

Moleskine to Mobile

**How Creative Professionals are Using Their Mobile
Phones**

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Declaration of Submission

This thesis is submitted to the University of Dublin, Trinity College, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of M.Sc. in Multimedia Systems.

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Summary

In 2004, there were 1.756 billion mobile phone subscriptions worldwide and these mobile devices are now commonly equipped with camera and video recording, however basic. Given the worldwide penetration of these mobile devices, are artists, designers, writers, and other creative professionals using their mobile devices as a replacement to the ever present sketchbook that many creative individuals have carried with them in the past? Has the presence of a mobile device which can record text, photos, videos or sound increased the productive output of the creative professional?

This thesis examines the use of the mobile phone as a note taking device, a sketchbook, and increasingly, as a tool to create finished or realized pieces, in the last five years and as they are currently being utilized by artists, designers, and writers.

The Introduction raises the questions that the thesis will answer: As pocket and purse space is at a premium, how many creative professionals are replacing their sketchbooks with a mobile device? Are these mobile phones merely for note taking and communication purposes or are they becoming an integral tool in the hands of the artist or designer for creative production or documentation of the world around them for later use? Are creative professionals becoming more prolific due to the easily accessible mobile device?

Chapter One – The Mobile Phone – examines the history and uses of mobile devices, the camera phone and first mobile weblogs (moblogs), Molly Steenson's challenge to designers and internet futurists to forget the desktop / page paradigm and shift to the mobile. This thesis offers a vision of a creative mobile use.

Chapter Two – Artists, Designers, Writers and Mobile Devices – this chapter gives a snapshot the wide range of how creative individuals and communities have been using their mobile phones from the inception of the moblog in late 2002 to early 2006. The question of who, the mobile handset manufacturers or service providers or the user, is driving and restricting creative innovation is raised.

Chapter Three – The Research - What methodology was used? How the survey and interviews were conducted? The survey and interview results are reviewed and analyzed.

Chapter Four – Where do we go from here? - The conclusion of the thesis determines that creative professionals and non-professionals are using their mobile phones and devices to creative ends. For at least one-third, the use of the mobile camera phone or PDA device is increasing their productivity. More education is needed for many non-technical users and the current system of the service provider who also sells the handset may need to be altered for a fuller adoption of the creative use of the mobile device worldwide.

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Introduction

Late 19th century artist Vincent van Gogh is said to have completed nearly 900 paintings and approximately 1100 drawings in the course of a 9 year career, and in the last three months of his life, he completed 90 paintings¹. The state of his mental health aside, van Gogh may have been the most prolific artists in the history of painting who worked by himself and not as a part of a workshop system.

Van Gogh drew inspiration from the world around him, the landscape, the townscapes, interiors, people in his life, and himself. His tools were his brushes, his paints, canvas, and his ever present sketchbook, the Moleskine².

The mobile or cell phone has expanded beyond the realm of the business person or the tech-savvy teenager to the hands, purses and pockets of people throughout the world. In many developing nations, telephone landlines are still rare, but mobile phones are becoming more commonplace³. Be it in developing or developed nations, the most basic and cheapest mobile devices being sold in 2006 are equipped with phone, text, SMS messaging, calendar functions and increasingly with cameras. In developed nations, higher end mobile devices, sold in 2005 and 2006, are equipped with multiple mega pixel cameras, video recording, sound recording, email, internet, MMS (Multi-media Message Service), Bluetooth, and more. Mobile phones are now connected devices that are converging the internet, the

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent_van_Gogh . Van Gogh's most prolific period was in the last two years of his life. http://www.artnewsonline.com/pastarticle.cfm?art_id=751 , Timothy W. Ryback raises into question how many of the paintings found in Theo van Gogh's apartment at the time of his death were Vincent's and how many were other client's work.

² <http://www.moleskine.com/eng/index.htm> . "My sketch-book shows that I try to catch things in the act." – Vincent van Gogh.

³http://www.vodafone.com/section_article/0,3035,CATEGORY_ID%253D3040303%2526LANGUAGE_ID%253D0%2526CONTENT_ID%253D265426,00.html? Research conducted by Vodafone in Africa.

computer, business functions, communication, information, and artistic functions into one small object that can readily go into a pocket or a purse.

As pocket and purse space is at a premium, how many creative professionals are replacing their sketchbooks with a mobile device? Are these mobile phones merely for note taking and communication purposes or are they becoming an integral tool in the hands of the artist or designer for creative production or documentation of the world around them for later use? Are creative professionals becoming more prolific due to the easily accessible mobile device?

Chapter 1 - The Mobile Phone

Whether this small electronic, communication device is called a ketai, a mobile phone, a cell phone, a PDA, a Blackberry, or any number of other names in various languages around the world, the mobile phone has been a breakthrough communication device in the late 20th century. Radio telephony has been in development since the late 1940s for communication in rural areas where traditional telephone landlines are not feasible or economical.⁴ Since the 1970s, analogue mobile telephones have been available for the automobile and in the 1980s as a handheld mobile phone that could travel with the subscriber, although these were not necessarily pocket sized. Starting in the early to mid-1990s, mobile phones reduced in physical size, cost, and came in a variety of incompatible digital networks depending on geographical location.

The last decade has seen an explosion of mobile telephony from the developed nations to a plurality of nations across the globe. In the last five years, mobiles have crossed boundaries of nations and class to bring communication and information to regions that did not previously have traditional telephone landlines. In 2004, worldwide there were 1.756 billion mobile phone subscribers, up from 492 million in 1999. There are 27.4 mobile subscribers per every 100 inhabitants of the world in 2004.⁵ This is up from 1994, when there was 1 mobile subscriber for every 100 inhabitants of the world.⁶ It is estimated that an additional 750 million mobile phones were sold in 2005 worldwide.⁷

⁴ Ling, Rich, *The Mobile Connection: The Cell Phone's Impact on Society*, 2004, Morgan Kaufman Publishers, San Francisco – Mr. Ling tells of his grandfather's pioneering effort to bring radio telephone to rural farmers in eastern Colorado on the border of Nebraska in 1947.

⁵ International Telecommunications Union (ITU), "Mobile cellular, subscribers per 100 people", March 2006, <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/>

⁶ International Telecommunications Union (ITU), "Global and regional maps and graphs", March 2006, <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/>

⁷ Sayer, Peter, "Mobile phone sales reached new records in first quarter", *The Industry Standard*, May 25, 2005, <http://www.theindustrystandard.com/movabletype/datadigest/archives/003215.php>

How are all of these mobile devices being used? The first SMS (Short Message Service or text) was sent in December of 1992; by 2004 over 500 billion text messages were sent per year.⁸ High-end business phones started to come equipped with email as early as late-1990s. The first camera phone was introduced in Japan in 2000, as well as the first WAP internet enabled phone. It has been stated that the average mobile user is only using the phone, SMS/text, the calendar and the alarm functions of the mobile, and the camera in the last few years.⁹ While that may be true, is the super-user pushing the capacities of the feature sets? If so, how?

First Camera Phone and the Moblog

The very first camera phone, the J-SH04, was released in November 2000 in Japan by Sharp with an 110,000 pixel image sensor.¹⁰ In the five or so years since the release of the first camera phone, the camera feature plus video recording has become common to most mobiles, even moderate priced flip-phones. The addition of the camera to the mobile has opened up new spheres for the creative individual who would like to take photos on the go, be they for note taking purposes or as finished photos to be lifted up to a website or transferred to a computer via a cable or wireless Bluetooth.

As of this writing in March 2006, most of the camera phones released in the European and North American markets ranged from VGA to 2 mega pixel, mostly with 32 - 64 MB of memory on board the mobile; some have the option of a memory stick. In comparison, in November

⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Short_message_service , Wikipedia article on SMS.

⁹ Schick, Charlie, "Overserving the user!!", Lifeblog, August 16, 2005, http://cognections.typepad.com/lifeblog/2005/08/overserving_the.html

¹⁰ Sharp corporate history, http://sharp-world.com/corporate/info/his/h_company/2000/ <http://www.textually.org/picturephoning/archives/2003/10/002064.htm> Turrettini, Emily "First Camera Phone Launched in November 2000," Oct. 23, 2003, Picturephoning weblog post

of 2005 Samsung announced the release of an 8 mega pixel camera phone, the SPH-V8200¹¹ for the Korean market and in January 2006 a smart phone with an 8 GB hard disk drive for the North American Market at a trade show in Las Vegas.

The introduction of the mobile camera phone with email and WAP or 3G internet features evolved the early adopter¹² creative super-user who combined taking photos with their mobile phone and their weblogging practices, for example by sending their photos with text directly from the phone to the internet to be posted as a blog entry on their website or a community website. Web designer, information architect, and author Adam Greenfield first coined the word moblog, mobile weblogging, while living in Tokyo, Japan in November of 2002 to describe the practices of the mobile enthusiasts who were documenting their lives and passions with their camera phones. Freelance writer and researcher, Justin Halls came up with the word independently a few weeks later.¹³ Tokyo Tidbits/Kokochi,¹⁴ Joi Ito,¹⁵ and HipTop Nation¹⁶, the original SideKick moblog portal, were among first consistent moblogs.

¹¹ <http://times.hankooki.com/lpage/200511/kt2005110317080810160.htm> Tae-gyu, Kim, "Sumsung Unveils 8-Megapixel Phone", The Korea Times, Nov. 3, 2005
<http://www.mobilemag.com/content/100/340/C5027/> Somers, Jordan, "Samsung Electronics demonstrates the world's first 8 mega pixel camera phone", Mobile Mag, Thurs. November 3, 2005

¹² Early Adopters are educated social leaders who popularize a product, from Everett Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Early_adopter

¹³ Greenfield, Adam, "Finding the querencia: personally, digitally", V-2 Organization, November 26, 2002, http://www.v-2.org/displayArticle.php?article_num=182 . Mr. Greenfield also confirmed this via email correspondence on March 25, 2006, after he read a del.icio.us bookmark that the author had posted looking for documentation on whether it was Mr. Greenfield or Mr. Halls who first coined the term.

¹⁴ Yaginuma, Mie Kennedy, "First Live Post", Mie's Tokyo Tidbits Moblog, November 14, 2002, <http://tokyotidbits.com/mie/archives/000002.html>

¹⁵ Ito, Joi, "November 2002 archives", Joi Ito's Moblog, November 2002, <http://joi.ito.com/moblog/monthly/2002-11.html>

¹⁶ Perrone, Jane, "Weblogs get upwardly mobile", Guardian Unlimited, Technology section, Thurs. Dec. 12, 2002.
<http://.technology.guardian.co.uk/online/webwatch/story/0,12455,858719,00.htm>

The HipTop Nation community weblog was started in late 2002 by Mike Popovic, a beta tester for the HipTop. It began as a place for the users of Danger's HipTop device, also known as T-Mobile's SideKick, to post their HipTop or SideKick photos to a group space using weblog software to enable the community to share the photos, to build on the idea sets, and to comment on the photos.¹⁷

Mie Yaginuma of Tokyo Tidbits and Kokochi states why she started moblogging in November of 2002, "My now husband made special code so that I could email pictures, videos, and text to a blog [Tokyo Tidbits] that would automatically post from my phone. I basically started documenting my daily life about what I saw, where I went, and people I met."¹⁸

It is this urge to document and narrate life "on the go", as it happens, that draws people into moblogging and into using the camera towards creative ends rather than just as a communication device. From the earliest uses of moblogging by Yaginuma and Popovic, this thesis will show how the creative uses of the mobile have expanded exponentially.

Moreover the urge to document, narrate, and create one's life through documentation has grown beyond the camera phone and moblogging into the video and voice recording features of the mobile phone enabling communities of video bloggers (vlogs or vid-casts) and audio bloggers or podcasters to follow the lead of the mobile bloggers.

Molly Steenson's Vision: Get Rid of the Desktop, Use the Mobile Phone

¹⁷ Popovic, Mike, "About HipTop Nation", HipTop Nation community website, <http://hiptop.bedope.com/about.html>

¹⁸ From March 2006 email interview, please see Appendix C for the complete Interview transcript with Mie Yaginuma (formerly Mie Kennedy).

“We need to open up the bigger question of what people are really doing and then come up with the things they need to support that.” – Molly Steenson¹⁹

“Make ways to share mobile voices. Add voice to text. And get rid of the Web paradigm. Get rid of the desktop. Most of the world isn’t ever going to have a computer. Use the mobile phone.” – Molly Steenson²⁰

On March 15, 2004, then Interaction Design Institute, Ivrea²¹ instructor Molly Steenson stood up in the “Future of Blogging” panel at SXSW Interactive Conference and challenged the panelists on their desktop PC and web page based focus for the future. It is not all about the page, she argued, there is more to the internet than the computer. During this conference in several different sessions Ms. Steenson mentioned the power of the mobile phone for connecting the developing world to the internet and to each other. She gave examples of how mobile phones are penetrating areas that do not have traditional telephone landlines. She described how this penetration of mobility was transforming the informational and community lives of people worldwide.

Statistics from the International Telecommunications Union flesh out the stark facts of the digital divide between the developed and developing nations of the world. In 1994 for 100 inhabitants of the developed world there were 48.8 telephone landlines, whereas there

¹⁹ Transcription of SXSW 2004 Interactive Panel, “The Aesthetics of Social Networks”, on FC Now Blog, March 15, 2004, Fast Company,

http://blog.fastcompany.com/archives/2004/03/15/the_aesthetics_of_social_networks.html

²⁰Transcription of SXSW 2004 Interactive Panel, “The Future of Blogging”, on FC Now Blog, March 15, 2004, Fast Company,

http://blog.fastcompany.com/archives/2004/03/15/blogging_next.html

The author of this thesis was also at this panel, but does not have comprehensive notes, only a brief summary of this panel of which Molly Steenson (<http://www.girlwonder.com>) also spoke up at. The author, also in attendance, remembers Ms. Steenson as speaking more eloquently than the Fast Company’s transcription quotes her.

http://www.blackphoebe.com/msjen/archives/2004/03/sxsw_day_3_of.html

²¹ <http://www.interaction-ivrea.it/>, website for the Interaction Design Institute, Ivrea.

were only 4.4 landlines per 100 inhabitants in the developing world. By 2004 the numbers had slightly improved to 12.8 landlines for every 100 inhabitants of the developing world, compared to the 53.5 landlines per 100 in the developed world.

The digital divide for internet users is even starker: in 1994 for every 100 inhabitants of the developing world there were only 0.03 internet users; the developed world had only 2.18 internet users per 100 inhabitants. In 2004, there were 53.8 internet users for each 100 inhabitants in the developed world, but only 6.7 internet users per 100 in the developing world. The digital divide remains wide in terms of computers and internet users between the developed and developing world.

In contrast, The ITU's statistics for mobile telephone subscriptions and the worldwide growth of mobility show a less marked gap between developed and developing. In 1994, for every 100 inhabitants of the developed world there were 5.2 mobile subscribers, and in the developing world there were 0.19 mobile subscriptions per every 100 inhabitants. In 2004, for every 100 inhabitants there were 18.8 mobile subscriptions in the developing world, and 76.8 mobile subscriptions per 100 in the developed world. Now the penetration of mobile devices is nearing 100% in many developed nations. Meanwhile in developing nations such as Africa had the highest rate of mobile growth in 2004, with China and India following close behind.²²

These statistics from the ITU confirm that rates of mobile phone subscriptions in developing nations are not only decreasing the digital divide between the developing and developed nations, but nations that have little access to the internet via a computer now have access

²² All statistics in this section from the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), "Global and regional maps and graphs", March 2006, <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/>

to the internet via a mobile phone connection. Ms. Steenson was right in 2004, it is time to start focusing on the mobile phone.

A Vision of Creativity

“When the Saudi people finally rise up in revolt and throw out the House of Saud, it won’t be for democratic reform, and it won’t be for an islamic republic. It’ll be about mobile phones.” – Alhamedi²³

The penetration of mobile phones worldwide, regardless of nation, does not just increase an individual’s ability to communicate with family and friends or to do business transactions. The individual’s creativity can also increase with the creative use of the camera phone, the voice recorder, video recorder, SMS/texting, and collaboration with one’s community. Ms. Steenson and Alhamedi’s vision of a world transformed socially and politically by the mobile phone is here and emerging into more spaces and communities every day, because the mobile phone and these features are becoming more available every day.

As early adopters and creative professionals alike push the mobile phone as a tool to create, it expands the definition of mobile telephony beyond a device for information and communication to a device for creative acts. Just as the internet in the last decade has expanded the ability of the individual with a computer and an internet connection to self-publish, to participate in community, and to share information and creativity with other individuals, so the next five years will see a worldwide expansion of information, communication, and

²³ Alhamedi (pseudonym to protect a Saudi ex-pat living in the UK), The Religious Policeman blog, Mon. April 19, 2004, http://muttawa.blogspot.com/2004_04_01_muttawa_archive.html (scroll to 04/19/04)

Mouna Naim, “Why Was I Born a Girl?”, Le Monde, Dec. 28, 2003 – For women students at King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, it is forbidden to have a mobile phone on campus. <http://www.worldpress.org/Europe/1730.cfm>

creativity with the mobile phone as more individuals use the mobile for creative purposes and as fresh uses of the devices multiply into new communities.

Chapter 2 - Artist, Designers, Writers and Mobile Devices

Snapshot of Now – What is out there...

“In the summer of 2001, I had never owned a PDA when I was asked to lead a project where in less than 3 months we would obtain 200 wireless iPAQs and create rich engaging content to show people what technology might look like in the year 2015 on campus. So, handheld computers (since 2001) have been a tool I use for engaging people in an experience or idea...that then leads to a rich dialogue / brainstorm.” – Glenda L. Sims, University of Texas, Austin²⁴

Since the summer of 2001, Glenda Sims has been actively engaging creatively with her handheld mobile device and working towards bringing mobile devices into the Blanton Art Museum on the campus of the University of Texas, Austin. Besides the Blanton Art Museum, where else can we view the products of individuals and group mobile creativity? Websites, art galleries, moblogs, catwalks and even on the streets of London.

The Onesixty SMS Poetry Magazine²⁵ launched at the Cheltenham Festival of Literature in 2002. Onesixty has released online the third issue of poetry submitted to the magazine via SMS text messaging. The poetry conforms to the 160 characters maximum allowed for in a text message. In the UK, there have been number of one off SMS poetry contests put on by newspapers and community groups, but Onesixty is an ongoing SMS literature magazine.

²⁴ From March 2006 email interview, please see Appendix C for the complete Interview transcript with Glenda L. Sims.

Ms. Sims recommends: Sims, Glenda, “UT@2015: A Pocket PC Experience”, Educase Quarterly, Number 2, 2002, <http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/eam02211.pdf>

²⁵ <http://www.centrifugalforges.co.uk/onesixty/>, Onesixty Poetry Magazine

In July of 2004, the first American exhibition of camera phone art, SENT,²⁶ was held at the Standard Hotel in downtown Los Angeles, curated by Xenia Jardin, of BoingBoing.net, and the SixSpace Gallery. For the exhibition at the Standard, the curators had printed out the mobile photos of the invited artists and celebrities and lined them up in 6 or so rows on one wall of the Burnette conference room. The online submissions were served slide show style by four monitors along another wall. The exhibition space was very minimalist, but it showcased the images and brought their beauty into sharp focus.

In email correspondence with Six Space's Sean Bonner²⁷, Mr. Bonner informed the author that none of the artists who were given camera phones for SENT have continued to use them, but that the website is still receiving submissions from community members.

Ludicorp,²⁸ of Vancouver, Canada, started working on building a better online interactive platform in 2002 that was dubbed "Game Neverending", this game evolved into the internet photo sharing site, Flickr,²⁹ which launched in the spring of 2004. Within a year, Flickr had proven itself to be not only popular with photographers, hobbyists, people who desired a working, stripped down photo networking site, but also with a much larger community of people who own digital cameras and camera phones and want to place the photos somewhere online. Flickr's user interface and uploading via computer or mobile has grown the site so exponentially such that Yahoo! bought Flickr in March of 2005.

²⁶ <http://www.sentonline.com/> , SENT online

²⁷ <http://www.sixspace.com> Email correspondence on January 4, 2006 with Sean Bonner of Six Space Gallery, Culver City, Calif. "The exhibition was quite interesting but none of those artists have continued to work with the cameraphone medium. Additionally, higher resolution mobile phones are now making the entire genre not much different than digital cameras."

²⁸ <http://www.ludicorp.com/> , Ludicorp's website pre-Yahoo! buy-out.

²⁹ <http://www.flickr.com/> , Flickr's website.

For mobile camera phone enthusiasts, Flickr is an ideal photo sharing site, as it gives the user a variety of ways to upload photos from their mobile phone to the user's Flickr photo stream: via email, MMS (Multi-media Message), or through a streamlined mobile internet interface. There are community photo pools with forums for posting text as well as photos. Photos can be tagged with descriptive words for easy searching; users can have several levels of privacy or public photo sharing. New features are added daily or weekly. Flickr is free and has no advertising.

Flickr encourages mobile creativity as it gives the user a free space to host and share their photos, as well as an easy to use interface of which to directly post mobile photos to the site from the phone.

Anina, a young French fashion model,³⁰ is participating with Nokia's Lifeblog project, a mobile photo documenting software, to encourage a spectrum of people involved in the fashion industry to start moblogging with Nokia series 60 "smart phones" and Lifeblog, a moblogging software for the Nokia phone, to a series of websites linked together called 360 Fashion. Models, photographers, fashion journalists, designers, agents, and fashion TV journalists all participate in 360 Fashion, each moblogging to their own Typepad moblog using a Nokia phone. This project has publicized moblogging with camera phones and drawn a great deal of people into moblogging and video blogging.³¹

Texas filmmaker and digital artist, Terry Dean, has resolved to work within the restraints of video blogging, by filming one mobile video a

³⁰ <http://www.anina.net/index.html> , Fashion model and mobile evangelist, Anina's website
<http://www.anina.net/360fashion/main.html> ,360 Fashion

³¹ See Victor W's interview in Appendix C, as he picked up moblogging after reading Anina's moblog.

day, using the mobile to send it to the 100lies.com website, which was then projected into a gallery space during the November 2005, "mo.vid.1" – mobile video exhibition, in Dallas, Texas.³² The mobile films are no more than 15 to 30 seconds and Terry uses the lack of recording quality to paint beautiful, dreamy abstractions.

University of California, at Berkeley's Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive has been encouraging the community outside of the Museum to participate in the mobile fun with their film series, Busy Signals: Telephonic Art in Motion, in November 2005. Attendees were to bring their mobile phones to film screenings and their photos, videos, and texts were incorporated into the evening and shared with the group.

London's experimental art collective, Troika, has been using guerilla art techniques by rigging up a with DIY mobile projector with a Nokia mobile phone, a lens, and a light source.³³ They encourage others to send SMS text messages to the mobile phone and they project the messages on people and space in London at night.

Evan Williams, the founder of Pyra Labs, the company that developed Blogger and then sold it to Google, has a new start up in San Francisco, Odeo that launched publicly in late Fall of 2005. Odeo is an audio sharing site where the user can create three minute audio recordings, import in up to 3 minutes of audio, or call a 415 area code phone number and record an audio blog from the telephone. The user can then create an audio channel of which to share the recording with friends, the Odeo community, or on the user's own website. Several of

³² <http://100lies.com/>, [mo.vid.1] Dean Terry's mobile video blog
Terry, Dean, "Mobile Video Phone Art Project | mo.vid.1 | video painting", on comment.terry weblog, October 30, 2005,

http://www.deanterry.com/blog/archives/2005/10/mobile_video_ph.html

³³ <http://www.troika.uk.com/sms-guerilla-projector.htm>, Troika's Guerilla SMS Projector

the research survey respondents report using Odeo to create short podcasts or audio blogs.

Due to file size restrictions, the limitations of the physical mobile device, and mobile bandwidth issues, the audio recordings and / or vlogs are at this time short in duration, small in size, and the quality of the video or sound are not as high as some users would desire. The quality of the camera phone has improved markedly in the last two years, the video and audio features are to follow, especially as memory chips increase in size. With improved mobile handsets and network coverage in the immediate future, mobile video and audio blogging will be emerging out of the early adopters and into the mainstream of users.

Yet, mobile phones laden with features and individuals who want to fully explore these features are only two parts of a three part whole that is not always in concert.

Who drives the Cart: handset manufacturers, carriers, or users?

“The service providers clearly, clearly don't get it. I don't want to watch videos on my phone screen, or send multimedia messages to friends, and when both my device and my service contract are optimized around doing just that, I don't have the flexibility to use my mobile in genuinely creative ways. (Another way of saying this is to note that feature sets and functionality are driven by perceived marketing requirements rather than user needs.)” - Adam Greenfield, Studies and Observations, NY, NY ³⁴

Adam Greenfield has been writing on the cellular service providers business practices in an attempt to keep customers from straying each

³⁴ From March 2006 email interview, please see Appendix C for the complete Interview transcript with Adam Greenfield.

time a new and better phone comes out on the market, as well as not understanding how to keep customers with good user interface in late 2002³⁵, yet, nearly 3.5 years later the service providers continue the same business practices that stifles wide spread adoption and practice.

Interview respondent John Braine notes that his creativity may be cramped due to high prices of MMS (Multi-media Messaging Service) and internet service. "I'd probably be a lot more creative with it if it wasn't so dear to send MMS messages and connect to the internet. I'd say you could have great fun updating websites from a phone but it's just too expensive."³⁶ Mr. Braine raises a pertinent issue for many respondents, that of prices for data, internet, or MMS services with many of the service providers.

There is a paradox whenever the mobile device manufacturers continually release the new and improved models of mobile phones with more features than the last, yet the service providers in many countries either disable the features, attempt to restrict access to the greater internet and keep customers on the provider's content intranet, e.g. DoCoMo's I-mode, or restrict usage via high price plans or data tariffs due to below par networks that are unable to handle a high adoption of 3G or internet features.

Many service providers entice customers into restrictive price or tariff plans with feature laden mobile devices that are significantly reduced in cost if the customer signs onto a contract for a year or two. The customer is then in a legally binding agreement with the provider. Yet often the customer is not able to use all the features of the mobile

³⁵ Greenfield, Adam, "Moblogging as, um, CRM enhancement", V-2 Organization, November 27, 2002, http://www.v-2.org/displayArticle.php?article_num=185

³⁶ From March 2006 email interview, please see Appendix C for the complete Interview transcript with John Braine.

phone due to the contract's restrictions, or to bad customer service on the part of the provider once the contract is signed. Many cases the mobile phone bundle that the service provider sells does not come with all of the necessary items to use the phone to its full potential, such as a data cable to transfer text, photos, videos and sound to the user's computer.

An individual does not purchase a computer from the same vendor as one purchase one's internet service. The hardware is sold separately from the internet connection. Most computers come bundled with promotions for internet connection but the purchaser is not required to use those vendors.

If an individual wants to buy an automobile off the dealer's lot, they can. One can also choose to order a specific set of features from the car dealer and several weeks or months later the requested customized automobile arrives. Could not the same be done with a mobile phone?

This thesis proposes such a model for mobile phones, a model with would facilitate rather than prohibit creativity. The purchase of the handset would be a separate action from subscription to a mobile plan, so that the features of the phone can be customized or at least can be sold to a customer as the manufacturer designed them to be rather than disabled or altered. One could buy a traditional phone from a retailer separate from the ordering of telephone landline service from a telecommunications company.

Thus, if one wanted a standard off the shelf mobile phone one could purchase it from any retail vendor, as well as the subscription from whatever carrier/service provider suited the needs and wants of the

individual. In the web design field, leaders and practitioners have been preaching the separation of structure from presentation. Separation of out handset manufacturers from the service providers, would give the service providers impetus to give actual customer service, and provide customization to the customers who want it.³⁷

³⁷ Hanen, Jenifer, paraphrase of a comment posted on the "Jason Fried wants: Less Phone: The Moto PEBL" blog entry on Charlie Schick's Lifeblog, March 29, 2006, http://cognections.typepad.com/lifeblog/2006/03/jason_fried_wan.html

Chapter 3 – The Research

Methodology

Most of the current research on mobile phones and communication is focused on the technical, computer science, or sociological perspectives. The technical research is focused on improvements to the network, wireless advancements, and handset components. The sociological research is more focused on camera phones and how people use the devices to share the photos within their family and community groupings, as well as how certain groups of super-users are adopting the mobile for purposes of sharing information and communication in the context of their community structures.

Because this thesis is focused on creating with the mobile phone, online newspaper articles, weblog posts, artist's websites and interviews yielded more research references than the academic literature. After reviewing the mobile creative pieces that were available on moblogs, weblogs, Flickr, and other websites, it was determined that the best approach would be to craft a short qualitative survey on the mobile practices of creative professionals, as well as interview a few key early adopters and innovators in the field.

The survey questions were crafted to ask questions about the artistic stages at which creative professionals used their mobile phones. For example, cogitating / note taking, as a sketchbook, or to create finished or realized pieces. The survey also asked if the respondent felt that their individual creative output has increased with the use of the mobile device. The survey was posted online via surveymonkey.com from February 21 to March 23, 2006. The survey was publicized in the first two days by sending email invitations to a targeted community of

designers, web developers, artists, musicians, DJs, and writers who are known for their artist mobile use.

This group was asked to take the survey and if possible to refer the survey's URL link to other creative colleagues and collaborators via email or a link on their website. On February 23, 2006, San Francisco photographer and Flickr community manager, Heather Champ, posted the link to the survey on the Flickr blog. At the time of the closing of the survey, 188 individuals had taken the survey.

Due to the manner of publicity of the survey to respondents and the penetration of the camera feature on most mobiles sold in Europe and North America in recent years, the results are skewed slightly towards photographers or respondents who are visual and would use the camera feature to take notes or post to the web. Though the survey also targeted video bloggers and audio podcasters, but the response was not as strong or as enthusiastic as it was from the design and Flickr communities.

Another critique is that the survey did not specifically ask for or require professional qualifications. It was assumed, perhaps naively, that the survey design and wording, as well as the publicity and public nature of the survey that the respondents would be those whose professions were in creative fields or non-professionals dedicated to creative endeavors.

In addition to the option on the survey asking respondents if they would like to further comment or elaborate in an email interview, additional emails were sent out requesting interviews with specific creative mobile early adopters and innovators. The approach was to delve into the subject with the interviewees after reviewing the initial bulk of survey

responses. Many of these targeted emails remained unanswered, of the 40 plus people who agreed to an interview on the survey or at SXSW Interactive 2006 conference in person, only 11 email interviews that were returned were used for analysis.

Survey Results

188 respondents took the “Moleskine to Mobile” Short Survey from February 21 to March 23, 2006. By stated name, stated URL, referents, and IP addresses, nearly all of the respondents identify as creative professionals, bloggers or Flickr mobloggers from the USA, Canada, Europe, Africa, and Asia. 70 of the 188 gave their name, 118 chose to remain anonymous. 47 of the 188 gave their URL where they are posting their mobile creatively, 141 remain anonymous or do not have websites where they are directly publishing finished or realized pieces from their mobile phones.

This section is formatted with the data in a table structure. Additional statistics follow to elucidate the results. Quotes from respondents on significant or unusual mobile practices were typed into the survey's Other (please specify) text box for each question.

2. Cogitate: Notes

A. Do you use your mobile device to take notes? If so, which function(s)?

	Response Percent	Response Total
text only - I take notes for later use	53.1%	93
SMS / Texting - I send notes to myself or a creative collaborator	39.4%	69
email - I send emails to myself or a creative collaborator	29.7%	52
photos - I take photos with my mobile for note taking use	60.6%	106
MMS - I take photos or videos and MMS them to myself or a creative collaborator for note taking purposes	9.7%	17
video - I record videos for note taking purposes	11.4%	20
sound - I record sound for note taking purposes	16%	28
phone - I call myself or a collaborator to leave messages on my notes	24%	42
Other (please specify)	11.4%	20
Total Respondents		175
(skipped this question)		13

Of the 175 total respondents for Question 2A, 10 used the Other (please specify) text box to say that they don't use their mobile or cell phone to take notes in any form. Thus, 165 of the whole survey total of 188 respondents used their mobiles to take notes with one or more of the features, **87.8%** of all survey takers use their mobile for note taking purposes.

Of the Other (please specify) notes for Question 2A the following practices and approaches to using the mobile for note taking or cogitating:

"I draw in the notes (my silly pictures can sometimes help me remember even better than words)"

"If I think I won't remember anything I type it in my phone to have until I find a pen. I prefer to write things down on paper"

"I use my ipod for the sound recording, not my cell phone"

"Calendar function: for notes with dates etc."

87.8% of all of the survey respondents use their mobile device to take notes. 60.6% of the 175 respondents who answered Question 2A use the camera phone feature to take notes, 53.1% use the text to take notes, and 24% use the voice call feature to phone notes to a collaborator or their own voice mail for later retrieval.

3. Moleskine / Sketchbook

A. Are you using your mobile / cell phone for the purposes of creating and expanding on ideas, as you would a sketchbook?

	Response Percent	Response Total
text only - I write notes, or story ideas, or poems for later use	41.6%	52
SMS / Texting - I send notes, or story ideas, or poems to myself or a creative collaborator	24.8%	31
email - I send emails to myself or a creative collaborator	20%	25
photos - I take photos with my mobile for sketching use	53.6%	67
MMS - I take photos and MMS them to myself or a creative collaborator for note taking purposes	5.6%	7
video - I record videos for sketching purposes	10.4%	13
sound - I record sound for sketching purposes	12%	15
phone - I call myself or a collaborator to leave messages on my ideas	19.2%	24
Other (please specify)	15.2%	19
Total Respondents		125
(skipped this question)		63

In Question 3A, of the 19 respondents who used the Other (please specify) text box it most noted that they do not use their mobile devices to create or expand on ideas as one would a sketchbook. Of the 125 responses to this question 112 did use the mobile in one or more ways as a “sketchbook”. This is **59.6%** of the whole survey respondents of 188, still a large majority of respondents.

Of the Other (please specify) notes for Question 3A the following practices and approaches reflect artists and designers who use their mobile as one would a sketchbook:

“I have Backpack³⁸ running on my Treo via AvantGo. I jot down ideas on it sometimes.”

“This is rare, only if I don't have my moleskine with me...”

“Drawings on the screen via stylus.”

“I take photos of product that I want to expand on or improve. The mental notes are remembered when I see the pic. For instance, saw a candle holder that gave me an idea for a new design that I could market and sell. It worked. Took pic in Paris, made candelabra in Mexico and it was featured in InStyle Magazine this winter.” – Kathy Delgado, VintageWeave.com

“That said, I've taken photos (and Flickr'd them) purely for the colour palettes within.”

³⁸ Backpack is a project management web application made by 37Signals.com.
<http://www.backpackit.com/>

“I’ve used my phone to document several stages of an oil painting (but the photos are still on my phone).”

59.6% of all survey respondents are using their mobile phone as a sketchbook. 53.6 % of the Question 3A respondents are using the camera feature to for sketching use. The last three quotes illustrate that artists and designers are using the camera feature and a stylus on a PDA touch screen much in the same way that Vincent van Gogh would have sketched a scene, noted particular colors, or documented the stages of painting.

4. Creative Output

A. What types of finished / realized pieces are you creating on your mobile / cell device in its whole form?

	Response Percent	Response Total
SMS - I write stories, poems, manifestos, short shorts and send them to myself or others	14.9%	15
email - I write stories, poems, manifestos, short shorts, blog posts and send them to myself or others or to my weblog	21.8%	22
photos - I take photos with my mobile and send them to myself, others, to my weblog, or to Flickr or other photo sharing sites	76.2%	77
MMS - I take photos with my mobile and send them to myself, others, to my weblog, or to Flickr or other photo sharing sites	12.9%	13
video - I record and edit videos of which I send to myself, others, to my weblog, or to a video blogging service	19.8%	20
sound - I record and edit sound for myself, others, my weblog, or podcast	8.9%	9
phone - I call myself, others, Odeo or other sound services to leave messages or podcasts	11.9%	12
Other	16.8%	17
Total Respondents		101

Of the 101 respondents to Question 4A, 10 of the 17 responses in Other text box were to say that they did not use the mobile device to create a finished or realized piece in any one of the listed options. 91 of the respondents use at least one of the mobile's features to create a finished or realized creative piece; this is **48.4%** of the total 188 survey respondents. These numbers indicate that the mobile device is more than just a phone. It has emerged beyond the scope of the early adopting technology, business and youth markets and into the creative professional's realm, being used to create finished / realized pieces for the public at least half of the time.

Of the Other (please specify) notes for Question 4A the following practices and approaches reflect the finished or realized pieces that the individual is creating on the phone and posting them to a website or for other purposes:

"muvee" – Anina, anina.net.

"Creative posting via lifeblog. My prose is firmly a pen-pad thing then to computer for printing. My online writing is usually computer to web thing."

"Haven't managed to get them off my phone yet (was gonna ask you to help!), but the most creative thing I've done is spinning my phone in the air while taking a picture. Have a series of these. I also use my video/phone to capture my son doing cute things but don't have a Bluetooth device or cable or anything so they remain on my phone because MMS is too dear." – John Braine

48.4% of the total 188 respondents are using their mobile phones to create finished / realized pieces. 76.2 % of the 101 respondents to Question 4A are creating finished / realized photos with their mobile camera phones.

4. Creative Output		
B. Has your creative output increased with the use of your mobile / cell phone?		
	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes	19.2%	24
No	52%	65
If Yes, how so?	28.8%	36
Total Respondents		125
(skipped this question)		63

Of the 125 respondents 65 replied No; the mobile has not increased their creative output. 60 respondents replied Yes, the mobile has increased their creative output, which is **31.9%** of the total 188 survey respondents. This is a significant number of respondents, nearly one third, reporting that this tool, their mobile, has made them more prolific in their creative activities, be it video, photos, sound, text, email, MMS, etc.

Of the Other (please specify) notes for Question 4B the following reflect on how the use of their mobile phones have increased their creative output:

“Helps me remember a moment in time”

“Whenever I get inspired by something I quickly snap a photo... previously, I would forget at least 90% of my ideas because I wouldn't have the time to write or sketch them down...”

“I am more aware of things outside of the workplace than before. Especially behind the wheel. (As bad as that sounds...)”

“It's inspired me to post more about my life on my blog since I can email pics to Blogger and they post instantly on my blog, <http://www.nicolecarina.com>. I don't have to wait till I get home to post. I capture instant moments of my life and type about how I feel at that moment.” – Nicole Carina, North Carolina, USA

“Mainly because I have IM all the time with me... So I'm constantly in conversation.”

“Being able to quickly share my photos with others through my personal blog at bigpinkcookie.com and on Flickr. Also, I have used audioblog.com to podcast with my mobile phone” – Christine, Houston, Texas, USA³⁹

“It lets me use time that would previously have been wasted.”

“Even though I have an SLR camera, sometimes I grab my phone instead, to take photos, as I love the different effects it has.”

³⁹ Self-description on <http://www.bigpinkcookie.com> : “My name is Christine. I am a mother, a wife, a knitter, a [knitting podcaster](#), a [photographer](#), the owner of two rescue cats and one rescue dog. I live in Houston, Texas. I returned to college in the fall of 2005, just before I turned 36, and I dream of getting my degree eventually. Hopefully by that time I will figure out my major.”

“I can capture plot ideas, snippets, imagery, and thoughts while on the go. Beats having a pen and pad for idea capture.”

Though the majority of respondents felt their creativity was not increased, the actual answers show creative use of the phone. And one third is still significant. The mobile phone is almost always close at hand, in the sense that it is in the pocket or purse of the user, it is turned on and available, as the quotes above illustrate, to capture a moment or a scene that would later be forgotten or pushed away due to time constraints. By using the mobile, the above creative professionals are able to accomplish more with their time and document a passing moment for later use, thus increasing their creative output.

5A. Which of the following mobile / cell connection features do you send or share your notes, sketches, or create finished pieces?

	Daily	Weekly	Occasionally	Sometimes	Never	Response Total
SMS / Text	35% (36)	21% (22)	18% (19)	7% (7)	19% (20)	104
Email	22% (22)	18% (18)	16% (16)	10% (10)	35% (35)	101
MMS	6% (5)	8% (7)	13% (11)	17% (14)	56% (47)	84
Bluetooth	10% (10)	19% (19)	25% (25)	6% (6)	39% (39)	99
Wired Cable to Computer	17% (16)	20% (19)	10% (10)	6% (6)	47% (45)	96
Phone Call	37% (37)	26% (26)	10% (10)	9% (9)	17% (17)	99
LifeBlog or ShoZu or other Software on Phone	8% (7)	7% (6)	6% (5)	8% (7)	70% (58)	83
Total Respondents						126
(skipped this question)						62

Question 5a asks how and how often the respondents are using the possible connection features of their mobile devices for sharing, transferring or posting their creative works from the mobile phone to their computer, to a web server, or to another individual. One of the assumptions made by handset manufacturers and service providers is that the average mobile phone user will know how to share or transfer images, videos, sound, emails, SMS messages, etc from the phone to the desired location.

As noted previously, many individuals do not receive a data cable with their mobile phone, or the phone does not come with Bluetooth wireless, or the user's computer does not have wireless. For many people, even people who work with technology as a part of their daily lives, such as designers, they will leave the imagery or files on the phone until they delete them one by one to make room for more.

As the above chart illustrates for Question 5A, a large minority of the individuals who responded to the question are not creating with their mobile or using a data cable or Bluetooth to transfer files from their phone. Of the 62 survey respondents who skipped the question, did they skip because are not using their mobile phone to create or because they don't have a cable or Bluetooth of which to transfer files to a computer?

In terms of using SMS, email, MMS, voice call, or other software to share or transfer files, a significant number of respondents are using these functions in varying amounts daily, weekly, occasionally and sometimes, which indicates that the users are familiar with these functions and how to use them.

Creative professionals are using their mobile phones to transfer files or to send them via email, SMS, or MMS, or via software to upload the files to the internet. But for many the lack of a data cable, Bluetooth wireless, or the education on how to use these items, has blocked their ability to use the creative output of their mobile phones.

Question 6C. You are up to creative acts with your mobile / cell phone, and I have not covered it above or you would like to elaborate or tell me more, do it here:

Question 6C yielded rich results in terms of the respondents elucidating their practices or their intentions when using their mobile phones creatively. The direct quotes below from a selection of the 26 responses, capture the full artistic scale and voice of their creative practices and intentions.

“Most of my mobile creativity is not directly published...but serves as a note for later work on my laptop or real digital camera. I also use my mobile device to spur conversations that would have ended if I didn't have internet access at that moment...so I use my mobile device as an aid to creative brainstorming with other web professionals.”

“I collect photos/images and redo them for my poetry film project.”

“Just a writer/poet with a cell phone. I will record my voice, sometimes, usually while driving--when I can't get pen to page. Cell phone is basic; no text messaging, no camera, no web browsing. But it has recorded ideas I couldn't have otherwise saved, beyond committing them to memory (hard when in the middle of fast traffic)...”

"I use a Treo 650 to shoot set pieces for illustrated fiction, then email it via mms to my collaborator. I use an iPod mic (iTalk) to record conversations for myself and the illustrator for later use in short animated pieces."

"Jen, I think I get a sense for your focus here: using mobile devices for actual creation (and it's not something I do). But there's the whole other side of it that is critical to what I do for a living, for example: using the mobile device as a conduit to transmit *other* creative works. When I'm in the field doing my photography, often the only way to make timely digital submissions is to use a mobile phone as a wireless modem to submit images to wire services or to an editor via my laptop. Without the mobile device, I'd be completely unable to function in some situations due to my access to an internet connection (or lack thereof)."

"Graphic design is more of a way of life than a job; ideas come to you when you're on the metro, in a queue, on the toilet. What I'm waiting for is a cut down Photoshop, on either a mobile or PDA. There are drawing tools available now, but they are crude and can be difficult to use. Once there's a program with layers, bitmap editing tools and a couple of filters it would give me the flexibility to save ideas, colours and layouts that I see around me, and more importantly give me the motivation to see them through. Often I'll scribble an idea down in my sketch pad but it'll never see the light day because I haven't got the time to artwork/develop it. If it was on my PDA however I could work it up on my metro into work, then save it on the memory stick and save it for whenever I need it!"

"I'm essentially using my Treo as an organizer for my work, which is creative. So for the most part the direct output from the phone is raw

and needs to be filtered or adapted. The exception being Flickr photos. Which I'm doing less and less."

"For the most part, we've found that we care more about quality of the photos/videos than about mobility. So we never use the on-the-go posting options of our phones (one 7610, and two Razrs). In fact, we had initially signed up for a data plan, and found we never used it, so we've disconnected it. Generally we take images/video and then Bluetooth it to our laptops, take them through Photoshop or Final Cut Pro, and then post to our blog. As photo/video artists, we like our blog be more polished and less impromptu. Also, we've noticed that for us, there is not much difference in posting after-the-fact, and with relevant text, than in posting live. And I simply don't have the thumb strength or dexterity to key in a whole blog entry on the phone pad." – Megan McMillan, meganandmurray.com

"I'd probably be up to a lot more with my phone if I could get them onto a computer easier than MMS. I have better quality pictures on my newer phone but haven't bothered getting them off it yet..."

"Well, ShoZu which you mentioned is a great application, and integrates nicely with photos and video to Buzznet. There are a number of other mobile apps that we have in development with other partners too." – Marc Brown, buzznet.com

Interview Results

Furthermore of the 188 people, who took the “Moleskine to Mobile” Survey, 70 gave their name, 47 gave their URLs where they post their mobile creativity, and 26 had more commentary and 40 plus agreed to be interviewed.

These interviews confirm at an individual level, the trends found in the survey, which are: mobile phones are being used creatively but are not being perceived as creative tools, mostly because the respondents are viewing the technological limitations and not seeing their own creative usage.

“I’m very, very skeptical about the near-term use of mobile devices for creative ends, and this skepticism arises from a variety of factors:

- We haven't really done a very good job of figuring out which elements of functionality make sense together in a mobile device. Clearly "phone + camera" seems to make some sense, but I at least don't believe that the same is true of "phone + camera + personal audio device," or "mail client + personal audio device."
- We have so far not been able to integrate place into the mobile experience in any particularly compelling way.
- There are deep and unresolved issues about the etiquette of mobile use in public space. I've come to perceive most mobile "creative" activities as essentially narcissistic, both decoupled from the actual lived experience and injurious to the sense of public space - of a shared public realm at all.” – Adam Greenfield, Studies and Observations NYC

In contrast to Mr. Greenfield's skepticism towards the mobile phone's use as a creative device in the short term due to feature sets and the

phones use in the public space, Melbourne based photographer Stuart welcomes the limitations of the mobile device and is actively using it in the public space to create photographic works for exhibition.

"I really like the democratization of photography that these kinds of devices permit, and the level of spontaneity they provide, empowering people to experiment and document, any or all aspects of their lives."
– Stuart, Melbourne, Australia

"I bought my first phone camera in the late 90's, and enjoyed the spontaneity of it, in particular people's reactions, when I used it for portraiture, once I managed to achieve a quick and easy way of getting them from my phone to a computer I realised it had some potential as a creative tool for image making" – Stuart, Melbourne, Australia

"Currently I am undertaking a project involving the "documenting" of shopping trolleys in my own travels around Melbourne, these are then uploaded to the web on [flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com), where I have a set of them put aside from all my other ideas and projects at some point I am considering creating a piece involving these images, perhaps online and interactive, maybe a book or zine I'm still not 100% sure.

Absolutely, I respect the mobile phone's lack of photographic controls, poor quality optics and exposure systems, the trolley project is as much about shopping trolleys as it is about using a mobile phone to record them in a grainy fuzzy home-spun way." – Stuart, Melbourne, Australia

Stuart perceives his phone as a mobile photographic instrument and is welcoming its limitations as a part of the art work. Dave Shea, a graphic and web designer, is also aware of his use of the mobile as a

creative device, but would welcome small versions of Photo shop and Illustrator design / photo software for the mobile to truly be able to create more fully realized sketches or pieces.

“First conscious act was uploading camera phone photos to Flickr. Hardly creative, more like life documentation at that point. These days I use the camera/video features of my phone, I'm in love with the PIM stuff that keeps my work organized, and I keep notes whenever inspiration strikes. I've got a sketch pad app, but strangely I never use it. I'm a more textual thinker on my phone, for some reason.” – Dave Shea, Vancouver, Canada

“My notes are loose and unstructured mind dumps. Basically as I'm working out a creative problem, I'll record my thought process and conclusions. Later I'll refer back to that as I begin work.

I use photos for documentation too, sometimes. Screen caps of slide shows, for example, or taking pictures of furniture/decorative objects I'm thinking of buying to get a sense for how they'll look in context back home.

My gut is that it's emerging, but only the truly gadget-obsessed have figured out how to integrate these into the creative process yet, above and beyond organization and brainstorming.” – Dave Shea, Vancouver, Canada

The survey also confirms the creative use of the mobile phone, yet it also confirms that it is more than just the “truly gadget-obsessed” who are using the mobile phone beyond note taking. Creative professionals and non-professionals alike are using the mobile phone

for sketching purposes, as Kasper Jeppesen clearly illustrates below, and as finished or realized pieces.

“I started using my apple newton for sketch work back in 1996. Since 2004, the camera in my mobile phone has been good enough to continuously grab snapshots of inspiration while on the go. I use my mobile phone daily to grab quick snapshots of the life around me, to use as input for my creative works. In the last few months I have also started to record voice notes for my online comic (<http://instituteofbacon.com/>). But they are just notes... not actually part of the creative work.” – Kasper Jeppesen, Denmark

Mr. Jeppesen uses the camera phone photos he takes in the public space as a sketching reference for wonderful abstracted watercolor paintings and drawings that he creates based on the photos.

“My most creative coolest mobile project (so far) has been a handheld computer research project for the Blanton Museum where we tested to see if a device filled with video, audio, text, pictures and interactive play elements would enhance or detract from the in gallery experience.” - Glenda L. Sims, University of Texas, Austin⁴⁰

Ms. Sim's technology group at the University of Texas has been using mobile PDA devices since the summer of 2001 to help curate and enhance museum exhibitions by allowing the museum visitor to be able to interact with the art work in a non-linear fashion.

⁴⁰ From March 2006 email interview, please see Appendix C for the complete Interview transcript with Glenda L. Sims.

Ms. Sims recommends the formal paper for this event at Manning, Anne, and Sims, Glenda, “The Blanton iTour - An Interactive Handheld Museum Guide Experiment”, *Museums and the Web 2004: Proceedings*. Toronto: Archives & Museum Informatics, 2004

<http://www.archimuse.com/mw2004/papers/manning/manning.html>

Student and mobile blogger, Victor W., was first exposed to and inspired by the mobile creativity at fashion model Anina's moblog. Victor purchased a Nokia series 60 phone with the Lifeblog software and has been moblogging and experimenting with video blogging.

"Mainly photos and blogging, because the integrated camera in the phone goes everywhere with the phone...which actually goes everywhere with me. So, when I come across something interesting for me, I'd take a snapshot of it. Also, the phone camera was quick to use when I want to photograph a knitting project and put the picture on the internet. It's a whole lot faster than fishing out my digital camera and then take a photo, connect it to the computer, download the photo, upload it onto the server and then blog it. With the phone's camera and the phone, I can cut out a couple of steps that a digital camera would call for....and if need be, I can moblog directly to my blog." – Victor W, Munich, Germany

Interviews with the previous three creative professionals show the mobile phone at several stages of art creation: the sketch, the documentation, and as a finished piece that is then moblogged directly to the creator's website via the mobile phone.

The interview statements confirm and expand upon the survey results of 87.8% of all the respondents use their mobile for note taking purposes, 59.6% of the whole 188 survey respondents use their mobile as a mobile sketchbook, and 48.4% of the whole use their mobile to create finished or realized pieces for immediate sharing, moblogging, or later use. The mobile phone has truly emerged from the hands of the early adopters and into creative streams of use worldwide.

Chapter 4 – Where do we go from here?

Conclusion

“I do however have high hopes for the upcoming UMPC device (Microsoft Origami), which will hopefully provide me with a sketchpad for any kind of digital media wherever I am.

It seems that we are fast approaching a state where you easily create full pieces of art on mobile devices and instantly upload it to an online gallery. That will hopefully bring a whole new generation of creative travel journals about... I simply can't wait to be part of that =) ” _

Kasper Jeppesen⁴¹

Mr. Jeppesen writes expectantly about the mobile technologies expecting to be on the market before the end of 2006 that will further increase his artistic productivity. Dave Shea writes expectantly in his email interview about software that he would like to see for his mobile to increase his productivity. John Braine would like to get his photos and videos off of his phone in a timely matter, without spending too much for MMS or network connection. Victor W. and Anina are daily sending their mobile photos and videos directly from the phone to their creative websites. Glenda Sims is experimenting with call in audio blogging on a private website that will soon be launched.

Yes, as survey and interview results have shown, many creative professionals are replacing their sketchbooks with a mobile device. Many of the respondents are reveling in the freedom and expanded options that photo, video, sound, and mobile connection features provide them over the traditional pen-and-ink sketchbook.

⁴¹ From March 2006 email interview, please see Appendix C for the complete Interview with Kasper Jeppesen.

Mobile phones are becoming an integral tool in the hands of the artist or designer for creative production or documentation of the world around them for later use. As creative mobile phone features and good software become increasingly available to more users globally, then the use of the mobile phone for creative purposes will continue its expansion out of the realm of the early technical adopters and creative professionals and into more of the pockets and purses of non-professional users who are already starting to post their mobile creativity to weblogs and web communities such as Flickr and Buzznet, as illustrated by this thesis.

Yes, one-third of the creative professionals who took the survey report becoming more prolific due to the easily accessible mobile device.

To reiterate one of the survey responses, "Graphic design is more of a way of life than a job; ideas come to you when you're on the metro, in a queue, on the toilet." With a mobile phone or device, this individual and many others can note or sketch or expand on these creative ideas while on the metro, in a queue, or even in the loo, becoming more prolific with each use.

Where do we go from here? Recently, a Nokia executive claimed that mobile phones will deal final blow to makers of mp3 music devices and video camcorders, as they have the photo industry.⁴² As more and more of the mobile phones sold globally, have advanced features of photo capture, video and audio recording that match in quality and features stand along camera, video camcorders and mp3 recorders,

⁴² Reuters News Service, "A future sans MP3 players, video cams?", March 21, 2006, http://money.cnn.com/2006/03/21/news/international/nokia_multimedia.reut/

then we will see more creative professionals using these devices to produce finished or realized pieces.

As more communities build around video blogging and audio blogging, especially community sites in the model of Flickr and Buzznet, where the users can share and comment on each others creative pieces there will be an expansion of the use of the mobile for video and audio blogging and sharing.

While components and features for video and audio creation and blogging are already in place on many mobiles, there is still work to be done on educating the users and on the part of the service providers to lower price plans and deliver consistent network connection.

On the education front a number of governments, educational institutions, and arts groups are sponsoring workshops and evening participatory events so that members of community can come to learn about and explore the creative functions of their mobile phones. One good example is the Australian Council national initiative is exploring the creative potential of mobile devices by sponsoring exhibitions, workshops and a website under the umbrella of an organization called Mobile Journeys. Mobile Journeys has held events, workshops and exhibitions in several cities on the east coast of Australia for over 2 years and is committed to bring mobile creativity to the communities it serves.

The last piece of the puzzle is the service providers. If current business practices remain in place and prices for network connections such as MMS, email, and internet remain high, and the network connections in many countries remain patchy then the adoption of mobile creativity for the global mainstream will emerge at a slower pace. If service

providers, due to market competition or a change in business practices to allow for better customer service, lower prices and provide consistent network connections, then there will be an exponential growth of mobile creativity globally from individuals and communities.

Be it in the near-term or in another five years, to have photos from African artists, audio stories from Peru, videos from Bangladesh, poems from Vancouver, drawings from the Manila, all created on a mobile device and shared to other devices or to the internet, the world will be a beautiful place indeed.

Appendices

Appendix A – Survey Questions

Moleskine to Mobile : How Creative Professionals Use Their Mobile/Cell Phones

As conducted on SurveyMonkey.com from Feb. 21, 2006 to March 23, 2006.

1. Moleskine to Mobile : Introduction

Hello all Creative Professionals and Art/Design/Photo Folk, I am doing my Masters Thesis on how creative people are using their mobile/cell phones to cognitate, sketch, take notes, create ideas or finished products. Please fill out the following survey.

If you are interested in the results of this survey, please watch <http://www.blackphoebe.com/msjen>, and I will post on it. If you have definitely opinions on the subject of mobile/cell phone creative usage and would like to be heard or further interviewed, fill out your name and email at the end of the survey. Thank you!

Click "Next" to get started with the survey. If you'd like to leave the survey at any time, just click "Exit this survey".

2. Cognitate : Notes

Do you use your cell/mobile phone or device to take notes your ideas for later use

A. Do you use your mobile device to take notes? If so, which function(s)?

- text only - I take notes for later use
- SMS / Texting - I send notes to myself or a creative collaborator
- email - I send emails to myself or a creative collaborator
- photos - I take photos with my mobile for note taking use
- MMS - I take photos or videos and MMS them to myself or a creative collaborator for note taking purposes
- video - I record videos for note taking purposes
- sound - I record sound for note taking purposes
- phone - I call myself or a collaborator to leave messages on my notes
- Other (please specify)

3. Moleskine / Sketchbook

We have all worked out larger ideas beyond the notes for a project or art piece or purely dreaming in a sketchbook or notebook, how are you using your cell / mobile phone to flesh out your ideas?

A. Are you using your mobile / cell phone for the purposes of creating and expanding on ideas, as you would a sketchbook?

- text only - I write notes, or story ideas, or poems for later use
- SMS / Texting - I send notes, or story ideas, or poems to myself or a creative collaborator
- email - I send emails to myself or a creative collaborator
- photos - I take photos with my mobile for sketching use
- MMS - I take photos and MMS them to myself or a creative collaborator for note taking purposes
- video - I record videos for sketching purposes
- sound - I record sound for sketching purposes
- phone - I call myself or a collaborator to leave messages on my ideas
- Other (please specify)

4. Creative Output

What are you creating on your mobile/cell phone that you are putting out to the world or displaying as a finished piece straight from the phone?

A. What types of finished / realized pieces are you creating on your mobile / cell device in its whole form?

- SMS - I write stories, poems, manifestos, short shorts and send them to myself or others
- email - I write stories, poems, manifestos, short shorts, blog posts and send them to myself or others or to my weblog
- photos - I take photos with my mobile and send them to myself, others, to my weblog, or to Flickr or other photo sharing sites
- MMS - I take photos with my mobile and send them to myself, others, to my weblog, or to Flickr or other photo sharing sites
- video - I record and edit videos of which I send to myself, others, to my weblog, or to a video blogging service
- sound - I record and edit sound for myself, others, my weblog, or podcast
- phone - I call myself, others, Odeo or other sound services to leave messages or podcasts
- Other (please specify)

B. Has your creative output increased with the use of your mobile / cell phone?

- Yes
 - No
- If Yes, how so?

5. Future Directions

A. Which of the following mobile / cell connection features do you send or share your notes, sketches, or create finished pieces?

Daily Weekly Occasionally Sometimes Never

SMS / Text
Email
MMS
Bluetooth
Wired Cable to Computer

Phone Call
LifeBlog or ShoZu or other Software on Phone

6. Thank you for taking this short survey!

If you have definite opinions about your mobile / cell phone usage or creative practices that you would like to share or further elaborate as quotes in my masters thesis... Or if you would like to be interviewed about your ideas, please list your name, email, URL where you are posting your creative output, and notes below.

A. Name:

B. URL where you are posting your mobile creativity:

C. You are up to creative acts with your mobile / cell phone, and I have not covered it above or you would like to elaborate or tell me more, do it here:

D. I am willing to further discuss or be interviewed about my creative mobile / cell usage and ideas for the purposes of the thesis research:

Yes

No

If yes, please write in contact email:

Thank you,
Jenifer Hanen
Masters of Science in Multimedia Systems candidate
Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland
<http://www.blackphoebe.com/msjen>

Appendix B – Interview Questions

Thank you for taking my Moleskine to Mobile short survey, on the survey you indicated that you were willing to be interviewed for the research for my master's thesis. Ha! So here it is....

If you could take 10-15 mins. to fill out the following questions in short or paragraph form and reply to this email address, it would be greatly appreciated as it would add to the research on how creative professionals are using their mobile phones or devices to take notes, as a "sketchbook", to create pieces for a later finished product, or to create photos, sound, video, or text that is ready to be used in other pieces or uploaded to the internet.

Name:

Email:

URL:

- 1) Brief background or history of your creative practices:
- 2) Current employment or main creative endeavor:
- 3) When and how did you start using your mobile device for creative output:
- 4) How often do you use your mobile device towards creative ends or as an output device?
- 5) What is your preferred use of your mobile device: photos, text, sound recording, video, other (explain):
- 6) What use or output from your mobile device are you most passionate about or use the most? Please describe your process and what you do with the notes, sketches, or finished pieces:
- 7) If you use the output from your mobile device in other pieces or as a finished piece online or in other work, please describe:
- 8) Is the creative use of your mobile device influenced by the capabilities / limitations of the device itself, by others' use (friends, online, contests, etc), or your own discovery and use:
- 9) Has the use of your mobile device helped to increase your creative output? Describe:
- 10) What is the most creative or most innovative use of a mobile device that you have done or seen or heard of someone else doing?

11) Further thoughts on your mobile device usage and creative output?

If you have any further questions for me, please email Jenifer Hanen at blackphoebe@gmail.com or text me at +3530872812415. Thank you for your time and the sharing of your creative mobile practices with this interview.

If you would like a copy or a link to a pdf of the finished thesis, please let me know and I will send it on to you when the Moleskine to Mobility thesis is completed.

Thank you,
Jenifer Hanen
Master of Science in Multimedia Systems student
Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland

Appendix C – Interview Responses Transcripts

Adam Greenfield – Author and researcher, coined the term Moblogging in 2003. New York City, New York, USA

Name: Adam Greenfield

URL: www.v-2.org (personal)
studies-observations.com (practice)

1) Brief background or history of your creative practices:

http://www.studies-observations.com/everyware/about_the_author.html

2) Current employment or main creative endeavor:

Principal, Studies and Observations NYC

3) When and how did you start using your mobile device for creative output:

Various experiments with WiFi-enabled PDAs, 2000-2003

4) How often do you use your mobile device towards creative ends or as an output device?

Currently, I don't.

5) What is your preferred use of your mobile device: photos, text, sound recording, video, other (explain):

As a phone, and as a phone only - at least until we've detached ourselves from the mobile service provider model.

6) What use or output from your mobile device are you most passionate about or use the most? Please describe your process and what you do with the notes, sketches, or finished pieces:

N/A

7) If you use the output from your mobile device in other pieces or as a finished piece online or in other work, please describe:

N/A

8) Is the creative use of your mobile device influenced by the capabilities / limitations of the device itself, by others' use (friends, online, contests, etc), or your own discovery and use:

N/A

9) Has the use of your mobile device helped to increase your creative output? Describe:

N/A

10) What is the most creative or most innovative use of a mobile device that you have done or seen or heard of someone else doing?

The design practice area/code does amazing "Big Games" that are entirely based around mobiles.

11) Further thoughts on your mobile device usage and creative output?

I'm very, very skeptical about the near-term use of mobile devices for creative ends, and this skepticism arises from a variety of factors:

- We haven't really done a very good job of figuring out which elements of functionality make sense together in a mobile device. Clearly "phone + camera" seems to make some sense, but I at least don't believe that the same is true of "phone + camera + personal audio device," or "mail client + personal audio device."
- The service providers clearly, clearly don't get it. I don't want to watch videos on my phone screen, or send multimedia messages to friends, and when both my device and my service contract are optimized around doing just that, I don't have the flexibility to use my mobile in genuinely creative ways. (Another way of saying this is to note that feature sets and functionality are driven by perceived marketing requirements rather than user needs.)
- We have so far not been able to integrate place into the mobile experience in any particularly compelling way.
- There are deep and unresolved issues about the etiquette of mobile use in public space. I've come to perceive most mobile "creative" activities as essentially narcissistic, both decoupled from the actual lived experience and injurious to the sense of public space - of a shared public realm at all.

Mie Yaginuma (former Mie Kennedy) – Moblogger, photographer, and self-expression documenter. San Francisco, CA, USA

Name: Mie Yaginuma (formerly Kennedy)

URL: <http://www.kokochi.com>

1) Brief background or history of your creative practices:

Nothing in particular before blogging, or at least I didn't realize I loved such self-expression until blogging.

I am into the Burning Man lifestyle/community which supports art and creativity, but I've been more into enjoying it and incorporating the values into my life vs. actually working on an art project [other than the ultimate art project in my belly]

2) Current employment or main creative endeavor:

I work for Six Apart, the makers of the blogging software that I use. I do communication and liaison project management work. Again, I am not on the forefront of creating per se, but rather enjoy supporting people and the environment that enables people – regular people – to express themselves. It's an exciting space to be involved in, to see concrete changes in how people and even society's communicate with internet tools.

3) When and how did you start using your mobile device for creative output:

November 2002. My now husband made special code so that I could email pictures, videos, and text to a blog [note from further email : Tokyo Tidbits] that would automatically post from my phone. I basically started documenting my daily life about what I saw, where I went, and people I met.

4) How often do you use your mobile device towards creative ends or as an output device?

I have my phone with me all the time. There have been a few occasions where I've run out to grab lunch or whatever without my phone, and seen the perfect thing to blog, and kicked myself for not having my phone ALL the time The last time was in a supermarket where I found a wild bird in the vege section. I could have taken the cutest picture while he was pecking at broccoli, but didn't have my phone. I regret it to this day.

I also blog without my phone from home occasionally. And there are times when I won't blog for a week or more. It ebbs and flows, depending on how I'm feeling. I never feel obliged to blog.

5) What is your preferred use of your mobile device: photos, text, sound recording, video, other (explain):

I use my phone as my camera/documenter. I text a lot to friends too.

6) What use or output from your mobile device are you most passionate about or use the most? Please describe your process and what you do with the notes, sketches, or finished pieces:

I moblog, plain and simple. I simply enjoy documenting mundane things in my life, like a diary. It's rewarding to have years' worth of postings and be able to go back in time. Because I document the mundane, say a meal I had or random sign that made me laugh or smile, I can go back in time and totally connect with that moment. It's not just about birthdays, weddings, and big events. Because I post from my phone, the posts are usually up on the internet while I'm still experiencing it. The immediacy makes it feel real, at least to me.

For process, I basically take pictures or videos via the phone, attach them to an email with text to explain it. The code that my husband wrote automatically processes the photos into thumbnails, correctly places them within the blog post, and includes the text I've typed as the blog entry.

I haven't used it for a while, but I also have a digital pen which enables me to write my text on a special notepad, send that writing to my phone which then shows up as a .jpg in my phone folder. I attach that .jpg to the email along with the photos. Then they all show up on my blog.

I used to use GPS location attached to photos, but that was based on my Japanese phone (back in 2002!!). My husband made it so that each picture would have a link to a map that showed exactly where I took that picture. I've tried the same here in the US using a program UC Berkeley SIMS students created, and one that my husband created, but both have been cumbersome and hard to use. I hope to begin redoing that so I can have time and space information with my photos.

7) If you use the output from your mobile device in other pieces or as a finished piece online or in other work, please describe:

All output is created for and posted to my blog. I also use other online services, such as flickr, for fun, but consider my blog my main repository.

8) Is the creative use of your mobile device influenced by the capabilities / limitations of the device itself, by others' use (friends, online, contests, etc), or your own discovery and use:

My husband by far has been the inventor and influencer. Without him I may or may not have joined the blogging bandwagon. I wish phones

were more accessible though. If there was a way I could tinker with its features, and create new output, I'd love to experiment.

9) Has the use of your mobile device helped to increase your creative output? Describe:

Definitely yes. I never knew I liked to share my life online this way. It has changed how I view things as I'm constantly on the look-out for neat things to post. This is not a burden at all, but rather has enhanced my perspective. I'm more sensitive now. It has also shown me the power and potential beauty of the internet. It would have been more foreign to me without this very personal experience. I trust the internet a lot more than I would have, thus expanding my knowledge and interest in doing things with technology.

10) What is the most creative or most innovative use of a mobile device that you have done or seen or heard of someone else doing?

I like the games created for mobile devices that connect the individual mobile phone experience with a space in a city. Like Mogi (http://www.in-duce.net/archives/mogi_item_hunt.php). It's important not to get lost in online relationships without reconnecting to where you live. I always remember Adam Greenfield at the First International Moblogging Conference questioning what the loss of serendipity would mean, as in walking into an old record store and discovering a whole new genre of music when flipping through a random old box. Those random inputs make life rich, and by focusing only on an online network, this may be lost. I never got to play Mogi, but would have loved walking into new neighborhoods, meeting new people.

I think games/services that reconnect us back to where we live (vs. a virtual instantaneous world) are coming as people search how to enrich and humanize technology.

11) Further thoughts on your mobile device usage and creative output?

Usability. Moblogging is not some amazingly unique behavior. It just enables what we've always done; tell our stories. I think this will happen, but I look forward to technology being more accessible. I forget how lucky I am to be surrounded by people who help me do what I do. If I were on my own, it would be less accessible. I wish it would be easier to create output for everyone. It's getting there but there's still a huge divide.

Melissa Gattine, Organizer of the CellFlix Festival, Ithaca College.
Ithaca, NY, USA

Name: Melissa Gattine

URL: <http://www.cellflixfestival.org/>

1) Brief background or history of your creative practices:

Communications school with 1250 students

2) Current employment or main creative endeavor:

Created the first CellFlix Film Festival for films shot entirely on cell phone

3) When and how did you start using your mobile device for creative output:

The contest began in November 2005 and we announced the winner on Jan. 30, 2006 - There were 178 entries

4) How often do you use your mobile device towards creative ends or as an output device?

This will be an annual event

5) What is your preferred use of your mobile device: photos, text, sound recording, video, other (explain):

In the case of CellFlix it was video and pictures that were used in the films

6) What use or output from your mobile device are you most passionate about or use the most? Please describe your process and what you do with the notes, sketches, or finished pieces:

- Just wanted students to be prepared for this new technology
- what do they need to know when they graduate
- some of them may be producing content for cell phones and iPods
- Students need to learn how to adapt to new technologies and move from one outlet to another easily.

7) If you use the output from your mobile device in other pieces or as a finished piece online or in other work, please describe:

The festival website features the Top 10 finalists. Films were also used in media coverage of the contest (ex. Good Morning America and CNN)

8) Is the creative use of your mobile device influenced by the capabilities/ limitations of the device itself, by others' use (friends, online, contests, etc), or your own discovery and use:

Yes- How do you convey a story in 30 seconds - what about scenery - does it show up in a small camera? How many people can be in one

scene - etc.? These are all things that each contestant dealt with while creating his/her film. Also, now students are looking at what others produced to see what worked well and what didn't.

9) Has the use of your mobile device helped to increase your creative output? Describe:

This contest was featured in many publications, blogs, etc. It promoted Ithaca College and now people think of us as anticipating, not waiting to see what happens.

10) What is the most creative or most innovative use of a mobile device that you have done or seen or heard of someone else doing?

Not sure - too much is going on.

Stuart – Artist, photographer, and educator. Melbourne, Australia

1) Brief background or history of your creative practices:

I formally trained as artist/photographer late 1989-1991

I have exhibited and continue to do so in various shows around Melbourne 1991-2006

My background is in analog photography, I currently explore the relationship between the urban landscape it's inhabitants, and the marks they leave. In the past I have used fine silver gelatin prints to explore this idea, but now I use both analogue and digital processes and use both online and real world exhibition spaces to share my results.

2) Current employment or main creative endeavor:

I teach photography as my main source of income, and when I find time shoot my own ideas and work

3) When and how did you start using your mobile device for creative output:

I bought my first phone camera in the late 90's, and enjoyed the spontaneity of it, in particular people's reactions, when I used it for portraiture, once I managed to achieve a quick and easy way of getting them from my phone to a computer I realised it had some potential as a creative tool for image making

4) How often do you use your mobile device towards creative ends or as an output device?

Hard to say as it is with me at all times, and I'm the kind of creator who follows their intuition first and foremost the frequency has too many variables to really count.

5) What is your preferred use of your mobile device: photos, text, sound recording, video, other (explain): Photography.

6) What use or output from your mobile device are you most passionate about or use the most? Please describe your process and what you do with the notes, sketches, or finished pieces:

currently I am undertaking a project involving the "documenting" of shopping trolleys in my own travels around Melbourne, these are then uploaded to the web on [flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com), where I have a set of them put aside from all my other ideas and projects at some point I am considering creating a piece involving these images, perhaps online and interactive, maybe a book or zine I'm still not 100% sure.

7) If you use the output from your mobile device in other pieces or as a finished piece online or in other work, please describe:

The only place I am currently using them is as an online exhibition.

8) Is the creative use of your mobile device influenced by the capabilities / limitations of the device itself, by others' use (friends, online, contests, etc), or your own discovery and use:

Absolutely, I respect the mobile phone's lack of photographic controls, poor quality optics and exposure systems, the trolley project is as much about shopping trolleys as it is about using a mobile phone to record them in a grainy fuzzy home-spun way.

9) Has the use of your mobile device helped to increase your creative output? Describe:

Not really it, the phone goes everywhere with me, when I find time I download from the phone to my computer then upload to the web.

Really

what it has allowed me to do is not do anything more than make sure I have it on me and if I feel the need or inclination use it.

10) What is the most creative or most innovative use of a mobile device that you have done or seen or heard of someone else doing?

Sorry can't really offer much here?

11) Further thoughts on your mobile device usage and creative output?

I really like the democratisation of photography that these kinds of devices permit, and the level of spontaneity they provide, empowering people to experiment and document, any or all aspects of their lives.

Dave Shea – Designer, author and CSS Zen Garden founder.
Vancouver, Canada

1) Brief background or history of your creative practices:

I started out on the web in 1998, and spent a bunch of years cutting my teeth at small, local design and development shops. In 2003 I launched a design project that got me a lot of recognition, and went out on my own a little while later. Been doing that ever since.

2) Current employment or main creative endeavor:

Founder/Design Lead of my own Bright Creative. I'm currently doing a lot of contract design work, although I've been speaking about design a lot more lately.

3) When and how did you start using your mobile device for creative output:

First conscious act was uploading camera phone photos to Flickr. Hardly creative, more like life documentation at that point. These days I use the camera/video features of my phone, I'm in love with the PIM stuff that keeps my work organized, and I keep notes whenever inspiration strikes. I've got a sketch pad app, but strangely I never use it. I'm a more textual thinker on my phone, for some reason.

4) How often do you use your mobile device towards creative ends or as an output device?

Weekly, I suppose.

5) What is your preferred use of your mobile device: photos, text, sound recording, video, other (explain):

Text. Photo and video come second. Wish I had a sound recording app, but video does that job well enough.

6) What use or output from your mobile device are you most passionate about or use the most? Please describe your process and what you do with the notes, sketches, or finished pieces:

My notes are loose and unstructured mind dumps. Basically as I'm working out a creative problem, I'll record my thought process and conclusions. Later I'll refer back to that as I begin work.

I use photos for documentation too, sometimes. Screen caps of slide shows, for example, or taking pictures of furniture/decorative objects I'm thinking of buying to get a sense for how they'll look in context back home.

7) If you use the output from your mobile device in other pieces or as a finished piece online or in other work, please describe:

Flickr is the only time I'll do that. Mobile stuff is too raw for finished work.

8) Is the creative use of your mobile device influenced by the capabilities / limitations of the device itself, by others' use (friends, online, contests, etc), or your own discovery and use:

Limitations of the device. I mean, I don't expect Photoshop or Illustrator for the Treo, but the creative tools are way too rough for my liking.

9) Has the use of your mobile device helped to increase your creative output? Describe:

Yes, but mainly in the sense that I'm far more organized now thanks to the PIM stuff.

10) What is the most creative or most innovative use of a mobile device that you have done or seen or heard of someone else doing?

Can't think of any specific examples. Wireless communication between devices strikes me as something with potential for real innovation, but aside from the coolness factor of transferring contacts, I haven't seen it tapped well enough yet.

11) Further thoughts on your mobile device usage and creative output?

None at the moment. My gut is that it's emerging, but only the truly gadget-obsessed have figured out how to integrate these into the creative process yet, above and beyond organization and brainstorming.

Megan McMillan – Video & Photo Installation Artist. Whittier, California, USA

Name: Megan McMillan

URL: www.meganandmurray.com

1) Brief background or history of your creative practices:

I'm a part of a collaborative art partnership, and we make video and photo installations. We have kept an artblog since Aug. 2004, where we document our creative process, review shows, and generally write about anything art-related.

2) Current employment or main creative endeavor:

I'm self-employed, working full-time as an artist.

3) When and how did you start using your mobile device for creative output:

Not until Fall of 2005, when we got phones with camera and video.

4) How often do you use your mobile device towards creative ends or as an output device?

Whenever we take pictures or video with our phones, they usually end up on the blog. We do this every few weeks, but anytime we post about shows we've seen, we use our own photos.

5) What is your preferred use of your mobile device: photos, text, sound recording, video, other (explain):

We both use the still and video cameras, and that's about it.

6) What use or output from your mobile device are you most passionate about or use the most? Please describe your process and what you do with the notes, sketches, or finished pieces:

It's great to have a camera on me (and my partner) at all times.

7) If you use the output from your mobile device in other pieces or as a finished piece online or in other work, please describe:

We always take the photos/videos we capture through an editing process (photoshop) before they reach the blog, even if it's just to change the image size and the dpi. Sometimes, we incorporate the photos in digital collages. The videos are often edited with Final Cut Pro before we post them. Since we consider the work we put on the blog part of our portfolio, we are passionate about quality content.

8) Is the creative use of your mobile device influenced by the capabilities / limitations of the device itself, by others' use (friends, online, contests, etc), or your own discovery and use:

We both tend to underuse the devices we carry, in terms of their capacity. We're not interested in instant web access, and don't mind if there is a delay in the amount of time it takes to capture an image and when it ultimately ends up online. So we don't use the web browser capacities on our phones, preferring to just get the image from the phone to our laptop computers. I haven't seen a lot of artists who are doing anything similar to what we are (transparency of process with artwork), except Dennis Hollingsworth (dennishollingsworth.us), a painter who blogs his process. But that's more a question of the content of the technology, and not the technology itself.

9) Has the use of your mobile device helped to increase your creative output? Describe:

Yes, it's great to have cameras/video on hand to document something spontaneous.

10) What is the most creative or most innovative use of a mobile device that you have done or seen or heard of someone else doing?

The other day, we saw a performance where the two performers both had phones, and they called each other, and then spoke to the phone, over the microphone, creating a loop of feedback and replay. It was an innovative use of the device, I thought.

11) Further thoughts on your mobile device usage and creative output?

Kasper Jeppesen – Computer Programmer, artist, and blogger.
Denmark

Name: Kasper J. Jeppesen

URL: <http://narcissisme.dk/dynamics/>

1) Brief background or history of your creative practices:

I have been painting and drawing for most of my life. Since the early nineties I have also been photographing. During the late nineties I started working on using my photography as the source for my paintings, trying to essentially cook down whatever it was that grabbed me in the photographs and intensify the feelings the conveyed. For the last couple of years, I have been using my mobile phone and pda more than camera and sketchbook to grab the pictures which I base my paintings on.

2) Current employment or main creative endeavor:

Unfortunately, it has been almost 5 years since I last worked fulltime in any form of creative work... back then it was at an ad agency (grey). I am currently employed as a software developer, doing only creative work in my spare time. My main creative endeavor at the moment is the work displayed on <http://narcissisme.dk/dynamics/>

3) When and how did you start using your mobile device for creative output:

I started using my apple newton for sketchwork back in 1996. Since 2004, the camera in my mobile phone has been good enough to continuesly grab snapshots of inspiration while on the go.

4) How often do you use your mobile device towards creative ends or as an output device?

I use my mobile phone daily to grab quick snapshots of the life around me, to use as input for my creative works. In the last few months I have also started to record voice notes for my online comic (<http://instituteofbacon.com/>). But they are just notes... not actually part of the creative work.

5) What is your preferred use of your mobile device: photos, text, sound recording, video, other (explain):

I am currently only using it to take pictures and a few voice notes... I do however have high hopes for the upcoming UMPC device (microsoft origami), which will hopefully provide me with a sketchpad for any kind of digital media wherever I am.

6) What use or output from your mobile device are you most passionate about or use the most? Please describe your process and what you do with the notes, sketches, or finished pieces:

Pictures... definitely pictures. I used to bring a camera or a small sketchbook (yeah.. actually a moleskin) around with me whenever I could, but my mobile phone is far less intrusive and i never seem to forget it.

7) If you use the output from your mobile device in other pieces or as a finished piece online or in other work, please describe:

I don't use the output directly in any work...

8) Is the creative use of your mobile device influenced by the capabilities / limitations of the device itself, by others' use (friends, online, contests, etc), or your own discovery and use:

I am usually a "first adopter" on all kinds of portable high tech gadgets, so my mobile creative use is mainly limited by the capabilities of the current generation of devices available. As previously mentioned, I have high hopes for the new UMPCs to bring my "mobile creativity" to new heights. Hopefully to a level where I am able to create finished pieces of work in the field.

9) Has the use of your mobile device helped to increase your creative output? Describe:

Absolutely, but again mostly because I always bring it with me.

10) What is the most creative or most innovative use of a mobile device that you have done or seen or heard of someone else doing?

The blinkenlights project (<http://www.blinkenlights.de/>) had for a time a pong game through the use of mobile phones. I know that some of the people involved had been looking at creating a small drawing application for mobile phones, which would allow anyone to draw small pictures and display them on the building. That would be insanely cool... art created by anyone wishing to participate, from wherever they are, and instantly displayed in the public space.

11) Further thoughts on your mobile device usage and creative output?

It seems that we are fast approaching a state where you easily create full pieces of art on mobile devices and instantly upload it to an online gallery. That will hopefully bring a whole new generation of creative travel journals about... I simply can't wait to be part of that =)

Glenda Sims – Senior Systems Analyst at University of Texas, Austin, first to introduce mobiles to the UT museum in 2001. Austin, Texas, USA

Name: Glenda Sims

URL: <http://glendathegood.com>

1) Brief background or history of your creative practices:

I'm a web developer for the University of Texas at Austin. The most creative parts of my job include designing interactive elements for museum learning and conducting usability testing on these elements. I also love to write and present on topics related to my field, from accessibility to handheld computers in museums to Web 2.0 and how it applies to Higher Ed and Museums.

2) Current employment or main creative endeavor:

Senior Systems Analyst on the central web team at the University of Texas at Austin. Consultant for GeeGuides.com (art interactives) , Instructor for Knowbility (accessibility)

3) When and how did you start using your mobile device for creative output:

In the summer of 2001 I had never owned a pda when I was asked to lead a project where in less than 3 months we would obtain 200 wireless iPAQs and create rich engaging content to show people what technology might look like in the year 2015 on campus. So....handheld computers (since 2001) have been a tool I use for engaging people in an experience or idea...that then leads to a rich dialogue / brainstorm.

4) How often do you use your mobile device towards creative ends or as an output device?

On a regular day...I use my personal handheld(s) in a more functional way....as a phone, checking maps, calendar. I take pictures maybe once a week from my mobile device...I thought I would take more...but when I combined by PDA and my phone (about a month ago) I found room in my tiny purse to start carrying my real digital camera....and it takes MUCH better pictures.

5) What is your preferred use of your mobile device: photos, text, sound recording, video, other (explain):

I'd say..I'm a text girl...my PDA/Phone has a keyboard making it easy to type...and I do still like to take scribble notes.

6) What use or output from your mobile device are you most passionate about or use the most? Please describe your process and what you do with the notes, sketches, or finished pieces:

in the heat of a delicious conversation...I use my mobile device to

record (by typing or scribbling a note) the thoughts that blew my mind in the conversation...these thoughts then become....(ooooo, I see that is the next question)

7) If you use the output from your mobile device in other pieces or as a finished piece online or in other work, please describe:

my notes might become a post on my blog or a creative project for my team (like an interactive for a museum) or a quote for flickr).

8) Is the creative use of your mobile device influenced by the capabilities / limitations of the device itself, by others' use (friends, online, contests, etc), or your own discovery and use:

I'm limited by the device. The camera quality is good...but not great...and it is like pulling teeth to send a photo directly to flickr on my new phone (easy as pie on my old phone)...and getting the device to quickly connect to 802.11 versus trying to use the mobile phone line...grrrrrrr.....ahhhh, the joys of being on the edge of technology.

9) Has the use of your mobile device helped to increase your creative output? Describe:

In brainstorming, it let's me capture the thoughts of the moment (which would have been lost) and being able to jump online from anywhere...is powerful when brainstorming new ideas...from pulling up the thesaurus online to get just the word to keep the conversation moving forward...to grabbing that little piece of info we need to keep the brainstorm movin' forward.

10) What is the most creative or coolest use of a mobile device that you have done or seen or heard of someone else doing?

<http://yellowarrow.net/>, <http://www.cellflixfestival.org/> and http://www.sfmoma.org/education/edu_podcasts_inv.html (I have an audio post that I kicked out to a tiny little blogger space I have on my experience of seeing my very first Pollock" Imagine encouraging people to post the thoughts from their phones...sweet <http://glsims.blogspot.com/>

Ooooo...and my most creative coolest mobile project (so far) has been a handheld computer research project for the Blanton Museum where we tested to see if a device filled with video, audio, text, pictures and interactive play elements would enhance or detract from the in gallery experience. The formal paper is posted at <http://www.archimuse.com/mw2004/papers/manning/manning.html> but I can give you a brief (and more entertaining description via skype if ya want).

11) Further thoughts on your mobile device usage and creative output?

I can't wait for the day the device can really respond well to my

voice...so I can speak and it will just take notes...that will be amazing!
Oh, and for what it is worth...here is a PDF on that first project I did with
200 iPAQs <http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/eqm02211.pdf>

Victor W – Student, moblogger, and vid-caster. Munich, Germany and Bangkok, Thailand

Name: Victor W.

URL: <http://numenna.blogspot.com>

1) Brief background or history of your creative practices:

I don't really have a creative practice per se, since I'm not working yet. However I have always took interests in the field since I was younger (usually in the art: painting and such)

2) Current employment or main creative endeavor:

I'm a student (political science) at the Hochschule für Politik (Academy for Politics) in Munich, Germany. Blogging and moblogging with pictures that accompany my text is my main creative endeavour.

3) When and how did you start using your mobile device for creative output:

Since I got my Nokia 6630 in March 2005 I started to take photos and video clips with it. By May 2005, I joined Blogger.com and started moblogging with it a month later using the email implementation for just text entries and moblogging pictures with text through Nokia Lifeblog by June 2005. I also made some short video clips which I sometimes post through 3rd party hosting services on the web to my blog manually. Since the beginning of March 2006 I started to inofficially do a "vid-cast".

4) How often do you use your mobile device towards creative ends or as an output device?

On a daily basis (I take photos and video clips with my 6630 and also started doing "vid-cast" inofficially)

5) What is your preferred use of your mobile device: photos, text, sound recording, video, other (explain):

Mainly photos and blogging, because the intergrated camera in the phone goes everywhere with the phone...which actually goes everywhere with me. So, when I come accross something interesting for me, I'd take a snapshot of it. Also, the phone camera was quick to use when I want to photograph a knitting project and put the picture on the internet. It's a whole lot faster than fishing out my digital camera and then take a photo, connect it to the computer, download the photo, upload it onto the server and then blog it. With the phone's camera and the phone, I can cut out a couple of steps that a digital camera would call for....and if need be, I can moblog directly to my blog.

6) What use or output from your mobile device are you most passionate about or use the most? Please describe your process and what you do

with the notes, sketches, or finished pieces:

Like I've mentioned above, taking photos with my mobile phone's camera. The resolution of 1.3 megapixel is not exactly professional and compelling, neither is the lack of focus or micro-mode, nor the lack of aperture control. However, I still consider the pictures taken with my phone-cam an artform. This also applies to the sketchy feeling of the videos taken with it. Similarly, the moblogging option is a helpful one.

7) If you use the output from your mobile device in other pieces or as a finished piece online or in other work, please describe:

I used to moblog a lot of photos with texts directly to my blog. (I said "used to" because nowadays I tend to upload the photos to my computer first to adjust the exposure of some pictures)

8) Is the creative use of your mobile device influenced by the capabilities / limitations of the device itself, by others' use (friends, online, contests, etc), or your own discovery and use:

Yes, there are definitely limitations to a camera on a mobile phone, thus rendering me not being able to do some of the things a professional camera could have done.

9) Has the use of your mobile device helped to increase your creative output? Describe:

Yes, I ended up blogging almost everything I came across and snippets of thoughts.

10) What is the most creative or most innovative use of a mobile device that you have done or seen or heard of someone else doing?

Up to this point, I'd have to point out to Anina at <http://anina.typepad.com> Although it's not that different from what I do when the question concerns only moblogging, however she extends the scope of the use of her cellphone and its features far more than I've explored myself.

11) Further thoughts on your mobile device usage and creative output?

No, not at the moment.

John Braine – Designer and Multimedia Systems candidate. Dublin, Ireland

Name: John Braine

URL:

<https://www.cs.tcd.ie/~brainej/>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/77879815@N00/>

1) Brief background or history of your creative practices:

When I left school I did a one year art and design, portfolio course but never went to college. Then I bought a computer to start making electronic music. I released a few records and got into web design. I did a web design course and have been designing/developing web sites on the side of doing many other things for the last 6 or 7 years. I'm also slowly getting back into art and have been doing some oil paintings recently but I've pretty much stopped making music. Currently doing a Masters in Multimedia at TCD.

2) Current employment or main creative endeavor:

Multimedia student. Haven't much time to be creative at the moment apart from college assignments that allow creativity; namely web design, music & video.

3) When and how did you start using your mobile device for creative output:

I've not really used it that much creatively. One weekend I had lots of fun making nice pictures by chucking my camera phone into air and spinning it. I've only recently put them on my TCD website.

Apart from that I just use it to take photos and videos of my son. I've always liked the idea of shooting a short movie just with a camera phone though. I'm sure that's been done to death by this stage though.

4) How often do you use your mobile device towards creative ends or as an output device?

Not at all any more. It's too much hassle and too expensive to upload the pictures or videos by MMS. I really should sort out a Bluetooth device.

5) What is your preferred use of your mobile device: photos, text, sound recording, video, other (explain):

I just use it to take photos and videos. I don't write any creative text. I use SMS text but keep it to a minimum as I have bad repetitive strain injury.

6) What use or output from your mobile device are you most passionate about or use the most? Please describe your process and what you do with the notes, sketches, or finished pieces:

I don't think I could honestly say that I'm passionate about any of the functions. The camera and video are good fun but the novelty has kind of worn off. I never really use any of the web functionality of my phone. If it wasn't so expensive I'd use more of the features and probably even get a better phone.

7) If you use the output from your mobile device in other pieces or as a finished piece online or in other work, please describe:

Just the camera tossing. <https://www.cs.tcd.ie/~brainej/>

8) Is the creative use of your mobile device influenced by the capabilities

/ limitations of the device itself, by others' use (friends, online, contests, etc), or your own discovery and use:

Probably limited by the device itself. Quality of audio, video and photos aren't exactly hi-fidelity. Limitations are more to do with lack of pocket money.

9) Has the use of your mobile device helped to increase your creative output? Describe:

No.

10) What is the most creative or most innovative use of a mobile device that

you have done or seen or heard of someone else doing?

Camera tossing!

11) Further thoughts on your mobile device usage and creative output?

Nothing much to add that I haven't said already. I'd probably be a lot more creative with it if it wasn't so dear to send MMS messages and connect to the internet. I'd say you could have great fun updating websites from a phone but it's just too expensive. Although I'm not sure I'd bother with it that much as that much work from the small interface of a phone would be painful with my RSI.

Fionnuala Mahon - Designer and Multimedia Systems candidate.
Dublin, Ireland

Name: Fionnuala Mahon

URL: www.cs.tcd.ie/~fmahon

1) Brief background or history of your creative practices:

I have experience in a number of disciplines:

- I have a BDes degree in Visual Communications from NCAD. I worked as a graphic designer for a design company after graduating from NCAD and currently do freelance work.
- I have worked on set and costume design for the St Patricks Day parade in the past. I regularly do face painting for the parade and special events in dublin.
- I did voluntary work for the Ark in Templebar... working on two projects in particular. These were a photographic workshop for children and I worked on "save the Robots" aswell.
- I had an exhibition of photography in Slovenia while on eramus there.
- I am studying for a masters in multimedia studies at the moment.

2) Current employment or main creative endeavor:

As mentioned above I am studying for a masters in multimedia studies at the moment.

Freelance design work (when I have the time)

3) When and how did you start using your mobile device for creative output:

I can't remember really... prob when I started college in Ncad, back in 2000

I use to store notes on mobile phone if I didn't have a pen

I got my mac laptop around 2003, as I was in final year college and needed to be able to work around the clock and our college computer closed at 9 and we had to share computers... they weren't even networked.

I used my laptop for most of my design work... I scanned it any photographs or illustrations I did. I continued using sketchbooks as I prefer them but I had to to have perfect presentation for college. I consider my digital camera a mobile device, I use it to document everything, I used my manual slr before that but I felt confined by the cost of developing so many photos I had to convert to digital!

4) How often do you use your mobile device towards creative ends or as an output device?

All the time, I spend a large portion of my day on my laptop. It was

being fixed for a week and I was totally lost without! I did however have my digital slr so I survived...

5) What is your preferred use of your mobile device: photos, text, sound recording, video, other (explain):

Every of the above mentioned media. Photography would be top of list.

6) What use or output from your mobile device are you most passionate about or use the most? Please describe your process and what you do with the notes, sketches, or finished pieces:

Ummm, that's difficult to answer. I guess I'd have to say printing... vague I know. At the end of the day I prefer to have my "art" printed on paper. I feel that the computer or camera screen is confined and I like to see out of it's box.

It all depends on what I'm doing with my output... if I'm working, I have to email it to clients, in college I also have to email it or else upload it on the web. For my personal use I print it out and stick it up on my wall. Sometimes I put the print outs in a notebook and draw over them, to create a new art piece.

7) If you use the output from your mobile device in other pieces or as a finished piece online or in other work, please describe:

Refer to my previous answer.

8) Is the creative use of your mobile device influenced by the capabilities / limitations of the device itself, by others' use (friends, online, contests, etc), or your own discovery and use:

When I bought my laptop originally I was studying visual communications and my laptop was fantastic... it could do everything I wanted. However I decided to study multimedia and I now need a new one as it isn't powerful enough. So I guess it's up to my discovery and use.

9) Has the use of your mobile device helped to increase your creative output? Describe:

Yes... I always imagined (what I thought were great) ideas but could never visualise them. Now I have a tool that enables this. At the end of the day it is only a tool, it needs a creative to utilise it

10) What is the most creative or most innovative use of a mobile device that you have done or seen or heard of someone else doing?

sorry, I can't think of any just now. My thesis has frizzled my brain

11) Further thoughts on your mobile device usage and creative output?

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