

Anti-Distraction System

My thesis concept is to develop a desktop application to help prevent distraction for knowledge workers.

A variety of anti-distraction tools already exist today, including Freedom, RescueTime, OmmWriter, and many others. The problem is that they all require a user to plan ahead for being distracted. My concept is built around the idea of using a tool that monitors what users are doing so that the tool can provide real-time feedback and guidance. It will also connect with your coworkers so that users can get social support when they are feeling too distracted. This concept features several core ideas:

Real Time Monitoring. The system will monitor a user's computer activity and will classify applications, documents, and websites as being distracting or not. It will provide a simple and clear visualization showing a summary of the amount of distraction within the past hour so that users can keep track of how they're doing.

Inhibits Distraction. When the system detects that a user has gotten too distracted, it will block access to distracting applications, documents, and websites.

Social Distraction Prevention. The system will share quantified data with a user's coworkers, so that everyone can help each other through distraction. The system will also allow users to share milestones and progress over the course of the day, and it will help users get in touch through existing communication channels, such as email or IM.

Breaks that disable monitoring, so that users can distract themselves as much as they want over the course of the day.

Analysis Tools to allow users to see the activities that distract them most.

