

PLATFORM REACTANCY

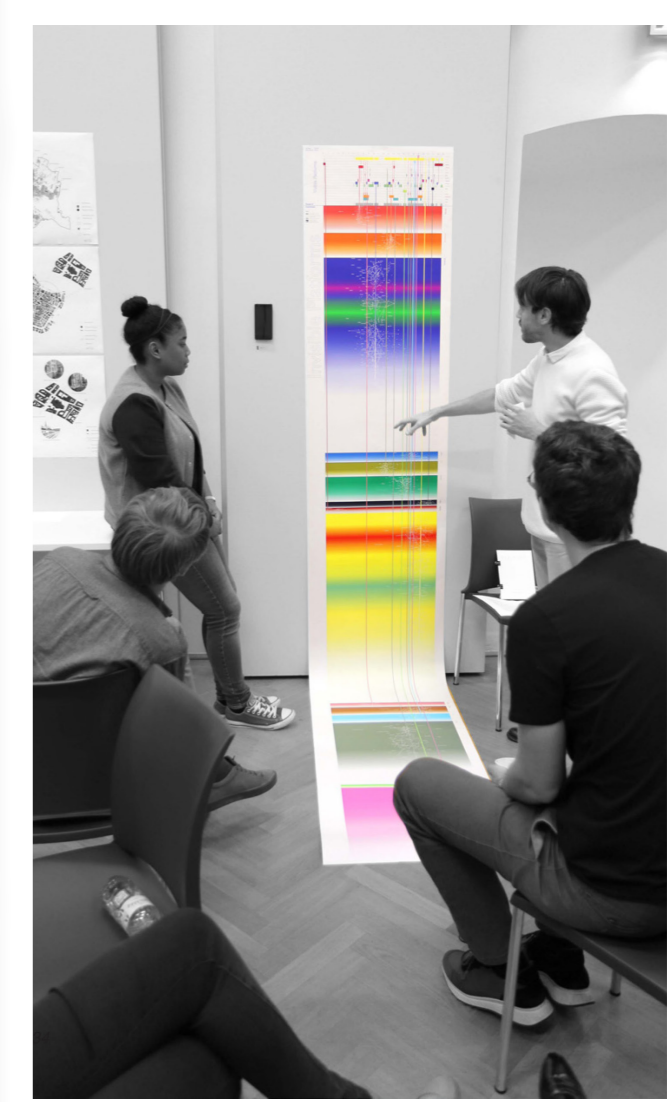
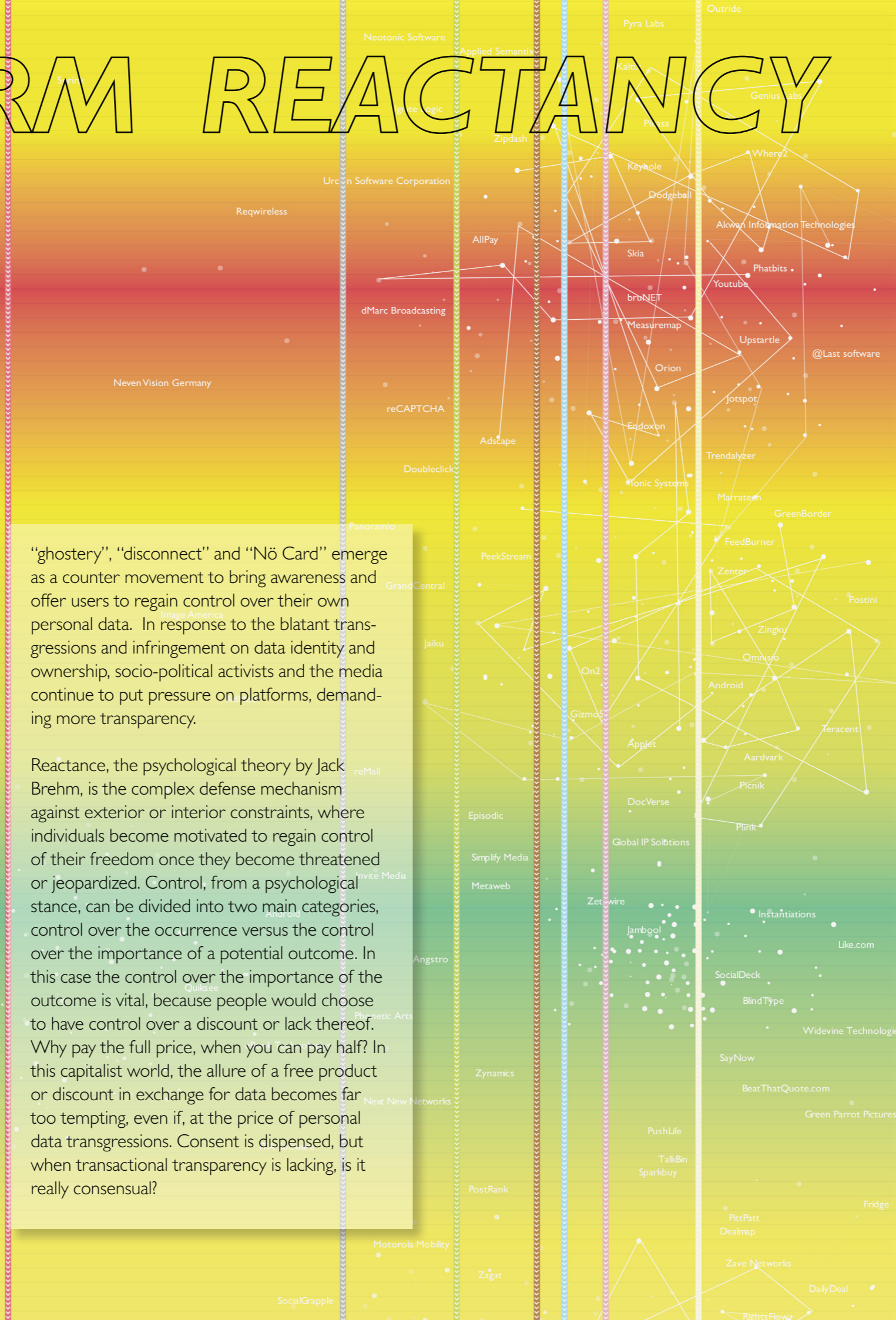
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The term reactancy finds its roots in the cultural, historical, and emotional behavior of mankind. It is the motivational arousal and emotional reaction that comes with daily consent transgressions, subjugated on us by the very platforms that have come to shape our world today. These Platforms have shaped our modern world since they were first introduced on the market in the mid 2000s. The exponential transition led to the rise of many questions and created a wide range of new terms that were left undefined; for example Digital identity, data and consent. A key understanding of data and its value exchange rate and accessibility are concerns that have recently become topics of interest. Understanding the value and worth of data, as a form of digital currency is at the core of platform reactancy.

Humans are by nature self-serving and seek instant gratification, and these platforms utilize this to gain access to information. Data becomes a key currency in this exchange. Customer club cards operate by mapping out spending patterns coupled with geographical locations to create customer profiling to generate more profit, while platform-users are left with little transparency as to which third-parties gain access to their information. Platforms such as “Do not Track me”,

“ghostery”, “disconnect” and “Nö Card” emerge as a counter movement to bring awareness and offer users to regain control over their own personal data. In response to the blatant transgressions and infringement on data identity and ownership, socio-political activists and the media continue to put pressure on platforms, demanding more transparency.

Reactance, the psychological theory by Jack Brehm, is the complex defense mechanism against exterior or interior constraints, where individuals become motivated to regain control of their freedom once they become threatened or jeopardized. Control, from a psychological stance, can be divided into two main categories, control over the occurrence versus the control over the importance of a potential outcome. In this case the control over the importance of the outcome is vital, because people would choose to have control over a discount or lack thereof. Why pay the full price, when you can pay half? In this capitalist world, the allure of a free product or discount in exchange for data becomes far too tempting, even if, at the price of personal data transgressions. Consent is dispensed, but when transactional transparency is lacking, is it really consensual?



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