MOBILE PHONE USE AND THE MANAGEMENT OF INDIVIDUAL REACHABILITY

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Abstract

This research seeks to explore if and how individuals manage the great spatial and temporal reachability provided by mobile phone use. Our assumption is that there is no trend towards "generalized" and instantaneous reachability (*i.e.* reachability every time and everywhere), but that there is a great diversity of practices which reveal the capability of the individual to control for its availability in space and in time. Using both quantitative and qualitative data, our aim is to evaluate the influence of parameters like occupational status, gender, household makeup (especially the presence of young children), age and familiarity with mobile phone use.

Keywords

Mobile phone, reachability

1 INTRODUCTION

The widespread use of mobile technologies and especially mobile phones holds the potential to transform family, social and working life in many complex dimensions. Researchers are only beginning to explore theoretically and empirically these transformations, which have to be questioned recently through different prisms. One concerns the spatial and temporal construction and coordination of everyday activities [6, 14, 16]: mobile technologies hold the potential to increase the spatial and temporal flexibility and the fragmentation of everyday activities [12], make time use more efficient, especially when on the move [19], and also blur the boundaries between family life and working life [3]. Another aspect is the construction and maintenance of social and professional networks, and in particular the process of socialisation and the empowerment of adolescents [9].

One central element is that mobile phone offers the possibility to be reachable almost every time and everywhere [13] and especially during travel or more generally when the individual is outside homeplace and (usual) workplace. It is expected to lead to the adoption of new modes of family, social and professional practices, and especially real-time or more efficient practices [10, 14]. Mobile phone use is even sometimes supposed to favor the emergence of an improvisation culture [8]. By giving the possibility to be informed and to inform others in real time, mobile phones would allow individuals to reorganize their schedules at the last minute, and thus influence many aspects of everyday life, and especially travel behaviour [12]. It could also lead to more mobility for both private and professional purposes insofar as people may be less fixed to locations [20].

However some authors have qualified these assumptions: indeed, the construction of everyday life seems to remain firmly related to well-established time and space-based social constraints [6, 16]. In addition, people may not be affected to the same extent because they do not have the same space-time constraints [16]. Finally, unwanted or unexpected phone calls that demand attention may represent undesirable disruptions and people could react by developing strategies in order to limit their effective reachability [2].

This paper seeks to explore if, how and why individuals manage the huge reachability offered by mobile phone use. The first part discusses recent literature in order to characterise the reachability offered by mobile phone use and to identify the determinants for the attitude towards reachability. The second and third parts compare some of the theories proposed in the first part with the results of two surveys. The first is a survey conducted in the spring 2008 by a group of researchers (to which we belong) for the MOBITIC project which aims to analyze the relationships between mobile phone use and mobility (in a broad sense). 2,040 French people (aged 18 and over) were questioned by telephone about mobile phone use. This survey is used to test the effect some parameters on the level of reachability during travel. The second survey is composed of interviews of 20 French workers (and mobile phone users) aged 20 to 50. They were questioned about the management of their individual reachability during working days. The mix of a quantitative and a qualitative approach helps us to give some elements about

the way people manage their reachability. The conclusion reviews the main lessons from this work and suggests several avenues for future research.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Mobile phone usage allows us to be more reachable, particularly when we are travelling or on the move (not at our usual "fixed" locations). However, the literature shows that reachability has its own limits, formed by social norms, on the one hand, and by individual practice that aims to better manage the constraints of that reachability being potentially permanent. We are still unaware of the diversity of attitudes towards mobile phone-enabled reachability; however, if we consider the literature on mobile phone usage, a certain number of variables can be advanced, some of which are tested in an empirical fashion using the results of a telephone questionnaire and a series of interviews.

2.1 The Mobile Phone and new forms of reachability

According to M. Sheller and J. Urry [18], "the 21st century will be organised around new 'machines' enabling 'people' to be more individually mobile through space, forming small world connections 'on the go'."

Actually, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in general, and the mobile phone in particular, offer new potential in terms of reachability, which is here understood as the possibility of being contacted but also of contacting someone else. The main characteristics of this "increased" reachability are as follows:

- Individuality. The mobile phone is primarily a personal communications tool. When we use one, we can expect to contact a particular person or to be contacted in a personal way. But more importantly, what makes this tool personal is that it allows us to instantly and easily contact a small group of people who are important to us [19]. In other words, when we use a mobile phone, we're contacting a particular person. Which is not the case with a landline, particularly with a home line, which is usually the only one of its kind and is therefore shared by all members of the household.
- Reachability Extended through Space and Time. While the office or home phone is explicitly connected to the person's geographic location and either professional or private life, the mobile phone is primarily a personal communications tool that connects to a person in different locations as well as between these locations. By permanently having a mobile phone on our person, we cancel out spatiotemporal barriers in a way. In theory, a person can contact and be contacted at any time and in any place as long as that person has their mobile phone on their person. The main point is that periods of reachability extend to periods of mobility and travel, in other words to all places that are not traditionally "fixed" (home, office) where the presence of a landline (whether it be personal or not) allows us to expect to contact someone or to be contacted. But the mobile phone also expands reachability to include these "fixed" locations, at times when previously one would have been hard to reach: during a meeting, at lunch break, etc. In the home, which is a place from which a large number of calls are made and received via mobile phone, the mobile phone can change the rules of the game, particularly for adolescents who can avoid the filter of the landline and communicate with more privacy from their bedrooms.
- A Lesser Division between Personal and Professional Reachability. For all the reasons mentioned above, reachability via mobile phone indisputably blurs the borders (which were not impenetrable anyway) between reachability for private reasons and reachability for personal reasons. This is due, in part, to the fact that most people have one mobile phone that serves both purposes at the same time. It is also because a telephone number is no longer a synonym for a particular location and therefore a particular activity, since the mobile phone moves with the person.

However, the theoretical limits, both spatial and temporal, of unlimited reachability presented by the mobile phone are of two different orders.

The first kind of limits is related to the social norms that regulate the use of the mobile: answering or ignoring a call, turning one's mobile off or leaving it permanently on. Jauréguiberry [8], amongst others, suggests that hierarchical rules can regulate usage. Collective rules also exist in certain places, like the cinema or the train, for the sake of the tranquillity of others present. Indeed, the results of the 2006 "Mobile Life" project prove that the majority of the British people interviewed avoid using their mobile phones in certain places. Yet norms are evolving with mobile usage: while ten years ago it could have been seen as impolite to make a call in the street or aboard public transportation, such situations are not remotely shocking now, as long as the person involved respects certain rules of discretion. To this first limit category, we could add regulatory norms, which, for safety

reasons, prohibit the use of mobile phones while driving or in a hospital. Finally, technical limitations (i.e. network coverage areas) can also limit reachability, even though they are becoming less of an issue.

The second category of limits, and the one which most interests us in this essay, is related to the fact that individuals may implement a certain number of strategies to limit their reachability of their own accord [1, 3]. At least two strategic forms can be distinguished: on the one hand, "organizational"-type strategies stemming from more or less clearly defined rules that ensure that (at least certain) potential callers – be they family, friends or clients – know not to call at certain times (for example during work hours) or *a contrario*, that it would be best to call at a certain time (for example during lunch break). More prosaically, in order to limit professional life leaking into personal life, some people make their annoyance at being "bothered" very clear (by giving the person on the other end of the line a piece of their mind, for example); others construct more technical borders that do not directly engage them (such as filtering calls by making their children answer). [3].

There is also, on the other hand, another kind of limit that resists availability anytime, anyplace, one based more on the material object itself. It consists in the person called or at risk of being called organizing his or her non-reachability, either ex-ante (by turning the phone off or putting it on vibrate) or on the spot (by filtering or not answering calls).

2.2 Are Different Groups Differently Reachable?

Several studies on the actual use of mobile phones indicate major divisions according to age, gender, profession and even household size (presence of children). [15] However, we would argue that the issue of reachability has been under studied in terms of a possible diversity of practices and of the criteria upon which such diversity is based. Bauwens and Modica [1] prove that reachability depends on the relations individuals have with other people. The authors stress professional relationships amongst others: when a person has a solid working relationship (with a client), they feel "authorized" to not answer without risking offending the other person. Such an action does not automatically give an impression of an unprofessional / unserious person.

For our part, we are not interested in the influence of social norms, but rather in the strategies individuals employ to make themselves (more or less) reachable or not on a day-to-day level. We feel there are various hypotheses that can be tested in an attempt to understand what makes an individual unreachable in any location or way.

The first hypothesis would be that of age. It is to be expected that young people be the most reachable, everywhere and at anytime. More specifically, it is also these young people that are the heaviest mobile phone users [4], those for whom calling or being called is highly valued (as it proves that one has friends), who are the most in demand for peer activities, and who have the least semblance of a private life. They generally walk or take public transportation: there are, therefore, fewer constraints to their reachability while on the move.

Family structure is another variable to be considered. It is likely that couples with children – particularly mothers – make themselves more reachable, for reasons of micro-coordination and parental control (teenagers). [17].

The kind of profession a person has can be a discriminating factor. It's not the socio-economic category that's important, but the conditions under which professional activity is carried out: the kind of activity, identity at work, and degree of autonomy. Le Douarin [12], for example, draws a line between "supervising businessmen" and "non-supervising businessmen". The former are primarily managers who have responsibility for and supervise a team: these are the businessmen that "during their day-to-day work impose discipline, limits to be adhered to and legitimate terrain to respect upon a team." They are both concerned with providing a good example and making the most efficient use of work time, and so separate private and professional life and limit personal incursions at the office. The kind of profession a person has is probably a good entry point to analyse reachability strategies.

Familiarity with the tools at hand is part of the progressive mobile learning hypothesis. A priori, this could occur in both directions: we can imagine people becoming more reachable as they integrate the mobile phone into their everyday lives; on the other hand, we can imagine those people being more controlling of the negative effects.

Mobility and travel can also serve as essential parameters to understand mobile phone usage and reachability. Are those who travel a lot, particularly for professional reasons, more reachable (because they know they're harder to reach at a fixed address, or do they employ strategies of control? Dhaleine, Boboc and Mallard [6], amongst others, are interested in work-specific relationships with mobility. They show that the people who say they divide their work time between travelling and being in an establishment also say they use their mobile phones for both personal and professional reasons, and leave their devices switched on more than others.

Network size and geography are also potentially discriminatory variables: a study shows that the more reachable we make ourselves, the more our network grows [14]. It is easy to imagine that the larger and more geographically close the network, the more people are connected to it (whatever the tools used, tool complementarity hypothesis) and the more they will attempt to make themselves reachable.

The kind and cost of contract can also explain practices: *a priori*, if a person does not want to use the mobile phone often, they will be more likely to control their reachability. It could be suggested that the more one uses a mobile phone, the more reachable one makes oneself. Bauwens and Modica [1] add to these variables, proving that it's the cost of the communication – and its transparency – that is the determining factor. An overseas traveller will limit his or her reachability to avoid the risk of excessive costs (for those whose bill is not paid by the company).

Attitudes towards the mobile phone are another parameter to take into account: a person will have a different attitude depending on whether they see the device in a positive or negative fashion, and that person will attempt to control their reachability to a greater or lesser degree accordingly.

3 REACHABILITY AND MOBILITY

In the spring of 2008, we carried out a survey as part of the MOBITIC project, the objective of which was to analyse the link between mobile phone use and personal mobility. 2040 residents of France were surveyed by telephone using a survey we created. One of the questions concerned attitudes to reachability while travelling. After presenting the study, we cited the variables that most discriminated between the attitudes of the people questioned and related them to the hypotheses suggested at the end of the literature review.

3.1 Presentation of data from the MOBITIC survey

The MOBITIC project involved fifteen French researchers from various organizations and disciplines over a three-year period. The group's objective was to shed light on the relationship between the usage of mobile communications devices, particularly the mobile phone, and individual physical mobility. While the question of the links between the development of personal communications devices and individual physical mobility is not a new one [16], the dramatic spread of personal communications devices in general – and mobile ones such as the mobile phone in particular – has brought new attention to this issue in fields such as the economics of transportation, geography and sociology.

One of the most important facets of the MOBITIC project was the telephone survey, which aimed to gather information on:

- Mobile phone use
- Practices of everyday mobility (including mobile phone usage while moving)
- The organization of everyday life
- Social and family networks
- Individuals' socio-economic situation and their household

This survey was carried out in the spring of 2008. It involved 2040 respondents living in France and over the age of fifteen. Of these 2040 people, almost 71% (1626) had a mobile phone.

One of the questions asked to the people who had a mobile phone regarded how they felt when they got a call while they were on the move. The exact formulation of the question, and the suggested responses, were as follows:

"When you are on the move do you answer calls?"

Answer 1: Almost always, unless something crops up.

Answer 2: Only important ones.

Answer 3: No – I listen to my messages and read my text messages.

Answer 4: No, never.

Analysing the responses to this question – particularly the variables within the responses – constitutes the beginnings of an approach to the issue of reachability. The variables between the individuals, in particular, prohibit us from evaluating the influence of social norms on their attitudes.

Nonetheless, we were able to test the influence of some of the hypotheses suggested in the first part of this paper. We conducted a series of cross tabulations in order to determine truly discriminating variables and thereby suggest an econometric model that aimed to explain mobile reachability levels.

3.2 The Discriminating Variables of Mobile Reachability: An Econometric Analysis

The first lesson learned was that very few people are completely unavailable while they are on the move: only 4% of the respondents said they never answer calls received while they are on the move. A large majority (62%) systematically answer calls, while 23% only answer important ones. In other words, over 80% of those surveyed are relatively reachable when on the move. By contrast, a sharp difference was marked between this result and another question regarding reachability for personal reasons at a place of work or study, to which 39% of those surveyed said that they answer all the time: there are more obvious constraints and norms at the workplace to dissuade people from being reachable, or at least to modify their reachability, than exist when they are on the move.

In order to measure the actual influence of a certain number of variables identified in the literature review, we built an econometric model (GLM – General Linear Model – Procedure in R freeware).

The objective was to explain attitudes towards reachability, grouped into two different modalities:

Modality 1: Good reachability (answers 1 & 2)

Modality 2: Poor reachability (answers 3 & 4)

The variables taken into consideration are presented in Table 1 and the results in Table 2. Several different models were tested; we used the most significant.

Variable	Presentation
Age	Age1: 15 to 17 Age2: 18 to 24 Age3: 25 to 39 Age4: 40 to 59 Age5: 60 and +
Length of time have owned mobile phone	Own1: less than 2 years Own2: between 2 and 5 years Own3: over 5 years
"Addiction" to mobile phone(1)	YesAddict: returns home to pick up phone if forgotten NoAddict: does not return home to pick up phone if forgotten
"Addiction" to mobile phone(2)	YesNeed: carries mobile if absent all day NoNeed: does not carry mobile if absent all day
Perception of being inconvenienced by new technologies	YesDisturb: has the impression of often being in demand / inconvenienced / interrupted because of new technologies NoDisturb: does not have the impression of often being in demand / inconvenienced / interrupted because of new technologies
Use of mobile phone away from home and office	User: uses mobile to communicate away from home and office NoUser: does not use mobile to communicate away from home and office
Reachability in the workplace (attitude when receiving a personal call at work)	HighReachWork: answers unless something crops up MediumReachWork: only answers important calls LowReachWork: listens to messages NoReachWork: does not answer

Table 1: The Explicative Variables Retained in the Model

The variables relative to family structure were found to be insignificant. One possible explanation is that our survey included too few people with children. As expected, socio-professional categories and employment or lack thereof were not significant either. On the other hand, contrary to expectations, neither the location of family and friends (whether they lived close by or far from the person surveyed) nor variables related to mobility (time and mode of travel) were found to be significant.

Table 2 presents the results of the econometric model, taking the variables explained in Table 1 into account.

	Estimate std	Error z	Value	Pr(>z)
Intercept	1.6085	0.5973	-2.693	0.007085 **
Age2	0.8962	0.5387	1.664	0.096148
Age3	1.6813	0.5142	3.270	0.001077 **
Age4	1.8522	0.5147	3.598	0.000320 ***
Age5	2.1011	0.5536	3.796	0.000147 ***
Own2	-0.4663	0.2425	-1.923	0.054536
Own3	-0.5001	0.2229	2.244	-0.024851 *
YesUser	-1.0972	0.2606	-4.210	2.55e-05 ***
NoAddict	0.5603	0.1695	3.307	0.000944 ***
YesNeed	-0.8198	0.1876	-4.370	1.24e-05 ***
HighReachWork	-0.8582	0.2694	-3.186	0.001444 **
MediumReachWork	0.3537	0.3000	-1.179	0.238470
LowReachWork	0.9679	0.2311	4.188	2.82e-05 ***
NoReachWork	0.7633	0.3004	2.541	0.011066 *
NoDisturb	0.2340	0.1529	-1.531	0.125787

*Significance codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*'*

Table 2: The Econometric Model

As expected, age is a significant variable: the older the person surveyed was, the less he or she tended to be reachable while on the move. This can probably put down to a generation effect (young people have (almost) always had mobile phones in their lives, unlike older people, for whom the mobile phone has, on average, greatly affected everyday life) and could also be linked to lesser availability with age (because of work, etc.)

The length of time the person has owned a mobile phone also played a role: the longer people had owned their mobile phone, the more reachable they were on the move. This is probably the expression of a learning effect, or more precisely the penetration of the mobile phone into the organization of everyday life over time. Furthermore, mobile reachability goes hand in hand with the habit of using the mobile phone to communicate when outside the home or workplace: *a contrario*, those who did not make many calls outside of the usual "fixed" locations (home and workplace) were also those who were unreachable or not very reachable when they were outside these places.

In more general terms, those for whom the mobile phone was an almost indispensable tool (those who, in our survey, said they would return home to get their phone if they had forgotten it and who put it on the list of things to bring when they are going to be absent all day) were also those who are the most reachable while on the move. Similarly, reachability while on the move also goes hand-in-hand with reachability at the workplace, even if there are still differences due to various norms and constraints. Whatever the reasons may be, the fact is that making oneself reachable (for personal reasons) at the workplace and being very reachable while on the move are connected. This probably indicates that people either make themselves reachable "all the time" or never, with a visibly growing lack of differentiation between times of day and locations; we can validate this hypothesis with the results of the interviews.

The other side of high degree of reachability is the impression that with new technologies (the mobile phone, but also the Internet) we are "in demand / inconvenienced / interrupted" more often.

4 THE REACHABILITY OF WORKING PARENTS

We wanted to look at things in another, complementary way to the results of the MOBITIC data analysis, because of the major limitations that such a quantitative approach entails: on the one hand, MOBITIC was only concerned with mobile reachability; on the other hand, the sample of people surveyed contained very few households with children, while one of our hypotheses is that the presence of (particularly young) children encourages people to make themselves more reachable. Furthermore, the explanatory variables are very limited with this kind of survey (we have already indicated the lack of information provided by a person's socio-professional category when compared with their actual work).

We conducted interviews of around two hours each with twenty working couples with young children under the age of twelve, in the interests of better understanding their attitudes to reachability via mobile phone. These couples fit diverse professional, age and location profiles. We asked them if they used a mobile phone and especially how they used it at different moments and in different situations during the day, particularly when they were at work and when they were not. The interview's general aim was to determine how they managed their daily activity programme between work and private, particularly family, activities.

This series of interviews confirmed the very high levels of reachability of these people. A vast majority of those interviews told us that they barely ever turn off their mobile, no matter where they are (including their place of work). This result confirmed that of MOBITIC, which showed quite clearly that people under 60 are very reachable while on the move.

> "If I want to be available, I need my telephone. I'm reachable anywhere and at any time. When I go on holidays it comes with me. I have an international phone. When we went to Egypt, we used it to tell someone to come pick us up in advance." (Gérard, 37, heavy goods vehicle driver, lives with his wife and his three-year old son in southwest France).

It appears that today, once a person has started using a mobile phone, they consider it an indispensable tool that is left on all the time, even at night (younger people use it as an alarm) and that they bring everywhere (on holidays, to work, etc.) with them (in their pocket, their bag, their coat, etc.)

If the mobile phone provides us with the potential to be "permanently" reachable, it still remains true that people don't all do it for the same reasons, but also – most importantly – that attitudes towards reachability vary greatly. While some people try to make themselves reachable for primarily professional reasons – as is the case with businessmen on tight schedules, independent workers (artisans, employees of small businesses, liberal professions) – others do so for reasons of safety [15]. Furthermore, for the latter, it's not so much the ability to be able to make a call that count, but the ability to be contacted, to keep up to date with possible hazards and to prepare for the unexpected.

> "My phone is always switched on but it never rings. It's a tool for me. My mobile is not a means of communication, like it is for so many young people today. For me, it's a safety measure. I know that I can contact somebody if I have a problem and more importantly, that I can be reached in an emergency. It's for this purpose and only for this purpose. But if I turn it off, I forget to turn it on again the next day, because it doesn't ring! It rings very, very, very rarely." (Sylviane, 47, sales assistant, lives with her partner in the Paris area).

The interviews also bring out the close synergy between fixed and mobile communications devices in the management of everyday activities. It seems particularly apparent that landlines are used much more in fixed locations (home and workplace). This is particularly true for the generation of people that started using the mobile phone fairly recently. This synergy between landlines and mobile phones is partly a question of cost. On the other hand, once outside these fixed locations, the mobile phone is used systematically.

All those interviewed try to control their reachability (contacting or being contacted) according to their location (at work or home) and the reasons behind their phone calls (personal or professional). With regard to reachability for personal reasons at work, while some people leave their phones on, other use the "vibrate" or "silent" function, particularly during meetings. When the mobile phone is used for personal calls at work, it maintains a certain intimacy without bothering co-workers.

> "Sometimes we have to coordinate with regards to our daughter, so that I know if he can go pick her up if I can't. Hervé [her husband] usually calls me on my mobile, but I sometimes call from the landline if I need to. (…) And then, it's more private when I go into the corridor to talk to him with my own mobile. If I'm calling the bank, for example, I do that, I go into the corridor (…) I put my phone on

vibrate during meetings; it's turned on at all other times, even at work." (Olivia, 31, telephone hotline worker, lives with her husband and their three-year old child in central France).

We would state therefore that a third reason for reachability is directly linked to family responsibilities [15]: people coordinate in real time and often several times a day by mobile phone in order to confirm who is looking after children and make changes to plans. Mobile calls allow them to manage the whole family's agendas all at once. People coordinate their respective professional calendars and decide who has to go pick up a child after school, for example. Women, on whom most of the responsibility for the daily syncing and management of the timetables of all family members lies, use this kind of reachability the most. Like L. Bardin [2], we observed certain preferred times for making private calls, such as the morning call to the babysitter before the first morning break, which recurred in several interviews. Such rituals exist for several couples with young children who are trying to coordinate the household logistics.

It can be stated, then, that individuals make themselves available for private reasons at work, but that the inverse is much less true. Whether they are businessmen (with a lot of responsibility) or independent contractors, people try to implement elaborate strategies to avoid being too reachable for professional reasons at home (for example, co-workers often call each other to try and find a replacement). People only give out their personal mobile phone number to a small circle of people (co-workers and clients with whom they have good, trusting relationships) and ask that they only be called in an emergency: *"there aren't many people who have my mobile phone number, so I'm less bothered… being bothered at home for nothing… that's just what I need!"*

5 CONCLUSION

The mobile phone allows us to be both here and elsewhere at the same time; we can contact and be contacted anywhere and at any time. The issue of "permanent" reachability has surfaced now, in the time and space opened up by the mobile phone: is this permanent reachability pushed to its limits in a society where the majority of the population have a mobile phone, or on the contrary, does it meet with resistance?

Thanks to the data analysis of the information gathered during the MOBITIC survey and the "semidirective interviews," we can posit that people are by and large very reachable, particularly while they are on the move. It emerges that certain socio-demographic variables determine an individual's choice to be reachable or not. Amongst others, we can state that the people are, the less reachable they are when on the go. The qualitative survey was particularly strong at highlighting the effects of gender and professional activity on mobile phone usage and reachability. Reachability is increased, in part, by family responsibilities for women who assume the management of the household from the office, and also by the professional responsibilities of workers, particularly businessmen and independent contractors who "have to" remain in as much contact as possible with their clients or their team members at work. However, people come up with strategies to control this reachability.

Building on the work of other sociological studies, our survey confirms that individuals are not reachable anywhere, at any time, and in any way. More specifically, they are resisting the overlapping of different spheres of daily life that has become a growing phenomenon with the mobile phone. The methods used to achieve this are either technical – they use their phone's vibrate function, for example – or ritual – there are moments when they can make and receive calls at work – or tactical – such as when individuals only give out their mobile phone number to a small number of people.

We can confirm in conclusion that the mobile phone has not produced new behaviours but that each user has adapted it to his or her needs. The present example of reachability is a case in point: couples with children, particularly mothers, use their mobile phones to have greater parental control, couples to plan their daily activities, etc.

The reachability question obviously merits greater investigation. Our feeling – based on the results of our survey – is that reachability for personal reasons will become increasingly apparent in the years to come. Not because social norms are becoming less strict, but rather because as society becomes increasingly out of synch, men and women will need to coordinate between themselves. Individuals will make themselves available so that they can contact their partner in real time, in order to negotiate the division of daily tasks, for example. This evolution obviously poses several questions, particularly with regards to the individualization of calendars and behaviours while on the move.

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