

Smart Spaces

What problem are you trying to solve?

According to the PWC survey “Workforce 2030” and similar research, remote work, and job market globalization are growing trends. We could assume that the majority (up to 80%) of “white colors” living in Helsingborg will be working remotely for the companies/projects from around the globe by 2030.

The other trend is that the employment system will be transforming into the gig-economy model or “uberization” of the labor market.

People will be working from home, in co-working spaces, and wherever-they-are. Maybe even switching between projects/employers during the day/week. Those labor market changes will diminish socializing opportunities at the workplace as people will be meeting colleagues mostly online, and it might create a feeling of disconnection and isolation.

Our Problem Statement: How might Helsingborg create a safe, comfortable, friendly, and supportive environment for a remote uber-type employee living in the city and suffering from loneliness, and lack of social communication at the workplace.

How do you plan to solve the problem?

We will create an interactive application that replicates a physical city (“twin city”) on the digital platform and provides remote workers with the possibility to meet and socialize in real life. Imagine Pokemon GO but for finding other remote workers in the city.

We are willing to engage various public spaces and commercial entities (cafes/libraries, parks/beaches, co-workings areas, etc.) to create specially marked zones for remote workers who are open to socializing/networking. The interactive map in our application will mirror those dedicated physical places/zones enabling interaction of users online as well. Platform members can opt to show their real-time presence in those zones as avatars when they are open to being contacted. We will also innovate together on how to make those physical zones more “inviting for communications” - maybe ice-breaking questions or metaphors cards on the walls to start the conversation with a stranger, or some urbanistic solutions, incorporated into space.

User Scenario | Find and socialize with co-workers

Users can choose the place to work for today, book this place, and mark it as “let’s work together”, inviting the other remote workers to join. Now people can have someone sitting and working nearby to talk and to have fika during the breaks. We will stimulate social connections, and make it more natural. Would you dare to share a table with a stranger in the cafe? Maybe he/she doesn’t want it? But now you can clearly see in the application which person close by is open to social contact, and it is not scary to say hello anymore.

User Scenario II

Users can also create their own workplaces, inviting others to work from their place.

We use geolocation to choose workplaces nearby. Maybe today your neighbor works in your kitchen (did you know before that you are colleagues and have common interests?).

User Scenario III

Each user has a profile/avatar, which shows interests, topics you like to discuss, other information you want people to know about you. The user also sets up current mood/status from “I want to walk and chit chat for half an hour at 11 in this area/I want to share a pizza at 12 in this neighborhood to “I would be happy to get professional advice from UX designer/I am looking for a buddy for well-being and motivating each other”.

Search in the app will be designed for different scenarios (by places, by activities, by interests, by profiles, etc).

The app will be an IT secured and trusted platform, using data protection when identifying the users and compliant with GDPR.

How do you plan to make this solution a reality? Do you have an action plan?

We would like to start by establishing cooperation with Helsingborg municipality and local businesses in order to re-think and modernize the public areas and adapt them for future needs of the changing labor market.

In parallel, we are planning to develop an app/platform and start testing it.

We will create awareness by promoting the idea publicly and inviting citizens from the target audience to test the alfa version of the app.

We will work with local businesses (co-workings, offices, cafes, restaurants), non-profits/public organizations (such as educational institutions, libraries, Dunkershkulturhuset, Stadsteatr and etc.) to invite active participants of the “physical/digital space” and to create new innovative ideas of how to involve people into socializing using their facilities.

When this is done, we will officially launch the solution and start a PR/marketing campaign to attract maximum people from our target audience.

Why is your solution innovative?

We use technologies (augmented reality, geolocation, IoT, AI - and adding the newest which will be relevant) to build a digital environment mirroring the physical city spaces.

We are facilitating the collaboration between digital and physical realities, initiating people to be more present in physical reality, and have more spontaneous and pleasant social contacts by using digital platforms and physical spaces. It is a behavioral and social innovation - we are designing a new way of socializing and showing to people the beauty of face-to-face communications.

How scalable is your solution?

The solution could be rolled out in each city. The platform could be reused, and localized if needed, we just add the physical spaces ecosystem and invite local citizens to use it.

How does your solution make an impact?

We will tackle the problem of loneliness and social disconnection for people working remotely (from home or from a co-working space) - our early adopters. As we have estimated above, it might be up to 80% of “white colors” in the city. We also see the opportunity to broaden this solution. After the launch phase and testing, we might add other target audiences. So more citizens will benefit from this solution.

Happy and social people are more emotionally stable and healthy. They are working effectively, keeping their job even in the period of high turbulence, and create value for society.

The city is getting the real opportunity to contribute effectively to preserving the well-being and mental health of inhabitants.

When we have started our ideation, we were looking for the solution for a smarter labor market challenge. But after we have created a persona and researched about pains and gains, we have developed the solution, which clearly impacts several challenges: ‘A better city for health’ and ‘Be a smart neighbour’.

Is your solution built on prototype or is it a conceptual solution?

Conceptual