

# Designing Information Awareness Applications in Tcl/Tk

Q. Alex Zhao & D. Scott McCrickard, Graphics, Visualization, and Usability Center, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA 30332-0280 USA

## Information Awareness

### What is Information Awareness?

- Staying aware of information changes
- It's a secondary, peripheral task
- Examples: news, sport scores, stock prices, weather forecasts, etc.

### Implications

- Large amount of information
- Small amount of dedicated screen real-estate
- Animation helps

### Why Tcl/Tk?

- Development and maintenance costs are low
- Powerful networking and regular expression packages allow easy information collection and extraction
- Cross-platform support with low runtime resource requirements
- Peripheral information display widgets available

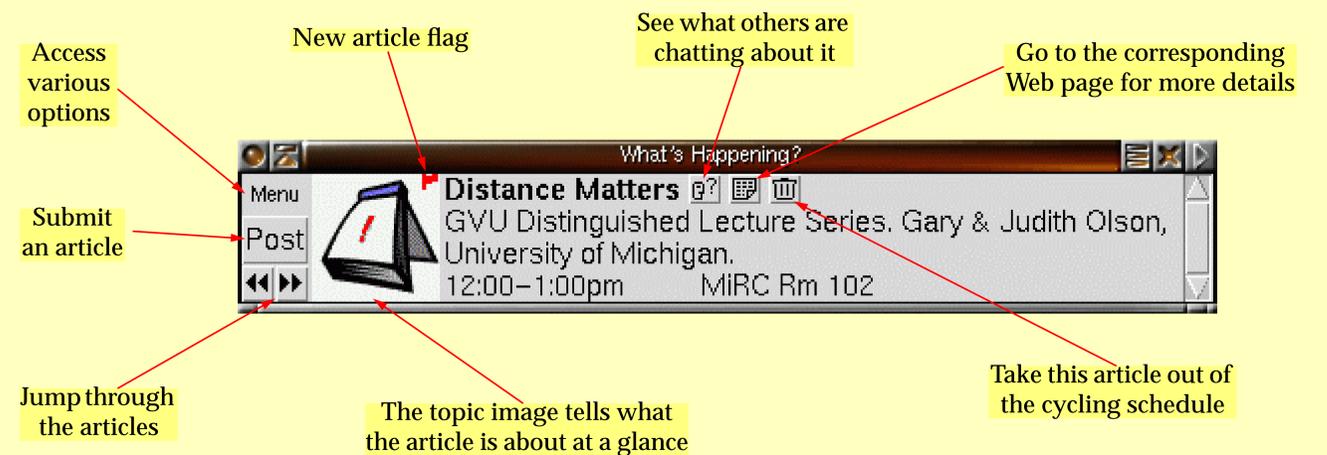
## “What’s Happening”: An Example Application

### Goal

To keep up with the happenings in an organization

### Features

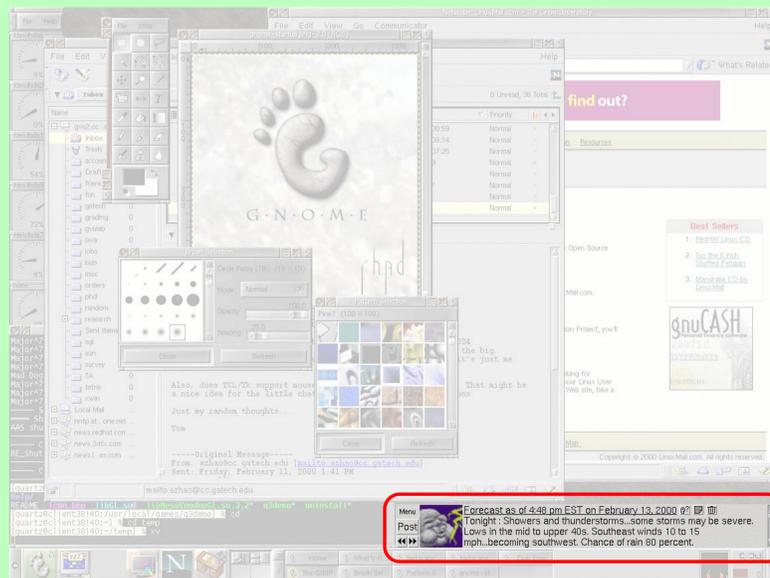
- Automatically collects information of popular interest
- Automatically cycles through available information
- Encourages user to submit new articles
- Supports lightweight chat-room discussions
- Most importantly, stays in the *periphery*



## Techniques to Minimize Distraction:

### Small On-screen Size:

Roughly 500 by 70 pixels.

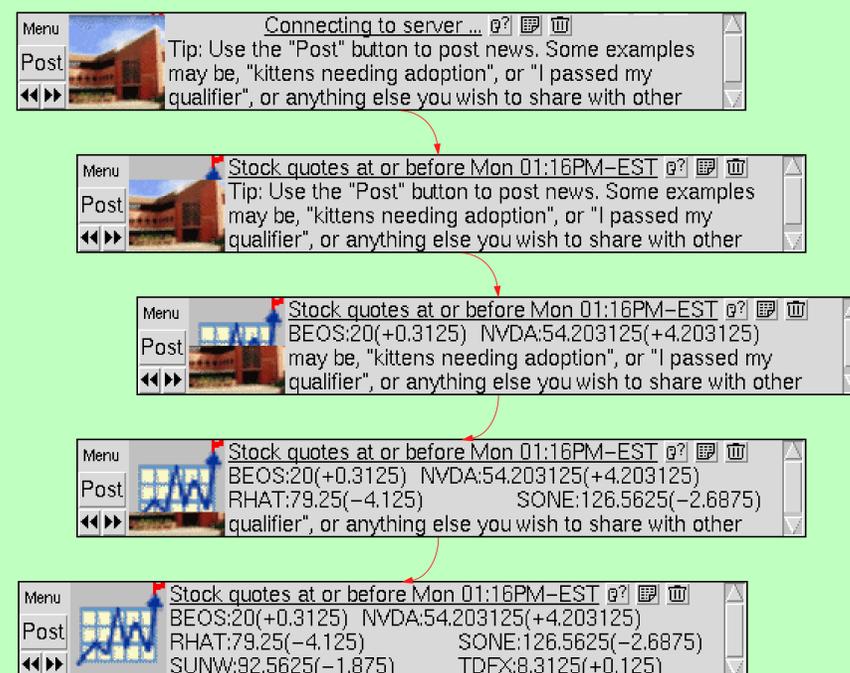


### “Less is More”

Using the minimum number of buttons to get the job done.

### Smooth, Slow-changing Animated Transition

A “wipe-down” animation takes 64 steps to transit from the previous article to the next. A time-lapse series of 5 of the steps is shown below:



### Topic Images

- User contributed content



- Calendar of events



- School calendar



- Weather forecast



- slashdot.org



- Salon/Herring/Wired/Fool



- Merriam-Webster word-of-the-day



- Yahoo stock quote service



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<http://www.cc.gatech.edu/gvu/ii/community/>