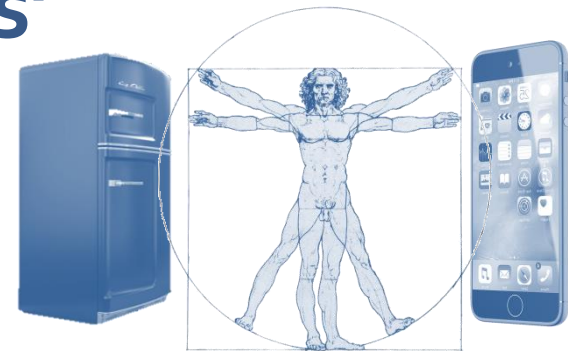# The mystery of consumers' nocturnal activities

Séissmograph report 2018

A self-financed qualitative study
conducted by Séissmo – Markt und Forschung

October 2018

One idea that left us sleepless…

▶ **The first idea for this Séissmograph** came while we were in **Shanghai.** We were carrying out research on skincare, listening to **Chinese women** talking about **their addiction to their smartphones** and describing **how they could spend hours on them at night in bed**, sometimes until 2 o'clock in the morning (and all the impacts that this habit could have on their skin)!

"I'm lying in bed and spending time on my mobile, playing and surfing on social media. Suddenly it's 2 am. The next morning I have circles under my eyes. The blue light – I heard – isn't good for us, it wakes up"

▶ We **wondered** if the **same phenomenon** observed in **hectic megalopolis also** exists to this extent in **smaller and quieter towns of Germany**.

Our way through the night

Research background and objectives

▶ We decided to **investigate the nocturnal moments of consumption**.
Indeed, **in 17 years at Séissmo** we have investigated **many moments**:
breakfast time, day time, late night moments, but **we have never had any requests**
for **night moments**!

▶ The Séissmograph has an **exploratory purpose**. As market researchers, we consider
it our job to **reveal these hidden night-time moments**:

   – **What makes people stay awake at night?**

   – **What are consumers doing when they should be asleep** or **when
   they wake up at night?**

   – What **keeps them going** and **busy?**

   – What are the **aspects of night-time consumption?**

   – On top of that, as researchers we wanted to know:
   What is the best methodology to get insights and valid results?

▶ *Disclaimer*: this research is not about insomnia problems and does not have a
medical dimension.
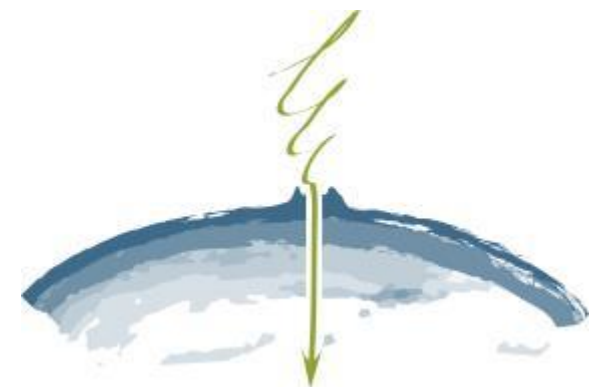
Methodology and sample

- Our challenge: find a way to make people reveal **intimate information**, but **without** using **invasive methods**.
- Cognitive interviews and online forums meet these requirements in a complementary way.
- More about the specific suitability can be found in the critical reflection of methodologies chapter on page 34

Cognitive Interviews	Online forum
- 17 interviews - 50 min each - In a facility	- 16 participants - Requirement: 50 min of participation per participant (during 1 week)

To recreate a **detailed picture** of the event by **improving access to memory** and **overcoming script confabulation**	To make participants **lose their inhibitions** by being **completely anonymous**

A large and diversified sample

- We recruited people on the basis of a **2-week time frame,** during which they experienced one of the following situations (at least once):
  - **Waking up in the middle of the night** and **carrying out some activities** because they can no longer sleep
  - **Falling asleep later than planned** (being **distracted by other activities**)

- **We recruited men** and **women** aged between **25** and **69 yrs**.
  - These people work in the following fields: sales, engineering, IT, education, insurance and finance. We paid attention to select a good range of job positions, from lower middle to higher management.
  - We also recruited a smaller number of retired people and students
  - They all have conventional work schedules and/ or life rhythms
    (no night shifts or atypical hours)

- We chose people from **3 different regions in Germany**:
  - 2 big cities: **Hamburg** and **Frankfurt**
  - 1 mid-size town: **Mannheim**.

- And they were easy to find! That's a first indication that **we had hit on a relevant social phenomenon** and one more reason to **investigate and dig deeper into what really happens during the night/ late evening.**

The sleepless society

A bad night starts with a bad day

◗ Surprisingly, when we asked participants to tell us about their evening/ night, most of them started telling us about their day (up to 12 hours before the "bad night")

◗ **A normal day makes people feel anxious:**
We are facing the social phenomenon of mental pressure caused by a normal life:

– A **nine-to-five job** – not necessarily involving a management position

– A life to afford, kids to raise and provide for, friends to keep, (girl-/boy-)friends to love…

◗ **Managing regular daily life becomes stressful and brings with it worries, influencing moods and habits in the evening.**

◗ Processing and digesting what happened during the day requires time and determines different paths and routines to go to sleep.

◗ **The night begins late and gets interrupted**

– People go to bed much later than desired and planned

– They wake up in the middle of the night and have difficulties falling back to sleep again

– They go to sleep too late & also wake up during the night

> "I have to start telling you about way earlier, my whole day plays out totally differently"

> "because I was stressed at work and then busy with the kids and cooking and I was annoyed… these were not good preconditions to fall asleep"

The "classic" sleepless situations

staying awake

- **They do not go to bed on time:**
  - Even though they are tired
  - Or because they don't feel tired nor relaxed enough
- They start doing other things which absorb their attention: foremost using electronic devices. **They forget and ignore to go to sleep and miss the right time.**
- They spend most of this time on the sofa, but also in bed.
- **They stay awake unintentionally until 1 or 2 am** even if they have to get up at 6 am in the morning.

Deriya, 35, watches a DVD on the sofa until 11pm, goes to bed but cannot get to sleep, gets up to watch DVDs again on the sofa and takes her mobile to play, to watch videos on YouTube and stays on Facebook until 1 am.

waking up at night

Christof, 62, wakes up at 3 am, feels angry at himself about waking up at night, goes to the fridge to drink, takes his laptop to check emails yet also starts watching movies in the ARD Mediathek until 4 am.

- They **go to bed on time and fall asleep**.
- But **in the middle of the night** after some time of sleep (3 to 4 hours) they **wake up and are unable to fall asleep again.**
- **Worries** keep their brains busy.
- They cannot stand staying in bed: they go to the toilet, then grab something to drink.
- Most of participants expect warm beverages to make them feel sleepy again.
- They use their **smartphones to play but also to overcome their loneliness via social networks.**

All complain about these sleepless nights

◗ All our participants **suffer** from their lack of sleep or at least feel **uncomfortable** with it.

◗ **Physical consequences:**

– They feel bad physically (tired, even sick of tiredness)

– Degraded intellectual (cognitive) capacities

– Consequences on their physical appearance (dark circles, on skin, etc.)

◗ **Guilty conscience:** they feel responsible and guilty for a lack of discipline that makes them suffer afterwards, and which is unhealthy

◗ **Strong feeling of being bored and angry at the same time** is a reason of hating these moments

◗ **Having a shifted lifestyle with their partner/ family** who are fast asleep while they are lying awake feeling lonely

"I know, I'll be tired tomorrow. That's the bad conscience. If you don't go to sleep right now, everything is postponed and the next day you pay the price!"

"I wanted to go to bed early and have a good night's rest, but when I was in bed, the tiredness had gone and then it took me 3 to 4 hours to fall asleep.. I wasted my time overthinking about how I was not able to sleep"

What I need vs. what I do

◗ People come up with strategies to compensate for these frustrating long nights:

What they claim to need	What they do	The self deceit
◗ **Stress relief** in general ◗ **Distraction** (change of scenery) ◗ Having **me-time** after a day full of communication and being amongst people (they need some time to rest and calm down before going to bed) ◗ They want to feel **sleepy**, to find **peace** after a hectic day	◗ They **push it**: **computer games**, **loud** music on **smartphones** but also a **constant stream**: music/ series (on Netflix) and TV programs, laptop or PC ◗ **Trying to calm down (in vain):** contemplative activities to find peace again: looking out of the window, snuggling with pets, meditation. Some try (unsuccessfully) to read to get tired also with the desire to escape ◗ **Finally, surrender:** an **unintended nap on the sofa** before going to sleep. When they wake up, they no longer feel like going to bed (feeling of being out of rhythm)	◗ A lot of the coping activities actually do require attention and eventually keep them from getting tired ◗ Paradoxically, despite those drawbacks consumers are often unable to significantly change their behaviour "I look for activities to relax and make me fall asleep: TV, reading, perhaps playing cards on PC. I do not spend time with activities, which require active attention"

The nocturnal customer journey
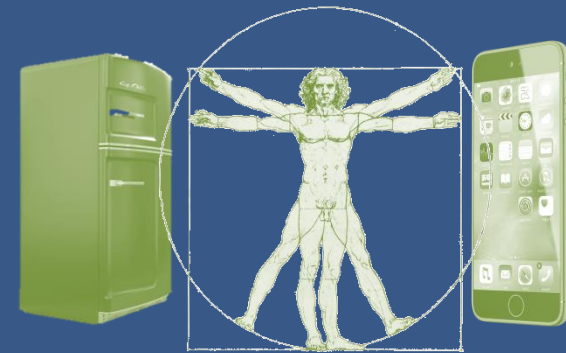
Situation 1: Going to bed (too) late
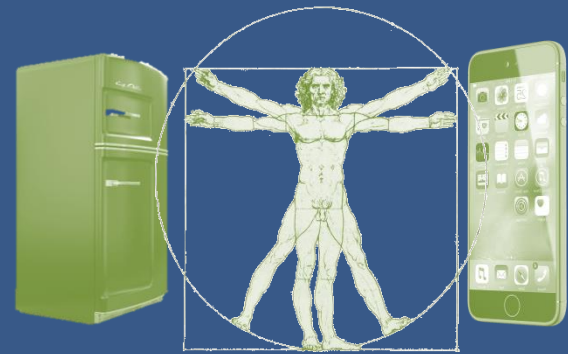
Many cannot resist eating late despite knowing better...

An appetite for savoury snacks grows:

- **Before going to sleep,** there is a **strong desire to nibble.** It is time for chips, nuts etc.
- At the same time, people tend to **watch TV** to **compensate for boredom** and as **reward for a stressful day.**
- Some are hungry, since they **did not find time so far to have dinner** (due to activities) – they go for savoury as well!

- **Although they know better** (a full stomach inhibits sleep) **they have difficulties resisting eating late or cannot resist:**

"actually I want to eat something- a biscuit or salt sticks and chips that we bought before, but my girlfriend reminds me that it's late and I shouldn't eat so much before going to sleep"

"I know, the stomach should not be full, but I ate something... and I regretted it ... also coffee was not so good at that time... I said to myself: I will never do it again"

"I thought I was hungry, since I was out to see friends.. I had some bread with cheese"

First stop on the journey: the couch

- For many of the participants before they move to the bedroom **the night begins on the couch.**

- The couch is the place where it is permitted to **eat in front of the TV, play on the smartphone (often in parallel)** - things you can only do with **a bad conscience** as soon as you have brushed teeth and got undressed.

- It is **something like a pre-stage and test stage before "finally going to bed".**

- You must not miss the right moment to go to sleep. Otherwise getting up makes you wide awake again. That is why so many participants prefer to stay lying there.

There is a risk to fall asleep right there – yet many (like to) take it

"many times I use the couch for a pre-sleep"

"I love my couch – it is a big one where you can make yourself comfortable and can also sleep quite well"

Sofas have become very comfortable and multifunctional in many senses

◗ **The couch** is the modern purgatory: it has **become an in-between stop on the way to heaven (or hell?)**

◗ The couch is also...

– the **meeting point** with your partner: from here you go to bed together

– **a point to rest to have me-time** where you can spend some time on your own (as you have not managed it so far during the day) – without your partner – without any duties

– a point **to return to** in the middle of the night **when you wake up**

◗ The cozy couch becomes a **multi-media-station**: goes with all technical equipment needed

"my husband was already sleeping on the couch and I didn't want to go to bed alone, so I lay down beside him and at some point during the night we got up and went to bed together"

"just want to sit there... no talking... just me and myself"

"she says: "it would be great if you come with me" but I still want to relax a little bit"

Most attractive activities: lullabies

Watching TV – a never ending story

▶ By watching TV people expect to become sedated and tired. They hope for lullabies, yet actually they often end up watching compelling movies or series

▶ **Only 50% really watch TV on a TV set.**
Half of the people have replaced it by convenient laptops, tablets und smartphones: smaller devices allow for more intimate viewing.

▶ But principally now they **do not depend on programs anymore. All is available and downloadable anytime**.

There is no breaking point

▶ De facto there is no close down. **We are aware of the consequences** on our condition the next day, yet in situations of tiredness we are also **too weak to resist the temptation of watching more than planned.**
One more episode of your favourite series…

We stick to it

"YouTube as a means to becoming tired but the videos do not really calm me down"

"for sure it's pestiferous that there is no off-switch in this sense, and all continues quite easily. So you have to say to yourself that it is enough right now"

"on YouTube I somehow got fixed and then I must have crossed the point of tiredness, which of course is not forbidden, but…"

"a Netflix series until 22:30… could not stop and was watching another episode subsequently on the laptop in bed"

# Most attractive activity: reading, because it is tiring

A nightly dose of "ideal world"

- In the online forum we observe an **over declaration of reading activities.**
  People report **the "script" of reading** a novel or a thriller to match **social desirability**.
- The cognitive interviews based on reports of concrete singular events reveal that **books (if and when they come up) serve as means to fall asleep because the act of reading physically makes you tired.**
- People hardly read more than a few pages for a few minutes - finishing the book this way often takes weeks, months or even years.
- It is rather about a **hypnagogic means** than a true interest in the content

"reading is the best pill to fall asleep"

"in the evening I do not look for something demanding – I just want to read to get tired"

- Reading happens more and more on devices like Kindles and less in a printed form.
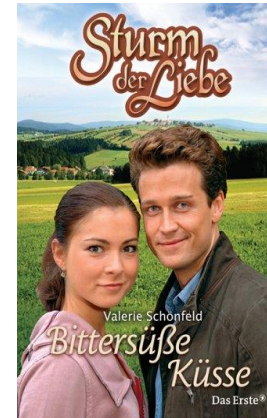
"these are fairy-tales for adults which make me fall asleep much better/ since there is no one who tells me a fairy-tale anymore/ yes, it is about love and war… Cinderella becoming a princess/ you dive into a fairy tale scenery"

- **Escapism**
  However it is also about **forgetting** and **leaving behind** the grief of the real world – **the longing for an ideal world**

Most important activity:
Closing the day on the smartphone

The journey is the destination

- The rather quiet and relaxed time before going to bed when most people consider it to be the **right time to make their journey across the world wide web.**

- **They go for whatever comes to their minds:** research on actors, movies, health, do-it-yourself...

- **They are browsing and shopping:** a good moment to check and compare offers (see more in a separate chapter later on)

- **They look for news:** the corresponding apps make it easy to stay updated.

> "I wanted to take my smartphone in my hand in any case, I did not have anything special to do, just entertainment"

> "if I decide to go to bed, usually later than intended, I always take my mobile with me... it tempts me to look at it even when I have already laid down and read news"

> "one thing leads to another"

It's late – but hard to find an end

- Latest news really means **latest news!** But what is the last one?

- **No one finds sleep and peace before having had a look at their smartphone**, laptop or making sure that all mails are read, answered and everything is fine.

> "I'm scrolling on Facebook or Reddit and cannot find an end/ then I think "ok just this post" and keep on scrolling nevertheless until I'm too tired"

> "to me it's kind of a routine to finish the day off/ if there is nothing popping up anymore, it is calming for me - now I can sleep, now I can retract from these social networks and find peace"

Situation 2:
Wake up in the middle of the night
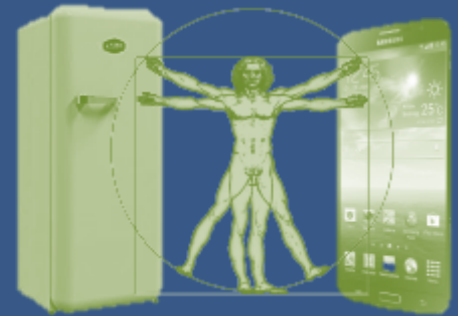
The dreaded interruption of sleep

- After 4 hours of sleep (or at approx. 3 o'clock) many participants **wake up and often feel depressed** (supposedly due to an increased melatonin release).

- **The atmosphere is dark and lonely**. Everyday worries take over, niggle and appear bigger than they actually are.

  - Private problems and griefs: bereavements, divorces

  - Built-up problems: livelihood, finance, debts, employment

  - What is the next day going to bring? Challenges and tasks of the working day

"at 3 o' clock I woke up/ it's always a pity – I get angry and am frustrated that I cannot sleep through the night"

"it is way too quiet, in my head it gets started… all the thoughts"

"the thoughts arrive at night more and more"

"my head is still working"

"thoughts which do not let go" (sketch by Nina, 40 yrs)

- **In the face-to-face setting of the cognitive interviews, we learn significantly more than in the online forum about the "real problems" which leave people sleepless.**
- When forced to tell a complete story (especially backwards) **people have more difficulties avoiding revealing specific information** (particularly dealing with the intimate sphere or their addictive habits)

Waking up creates frustration and pressure

Anger about waking up dominates | People try hard to fall asleep again

- The perspective of a short night and tiredness it brings the next day is **very unsettling.**

- But the harder they try the less successful they are.

- They get **restless and helpless**

- **A vicious circle:** the known phenomenon => "do not think of a pink elephant". The harder you try to avoid imagining something the more you will think of it.

> "I look at the clock and see something like 3 o'clock ... I think: 3 am - gosh, why are you awake again and cannot sleep through the night?"

> "very bugged because I start calculating the time I have left to sleep/ my night is getting shorter and shorter... a stressful time"

> "how many hours do I still have? I am a little concerned"

ernst ist das leben

> "then I closed my eyes and tried and tried again and again "

> "I was lying in bed and trying hard to think of nothing"

> "I tried not to think of the past day – or the next"

It increases the desire for positive distraction (as promised by the outer "sunny" world)

Inner unrest turns to outer unrest

Get up and do something

Driven by the unrest and nervousness, most of the people **cannot stand being doomed to lay static in bed any longer** – they have to get up.

A first reflex is **to go to the toilet.**
This is also the moment to **drink** (for thirst): tap water or a glass of water.

Another need is to **open the window** or (in summer) go out on the terrace or balcony to breathe in fresh air

The next step is to go into the kitchen
for drinks and food from the refrigerator (juices) -
or to prepare **warm drinks** (tea, milk, cocoa)-
and even a glass of wine!

And finally back to the couch – a kind of surrender

"and I realize that actually I am too awake and it makes no sense going back to my bedroom, otherwise I would just lay awake. So I go downstairs, lay on the sofa and take my mobile and start playing again…"

We also got to know people who started **DIY activities**
Combining distracting, monotone and thereby (hopefully) tiring activities with the usefulness of doing: Cleaning up, ironing

Calming strategies: having something warm & sweet

At night sweet is a must

Many feel the strong desire to eat or drink something **sweet and warm** which promises a **calming** effect.

- **Most popular are dairy products:**
  - **(Warm) milk** (the baby bottle substitute) or cocoa is a well known and proven (at least imagined) means to **sedate** (such as yoghurts, pudding, semolina)

"my body shouts: feed me!"

"warm cocoa... I know, this is not proven from a medical perspective... but it helps me to fall asleep"

Chocolate makes you happy even at night

- **Sweet is a must**
  They believe that sugar helps you to become tired again. They feel that **chocolate** in the dark hours is the **right counteragent to fight their negative mood.**

"always something sweet that hopefully makes me tired and full"

- **In the online forum people tended to forget and suppress their "weak moments" at night,** including the cigarette!
  In the **cognitive interviews** we **revealed more of this sweet consumption** - often first in the backwards or sequential telling.

Calming strategies:
escape into an ideal world

◗ When worries keep them awake
their brain has to get tired (again)

◗ In this situation people like to consume trivial frothy things which do not require cognitive constraints:

  ◗ **Watching pure landscapes,** undemanding documentary reports on TV with contemplative character are favoured

  ◗ Listening to **calming music** via platforms or channels like YouTube or Deezer

"something easy, a comedy but I cannot remember the title any more... something where you didn't have to think too much... to unwind"

"there are really beautiful pictures – of landscapes, beautiful pictures with fashion wind me down, or photos of animals. You may find it cheesy but this pictorial universe has a tendency of downplaying... pretty pictures"

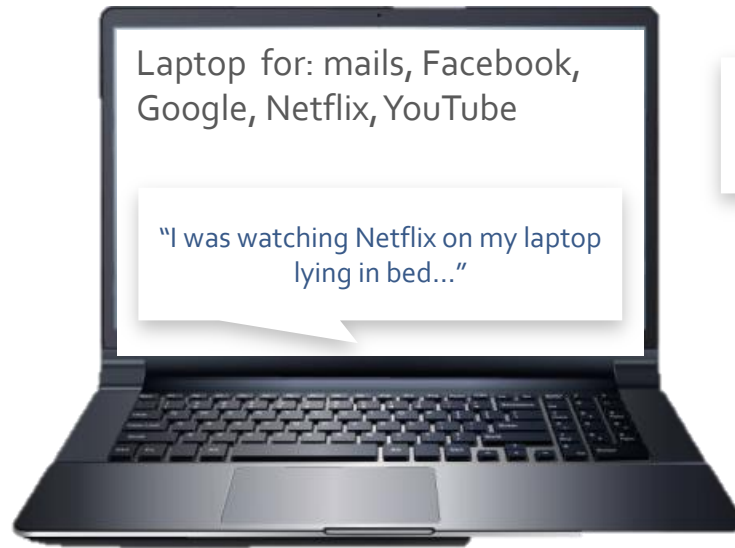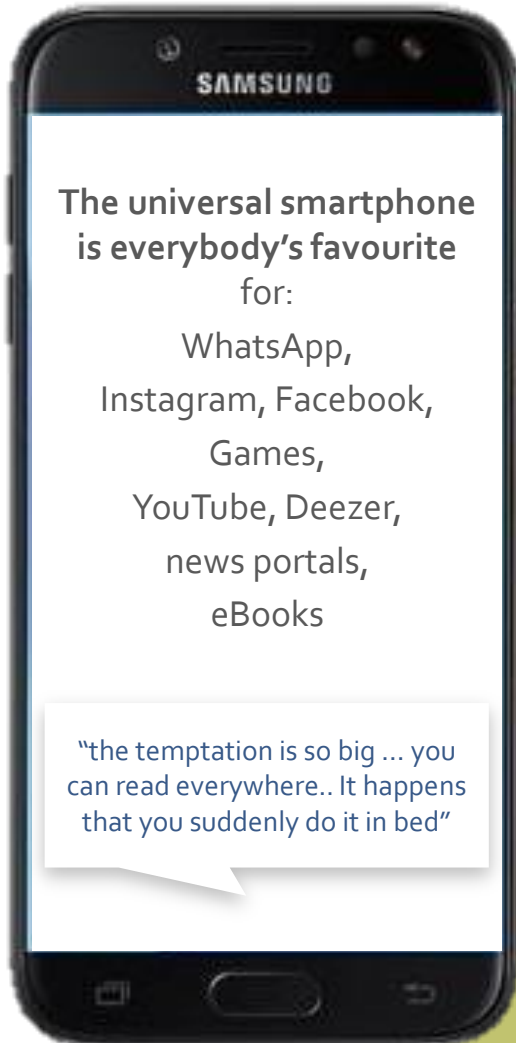## It's about contemplation

Darkness and quiet tend to make people feel alone. To forget and escape the daily worries they **long for a better world**

Reading literature is not top of mind: it is demanding and strenuous

"something I avoid is to switch on the light and grab a book. I notice that over the years we rather tend to depart from books. This is something you do during your holidays"

Longing for distraction:
the strategy turns into (digital) addiction

We observe a **massive addiction to the use of electronic devices** and the consumption of internet & social networks during the nighttime hours.

The universal smartphone is everybody's favourite for:
WhatsApp,
Instagram, Facebook,
Games,
YouTube, Deezer,
news portals,
eBooks

"the temptation is so big … you can read everywhere.. It happens that you suddenly do it in bed"

Laptop for: mails, Facebook, Google, Netflix, YouTube

"I was watching Netflix on my laptop lying in bed…"

"I rarely use the (desktop) PC – if at all to read mails and messages, rarely to play"

PC/ Computer

How we lie to ourselves:
Activities to bridge the awake phase
keep us from falling asleep

The tempting smartphone keeps us awake

◗ Although consumers know that the light will more likely wake them up than make them sleepy, **they cannot resist picking up their smartphone.**

◗ As soon as they are digitally active they cannot let go.

They get absorbed in playing games and scrolling on social networks

◗ They do **not realise how long** they have been playing and time flies

"I was playing Mahjong for 1,5 hours"

"when I play with my mobile, the artificial light makes me even wider awake…
by this light I am kept awake artificially, like I had a coffee before going to sleep.
I psych myself up by the light"
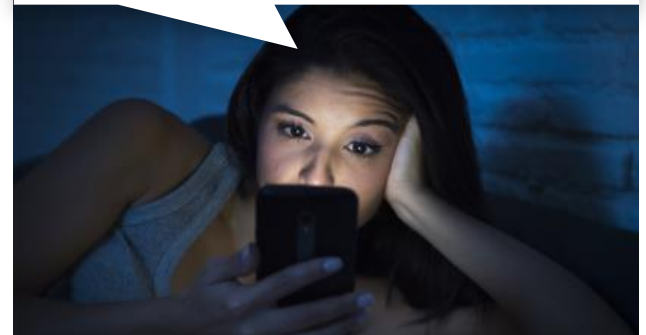
"and when I tried to force myself to sleep, things came to my mind I have to look so badly, and – hey presto – I'm on my mobile again"

◗ In the **online forum** we learned a lot about the **breadth** of portfolio of games people play.

◗ Via the technique of **cognitive interviews** we grasped how much time consumers **really spent** on them and how it **makes them feel.**

The smartphone connects the lonely sleepless ones with the never sleeping world outside

- **Curiosity kills the sleep**
  In the moment of perceived loneliness, there is big temptation "to have a quick look" at the smartphone in order to check if there is any news

- **Loneliness becomes obvious and haunting**
  Many are triggered by the fear of missing something and by the fear of not being missed or not being important

- They follow a **routine in canvassing all accounts** on all platforms and checking mails

It's a kind of digital snacking…

"it's rather an automatism"

- Social networks create considerable peer pressure to participate and prove your sociability

"…but then, as I couldn't sleep, I ran into the corridor towards the kitchen and saw my smartphone blinking. So I became curious and it finally caught me for an hour or 1 ½"

"was looking to see if I have or wanted to comment on anything"

"maybe I have to help one of my acquaintances"

"I look if there is any news, but not a single email for me"

"maybe my wife's sent me a message, I thought"

"I'm scrolling on Facebook or Reddit and I can't **find an end. Then I think to myself:** OK, this one last story and nevertheless I go on scrolling until I am too tired"

We do not sleep well – the smartphone does not sleep at all

- **The mobile is never really switched off**
  Most have their mobile at arm's reach – on the night stand (or even on the floor beside their bed) at least on standby.

- **The majority use it as an alarm clock**
  – a good reason not to "be allowed" to switch it off.

- A turned on smartphone is **a temptation and license to communicate 24/7** – rest periods do not exist.

- For some non-sleeping people, their smartphone is their **companion even on the toilet.**

"when I finally decide to go to bed, usually later than intended, I always have my mobile with me. My charger cable is directly beside my bed and the mobile always lies in bed with me. I use it as alarm clock, so I have to keep it in the room which also tempts me to have a look at it"

"in former times you didn't call anybody at 10 pm or 11 pm... but nowadays having WhatsApp makes it a little different"

"I went to the toilet and played games on the mobile"

- In the online **bulletin board** the participants pretend **to be much more "reasonable" and responsible in the usage of their devices**. More often, they report to having their smartphones really turned off at night or not having it in their bedroom (also due to electro smog).

Online shopping at night: Some recommendations

Browsing at night is fine…

- Actually the time before going to bed could be a good time for shopping: **people want to find peace after a stressful day,** (sometimes want to reward themselves) and take the time to go browsing online.

- However, we observe that even if they cannot find sleep **they are too tired to really concentrate.**

- Their tiredness often builds **a cognitive barrier to close purchasing acts – it is more a moment for extensive, but non-committal browsing.**

> "yes, there I find peace, I'm lying there – at work I cannot concentrate that way"

> "I am a kind of online-browser on the smartphone, the temptation to do it in bed is very big"

Favoured goals of browsing in our sample: house & garden, interior design, travel destinations, travel agencies, clothing, fashion, music, cars & biking….

amazon.de
ebay

- **Although consumers are not fully concentrated, spam emails succeed to leave an imprint in their memory**
Driven by the curiosity and the fear to miss something, consumers screen their inbox: Due to the high attention required in the screening process (delete or keep), they astonishingly remember the senders of newsletters well/ mass emailing/ spam emails.

> "it's bothersome to check mails… I just read the headlines… an email from TUI – don't know exactly – 'last chance to take advantage of our special winter price to fly to the Canaries' or so"

> "I didn't expect anything in my inbox. And indeed there was only spam…. Yes, I remember it was from Nivea but I deleted it"

Shopping at night is strenuous

- **Nevertheless people are not really in a shopping mood**

- They often are **overwhelmed by too big a choice**:
Too many things and options to choose from – too many criteria to apply – too "loud" web pages

- They **do not feel like making important decisions**
(spending bigger amounts money)

"yes – I also order sometimes at night, but in this case not a really expensive book, since in this moment I do not feel like giving it too much thought"

Derya,35
is stressed by a nocturnal online shopping procedure: making decisions is hard – there are still too many options offered, although she limited her criteria.

"there are just too many things – so I do not feel like browsing for a long time... it's getting too much. You can go by categories.. Okay: I directly go for ladies sale, then there are sub-categories... But then I notice that there are over 500-600 items of that kind of blouse, so I just browse a little and give up soon after because it was too much"
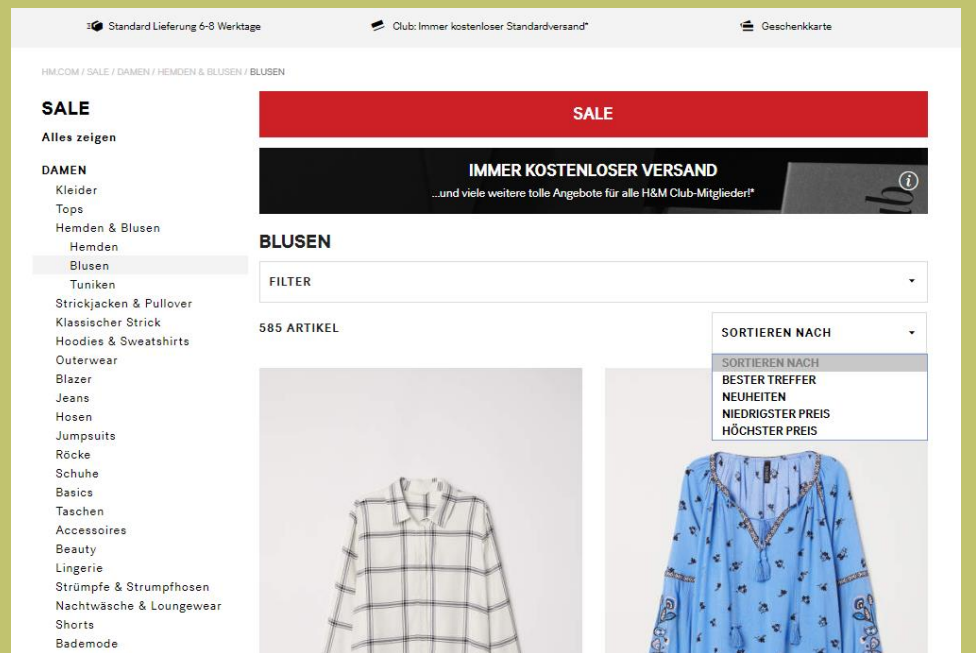
Ideas for **late light** Shopping

- At **night** the participants seem to be more **receptive** to **easily manageable, well structured and less complex offers.**
- Communication is less demanding when it requires less reading.
- The atmosphere is more in tune with the shoppers' nocturnal mood when the design is **calming** and corresponding to the **quiet and peace** they look for.
- **At night triviality is welcome.**

Example of good practice:
nice to look at,
non obtrusive

"the Chanel News page,
a bouquet of trivia"

**Responsive night design:
Less is more**

Some **ideas** which could make online shopping more adequate to the night time:

Offer to ease the choice
- A reduced (essential) offering to choose from

Design to reduce overstimulation and calm down
- Specific "night versions" of web pages (which make it worth visiting just then!)
- Focus on mobile/ smartphone layout…
- Less white/ blue light
- Emphasis on atmospheric design ("ideal world" instead of "consumption temple")

Features/ services for safety and health
- Special cancellation rights (Encouragement to shop by e.g. reminder the next day: do you really want to buy…?)
- Reminder: "You have been online for 30 mins – don't you think it's time to sleep?"

Critical reflection of the methodologies

One of the methods of choice:
Cognitive Interviews

We decided to conduct cognitive interviews because we expected to achieve the right granularity: to learn best and more about night time activities, when people are not very conscious about their behaviour and likely to follow routines they are not quite aware of.

◗ Cognitive interviews are **an implicit, non-directive method** (originally developed by forensic psychologists for eye witness interrogation to be used in Police Training Methods) to reconstruct events which occurred in the past with great detail and accuracy.

◗ It is a **narrative interview format, no question-answer routine.** The interviewee is encouraged to **mentally return to a specific experience and report all details.**

◗ By telling the same story – without being interrupted - forwards, backwards and then in sequences it is almost **excluded** that interviewees talk about **automated, generalized and learned patterns** (the so-called "script")

"All details matter, please tell me…"

◗ Our participants reported **one single evening in the near past**: **memorization of all activities, feelings and moods** comes by reporting: the triple reporting of the complete night makes it difficult to conceal anything.

◗ So **we uncovered unconscious behaviours and habits**

◗ People sometimes are surprised themselves about what they remember and reveal…

One of the methods of choice: Online Forum

We decided to conduct an online forum to explore content via the anonymity factor and to verify the often highlighted aspect of convenience in the implementation.

In terms of content

▶ We expected that people would **reveal** a lot of their *experiences* **without shyness** since they **remain anonymous**. This allows them to reveal details, peculiarities etc. you might not like to share with strange people in a group or with an interviewer face-to-face.

▶ By the exchange on a bulletin board, people are reminded of their own behaviour, activities they otherwise would have forgotten.
The **dynamic of a heterogeneous community should encourage the sharing of experiences** (and according moods, feelings and also advice) .

In terms of implementation: convenience

▶ **Comfortable "digital" online moderating** from the research facility without hiring a studio.

▶ **Members** of the community are **free to contribute whenever they want:** It is convenient to post several small contributions whenever you have some free time.

A huge disparity of results within the 2 methods

◗ Despite asking **the same questions** to participants from **both settings**, and **investing absolutely similar amounts of time for participants and moderators** during fieldwork, the results we obtained were very **disparate** and **heterogeneous** in terms of **details**, **richness**, and also **credibility** and **veracity**.

COGNITIVE INTERVIEWS

Granularity is worth it

◗ This method creates a lot of information – more than needed. For us to get to the "nuggets" – the relevant insights – requires investigation of the whole story.

◗ **Memorization comes from reporting** and in the flow of telling a true story, the interviewee reflects less on what is supposed to be important or "right".

◗ We obtained **details of high accuracy** that we did not get via the online community

◗ Some consumers **"confessed" intimate activities** in the end, or realised they were **exaggerating some activities.**

ONLINE-FORUM

Anonymity is not everything

◗ We were confronted with a lot of **self-censorship despite anonymity**: we were surprised to see that participants **suppressed a lot of information,** although we asked for details.

◗ We observed a **phenomenon of incomplete reporting on some topics**: alcohol, cigarettes, usage of mobile phone (information we got with the cognitive interviews).

◗ **The phenomenon of over-reporting is salient**: for example reading, socially desired (non) usage of smartphones

◗ **Laziness (and low ability!) to write** and to **answer in detail** (between 5 and 10 contributions/ posts per person)

Key learning and outlook

Key learning on late evening activities

This exploratory Séissmograph Research aimed to investigate the **activities that people carry out late at night** when **they should be sleeping**

- We observed **2 types of sleepless people**:
  - Those who stay awake longer than intended despite already being tired because they are absorbed in other activities (most of the time using electronic devices)
  - Those who wake up at night and are not able to fall asleep again (quickly)
- The **main activities** we observed in the late evening before going to bed included **screens**:
  - Watching movies, series or videos on TV, laptop, tablet or smartphone
  - **Browsing** the internet and social media (sometimes to fight a feeling of loneliness)

    People often go beyond the time they planned to spend on those activities, because they are too weak to resist the temptation of stopping entertainment, despite being aware of bad consequences of not getting enough hours of sleep, and negative impact of blue light on their quality of sleep.
- **Other activities**: Some **eat nibbles** as a treat (while believing a full stomach handicaps sleep); Some others try to read some **pages of a(n) (e)book**, but reading requires focus and they are often too tired to get very far.
- Many people do their evening activities on **their couch**: the couch is a pre-stage before going to sleep, if not the first stage of sleep when they fall asleep on it by accident.
- People are aware that they should sleep more and go to bed earlier. They feel **guilty** about their nocturnal distractions and wake up with **deficits in physical fitness and psychological state** the next day. Nevertheless, **they prefer to hide or bypass the problem** (eye cream for dark circles) rather than change their way of life (going to bed earlier, less exposure to screens).

Key learning on night sleep interruptions

◗ Some people **wake up during the night after some hours of sleep** and they are unable to fall back to sleep (quickly). They often feel **bored, depressed and lonely** in these moments.

◗ They try out **different calming strategies**:

– Warm drinks, quite often **dairy** products (unconscious reminiscence of the baby bottle)

– Get a treat: eat something **sweet** as **reassurance and comfort** (chocolate), or smoke a cigarette

– Listen to calm music

◗ We observe a **massive addiction to the use of electronic devices** and the **consumption of internet** & **social networks** in the nighttime hours. **Fighting boredom and the need to feel socially integrated (feeling connecting with the outside world)** are the 2 main motivations why they **cannot resist having a look at their phone**, even though they are aware that it might wake themselves up even more:

– WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, games, YouTube, Deezer, news portals, eBooks

◗ The smartphone is never really turned off and the majority have it at arm's reach during the night (with the excuse that it is used as an alarm clock)

COMPARISON OF THE 2 METHODOLOGIES: Cognitive interviews vs. online forum

◗ We had a huge disparity of results within the 2 methods.

– **With the cognitive interviews**: **details of high accuracy** that we did not get via the online community. Some consumers **"confessed" intimate activities** in the end, or realised they were **exaggerating some activities.**

– **Results of online forum**: self-censorship despite anonymity and incomplete reporting on some topics, socially desired answers as well as a laziness to write and answer in detail.

SÉISSMO

The different stages of an evening with the different needs of the consumers open up strategies on how to approach the consumers with certain products and services

In the evening after a full day at work, consumers want to **relax** and reach out for products/ services which promise **stress relief**. They also go for **escape and distraction** (a form of denial of reality).

Tips to offer products or services conceived as "evening and night-friendly":

▶ Products which put an **emphasis on the nocturnal setting** and **promise relaxation**

▶ **Dim the colors of webpages** and make them **easier to handle, reduce complexity and quantity,** give an **optimized overview**

▶ Special playlists for certain times of the day (calming playlist for a sleepless night); same for videos

Some **ideas** which could make **online shopping more adequate to the nighttime**:

▶ **Offer to ease the choice:** A reduced (essential) offering to choose from (for reduced cognitive capacities)

▶ **Design to reduce overstimulation and calm down:** Specific "night versions" of web pages (which make it worth visiting just then!)

▶ Focus on mobile/ smartphone layout: Less white/ blue light; emphasis on atmospheric design ("ideal world" instead of "consumption temple")

▶ **Features/ services for safety:** Special cancellation rights (encouragement to shop with possibility of retracting next morning)

▶ **Health reminder:** "You have been on online for 30 mins – would you fancy a bit of sleep?"