

A Touch Screen Photo Frame for Grieving at Work

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Abstract. A great investment is being made to grief management at work. This extended abstract describes the interactive properties of a touch screen photo frame designed to facilitate communication between mourners and their colleagues at work. The frame combines both photo display and diary functionalities to support grief activities and give cues to nearby colleagues of the state of mind of the bereaved.

1 Introduction

Grief costs U.S. companies more than \$75 billion annually in lost productivity [1]. In the Netherlands, a bereaved full time employee is legally entitled to between 1 to 4 days paid leave [2]. The grieving process however is not so easily contained and there are indications of stifled grief occurrences in the work place [3] [4]. This paper describes a digital photo frame designed to mediate the initiation of conversation between a bereaved and a co-worker. The primary problem addressed is how to support the grieving process of the bereaved whilst simultaneously giving cues to colleagues about when and how they should approach the bereaved. The expected goal is that colleagues are better able to cope with their colleagues grieving process and the bereaved is able to grieve in a manner that offers little interference with their work.

2 Concept and Interaction Scenario

To achieve the goals mentioned above, the frame is designed to integrate the functionalities of a picture frame and a diary to support mourning activities. The end result is a frame that supports usage as a shrine.

This means that the bereaved is able to \neg visit \emptyset the deceased whilst at work. The expected advantage of this is that he/she is able to efficiently handle their grief activities, and refocus on work. The \neg Visitation \emptyset feature is realized through the ability of the frame to decrease and increase in picture visibility. Full image visibility occurs when the user makes contact with the frame's screen e.g. to pick up the frame or to stroke the image. The \neg Diary \emptyset feature is realized through the screen's ability to support being written on and to store written data in an appropriate fashion. The

bereaved is able to navigate through the photo screen to review past thoughts and photographs.

The frame has touch screen capabilities and serves as a picture holder, a diary and a shrine. As a diary, it displays text which the worker enters into the memory of the frame.

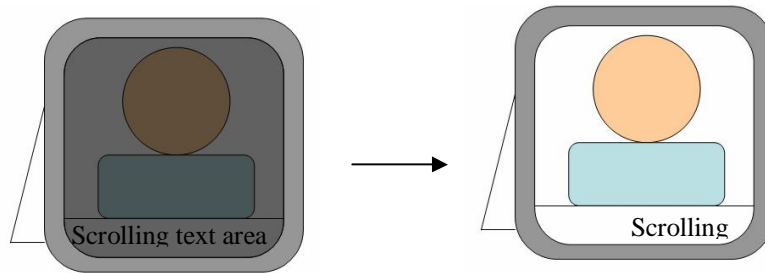


Figure 1. State transitions of frame from low visibility and static text (when the bereaved is busy with work-thoughts/passively grieving) to high visibility and scrolling text (when the bereaved is touching the frame).

3 Conclusions and Future Developments

The design presented shows one way that a touch screen photo frame can be used to support mourning at work. At the moment touch is used but other methods of monitoring people's thought process such as eye tracking technology can be considered.

Further work would focus on evaluating the ability of such a frame to mediate the initiation of conversations between the bereaved and their colleagues. Questions that can be answered are: is a colleague able to appropriately take cues from the image and text on the frame's screen and does the bereaved feel more or less settled at work as a result of the frame.

References

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