb-11</td>
<td>Asinew.com</td>
<td>Gen Y too dependent on gadget finds survey</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Press Release</td>
<td>220000</td>
<td>3080000</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>28-Feb-11</td>
<td>AFP.com (Asia)</td>
<td>Work-in-Progress</td>
<td>Wire</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Press Release</td>
<td>250000</td>
<td>1200000</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Media</td>
<td>Headline</td>
<td>Base Rate/ 30 sec, according to time belt</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Duration in 30 sec blocks</td>
<td>Loading factor</td>
<td>Loading remarks</td>
<td>Ad value total</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3-Apr-11</td>
<td>CR 95.8 FM News (9am)</td>
<td>Study shows 3 out of 4 youths are over-dependent on gadgets</td>
<td>3:30 1min 30s</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>PR Press Release</td>
<td>$1,018.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3-Apr-11</td>
<td>CR 95.8 FM News (9am)</td>
<td>Study shows 3 out of 4 youths are over-dependent on gadgets</td>
<td>3:30 1min 30s</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>PR Press Release</td>
<td>$1,018.00</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Headline</th>
<th>Base Rate/ 30 sec, according to each program duration</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Loading for time belt (duration already factored in here)</th>
<th>Loading remarks</th>
<th>Ad value total</th>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Weekly Reach</th>
<th>Circulation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3-Apr-11</td>
<td>Channel 8 News (6:30pm)</td>
<td>Study shows 3 out of 4 youths are over-dependent on gadgets</td>
<td>4:500 2min 11s</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>$33,500.00</td>
<td>Story Pitch</td>
<td>1800000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3-Apr-11</td>
<td>Channel 8 News (10pm)</td>
<td>Study shows 3 out of 4 youths are over-dependent on gadgets</td>
<td>4:500 2min 11s</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>$33,500.00</td>
<td>Story Pitch</td>
<td>1800000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3-Apr-11</td>
<td>Channel 11 News (11pm)</td>
<td>Study shows 3 out of 4 youths are over-dependent on gadgets</td>
<td>4:800 2min 11s</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>$81,500.00</td>
<td>Story Pitch</td>
<td>2000000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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**TOTAL** $127,628.89 161,20000

(PR equivalent) **TOTAL** $182,886.66
Appendix 35: Twitter mentions for @GadSavvy

thelensmen The Lens Men
RT @gadsavvy: Put thoughts into action with Groupon.sg by making a donation for Japan. http://tinyurl.com/JPNdonations
13 Mar

thadie Thaddeus Wee
@gadsavvy awesome time at NUS today! Why no Felicia Chin pics? :(
6 Mar

whitehot_surfer Jason Khor
today was DAMN FUN. helped out with @GadSavvy, went for French, then 2 Sunshine plaza 4 FYP. super fulfilling day. mais je suis tres fatigue!
1 Mar

chingkatong DianeFoongSookChing
support my frens by clicking here! (: Gad Savvy gad-savvy.com via @gadsavvy
24 Feb

goyiling Ling
Gad Savvy gad-savvy.com/index.html via @gadsavvy
24 Feb

ruiqibabylee Lee Rulqi
RT @paranoliamakesme @GadSavvy appears in MyPaper (A5) & Straits Times (front pg, A6) today! Here's a snippet http://tinyurl.com/gad-savvy
24 Feb

sarahwanna Sarah Wan
RT @xiuzie: Hi tweeple! Please follow @GadSavvy for some pure awesomeness and many exciting surprises coming your way!!! #fb
28 Jan

xiuzie Koh Ming Xiu
Hi tweeple! Please follow @GadSavvy for some pure awesomeness and many exciting surprises coming your way!!! #fb
28 Jan
Appendix 36: Opinion pieces by the campaign ambassadors on the website

The Revenge of the Nerds
23 February 2011 | 2:10 a.m.

By: Lim Wei Li

If there is one thing that annoys me these days, it is usually an iPhone user.

In the days when iPhones weren't around, when you talked to them, it was a conversation. These days, they still talk to you, only that they are always going "wait ah, wait ah."

Do they have a problem? Most definitely yes. And I'm not just saying this because I'm not an iUser. These people are gadget junkies, who typically spend way more time and energy on their gadgets than is absolutely necessary. And the poison of choice these days seems to be mobile phone overuse.

Now, most people do not like being told that they have a problem. The last person I told that to, he started having a problem with me. Needless to say, it was nasty. It is one thing to have a problem, it is another to have a problem that can create more problems.

But these days, it is all about being connected 24/7. Just ten years ago, it was the cool kids who had handphones. Now, if you don't have a handphone, you aren't just uncool, you are stone age. Even grannies these days have iPhones, and they can beat you at Angry Birds. Blame it on the telcos giving them away for free with their two-year plans.

The gadget junkie used to be that dude who had three computers, four handphones and five accessories for each of those, the creepy or nerdy one you avoided until you needed to buy a new laptop or phone. Now, they may have just one gadget, but they use it compulsively. In fact, they use it so much it has even affected their speech patterns.

A typical conversation with said junkie might go like this.
"Hey did you see what I just tweeted?"
"Yeah, I just whatshapped you to tell you that it was so lol."

Now, those sentences would not have made donkey sense even just five years ago.

In fact, a recent survey conducted by final-year students of NTU's WKW School of Communication and Information (NTU WKWSCI) amongst 600 youths of tertiary institutions found that more than three quarters displayed signs of gadget over-dependency.

Case in point - While the newspaper used to be the preferred form of toilet entertainment, it is now the mobile. And if the house ever goes on fire these days, most people would save their phones, just so they could take a picture of the fire and tweet about it.

From almost zero to three quarters of the population in slightly under ten years, it almost sounds like a scenario out of a bad science fiction movie, where nerds build evil robots and take over the world, and everyone else becomes their slaves. The stage is set for world domination by them, unless we realise that the innocuous gadget we are holding in our hands is actually controlling us.

I mean, look at the signs. We spend hours frozen in bad postures playing games with the phone, with scant regard to the chronic pains and aches we are subjecting ourselves to. And, for some of us, the phone is the perfect foil to avoid social situations, because we are so busy interacting on platforms like Twitter and Facebook, invented by nerds. Social interaction is no longer on our own terms, it is on theirs. It is exactly what they intended, and we can’t stop ourselves.

It is the perfect revenge. The nerds have won.

Tags: Blog, Features
Everything in Moderation
March 3, 2011, 9:45 a.m.
By Kasuter Seh

Bam. The alarm of the iPhone roars you from your sleep. Even before your eyes receive any daylight, you are browsing through the latest newfangled on Facebook Mobile. You get out of bed, only to boot up your laptop. As you lumber towards the bathroom, you wonder what your plans for the day are.

With your mind still searching for answers, your fingers find themselves on familiar ground – the QWERTY keyboard. You begin scanning through emails and tweets that came in the night before, and before you know it, you have lost a good three hours.

Unrealistic? Not really.

Much as I hate to admit it, I am guilty of such a morning habit. It gets worse. Oftentimes, I find myself swapping at my iPhone. No, not because I received a text – I simply had to see the screen light up.

Before you think I am bankers, take a look around on your next MRT commute. Count the number of people who whip out their smartphones or MP3 players, fiddle with it for a few moments before keeping. Now count the number of times they do that.

Suffice to say, I am not the only victim of gadgets here. Evidently, I think the problem is simple – I find it difficult to unplug. Before you make light matter of this, it is important to consider the implications. It is a known fact that usage of gadgets takes up a huge chunk of our time. I do not think that any one of us would want to wake up one day to find our family and friends feeling off into the background. Neither would we want to suffer the realization that life, with its opportunities and adventures, has passed us by.

What can we do, then? As with food, it is a simple case of everything in moderation.

Tags: Blog

Gadgets: the Double-Edged Sword
March 3, 2011, 7:38 p.m.
By Tim Bangsang

When was the last time you stood in the middle of the junction wandering, “where the hell is that street?” It isn’t before you bought an iPhone. Technology has improved productivity; technology in our hands has improved efficiency. Rise of the machines you say call me a g d l I think it’s a potential.

On a personal level, the iPhone has lowered my cost of living. App like Dirt and Decline Magazine has earned up a new option for me to read my favorite online magazine from my electronic face. A print copy costs $15.95 at the Electronic store. I save an average of $5.85 worth of paper. From 12 issues of 12 paper, this year I have only paid for 5 issues of the magazine.

Do I have economical advantage? Certainly. Have I been environmentally friendly? You bet I did.

Awesome Kit and 20s apps organizes my life. Unlike we’re a person who disagrees with using your priorities and set reminders. Or you have a natural gift of being able to remember a year. How frustrating that gives you from forgetting meetings or simple that stealing lot that you’re on technology is in your home giving you access to information on the go instantly. Knowledge is power.

As an aircraft engineer, my dad received news of the Qantas Airbus A380 engine rot failure at Heathrow with pictures through a human phone less than an hour after it happened. Read it on for a minute or two it may take you a couple of hours to access the site. Isn’t it on the newspaper you probably have to write till tomorrow’s triple Times.

Lots of people jump to the conclusion that over reliance on gadgets is becoming a social issue. Yes, I agree that once even usage of gadgets has caused social data for or physical problems. However, we do blame the proliferation of time waste among Singaporean over the past 2 decades, who decided to most under unfavorable living conditions.

Have gadgets like iPhone brought us more solutions or problems? Think about it...

Tags: Blog

Good or Bad? It’s all up to you.
March 2, 2011, 11:24 a.m.
By Jarred Gu

I remember a time not so long ago, when the only way to contact my parents was to dial their office numbers or go on their pages. I did so when I gave bread of reading fantasies and watching cartoons on TV21, and wanted to ask for permission to play outside.

In those years on, parents equipped with personal mobiles, are now the ones doing the calling instead. At least that’s what I hear from my 10-year-old cousin, whose love of other mobile entertainment is drowning his love for cartoons into films, and playing Mario kart on his Nintendo Wii console.

It is hard to ignore the impact that technological advancement has made on our lives, and I think it applied the modern idea behind this digital revolution. Indeed, how else would have been able to play music my way at 10 cents per minute, when I was away on an exchange program in USA.

Indeed, Singapore school students are just too hard to meet up physically. Even as a speaker, I am hoping that the future of technology is towards increasing our presence from physical access.

Despite this, the future of technology is towards making our lives easier by providing more efficient and convenient access to our everyday life. That I can hardly imagine how I would manage to get by without it in the past. Simply to meet with friends or to ask someone out or a date would be a daunting without a mobile phone and the convenience of text messaging.

They would be expected over the telephone or much rather, face-to-face. More importantly, there would be little room for instant changes or decisions, because without a mobile phone, it would be difficult to contact an individual once he/she exits the room. You cannot call to change a meeting at the last minute, or let the other party know that you will be late.

There is no denying the benefits that digital technology has brought to our lives. But everyone knows that too much of a good thing can be bad. It is now a common sight to see people typing away on their electronic gadgets at all sorts of inappropriate times – while driving or crossing the road, during fatalities, at the dinner table etc.
### Appendix 37: Responses from various counseling centers from both polytechnics and local universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Counseling Centres</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>NYP</td>
<td>Sent iGrow's website, number and Nicholas's contact</td>
<td>Requested for iGrow's contact but declined to establish contact with iGrow - however, they cc-ed, in the email, the relevant staff/lecturers who are likely to engage iGrow's services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>Handover - agreed to meet up</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>RP</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>TP</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Responded</td>
<td>SP Counseling facilities will only be ready the first half of 2012, and they will do a follow-up then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>NTU</td>
<td>Agreed to speak to Nicholas</td>
<td>iGrow to establish contact with counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>NUS</td>
<td>Responded</td>
<td>Rejected - no reason given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>SMU</td>
<td>Agreed to speak to Nicholas - Handover to iGrow</td>
<td>Forward mail, iGrow to established contact with Timothy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 38: Post-Campaign Questionnaire

We are a group of students from Nanyang Technological University, Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information. For this survey, we would like to find out more about the attitudes and beliefs of Singaporean youths pertaining to gadget usage.

Please note that the term “gadgets” comprises of ALL electronic handheld devices such as MP3s, Gaming devices, mobile phones, notebook etc.

Please kindly circle or tick your answer where applicable. From a scale of 1-5, the numerals will represent the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I have heard of the term “gadget dependency”.

☐ Yes
☐ No

2. Gadget dependency is the compulsive need to use gadgets.

3. It is important to strike a healthy balance when it comes to gadget usage.

4. Excessive gadget usage will lead to negative consequence

5. There is a need to seek professional help if my gadget usage goes out of hand.

6. I know where to seek professional help if my gadget usage goes out of hand.

7. How did you get to know of the “Gad-Savvy” campaign?

☐ Word-of-Mouth
☐ News
☐ Social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Youtube)
☐ Campus roadshows
☐ Others, Please specify ______________

☐ Yes
☐ No

9. I find the website (You can tick more than one)

Useless
Informative
Interesting
Messy
Engaging
Others, Please specify ______________

10. Do you have a copy of the Gad-Savvy informational booklet? If No, please skip question 23

☐ Yes
☐ No

11. I find the booklet (You can tick more than one)

☐ Boring
☐ Informative
☐ Useful
☐ Entertaining
☐ Messy
☐ Others, Please specify ______________
Appendix 39: Post-Campaign Findings

1. I have heard of the term "gadget dependency"

2. "Gadget dependency" is the compulsive need to use gadgets.
3. It is important to strike a healthy balance when it comes to gadget usage.

4. Excessive gadget usage will lead to negative consequences.
5. There is a need to seek professional help if my gadget usage goes out of hand.

6. I know where to seek professional help if my gadget usage goes out of hand.
7. How did you get to know of the "Gad-Savvy" campaign?

8. Have you visited the website: www.gad-savvy.com before?
9. I find the website...

10. Do you have a copy of the "Gad-Savvy" informational booklet?

11. I find the booklet…