

WEARABLE GADGET TRACKS EXPOSURE TO PASSIVE SMOKING

Media Lab Europe Research Adds Fuel To Debate Over Whether Smoking Should Be Banned In Public Places

Monday, 27th May 2002 - Researchers at Media Lab Europe, the innovation and research centre in Dublin, are developing a wearable device that allows people to monitor environmental smoke and project the damage passive smoking can do to their heart, lungs and life expectancy.

Speaking about the device, lead researcher Dr. Carol Strohecker said, "This tool can help people to increase their awareness of health risks due to passive smoke exposure. The device calls attention to the impact of personal and public decisions about smoking in public places."

The mobile sensing device developed by the Everyday Learning Group at Media Lab Europe detects chemical components of environmental tobacco smoke. The readings are displayed on a 12-hour clock, allowing wearers to see changes in their smoke exposure and reflect on harmful locations and patterns in their daily routine.

Currently the device is paired with a transparent fumatorium that includes a simulated smoker, allowing viewers to make real-time comparisons of the visible quantities of smoke with sensor readings of smoke components. A planned simulation environment will depict the sensor readings as attributes of cartoon characters and enable users to project effects of smoke-related toxicities on these characters.

Media Lab Europe demonstrated this and other research projects concerned with health and well-being at the World Health Organisation summit in Geneva last week.

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About Media Lab Europe

Media Lab Europe is an international research and innovation Lab. It is also the European research partner of the world renowned MIT Media Lab. Its interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to innovation provides a unique environment for exploring advanced research that facilitates the development of technologies that expand human potential throughout society. Media Lab Europe is a not-for-profit organisation that supports its work through corporate, community, academic and public research partnerships. For more information please visit www.medialabeurope.org
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