With Intention

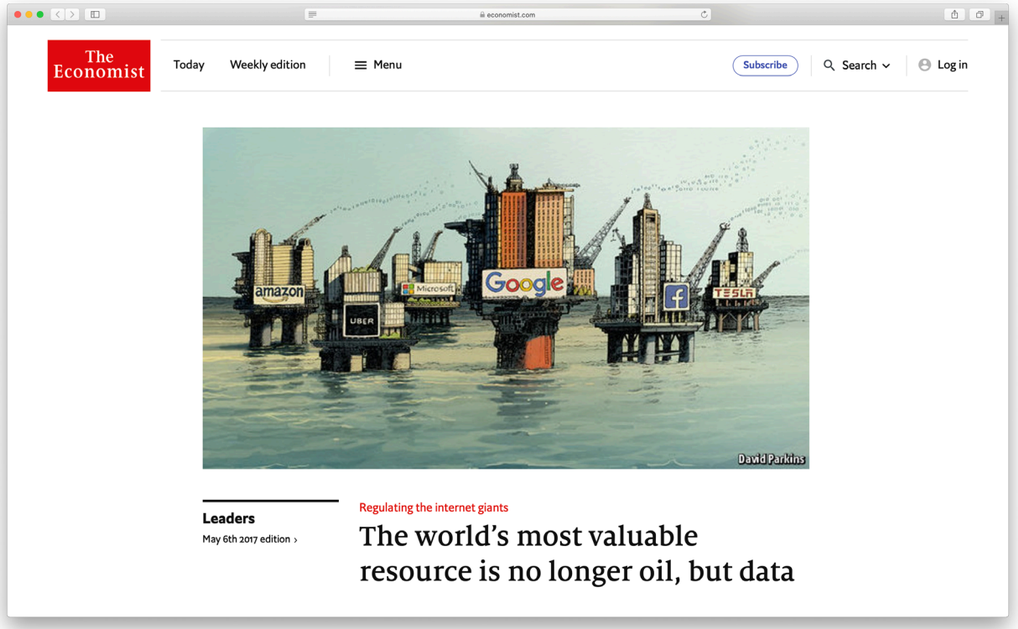
Ben Weatherhead

2016

In 2016, millions of people's information was compromised through facebook and used to persuade people to vote for Donald Trump. Modern technology has trained us to trade our information for convenience and entertainment to the point that we no longer consider the risks.

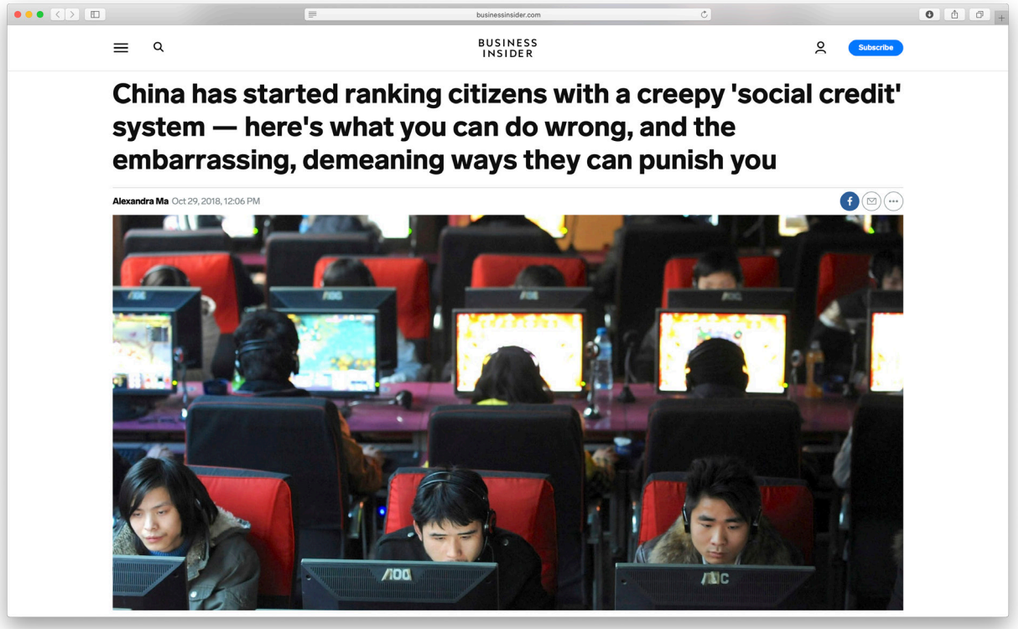
2017

In 2017 we see data surpass oil as the most valuable asset on earth due to the rise and rapid evolution of consumer technology.



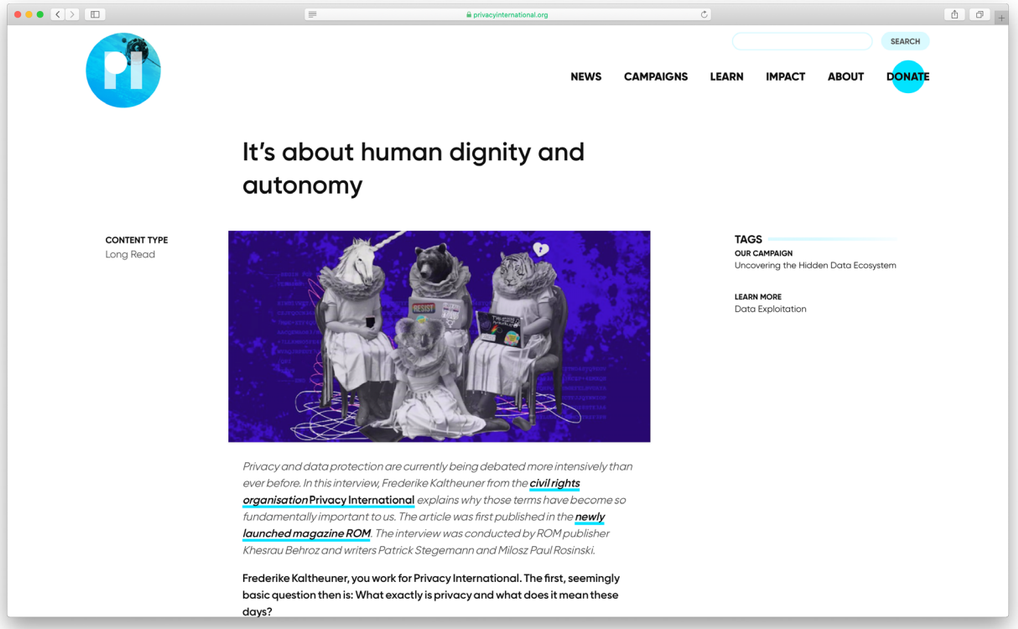
2018

China begins implementing a social credit system that uses several avenues to monitor its citizens and punish them for seemingly minor transgressions like having your dog off leash. They can punish you by throttling your internet, prevent your child from getting into a school, publicly list you as a bad citizen, or even take away your dog.



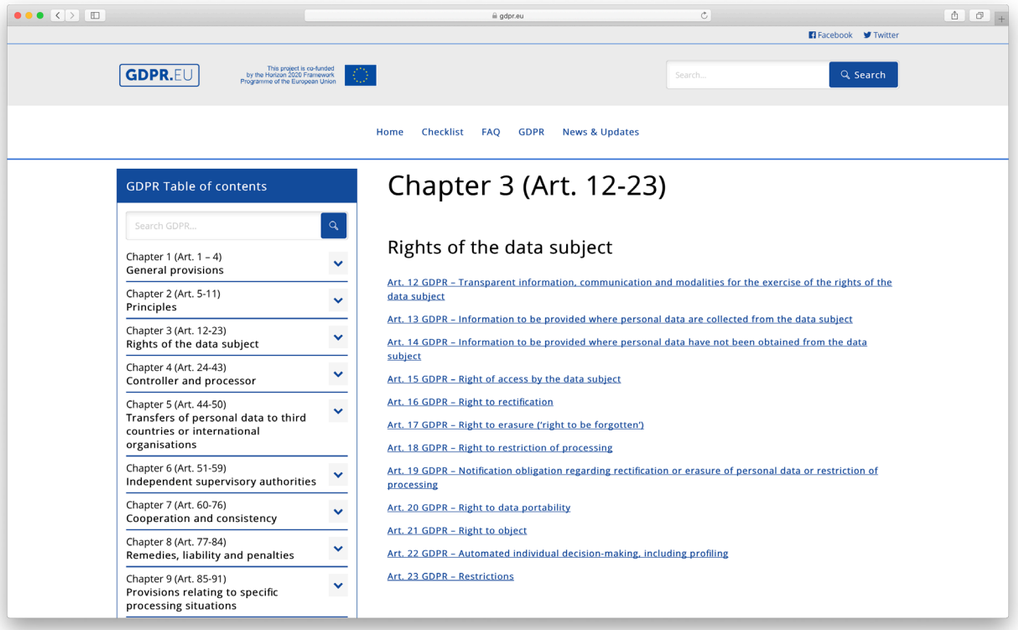
Data Matters

Data is used for many great things such as improving products and services, but in recent years a darker side of data has emerged. Companies, governments, and countless other entities are using data to sell you products, change your opinions, and punish you.



Regulation Is Good, But It's Not Enough

Regulation is a key solution to issues around data collection and privacy, but it's not the only one. The reason being that regulation in tech is often reactive. It comes out of crises, pandemics, and data breaches in order to prevent similar events from happening again. But "data" and data collection are changing and expanding, creating new unforseen avenues for hacking, surveillance, and manipulation.



Understanding Perceptions

Through interviews I was able to understand common perceptions of data. It became evident that people didn't value their digital information and didn't fully understand what they were agreeing to when accepting terms and conditions.

“

I don't think [companies] are doing anything malicious, partially because I don't think any of us individuals matter in the grand scheme of a million or billion people

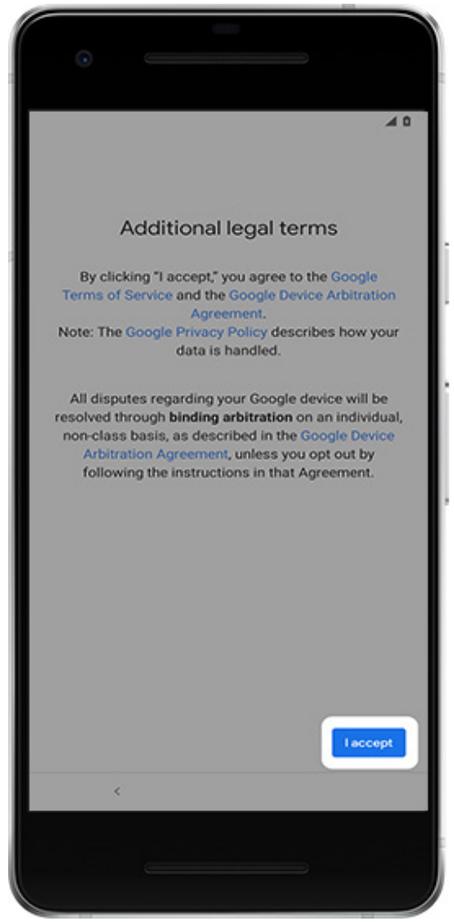
- Noah

I'm sure I should read [terms & conditions]... but there are so many words.

- Corinne

A Tap Away

To understand why we don't value our data I looked at how we interact with it. My interviews revealed that it was common for people to quickly skip through terms & conditions agreements, diminishing the act of sharing our data to a single tap.



A More Honest Approach

Despite the approachable forms of smart speakers, they are still a portal to the outside world.

Design Goals

Help people understand the value of their data.

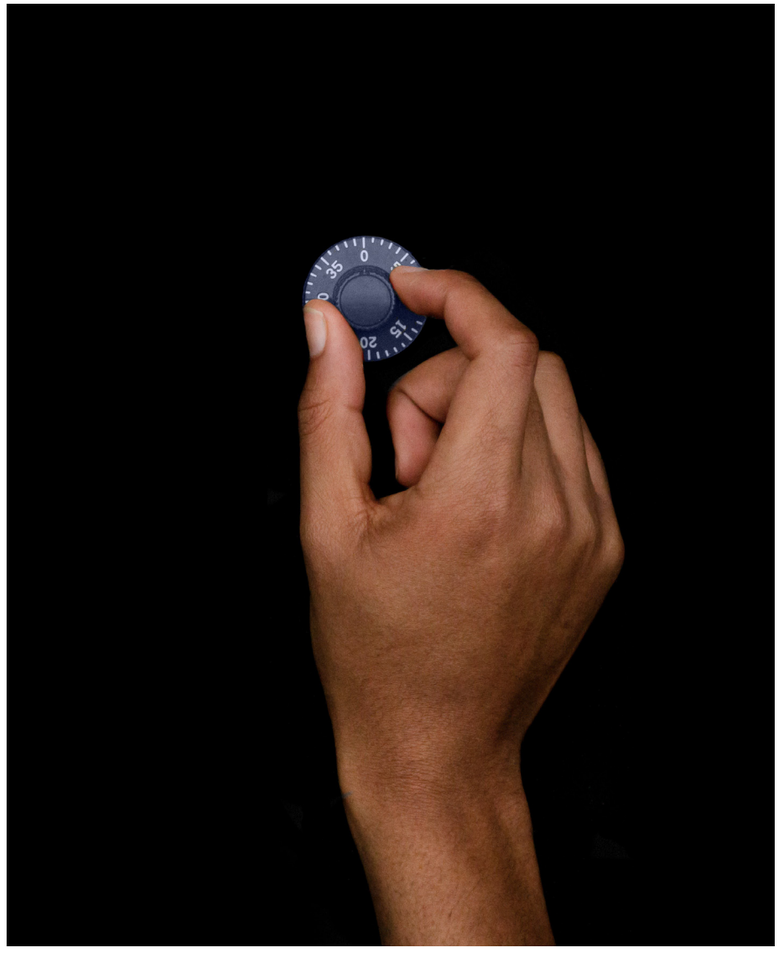
Help people understand what exactly they are sharing when agreeing to terms & conditions.

Use authenticity to shift our perception of the products that collect our information.

Intentional Interactions

In looking at past ways we have interacted with or given up information there was a sense of value that came with the deliberateness of a physical object or interaction.

For example, safes contain a person's most important documents, which they intermittently access using a unique combination. This interaction places value on what the safe contains.



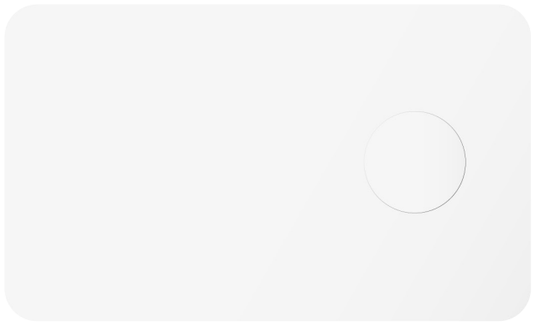
A Different Way To Authenticate

The first object borrows this safe dial interaction to create a unique, more mindful way of sharing our information.

The selected option gives the person using it a clear understanding of what they are agreeing to share by displaying it on an eink display.

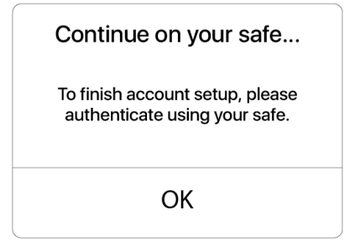
Physical Models

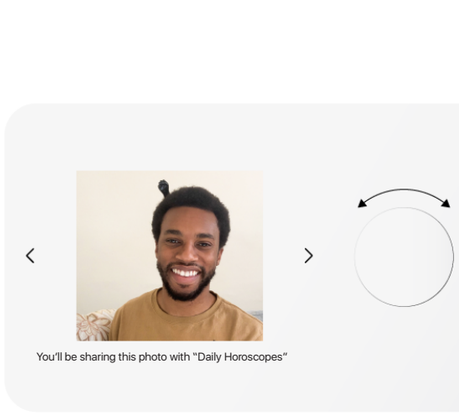
I used paper and cardboard models to validate this physical interaction and to better understand how this integrates into someone's life.



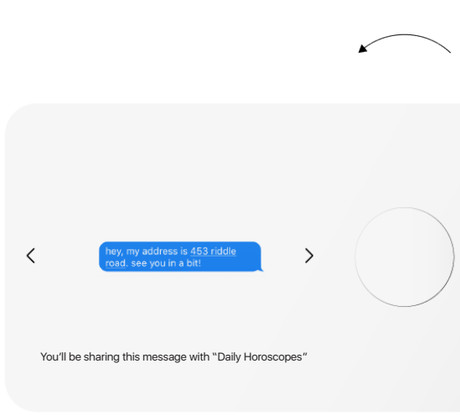
Opportunity for Pause

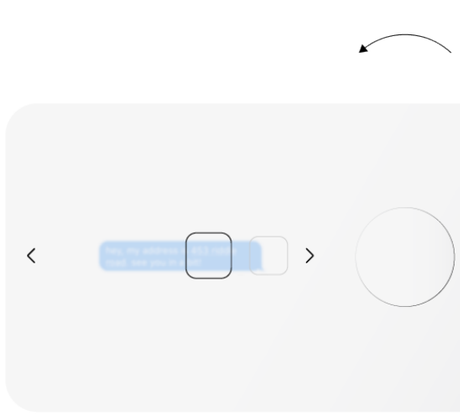
Before entering their combination the person is presented with a sample of the data they are agreeing to give up. This gives them a clear understanding of what specifically services are asking for.

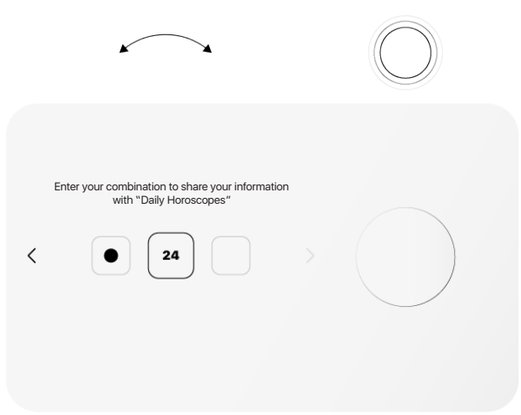




Turn dial to scroll through types of information you are agreeing to share



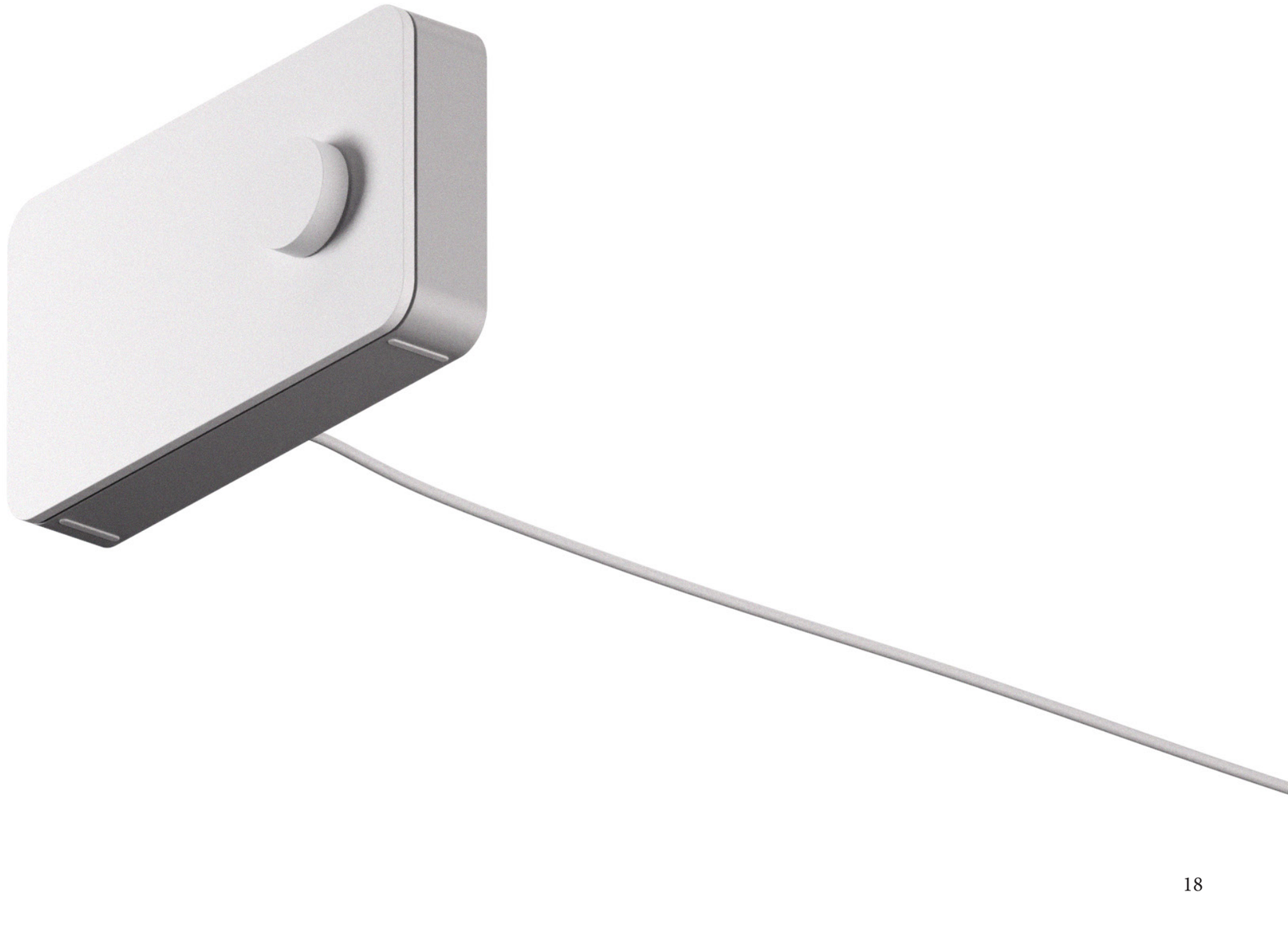




Turn dial to change number and press the dial to select.

You'll be sharing this photo with "Daily Horoscopes"
AUSTEN • SENSE AND SENSIBILITY
THE ACCIDENTAL CREATIVE
HOW TO BE BRILLIANT AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE
TODD HENRY
ELLEN LUPTON
DESIGN IS STORYTELLING
SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE
KURT VONNEGUT
gradle

Enter your combination to share your
information with "Daily Horoscopes"
24



A More Honest Approach

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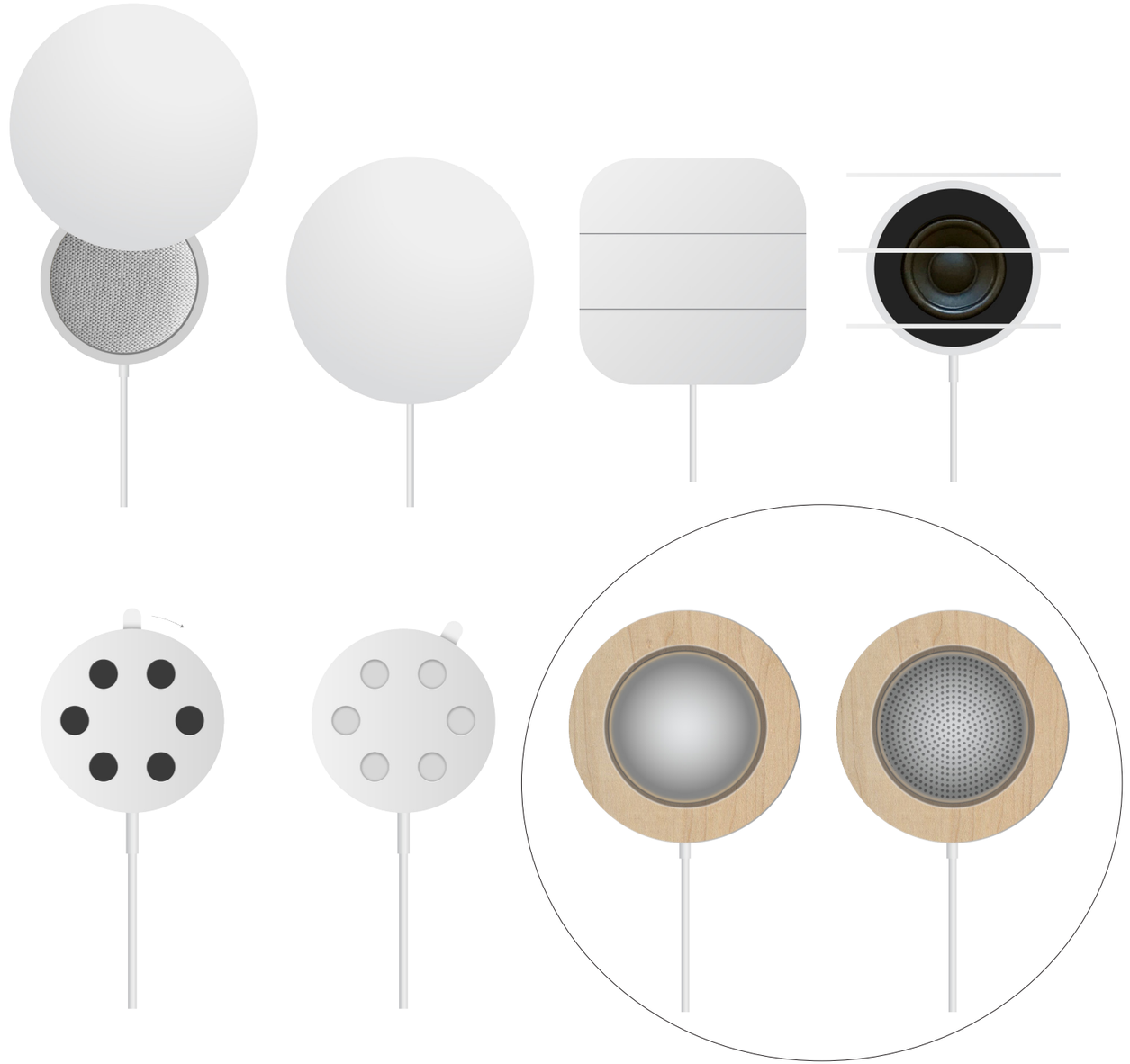
On / Off

The second object, a speaker, allows someone to close that portal for times they are not engaging with the speaker.

The shutter concepts were interesting, but the project moved away from that because the selected option physically disconnects the components from the board, which is a more reassuring off state.



Refined Form

The final speaker form takes cues from an intercom system to reflect more honestly that it is an audio device.

The speaker and microphones are contained within the metal housing and the main circuit board in the base. By flipping it over the person using it can feel reassured that the speaker is not "listening" because the components are physically disconnected from the board.

You Are The Product

In addition to holding companies accountable through regulation, we as individuals need to have a shift in perspective so we are not as easily manipulated by the products we place our trust in.

thank you :)