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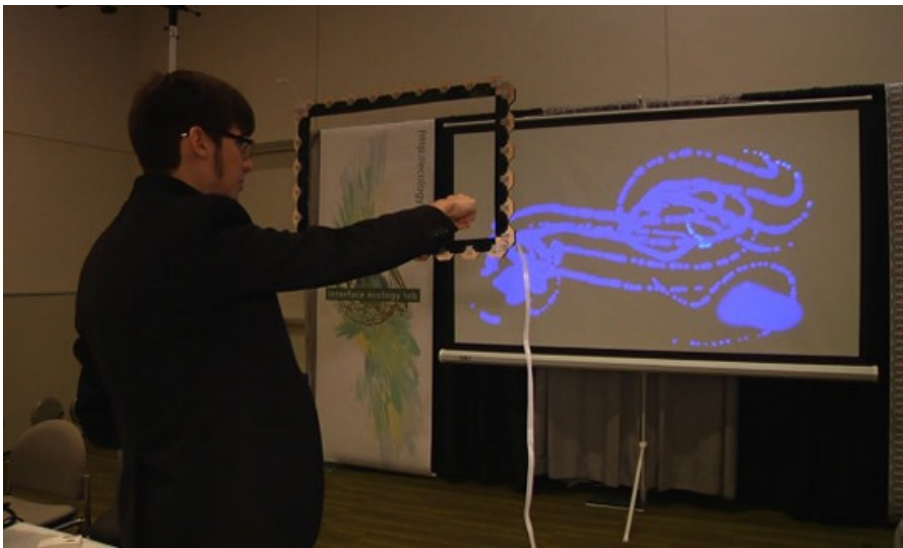


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COMPUTERS

'ZeroTouch' Lets You Paint Pictures in the Air

By [GRAEME MCMILLAN](#) | [@graemem](#) | May 11, 2011 | 1

A staple of science fiction movies – a virtual in-the-air touchpad interface – is one step closer with **the unveiling of the ZeroTouch “force field”** at Vancouver’s Computer Human Interaction conference.

Created by researchers at the Interface Ecology Lab at Texas A&M University, the ZeroTouch allows users to literally draw pictures in midair. “I like to consider it an optical force field; it’s like a picture frame where we shoot thousands of light beams across and we can detect anything that intersects that frame,” explains Texas A&M research assistant Jonathan Moeller.

The ZeroTouch uses 256 sensors around a frame, which turns the space within the frame into a virtual touch screen. Moeller believes that the potential for the system is much larger, however, imagining being able to stack multiple ZeroTouch layers together to be able to sense depth of touch, as well.

I’m just waiting to see what happens when someone pairs one of these things with Microsoft’s Kinect.

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