InfoCanvas: Information Conveyance through Personalized, Expressive Art

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Peripheral Awareness
Information

- Peripheral to a person’s main job
- Desirable to maintain some awareness
- Large amounts now easily accessible
Problem

- Display overload
- Checking information distracts people from their work
- Requires a cognitive context switch
Possible Solution

- Ambient displays
  - Off the computing desktop
  - Physically based (e.g., Moving lights, water lamp, bubble chambers)

- Characteristics
  - Low bandwidth
  - Predetermined source of information
  - Non-distracting?
Information Art

- Hybrid ambient display
- User designed visual representation
  - Flat panel display
  - Mimics a painting hung on a wall
  - Personally relevant peripheral awareness information

Ambient Displays  Our focus  Information Visualization
Current Status

- Early system prototype
- Initial focus on email and web pages
- Simple information representations
  - Basic drawing tools
  - Imported icons and images
Short Example

1. User finds information
2. Defines it for the InfoCanvas
3. Paints a representation
4. InfoCanvas monitors and updates
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Related Work

- Play Institute - InformativeArt
  - Modifies existing abstract art
  - Minimal end-user customization
  - Particular sources of information
    - Email server flow, web site traffic

Redstrom, Skog, and Hallnas, DARE 2000
Future Work

- More sources of information
  - Sensors, PDA, ...
- More representations
  - Enable talented artists
- Robust implementation
- Evaluation
For more information

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