A Presentation from the NewMR Ethnography & Market Research Event - May 25, 2011

In Time, In Context, InSpired:
Mindfulness in Mobile Ethnography

Julie Wittes Schlack, Communispace

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In Time, In Context, InSpired: *Mindfulness in Mobile Ethnography*

Julie Wittes Schlack
SVP, Innovation and Design, Communispace Corporation
Mobile ethnography in conjunction with online communities

Private Online Community

CONSUMERS

Talk with each other

CLIENT

Gives feedback

Arrows indicate flow

Speaker: Julie Wittes Schlack, Communispace, USA

NewMR Ethnography, May 25, 2013
From Observation …
To participation…
From professional watchers …
Businesses, too, have found ethnographers helpful for understanding how people use products and services, as indicated in the increasing use of ethnographic methods to understand consumers and consumption, or for new product development (such as video ethnography). The recent Ethnographic Praxis in Industry (EPIC) conference is evidence of this. Ethnographers’ systematic and holistic approach to real-life experience is valued by product developers, who use the method to understand unstated desires or cultural practices that surround products. Where focus groups fail to inform marketers about what people really do, ethnography links what people say to what they actually do—avoiding the pitfalls that come from relying only on self-reported, focus-group data.

Video-ethnography involves:
• Observation, including extensive filming of practitioners,
• Allowing practitioners to view the video recorded material and reflexively discuss their practice,
• Transforming practice through practitioner led change, and
• Building the capacity for the ongoing and critical appraisal of practice.

Video-ethnographic methods seek to foreground practitioner knowledge, expertise, and insight into the dynamics of their own work processes (see 1) Carroll, Iedema et al. 2008). This is achieved by first talking with practitioners about their work and organizational processes, and by seeking an articulation of the social, professional, environmental, and organizational contingencies that both enable and constrain their practice. By allowing practitioners to discuss their practices in response to video footage clinicians and researchers gain insight into areas of practice that may be benefit from redesign. Video ethnography is contingent on the researcher gaining the trust of practitioners, on becoming familiar with the site and on being trusted to be present at time and in places where critical conducts are undertaken.

In health care, for example, video ethnography has involved observing and filming clinical handover. The filming first focused on aspects identified by practitioners (and/or patients) themselves. This was later extended to also include aspects identified by the researcher as
Mobile Ethnography lets you capture

In-context, in-the-moment rituals, observations, and feedback

All images in this section were submitted by members of Communispace communities.

Speaker Julie Wittes Schlack, Communispace, USA
NewMR Ethnography, May 25, 2011
Lesson 1

Create assignments that will trigger mindfulness and self-reporting. **Focus on:**

**Emotion and Sensation.**
Things that Annoy me

“Multiple self-checkout errors requiring someone to come with a key to complete the transaction.”

Speaker Julie Wittes Schlack, Communispace, USA
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Parenting Tips Needed

“Tying a new hairstyle every morning for school is brain wrecking. Is there a guide book on princess hairstyles?”

Speaker: Julie Wittes Schlack, Communispace, USA

NewFR Ethnography, May 25, 2011
Encourage participants to be attentive to sound, smells, sensory disruptions ....
Lesson 2

Create assignments that provide you with:

**In-context observations that you could not get any other way**
Ask a simple question, like
“What captures your attention in the store?”

“Fine cheeses, making them look elegant and gourmet but not overpriced ... easy to find what I want, attention-grabbing, and good selection ... good price and grabbed my attention for the quality.”

“The packaging stood out because of the bold simplicity. Large logo in black font with grey, red and pink packaging.”

Speaker Julie Witte Schlack, Communispace, USA
NewMR Ethnography, May 25, 2011
Ask a simple question, like “What captures your attention in the store?”

Unique product with video display, all items needed and in a prominent location of store … Not sure I've a need for the product but it sure caught my eye.

Speaker: Julie Wittes Schlack, Communispace, USA
NewMR Ethnography, May 25, 2011
Lesson 3

Create assignments that:

Help participants chronicle a process
A simple series of questions lets you see a process, identify personas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What section did you visit first?</th>
<th>What caught your attention?</th>
<th>What did you consider buying?</th>
<th>What did you actually buy?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stationary</td>
<td>Sale items</td>
<td>Hot Wheels Diecast cars</td>
<td>'97 Corvette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home/bedding</td>
<td>All of the Easter decor</td>
<td>Snacks</td>
<td>Chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery</td>
<td>Little kid having a fit</td>
<td>Candy, cookies</td>
<td>Licorice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes</td>
<td>Spring clothes</td>
<td>T-shirt</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polly Pocket</td>
<td>Vintage, ooooh</td>
<td>Vintage Polly Pocket house</td>
<td>Vintage house</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Speaker: Julie Wittes Schlack, Communispace, USA  
NewMR Ethnometry, May 25, 2011
Lesson 4

Create assignments that provide you with:

Participants’ reflection on their own routines and rituals.
HomeWork routines, rewards, and challenges

Description
Working at home
Themes: Reward, Challenge
Tags: "xx"

Text note.
I'm home working in bed when I should probably be getting ready to go to sleep.
This is a working from home challenge. Sometimes you don't stop working when you should be relaxing.

Speaker Julie Wittes Schlack, Communispace, USA
NewMR Ethnography, May 25, 2011
HomeWork routines, rewards, and challenges

“

I get to play with my dog when I’m at home.”

”
HomeWork routines, rewards, and challenges

“These are my receipts for home business. Challenge because sometimes I buy stuff for myself as well and have to separate what is for home and what is personal.”

Speaker Julie Wittes Schlack, Communispace, USA
NewMR Ethnography, May 25, 2011
And because members feel safe in this intimate, secured, password-protected environment, they’re willing to engage in virtual ethnography projects like this one, taking us inside their medicine cabinets and through their day as they manage their medications and cope with the challenges of compliance.
Reflection yields different, but equally actionable, insight
Thank you

Julie Wittes Schlack
Communispace Corporation
Q & A

Julie Wittes Schlack
Communispace

Ray Poynter
The Future Place
Julie Wittes Schlack

Read Julie's blog @ http://blog.communispace.com
Follow Julie’s tweets @ http://twitter.com/fJljschlack
Connect with Julie on LinkedIn @ http://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=169270377&trk=tab_pro
Find out about Julie and her team's research at http://www.communispace.com/research/featuredresearch.aspx
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