Breaking down the wall between remote locations.

the WaterWall

CONNECTING SAP OFFICES

AROUND THE WORLD

WITH 24/7 VIDEO STREAM

GESTURAL CONTROLS

& INTERACTIVE GRAPHICS

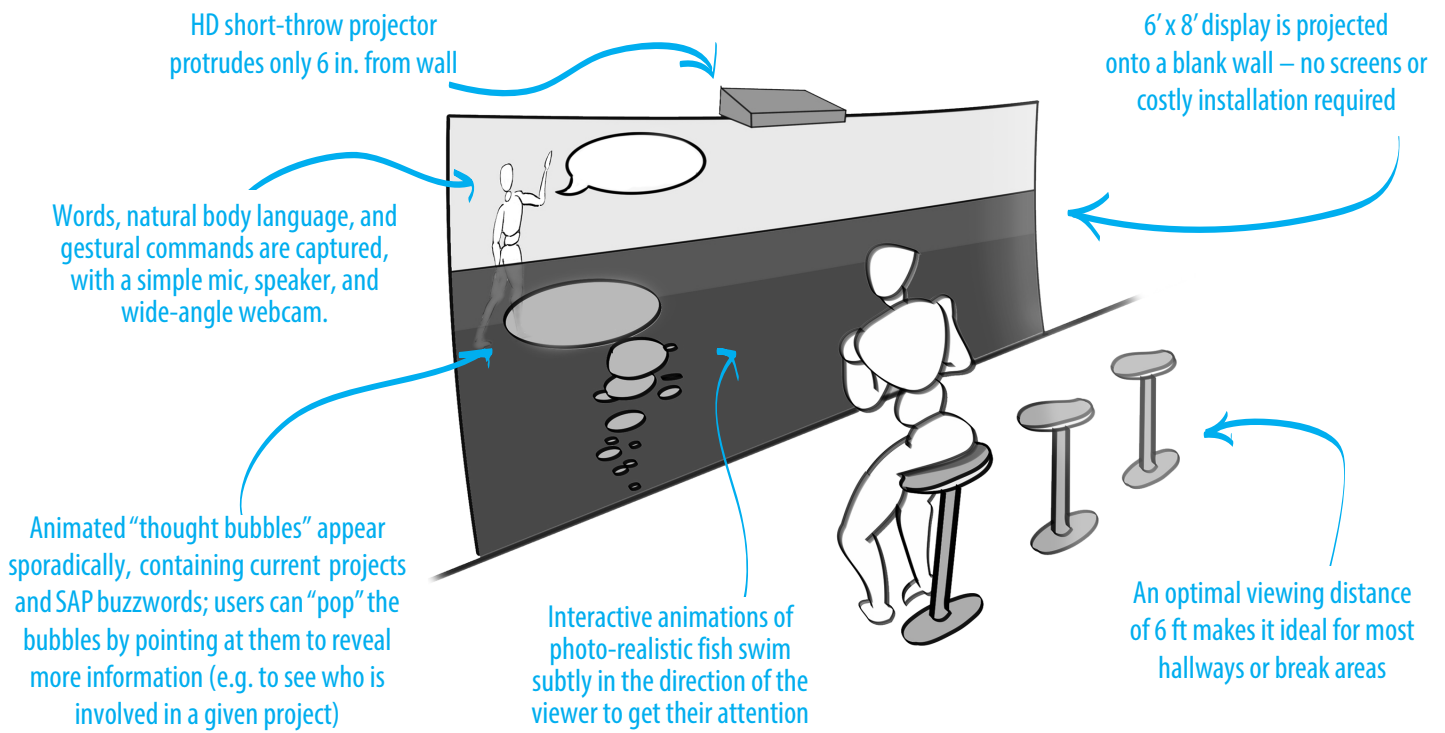**THAT PROVIDE A CATALYST**

FOR CASUAL COLLISIONS

& A STREAMLINED TOOL FOR

SPONTANEOUS COLLABORATION

Creative turning points are often born out of serendipitous interactions. An hour spent at the local water cooler is much more likely to spark new inspiration than an hour at a solitary desk. Many booming tech companies have realized this, and started building "campuses" instead of offices. They offer boundless on-sight perks to keep people at work as long as possible, because unfortunately, this phenomenon only works within the "campus" walls. It seems that even in a digital world, there is no substitute for face-to-face interaction.

Remote collaboration in all industries remains an enormous challenge. Expensive videoconferencing tools are well-suited for presentations and structured meetings, but their formality stifles creativity and they take weeks to schedule. Webcam video-chats have a more relaxed atmosphere, but the narrow view, tiresome setup, and awkward interactions make it an equally unappealing option overall. These issues are exacerbated when the people on either end are unfamiliar with each other in the first place.

These are the problems that inspired us to create The WaterWall. It has a live 24/7 video-stream to ensure that no time is wasted on setup, an interactive graphic display to make interactions more playful and enjoyable, and a "thought bubble" generator that displays current projects that are relevant to both parties. These subtle features enable The WaterWall to spark new intersections and unforeseen collaborations between different teams, departments, and locations accross SAP's vast global network.

DESIGN TEAM Max Cougar Oswald Tao Jiang Karan Verma Amit Badlani Peter Weldon Mark Culleton Eimear Connolly Ray Barrett

HD short-throw projector protrudes only 6 in. from wall

6' x 8' display is projected onto a blank wall — no screens or costly installation required

Words, natural body language, and gestural commands are captured, with a simple mic, speaker, and wide-angle webcam.

Animated "thought bubbles" appear sporadically, containing current projects and SAP buzzwords; users can "pop" the bubbles by pointing at them to reveal more information (e.g. to see who is involved in a given project)

Interactive animations of photo-realistic fish swim subtly in the direction of the viewer to get their attention

An optimal viewing distance of 6 ft makes it ideal for most hallways or break areas

EMBRACINGSERENDIPITY

WATER WALL

The realistic 3D aquarium serves as an aesthetic 'bridge' to soften the transition between the two remote environments. The system provides audio and speech capability, in essence acting as a life-size videochat system. The dynamic aesthetic encourages passersby to approach the WaterWall spontaneously, promoting casual encounters between colleagues who may never cross paths otherwise.

Project MAYA

WATER WALL BREAKINGtheICE

The WaterWall is a place where people will want to be; the aquarium is pleasant to look at, and the photo-realistic fish react to the sounds, presence and motion of those in the vicinity. "Thought bubbles" come subtly from the fish – these provide a snapshot of the corporate SAP mind, highlighting current projects and big topics at that location. Viewers can interact with the "thought bubbles" and reveal more information by simply pointing at them. Well-aqcuainted users have the option of lowering the aquarium's opacity for a more direct face-to-face chat.

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