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Introduction

The assignment was to create a product for a contradicting lifestyle. I chose to adjust the original target group a little, steering it into a direction that was far from who I am, to enable myself to experiment as well as getting to know extremer and more different aspects of designing. So I chose to develop a **garbage can for youngsters, in Lloret de Mar**.

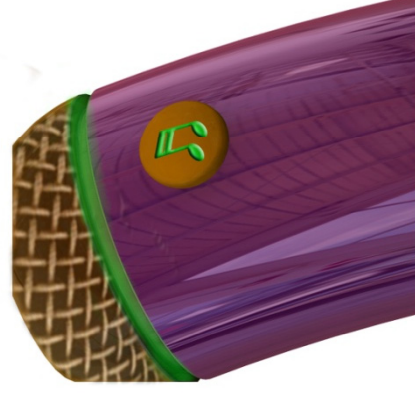
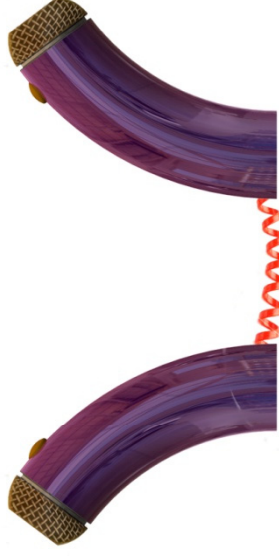
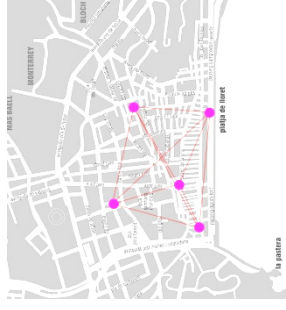
In Lloret de Mar a large entertaining business already exists, to be able to stand out or adapt to such an environment, something fitting needed to be proposed. A different form of interaction supposedly changes the way the young-aged throw away their trash, rewarding the youngsters somehow. Young adolescents head towards Lloret de Mar with specific goals in mind, meeting other people, go clubbing together, diving into the sensual nightlife of the city together and eagerly forgetting all previously assumed boundaries. For that reason I developed the trashtalker.



Final Design Proposal

To be able to stimulate the adolescents, interaction was the main aspect which needed to be changed. Getting rid of trash becomes in this way a secondary function. The main interaction with the garbage can is the fact that it allows the youngsters to **communicate**, when the trashtalker detects waste is thrown in, it will open the lines of communication between another trashtalker somewhere else in the city. The one who threw away the trash now has the opportunity to **speak and be heard** for thirty seconds, what is said in the activated trashtalker, is transmitted to the others in different settings around the city. At that moment the trashtalker functions as a speaker. When on the other hand, another person somewhere else hears this, and decides to throw in trash as well, they are able to communicate and the trashtalkers function as a phone line, with a main purpose of getting to know each other even when you have no idea who you are talking to. Discussions could even be formed when multiple trashtalkers are in use. First of all this will stimulate the youngsters in throwing away the trash because they are able to talk to others they do not necessarily know, they can hit on each other, make fun of and with each other or have a group discussion on where the best party's are. On second hand, when a youngster passes by and hears sound coming from the trashcan, the initiator will probably **seduce** the other to throw something in as well, to be able to communicate. As a bonus, a **button for a beat** is integrated. Giving the youngsters a chance to prove themselves in a rap battle or pretend to be a (drunk) idols singer. When this button is pressed a random beat is generated for the time remaining. Of course a lot of fun is imaginable,

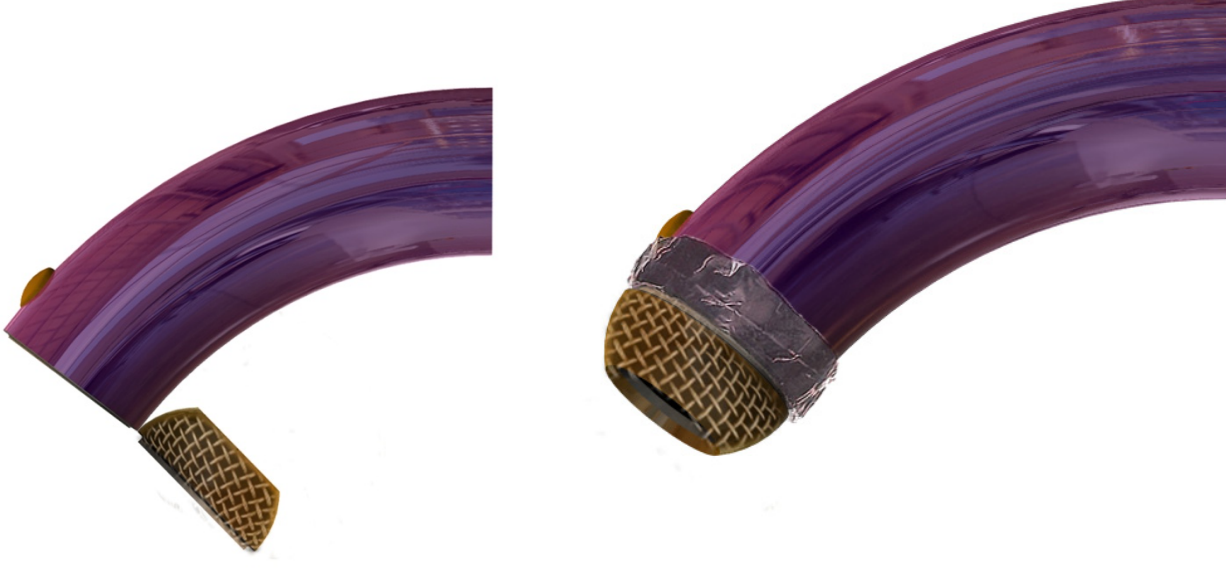
As of feedback, the edge lights up in bright green when the trashtalker **detects trash** was thrown in, showing the youngster that talking is possible. This is done by a sensitive pressure sensor in the bottom. The button for the beat also lights up in the same color. When the button is pressed it flashes on the beat. Both fade out slowly in thirty seconds.



For the user, the primary function is not necessarily throwing away trash, but trash functions more like a form of money, allowing the user be heard. But of course, the true function is still the fact that it is a garbage can. It can therefore be **opened normally**, the 'head' can be tilted off, opened with a key, and an empty garbage bag can be placed, or a full one can be taken out. An extravagant feature, as seen on the bottom right, which can go a tad too far is when the trash bag is placed inside and the lid is closed again, in this way the trash bag definitely adds to what is left of the imagination.

The form itself is of course quite extravagant. But most of all it is a collaboration of a **microphone integrated with a trashcan**. The fact that it is a trashcan is in this way still recognizable and in this form the secondary (for the user primary) function becomes more obvious. It is bent towards the street as a scream for **attention** and kept about the same size as a normal street garbage can, at a height of about 1.50m which means normal trash bags can be used and the same volume of trash can be collected. The gold 'head' or top represents the **masculinity** of the youngsters' culture, showing off to the extreme, with all kinds of (fake) necklaces (bling bling), tight clothes and high heels. This showing off and, as the youngsters do, scream for attention, is also found in the fact that the surface finish is very smooth, shiny and reflective of both the head and the purple base. Reflecting the city around it, the disco's neon lighting, the commerciality but the youngsters as well. To come close to a standard garbage can, a chrome finish was intended, but to bridge it towards a more extreme lifestyle, a bright and happy color was chosen. A comment on the earlier version of the trashtalker was the fact that the hole was somewhat small when comparing it to the normal garbage cans, therefore in this version it is widened.

Tertiary aspects are trashtalkers which belong to specific nightclubs, allowing those nightclubs to dissipate their music over to other locations, functioning like a commercial.



Criteria for the Final Design Proposal

As stated by the Greeks, one can only come to fully understand a product by understanding its specific aspects of meaning, expressed through language or other systems of signs, semantics. Therefore, to come to a correct design solution, understanding the contrasting target group is a necessary first step. The chosen target group differs somewhat from the original assignment, but this was found acceptable in the first quarter. The target group, youngsters in Lloret de Mar, are a true **expansive** breed of adolescents. They derive from **extravagance**, and live to **experiment**. But most of the time they are a destructive people, grasping towards every sedating resource available. One of the main aspects of such places as Lloret de Mar is the fact that it serves as a meeting point for young kids to go about and not get hassled by care-takers or studying, youngsters from around the world gather in such places to go wild in clubbing and everything else which is not allowed in their normal daily life. This is one of the key aspects for the design, the actual **goal of coming together**. Not to actually get together, this is already happening within the nightclubs or at the beach. Because it is such a social society, a lot of different people are present. This eventually means that the youngsters need to stand out through being conspicuous, acting tough, **showing off**. For the male youngsters, this means showing their masculinity, flourishing their ability to get together with new groups, proving the female youngsters that they are worth the hassle. The females on the other hand, when available, dress up in the most extravagant clothes, showing their femininity, concluding here that a lot of **sexuality** is found within these places. Of course, **impressing** is of mayor importance, through **communication** as such and body language.

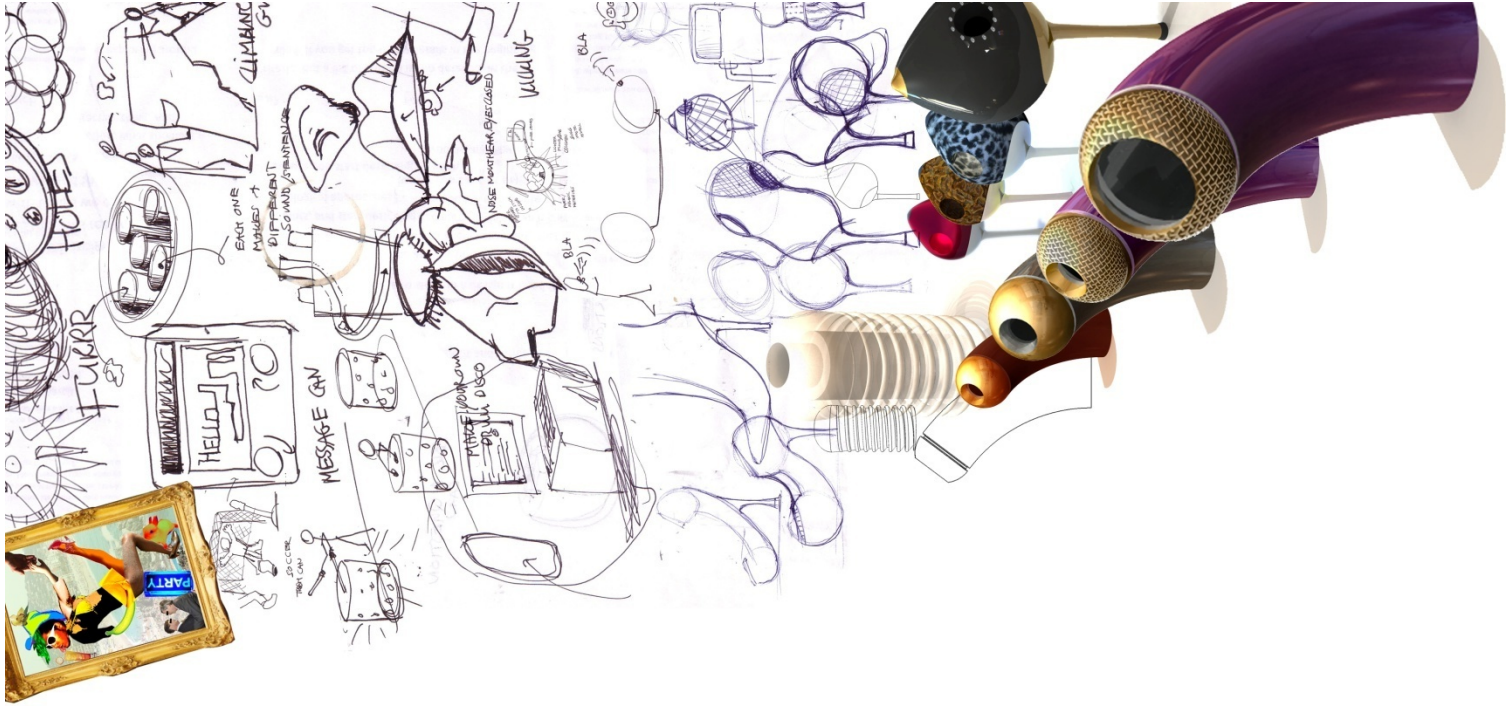
To translate these mentioned aspects of the community to a valuable product for the youngsters, the aspects need to be reflected in the design of the garbage can. The main keyword, which applies both female and male youngsters, is extravagance. This is found in the design when a sexual

atmosphere is met. In the first poster, sexuality translated into a surface finish was thought more likely to be a rough texture. In the second quarter however, I found that comparing sexuality to for instance latex, with a shiny and sticky feel, represented the target group in a better way. Therefore, the eventual surface is smooth, reflective and player-like, shining like a newly pimped car. The extravagance of the community is also represented within the shiny purple color, being bright and expansive. This **attracts attention**, which is also the main reason why the product is bent towards its user.

But to interest the youngsters in the design, the interaction is a key feature. In this way they are able to enhance their already existing social interactivities. They are not obligated to create a better environment by having to throw away trash for this only reason, the trash becomes an excuse to be able to communicate to new people, trying to get together somewhere within the night when a nice conversation was formed. Adding the time aspect to it also offers them to perfect their pitch. The trashtalker is a garbage can pulled away from its normal context, creating a different one for the youngsters, not as a product itself. Therefore, the primary function is still to collect garbage. The functional category is in this way just a **city artifact or furniture**, but the product class itself becomes somewhat different. In a way it is a merge of a static garbage can with a phone that dials random numbers. It is a kind of mediator in between the youngsters, some who are afraid to talk directly can prove themselves with a chance for a date, but always knowing they also have the chance of getting away, without ever being seen by the other. Also with adding the button for a beat makes it lean toward a communal activity like a very local version of Idols. So the product class could be considered as '**communal communicational garbage can, enhancing social activity**'.

Alternatives and Evaluation

For alternatives I divided the problem into two phases, the main form of interaction, and the appearance. Chronologically I wanted to solve the interaction problem, before anything else. So I explored the target group and possibilities by making use of collages and mind maps (which can be found in starting points 2, page 2). After exploring I developed several solutions possibilities for the interaction. I wanted to differentiate as much as possible since the youngsters are not eager to accept changes lay down by others, thus having to be convinced by the way of use. Solutions of interaction can be categorized by either an appearance aspect, what **height** (climbing or kicking, soccer) or what **size** (portable or static), or the actual interaction aspect of people and senses, **leaving messages** (written, drawn, msn, pictures), **communicating** (talking), **creating music** (drums, effects, singing, rap battles). All with the underlying thought for it to be social and stimulating, using the garbage as something else than its normal purpose. The true main goal is for the adolescents to throw away the trash, keeping in mind for myself of the significance of helping the environment. Therefore creating products with screens or slideshows showing pictures of people throwing trash in or msn like communication is not a right solution, these will consume more energy than is saved. The product needed to be **simple yet effective**, needed to be placed near the clubs in the city, stand out, be extravagant, radiate an atmosphere of sexuality and stimulate the already existing social activity. The interaction of talking or singing without seeing each other can be very exciting, scary, fun or idiotic, but certainly exciting. The form and coloring needed to 'scream' this towards the younger public.



Concluding, this product will definitely fit the chosen lifestyle narrowly, because of its extravagance in both design and interaction. But since it is still a public product, the original natives will most likely be intimidated by the design. Still, I do not expect much activity of natives around the placed trash talkers. The costs of the product will lie similar to that of original garbage cans, apart from the sensor, LED's and communication lines (cheaper via satellite). A weak point could be the fact that from a certain angle rain could come in, but first of all it does not rain that often, and secondly this is the same with most lid-less street trash cans. A strong point is the fact that it is just as easy for a garbage bag to be replaced as with the conventional garbage cans.

Reflecting on the process I really found out I enjoyed working in this way, conceptualizing and going broad, using the contradictions of a target group and product to be to eventually come to a behavioral influencing, and in this case thus sustainable, concept. Dividing the product into several different directions, interaction and appearance compared to a certain target group, can make you think really different about a product. When the posters would not have been made I would not have come to the eventual product that easily, I found that kind of exploration quite interesting. Although I did not always see the point into making for instance the starting points, it was good to do for myself into some extend, to get a grip on the situation, but I did get the feeling no one had read them in case I wanted feedback the next meeting. Another thing is I had trouble in describing all the time what I wanted to accomplish, without actually accomplishing anything for a long while. Writing reports and using strange and expensive words without designing gave me the feeling of having to repeat myself and not really getting anywhere, especially within the first half of the project. I understand the significance of for instance the exploration on existing products, having to set goals for the rest of the course, and of course that of collages, but at some point I wanted to take steps forward but we still needed to make reports. For me it then added up feeling too little time for the actual designing or actually making the

product work. Therefore I enjoyed the second half of the project much more than the first. In total I think it was a good learning experience for further use in a conceptual development career.

Jonas rikkert jan martens 1171720

