Ivy

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Ivy: A Critical Design for Sedentary Behavior in the Office Context

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CRITICAL DESIGN

Although we see a growing body of design work to reduce SB in the office setting, there is a relative dearth of critical designs in this context. Critical designs can challenge existing views by sparking discussions on current lifestyles and practices. It has received growing attention over recent years, for instance by the work of Malpass [1], who explains how interrogative, discursive and experimental approaches often adopted in critical designs can challenge the status quo.

DESIGN OF IVY

We used artificial ivy plants connected to fabric wires (Figure 1,2 and 3). These wires are hidden in plastic black tubes cut open at the top and integrated on the chair. These tubes function as guiding rails to guide the ivy around the chair. Whenever a person sits on the chair, the ivy is brought in motion after a short delay. The prototype uses one of two stepper motors to move the ivy out of the hidden compartment which is located under the seating area. The wires are pulled through the tubes and guide the ivy around the contours of the chair until the plants are fully extended. When someone stands up for at least 5 minutes, the ivy plant will move back again with the use of the same principle yet in the opposite direction with the second motor.

DISCUSSION

We argue that a direct connection in form (i.e. use of chair), and interaction (i.e. physicalization of data), constructs more meaning in the information representation of sitting behavior. Second, through an intentional paradox in the aesthetic qualities of the design, Ivy aims to enhance poetic awareness and social engagement. Finally, through the use of metaphors, we argue that a more reflective interaction on multiple levels is provided in the design. The insights of this work contribute towards a critical perspective on designing interventions to reduce sedentary time.