Inspiring Curiosity

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GFRY Studio, White Paper Outline

Summary

According to Moore's Law, The number of transistors on integrated circuits doubles about every two years. The advancement of technology allows us to do amazing things but it can also enable alienation among people, thus contributing to the mundaneness of life. By incorporating the concept of "Easter eggs" into the physical environment of 10 E. Lake via hidden messages, imagery, and user-activated experiences, we can use modern technology to inspire curiosity and encourage group interaction, ultimately rewarding the user with a unique and memorable experience.

Problem

Technology can be alienating. Things like social media websites, cellphone apps and texting prevent actual face-to-face human interactions, contributing to the dehumanization of communication and ultimately loneliness. People become use to this phenomenon and generally accept it, causing a large disconnection among modern society.

Easter Egg History

The term Easter egg originally derives from the Easter egg hunt, a Western holiday tradition, typically associated with Christianity. During an Easter egg hunt, children search for brightly colored Easter eggs that have been hidden throughout a specified location. Generally, the colorful eggs are hollow and made of plastic. This allows them to be filled with candy, toys or other goodies, thus giving the children incentive to find them. This system rewards the person(s) willing to search for the prize, making the search fun. As you may assume, finding an egg filled with goodies is enticing to most children and many adults as well.

In the modern era, the term Easter egg can also be applied to media like videogames, software and movies. In the figurative sense, an Easter egg is hidden content that creators of said media, have decided to place within their creations for reasons that may be personal, novel, or for marketing. According to game designer Warren Robinett, the term Easter egg was coined at Atari by personnel who were alerted to the presence of a secret message which had been hidden by Robinett in his already widely distributed game, *Adventure*. Another example of modern Easter eggs is Disney's hidden Mickeys.

First discovered in 1989, hidden Mickeys are a representation of Mickey Mouse that have been inserted subtly into the design of a ride, Disney properties, movie or other Disney products.

Solution

I propose that by incorporating the concept of "Easter eggs" via hidden messages, imagery and user activated experiences into the physical design of the 10 E. Lake site, we will disrupt the social expectation of what a public space is and how it functions. By using technology to encourage group interaction and play, we can create meaningful encounters amongst people in the community.

Execution

The 10 E. Lake site will Incorporate user-activated furniture and environments, which can be activated based upon human interaction. This could include but is not limited to different types of seating arrangements, high foot traffic walking/standing areas, and designated activity spaces that can sense different human interactions between the space and its occupants. For example, If two people are sensed sitting down facing each other the space in between them could be activated to become a random game of pong, or checkers. Larger groups of people could activate more complex games such as Tetris, or Foursquare. These larger groups of people could also allow for the activation of puzzles

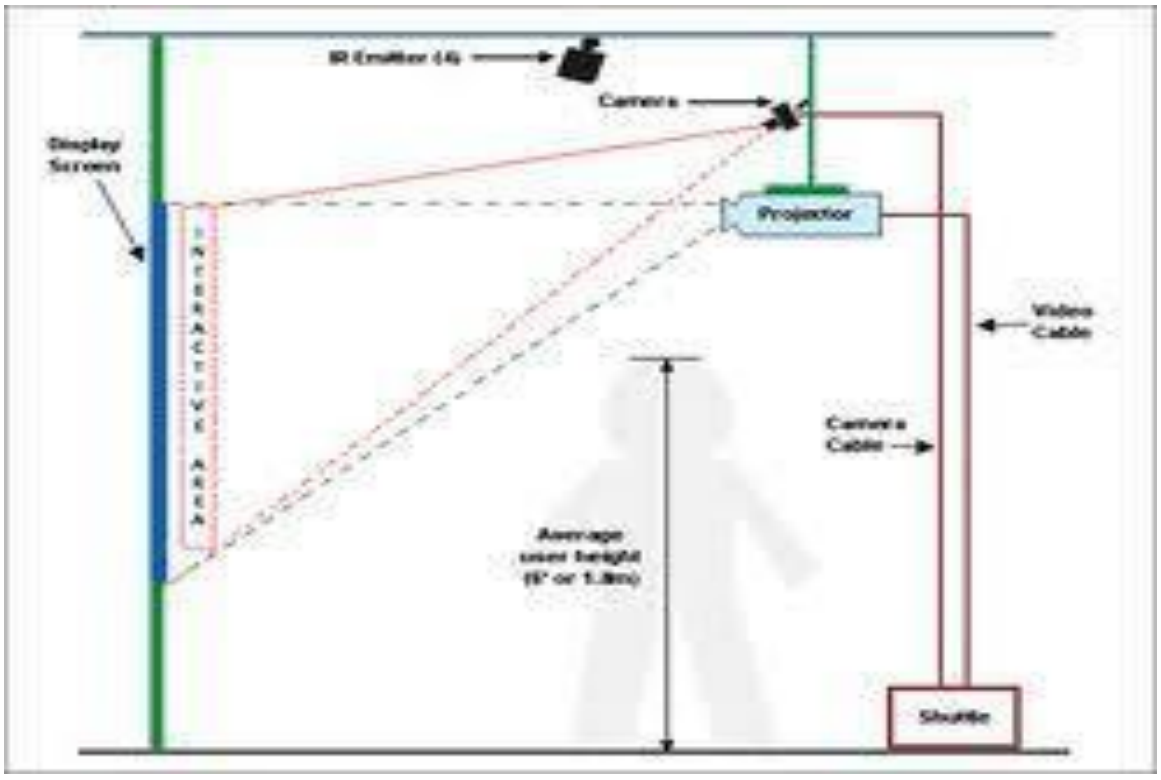
that require group participation in order to complete. The completion of a puzzle could unlock some other form of entertainment, or a code to later be deciphered online. The codes could be used to provide fun facts about visiting artists who are showing work in the space or or as clues to future events. The larger the group, the more possibilities the space has to offer, encouraging people to work and play in teams. The space would also be able to sense basic human interactions like hand holding, talking on the phone, reading a book, eating a meal, etc. and react to them appropriately. For example, This could be as simple as illuminating the area around a person reading.

My current ideas for content are all still very basic but my concept for this system is solid. I believe that if I develop this platform well, then it will open the door for others to develop content, the same way in which software designers develop content for computers. If this platform is successful, it could also grab the attention of potential visiting artist to create interactive installations. Creating an opportunity for something much more complex.

By first building a working prototype, we will be able to gather data that will inform us of how people react to an interactive space in general. This data will in turn help us to form and develop the features and possibilities of the space further.

Technical Aspects

There are many ways to go about activating the 10 E. Lake St. Space. One way to do this is by using a series of piezo and light sensors in conjunction with depth sensing cameras. The piezo and light sensors would be imbedded in the environment and furniture of the 10 E. Lake site. These sensors would provide information about the site to a central computer, which would result in the space being activated in different ways. Depth sensing cameras could be used to pick up on more complex human interactions such as gestures and posture. These technologies could be used together to provide a user centered, activated environment.



Benefits

Curiosity is the drive that pushes mankind to gain an understanding of the world around us. As children, it is the backbone to our learning structure. We form an understanding of the world in part through the information and attitudes we gain from being curious. As we age, we gain a greater understanding of the universe as well as a set of predictable expectations of how it works. Unfortunately, this can prevent us from being curious. By incorporating "easer eggs" into our design of 10 E. Lake, we will encourage curiosity within our users, as well as group interaction and play, overall creating a more personal relationship between the space and its occupants.

Plan of Action

To create intentionally fun and witty hidden messages, content and interactive experiences that can be found by the users of 10 E. Lake. By including these types of interventions in our design, we can inspire curiosity and the monotony of life.

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