Reflection - Bas Bakx - DDM110

Design for Behavioural Change

This semester I have been especially interested in finding a structured way to change behaviour, due to my FMP that centers around creating confidence in users to use and trust an online platform on one side, and help them influence traffic that interacts with their online presence. The main thing I wanted to get from this elective is to find and be able to find literature on which I can build the platform I'm working on in a scientifically relevant way. The clients I work most closely with focus on the financial sector, so a scientific user centered approach is something that I feel can greatly enhance their services.

I had to join the elective a little later than the initial start, but this didn't turn out to be a problem since the first lectures were very theory oriented (something i was able to do individually). The prospect of having to do a midterm seemed redundant to me at first, but turned out to work well for the continuation of the elective. Because of the familiarity with concepts from the papers we got, it was easier for us to talk about them. I do think this reflects in our (and the other groups') work, as the theories included in this midterm seemed to be considered much more than the frameworks introduced thereafter.

In the end, the most important lessons I got from this elective were: 1. the usage of the initial theories, as we got the opportunity to relatively extensively apply them. And 2. The importance of evaluation and how to structure them. These are both notions I can almost directly apply in my work and current project to make and justify decisions related to behaviour change. Structuring research or a project in a scientific way will of course stay a challenge in the future, especially as I move away from a research focussed institute such as the TU/e. But the concrete holds and knowledge that remain after this elective can, if internalised, add a unique aspect to my process and can even be used explicitly if a situation calls for it.

Lectures with only group presentations are often criticised, which might be the reason that these were kept short during the lectures, which I personally appreciate. However, for the final presentation we couldn't fit everything we wanted to tell in the 5 minutes we had, causing some notions to be incorrect or unclear. They will of course be rectified in the report, but I feel that the already valuable feedback could have been even more useful to our report and development. The lectures themselves were pleasant, the subject matter was interesting and challenging, a point of view from an industry that directly or indirectly apply notions from the lectures would have made them even stronger to me, but I understand if this threads outside of the scope of this elective.