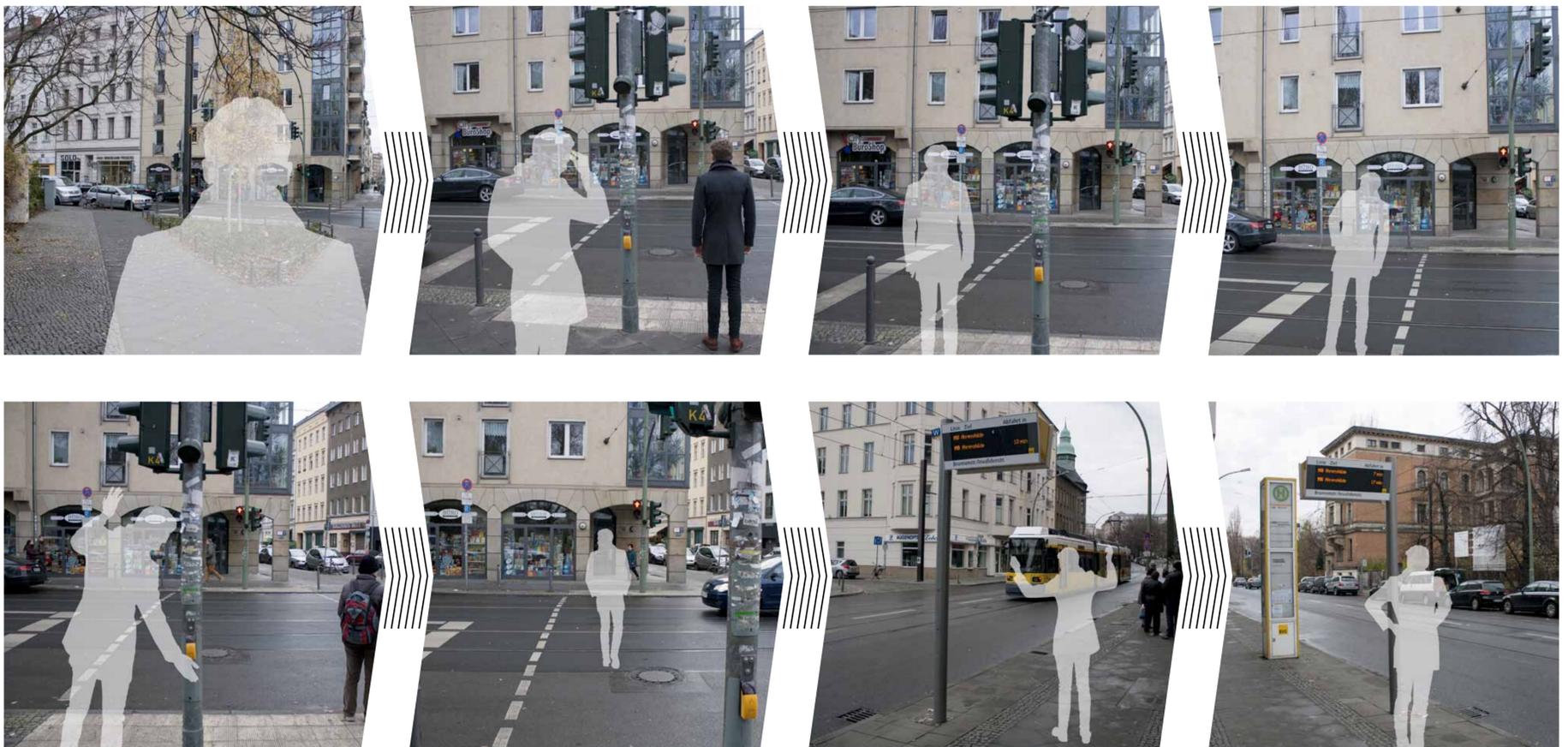


Die neue Berliner Ampel

Coerte Voorhees

Do we feel forgotten when waiting at traffic intersections? Is the existing crosswalk solution clear and efficient?

A typical daily crosswalk experience involves circumnavigating a dysfunctional system.



What if this information was available from the start?
Would we be impatient or feel the need to make unsafe decisions?

A problem that we've come to accept

Displayed below are three common problems with the crosswalk experience. Most critically, it does not have a visually clear function, so it is disregarded by a majority of pedestrians. The signal also does not give live feedback or information, consequently pedestrians are tempted to decide when to cross for themselves. Lastly, the current products are separately designed and implemented on the pole, resulting in a bulky, disorderly pole, which is difficult to install and maintain.

We interact with the crosswalk signal and button everyday, so we understand the basic interaction. With such a simple and universally understood function, why should the products be bulky, uninformative and a high aesthetical contrast to their surroundings? The solution should be clear, compact, and provide the user with the appropriate amount of information necessary to make their wait comfortable, safe, and efficient.





A solution to our problem

When we accept that the current system is not working, we allow ourselves to search for new opportunities to enhance our lives.

My solution is a total redesign of the crosswalk experience. The pole remains the same, but the hardware has been simplified, made more functional, and is visually more approachable. It begins with simple installation. The two flexible casted Polyurethane forms are fit around the pole- the undulating side detail allows the product to stretch and fit

comfortably around variable pole sizes and tapers. Internal metal wires are connected and twisted, bringing the split front opening together and fixed in place. Lastly, the hardware-- screen or button-- is press-fit into the front, concealing and water-proofing the electronics.

The signal displays live waiting and walking times both with a colored animation and in seconds. The centrally located button, on the bottom product, communicates a clear and simple function. A plastic ring around the button becomes illuminated after the button is pressed, to give visual feedback informing the user that his/her request to cross has been heard. The cylindrical cut running vertically through the button aids visually impaired users in locating the button. Speakers are built into both products, and face in opposite directions to audibly inform all users when waiting and crossing. Both products are strategically colored to blend with the environment. Color contrast is used on elements that require attention or interaction. The last feature is a laser printed QR code on the front surface, next to the button. This code is unique to each location and allows mobile smartphone users to quickly acquire local information about live public transit times, city maps and nearby stores and restaurants.

