

Consent to Participate in Research

Basic Study Information

Title of the Project: Push notifications and everyday life

Principal Investigator: Andrew Wright, Doctoral Candidate in Media Studies, The University of Texas at Austin.

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Suzanne Scott, Media Studies Area Head, The University of Texas at Austin

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to be part of a research study. Before you decide if you would like to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Feel free to ask if anything is not clear in this consent form.

Your Participation in this Study is Voluntary

It is totally up to you to decide to be in this research study. Participating in this study is voluntary. Even if you decide to be part of the study now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. Your decision not to take part or to withdraw will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

What is the study about and why are we doing it?

The core questions of this project are related to the role and function of push notifications in our daily lives. My research seeks to address how being 'always-on' and 'always-alert' might play a role in the lives of young people, and how any impact may not necessarily be positive.

Furthermore, I hope to understand any particular strategies that are used by smartphone users to deal with this cultural force in their everyday lives. The purpose of the study is to inform my dissertation work as a doctoral candidate in the Radio-TV-Film department of Moody College at UT Austin.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to go through a series of surveys and potentially an ethnographic interview. The first 'intake' survey begins with logistical questions about your age and your career status, followed by your general device and notification activity

Participants who wish to continue will then receive an email prompting them to engage in four surveys over the course of a single day, each at least one hour apart. These surveys will ask you to briefly characterize the notifications you have received since the last survey (or since the beginning of the day for the first survey.) You may give as much or as little detail as you desire and should not feel obligated to disclose any information that you are uncomfortable sharing.

The final survey in this survey will also ask you a few questions reflecting on the study and will ask if you wish to opt into a brief ethnographic interview for the same purpose. Any interviews will be conducted via Zoom at a time mutually agreed upon by the researcher and participant and may be recorded. 10 participants in these optional interviews will be selected to receive a \$10 Starbucks gift card.

All surveys will be administered via Qualtrics, which is a secure platform that is available on computers, phones, and smart devices without downloading an app. Your participation in this

study could last up to roughly thirty minutes over the span of a week, though base level participation should take roughly ten minutes. Approximately 50 individuals will participate in this study.

What alternatives are available?

You may potentially receive extra credit without participating in the study by informing your instructor that you do not meet study requirements (ex: if you are under the age of 18 or do not own a phone.) All extra credit decisions are the final responsibility of the course instructor, and participants are asked to refer to their instructor for more information. You may opt out of this study at any time.

What risks and discomforts might you experience from being in this study?

There are minimal risks and discomforts you might experience from being in this study.

You can skip any questions that make you uncomfortable or that you do not want to answer by selecting the N/A option.

Participation in research might involve some loss of privacy. There is small risk that someone outside the research study could see and misuse information about you. More information about how we will protect your information to reduce this risk can be found below.

How could you benefit from this study?

While this study is not likely to help you directly, you will likely gain a greater understanding of how your notifications operate. In addition, the information learned in this research will help the investigator understand how push notifications as cultural objects work, and will likely benefit academic research into digital cultural objects.

How will information about you be protected?

UT Austin has established secure research databases and computer systems to store information and to help with monitoring and oversight of research. Your information may be kept in these databases but is only accessible to the individual working on this study.

Identifiable information in these databases is not released outside of UT Austin unless stated in this consent or required by law. Although results of this research may be presented at conferences or in publications, identifiable personal information about participants will not be disclosed.

Personal information about you might be shared with or copied by authorized representatives from the following organizations for the purposes of managing, monitoring, and overseeing this study:

- Representatives of UT Austin, such as the Institutional Review Board (IRB; a committee in charge of protecting the rights and welfare of research participants)

- Officials of the Department of Health and Human Services.

What will happen to the information we collect about you after the study is over?

In general, we will not give you any individual results from the study. Research data will be kept for at least 3 years after study completion. During this time, your name and other information that can directly identify you will be kept secure. Audiovisual recordings of interviews will be transcribed with all identifiers removed, and the recordings will be destroyed at the earliest opportunity.

How will we compensate you for being part of the study?

Your instructor may offer extra credit for this assignment, which should be awarded to all study participants. All extra credit decisions are at the discretion of the instructor.

In addition, participants who engage in a debriefing discussion will be entered into a drawing to receive one of ten \$10 Starbucks gift cards. This drawing will be decided using PickerWheel.com, and winners will be sent their gift card via email within two weeks of the debrief.

Can you stop being in the study?

You can stop being in this research study at any time. Leaving the study will not affect your medical care, employment status, or academic standing at UT Austin. Tell the study staff if you are thinking about stopping or decide to stop. If you decide to withdraw before this study is completed, all data associated with you and your participation will be deleted. If you still wish to receive extra credit at this point, please reach out to the study staff.

Contact Information for the Study Team

If you have any questions about this research, you may contact:

Andrew Wright
Phone: 503.522.0795
Email: Andy.Wright@utexas.edu

Or

Dr. Suzanne Scott
Email: suzanne.scott@utexas.edu

Contact Information for Questions about Your Rights as a Research Participant

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the following:

The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board
Phone: 512-232-1543
Email: irb@austin.utexas.edu

Please reference the protocol number found at the top of this document.

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. We will give you a digital copy of this document for your records or you can print a copy of the document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.