



1. Sue, Hannah, Janet, and Sandy became firm friends when they met at their children's toddler group some years ago. Now they're back at work, the kids are growing up and there never seems to be time for the chat with and about one another they once enjoyed.



2. But then they subscribe to a "ChatPix" group. Whenever they take pictures they have the option of sending them to the group and they've found this is just the thing to keep up-to-date with one another's lives. Sometimes they use "ChatPix" to send something about a special event (Sandy's 29th birthday party—yet again).

Small Talk, Big Deal



3. At other times it's just a reminder that they're still there and keeping in touch. They like the option for adding 5 seconds of recorded sound—just enough to say how they're feeling.



4. The pictures turn up on their WebTV at home or on the computers at work. Last week Hannah sent a family photo from the Caribbean. Janet and Sue were on the phone to one another immediately to discuss how she looked in her swimsuit and speculate how they'd ever managed to afford the trip. The message said "Let's meet up when I'm back, I'll show you *all* my pictures." Sue and Janet weren't quite sure they felt up to that.

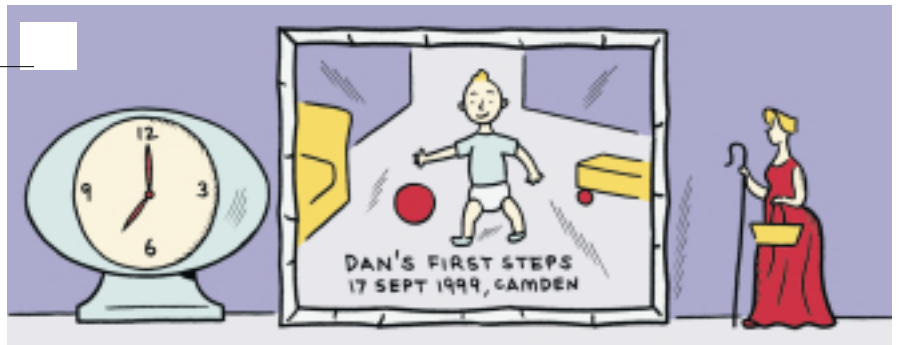
Hi! Tech

User scenarios developed
by IDEO Europe
Illustrations: Chris Long

If we can exchange snapshots at the push of a button, what photos will teenagers send each other? What pictures will families save, and how? Will visual messaging mean the end of small talk? It's all very well theorizing about how technology affects social relationships, but what will it mean in our daily lives? IDEO Europe turns the social insights of the previous pages into six everyday user scenarios.

Playing Happy Families

1. The Browns use "Pix" to keep Grandma in touch with baby Dan's development. They take pictures and add notes: "Dan's first steps," "Dan's first day in day care." Each picture is automatically date stamped and given a GPS (Global Positioning Satellite) reference so Grandma knows exactly when and where it was taken.



2. The pictures arrive at the "Pix" frames on Grandma's mantelpiece (she has a different frame for each of her grandchildren). After 4 weeks the frames warn her that the pictures are near the end of their life. She can store them in her "Pix" archive. But at the same time it gives her an excuse to contact her family and say she wants replacements before the present ones decay.



3. Dad carries a "Pix" card in his wallet. It's linked to his archive at home, where he can choose any five to be transferred to the card. It's a vast improvement over the old photos he used to take on business trips—they always seemed to be out of date. Now he can cycle through a recent selection if anyone asks to see pictures of his family. And if he's going far away he can take pictures showing his home, his office and his car, just the sort of thing to interest business contacts.

In Touch with the Family



1. The Thompsons are a busy family. During the week Mom and Dad both leave the house early for work and often one of them is away on a business trip. Weekends are times for the family to be together, although even then sports practice and drama classes take up some of the kids' time, the shopping has to be done, and there is usually a stream of friends in and out of the house. When life is busy they use "Pix" to stay in touch. Joe sends his Mom pictures from his sports club—often with a voice note: "Back at 8:30."



2. Frequently the messages are simply images that family members have seen and want to share. Joe used to send Molly pictures of spiders, but he's grown out of that now. Last week Mom sent Molly a picture of a very cute children's doctors kit she had seen in a shop window. Molly got it just as she was boarding the train for her interview for medical school.



3. Mom prints out all the little jokes she gets from the family and pins them on the board above her computer at work. Every time she looks up she's reminded of them and their growing and changing senses of humor.

Building the Teenage Image



1. At 12 years old Harry wants to be many different things to different people. He wants to reassure his Mom that he's still the conscientious schoolboy she thinks he is. So whenever he messages her he always adds in a picture of him playing in the orchestra or receiving his last year's music prize.



2. For his friends these images would never do. A picture of Pamela Anderson or him doing a spectacular skate-board jump is best.



3. Harry has a decision to make now. Last week he got a message from one of the girls in the orchestra. He wants to reply but is trying to find the right image to add. Hers had a heart on it, but he'd like to send back something more neutral (you can never tell how these images might be shown around). Perhaps one of him out running with his dog would be the most appropriate.



Just for Fun

1. Jamie has convinced his Mom that he met Geri Halliwell when he went to London last week. He found a picture of Geri shopping on a fanzine Web site. He sent it to his "Pix." Then using a white towel to block out his hand he took a picture of himself and blended the two. They really do seem to be shaking hands. Mom's convinced (or at least she says she is).



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2. Jamie's friend Elliot has constructed a whole sequence of himself in exotic places—at the Pyramids, in the NASA control-room, flying the Concorde. You'd be convinced if you didn't know he'd never been farther afield than Disney World. He's said he'll send the images to Jamie so he can add himself in; and one by one with all their friends they'll create a sequence of improbable group shots.

Hidden Agendas



1. Zoe's having a party. Actually it's in two stages. Everyone's invited to the party, then just a few of her closest friends are sleeping over and staying for brunch the next day. She's made an invitation using her "Pix," showing a picture of her house and giving her address and phone number. It says "Be there at 8 on December 26."

2. But for her closest friends (Emma, Rose and Beth) she's added an extra message. It shows her room and says "Sleep over until the 27th."

When she sends the invitations out she selects the friends who'll get to see the hidden message. They only have to shake their "Pix" once they have seen the party invitation and it will dissolve away to show there's a sleepover too.

3. She's had such fun using this trick. Last week she sent her older sister a whole series of family photos. She showed them to her Mom and Dad. They didn't know that underneath each image of them were other images that she had taken without their knowing—of them looking mad, just coming out of the shower, trying to catch the gerbil when it escaped. Her sister thought they were just great. She said they really made her miss home. ☺