

CFP: Mobility and Mobile Media in Latin America, Special Issue

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Convergence: The international journal of research into new media technologies
SPECIAL ISSUE CALL FOR PAPERS

Mobility and mobile media in Latin America

Edited by:

Adriana de Souza e Silva (North Carolina State University)

Isabel Froes (IT University of Copenhagen)

Important dates:

Papers must be sent in English by September 10th, 2012. We strongly encourage prospective authors to send papers as soon as possible.

- All papers (7000/11000 words) will undergo a double blind-review process;
- Submissions may be in the form of empirical research studies or theory-building papers;
- For formatting guidelines, please see:

<http://www.uk.sagepub.com/msg/conv.htm#HOWTOSUBMITYOURMANUSCRIPT>

· Papers must also include:

- o Name and a brief biography of the author(s) (50 word) in a separate sheet,
- o 150-word abstract, and
- o Up to 10 keywords.

Proposals and inquiries should be sent electronically to Isabel Froes (icgf@itu.dk).

Early submissions are greatly appreciated!

By the second decade of the 21st century, mobile phones have reached saturation levels in many countries in the world, surpassing the number of landlines and personal computers. Although initial scholarly interest on the social use of mobile phones focused on Europe, Asia, and the United States, the impact of mobile phone on the developing world (or Global South) is increasingly evident and perhaps much more profound. For many, the mobile device is the first phone, the first internet connection, the first TV set, and the first global positioning system.

Among developing nations, Latin America is a key area for studying the social dimension of mobile technologies. According to ITU statistics, the Americas had a total of 989 million mobile subscriptions as per 2011. However, numbers alone reveal little if not analyzed within a broader social, cultural, and economic framework. The focus on a homogeneous large-scale market leads to overly sanguine perspectives that often obscure how socioeconomic diversity causes and

reflects mobile phone use. Latin American countries have astounding income gaps among different sectors of the population, which influence and are influenced by technology development and use. For example, the use of high-end services such as mobile banking, and location-based services like Foursquare and Yelp is an intrinsic part of the daily mobile practices of the high-income population in Brazil. Conversely, the lower-income population in the country is familiar with the *diretão*—a mobile phone that allows users to make clandestine calls to anywhere in the world with the use of an illegal sim card. Brazil has also been at the forefront of an experimental and innovative approach towards new technologies, forecasted in cultural events that focus on art, music and film festivals dedicated to new and creative uses of mobile technologies, such as the Mobilefest and Arte.mov. This socio-economic and cultural diversity is also characteristic of other Latin American countries.

Despite this cultural and socio-economic diversity, and the relevance of its marketing, the social use and development of mobile phones in Latin America is largely under theorized and poorly studied. With the goal of contributing to bridge this gap, this special edition invites essays that critically investigate the inter-relations among mobile technologies, culture, and social development in Latin American countries.

Submitted manuscripts are encouraged (but not limited) to focus on:

(1) History of mobile phones in Latin America. Essays are encouraged to explore the development of mobile phones in Latin American countries, comparing them to the landline infrastructure and internet growth within the socio-economic and political framework. Authors may explore the development and use of new mobile services, such as the mobile internet, text messaging, mobile apps, etc.

(2) Social uses and appropriation of mobile phones. We welcome essays as empirical or theoretical studies dealing with the use and appropriation of technology by low-income communities. Of special interest are essays that explore how mobile and wireless technologies reconfigure the life of community dwellers and how people find new and unexpected uses for existing technologies.

(3) Mobile art and games. We invite essays that investigate mobile phones as artistic and gaming interfaces, including essays that explore uses of hybrid reality, location-aware and pervasive activities in educational contexts, media arts, and gaming.

(4) Location-based services. Submitted essays should investigate the uses and development of location-based services in Latin America, such as mobile annotation, location-based social networks, and mobile mapping.

About the editors:

Adriana de Souza e Silva is Associate Professor at the Department of Communication at North Carolina State University (NCSU), affiliated faculty at the Digital Games Research Center, and Interim Associate Director of the Communication, Rhetoric and Digital Media (CRDM) program at

NCSU.Dr. de Souza e Silva's research focuses on how mobile and locative interfaces shape people's interactions with public spaces and create new forms of sociability. She teaches classes on mobile technologies, location-based games and internet studies. Dr. de Souza e Silva is the co-editor (with Daniel M. Sutko) of *Digital Cityscapes—Merging digital and urban playspaces* (Peter Lang, 2009), the co-author (with Eric Gordon) of the book *Net-Locality: Why location matters in a networked world* (Blackwell, 2011), and the co-author (with Jordan Frith) of *Mobile interfaces in public spaces: Control, privacy, and urban sociability* (Routledge, 2012).

Isabel Fróes has received her Masters degree from the Interactive Telecommunications Programme at New York University (NYU) and a Bachelor's degree in psychology from Pontifícia Universidade Católica, Rio de Janeiro, PUC-RJ in Brazil. She is a lecturer and assistant researcher at the IT University of Copenhagen (Denmark), where she works both as a practitioner and scholar in the fields of communication, mobility, art and design. With a focus towards valuable interactions between people and technology, her research analyzes the future implications and current uses of digital media. In her courses she taps into the value of interactive elements in every arena and explores how they could affect the ways new concepts and activities are developed in distinct fields. She has presented some of these thoughts at various events such as the AAM conference (2009), and the IXDA South America (2010). She has taught various courses at Danish institutions such as IT University of Copenhagen, University of Copenhagen and Kolding School of Design as well as Tecnológico de Monterrey, Campus Querétaro in Mexico.

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