

### **Definition: Attention Economy**

“[...] theoretical physicist Micheal Goldhaber warned that the international economy is shifting from a material-based economy to an attention-based economy, pointing to the many services online offered for free. [...] Our attention has always been limited, valuable, and scarce. But what distinguishes the present day is that technological advances have made an overwhelming amount of information available, strategically aimed at capturing our attention. As for the general public, it has never been easier to garner such personal levels of attention though means like social media. When we go on the internet, we typically have a goal in mind, like finding an answer to a question or conducting research. Once we obtain what we want, we leave the site. However, social media keeps us on the platform longer and wanting more.“

(Berkeley Economic Review: “Paying Attention: The Attention Economy“. 2020. <https://econreview.berkeley.edu/paying-attention-the-attention-economy/>, 9-12-2021.)

**Focus: Personal Experience**

flipped classroom:

Watch: Ted. Harris, Tristan. “How a handful of tech companies control billions of minds every day“. 2017: <https://t1p.de/81ty2>.

introduction to lesson:

Switch on your notifications and sound.

1. Describe how the sound of ‘notifications‘ makes you feel.
2. Examine how much time you spend on your social media apps.
3. Tristan Harris of Time Well Spent says: “It [the app] is not designed to help us. It’s designed to keep us hooked“. Explain the following user interface designs of apps to keep users “hooked“. (Take this video as a starting point of your research: Vox. “It’s not you. Phones are designed to be addicting,“ <https://t1p.de/t4l9>.)

user interface design	explanation
push notifications	
unpredictability	
anticipation	
pull-to-refresh	
visual cues (reds)	
infinite scrolling	
autoplay	
freemium (free + premium)	
like-button	
Snapchat’s ‘streak‘	
rewards	

3. a. Examine how your frequently used apps are designed to keep you hooked.
4. Assess which apps are truly worth your attention on an interruptive basis.
4. a. Concerning the apps, unworthy of your attention, try to use them productively by ( + add to the list below):

	deactivating notifications
	grayscale
	restricting home screen everyday tools
YouTube	deactivate autoplay
WhatsApp	deactivate the read receipt option
TikTok	manage screen time
...	...
Detox Challenge	Get together with your Feedback Buddy and try to use apps productively, reducing your screen time. Re-channel your attention, in order to engage more meaningfully (cf. Jenny Odell. <i>How to do nothing</i> . 2019.).

- OR -

4. b. Media theorist Douglas Rushkoff says: "On Facebook [social media apps], we're not the customers. We are the product." Discuss.

**Focus on: Creativity**

**Tasks**

1. Describe Eric Pickergill's photographs in his project "Removed": <https://www.removed.social/series>.
2. Analyze Prince Ea's spoken word poetry "Can We Auto-Correct Humanity?", <https://t1p.de/4eaqt>.
3. Write, perform and record a spoken word poem in response to Prince Ea's "Can We Auto-Correct Humanity?" (Publish it.)
  3. a. Take photographs of scenes of an appropriate use of digital devices. (Publish them.)

## further information:

contents	title	website
Video: TikToks algorithms	WSJ. Inside TikTok's Highly Secretive Algorithm. 2021	<a href="https://www.wsj.com/video/series/inside-tiktoks-highly-secretive-algorithm/investigation-how-tiktok-algorithm-figures-out-your-deepest-desires/6C0C2040-FF25-4827-8528-2BD6612E3796?mod=hp_lead_pos5">https://www.wsj.com/video/series/inside-tiktoks-highly-secretive-algorithm/investigation-how-tiktok-algorithm-figures-out-your-deepest-desires/6C0C2040-FF25-4827-8528-2BD6612E3796?mod=hp_lead_pos5</a> ( <a href="https://t1p.de/1la9">https://t1p.de/1la9</a> )
	WHO: Helping Adolescents Thrive Toolkit. Strategies to promote and protect adolescent mental health and reduce self-harm and other risk behaviours	
additive methods	Busby, Mattha. "Social media copies gambling methods 'to create psychological cravings'". 2018.	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/may/08/social-media-copies-gambling-methods-to-create-psychological-cravings">https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/may/08/social-media-copies-gambling-methods-to-create-psychological-cravings</a> ( <a href="https://t1p.de/wfha">https://t1p.de/wfha</a> )
vs. attention economy	Ashley Michael. "Sick Of The Attention Economy? It's Time To Rebel". 2019.	<a href="https://www.forbes.com/sites/cognitiveworld/2019/11/24/sick-of-the-attention-economy-its-time-to-rebel/">https://www.forbes.com/sites/cognitiveworld/2019/11/24/sick-of-the-attention-economy-its-time-to-rebel/</a> ( <a href="https://t1p.de/sspp">https://t1p.de/sspp</a> )
participate in vs. attention economy	PersonalData.IO, the integrative toolbox addressing surveillance capitalism	<a href="https://wiki.personaldata.io/wiki/Main_Page">https://wiki.personaldata.io/wiki/Main_Page</a>