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Info C262

RR4: A Taxonomy of Ambient Information Systems: Four Patterns of Design

With technological advancement, digital information is becoming more and more accessible, and fields of ambient information system or calm computing focus on providing the just necessary information without bothering users from their primary work task.

I was wondering how sensitive, but important personal information can be integrated into ambient media. Even though information that ambient media covers is mainly not life-critical, now we have wide use of wearable devices that can monitor our health with live status. We now have personal health history saved into digital system and the more personal information become accessible through ambient media, I also believe that there should be more attention paid towards how to optimize in trade-off between information capacity and security of such information.

While ambient media are mostly expected to be visible and exposed to more than just the main users, I believe there should be more emphasis towards securing and encrypting the information in case the system or its information can be accessed by other unrelated users.

Another unique element of ambient information system was subliminal display, which provides subliminal stimuli that is below our threshold of conscious perception. While I know there hasn't been direct proof of having subliminal visual stimuli affecting our consciousness, I do believe that deliberate manipulation of sound or environment could possible affect the way we recognize objects. I'm not sure if this whole context could fit to ambient media, but because it has peripheral displays as one of its characteristics, I thought why not go further and have systems that can unconsciously control our awareness.