The Circle Design Workbook Excerpts

This document accompanies the following paper:
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Workbook Process on Tumblr

We organized our design workbook, including designs and reference, on tumblr.
“Okay, so I set up that camera this morning. I taped it to a stake, stuck that stake in the sand, in the dunes, with no permit, nothing. In fact, no one knows it’s there. So this morning I turned it on, then I drove back to the office, accessed Camera One, Stinson Beach, and I got this image. Actually, I was pretty busy this morning. I drove around and set up one at Rodeo Beach, too. And Montara. And Ocean Beach. Fort Point.”

With each beach Bailey mentioned, another live image appeared, each of them live, visible, with perfect clarity and brilliant color.”

-Bailey, Executive at The Circle at the SeeChange launch event

1. Excerpt from Dave Eggers’ The Circle (2013)
“Now the exciting, and blazingly simple part,” he said, smiling at Jackie with professional respect, “is that we can store all this information in the nearly microscopic chip, which is now used purely for safety reasons. But what if it provides both locational tracking and educational tracking? What if it’s all in one place?”

“It’s a no-brainer,” Jackie said.

“Well, I hope parents will see it that way. For participating families, they’ll have constant and real-time access to everything – location, scores, attendance, everything. And it won’t be in some handheld device, which the kid might lose. It’ll be in the cloud, and in the child him- or herself, never to be lost.”

-Francis and Jackie, employees at The Circle

The “Feed” tab presents live updates of their academic work

The “Overview” tab provides a summary of academic performance over time, to be used by administrators

1. Excerpt from Dave Eggers’ The Circle (2013)
Vital Radio: Elderly Care

Victor held sleek black box, about the size of a small DVD player. He turned to the audience and smiled.

“My grandmother’s eighty-seven. A year ago she fell and broke her hip, and since then I’ve been concerned about her. Last weekend, while she was napping—”

A wave of laughter rippled through the audience.

“Forgive me! Forgive me!” he said, “I had no choice. She wouldn’t have let me do it otherwise. So I snuck in, and I installed Vital-Radio in her bedroom and the living room. It can see through walls up to twenty five feet, so with just two of these boxes I can cover her whole house. She won’t notice it — it looks just like another electronic gadget hooked up to her television.”

“And of course,” Victor continued “all that data is stored in the cloud, and in your tablet, anywhere you want it. It’s always accessible, and is constantly updated. So if you fall, hit your head, you’re in the ambulance, the EMTs can access everything about your vitals history in seconds. And it’s not just healthcare. Imagine your home adapting music and lighting based on your vital signs and your mood. Or getting customized assistance based on your stress level at a Vital-Radio kiosk in an unfamiliar airport. Imagine the possibilities!”

-Victor, executive at The Circle

The data present a narrative of grandma’s day

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1. a short piece of fan-fiction written by the authors in the style of Eggers’ The Circle
The SeeChange Amazon pages show the same SeeChange camera being sold as three different products to different audiences.

In this page, SeeChange is positioned as a police body camera.
SeeChange framed as a small, hidden, wearable camera for activists groups like PETA.
SeeChange marketed “For Independence, Freedom, and Survival,” to be used by people suspicious of the government and may want to monitor government.
“It seems like this solves one of the problems of SeeChange,” Stenton said, “which is that even when there are cameras everywhere, not everyone can watch everything. If a crime is committed at three a.m., who’s watching camera 982, right?”

“Right,” Gareth said. “See, this way the cameras are just part of it. The color-tagging tells you who’s anomalous, so you only have to pay attention to that particular anomaly. Of course, the catch is whether or not this violates any privacy laws.”

“Well, I don’t think that’s a problem,” Stenton said. “You have a right to know who lives on your street. What’s the difference between this and simply introducing yourself to everyone on the street? This is a more advanced and thorough version of ‘good fences make good neighbors.’ I would imagine this would eliminate pretty much all crime committed by strangers to any given community.”

-Stenton, Executive at The Circle and Gareth, developer of NeighborWatch

1. Excerpt from Dave Eggers’ The Circle (2013)
SeeChange Angles
Airport Security

Airport Security depicts an imagined use of NeighborWatch and SeeChange, where an airport surveillance system automatically assigns threat statuses to people by color-coding them.
License Plate Tracker

The License Plate Tracker puts SeeChange in the hands of the police or government intelligence agencies.
TruWork re-imagines ChildTrack as an implantable tracking device that employers use to keep track of their employees’ whereabouts and work activities.
Product Diagrams

These diagrams borrow from startup companies visual language, which often includes a series of cartoons that provide a simple explanation of the product, in order to make the concepts in the designs more accessible to people familiar with that visual language.

CoupleTrack is an idea based on ChildTrack, which allows a couple to use implanted chips so they always know where the other one is and what they are doing.

Vital Radio Match extends Vital Radio to be used as an online dating service by matching people’s “compatible” heartrates.

ChildTrack for Advertisers allows advertisers to leverage a child’s location data to target them with advertisements for locations nearby, or for things that children with a similar profile like.
Amazon Echo Vital Radio

Amazon Echo with Vital-Radio combines the real Amazon Echo – a hands-free speaker, smart home controller, and virtual assistant – with Vital Radio, presented as a product for sale by Amazon. It uses a person’s heartbeat patterns to adjust a home’s lighting and temperature settings, choose what music to play, and automatically order items from Amazon.com that it thinks will suit the user.