

Innovation

Casper Cloaking Technology: Privacy + Transparency



There's a tension in many workplaces today. Organizations want transparent, collaborative environments. Leaders want to be visible stewards of their company culture. But, there are times when information just has to stay private. Large-scale monitor displays help teams work together. But, glass walled meeting rooms could display sensitive data to people passing nearby. Is the only solution to pull blinds and shut doors? We don't think so.

Casper Cloaking Technology by Designtex solves this problem using architectural film for glass walls that only blocks people's ability to see what's on a digital screen inside the room. People walking by can see faces and gestures, but can't see content displayed on any LED or LCD screen inside.

THE LIGHT BULB MOMENT

Like many big ideas, this cloaking technology started trying to solve an entirely different problem. Matt Mead, who now leads the information technologies innovation management office at Steelcase, was trying to overcome a challenge with an internal videoconferencing network. He needed to figure out how to allow people to work in rooms with windows while still using the cameras. Natural light has a positive impact on people, but it also shuts down a camera's iris making people in the room appear like a bunch of silhouettes on screen.

Casper gives people both transparency and confidentiality simultaneously. Plus, people know it works because they can see it in action.

Mead remembers the day Casper came to him. He was riding his bike to work on a particularly sunny morning and a childhood memory struck him. He took a detour to the grocery store to help him test his theory about light and Casper was born.

"We started experimenting with what we could do and what we couldn't do," said Mead. "Through that work, the product became more refined and it looked like we had something that could be groundbreaking."

In order to take a promising idea and turn it into something practical and beautiful, Mead turned to Andy Graham, chief innovation officer at Designtex.

EMOTIONAL REACTIONS



When Graham entered the picture, the cloaking technology worked, but appeared clunky and wasn't pleasing to the eye. He helped add a graphic design quality to the film that led to a more elegant solution, one people wouldn't mind installing in prominent areas of the workplace.

"What's most interesting about Casper is to see how it delights people," says Graham. "People were dragging friends to see it at NeoCon last year — walking back and forth to try to figure out how it works. It's generated more interest and enthusiasm than any product I've ever been involved with." For the record, Graham started his first business in 1977.

Already garnering national attention from publications like Fast Company and Wired, Mead has been blown away by people's reactions as well. "When you show it to people, their mouths fall open," he says.

Casper gives people both transparency in the workplace and confidentiality simultaneously. Plus, people know it works because they can see it in action. The smart shield ensures data privacy and provides people with the peace of mind to collaborate freely in any working environment.

For more information on Casper Cloaking Technology, visit www.designtex.com.



Rebecca Charbauski
Senior Communications Specialist

Rebecca, an Emmy-winning journalist, reports on global research impacting the places where people work, learn and heal. Over her career, Rebecca spent 17 years covering local and national news events on television and a variety of digital platforms. She directed a digital news group in Kansas City for three years before becoming news director in Grand Rapids, Michigan for more than five years. Prior to Steelcase, Rebecca worked with one of the four largest media groups in the United States to coordinate news coverage among 48 newsrooms from the east to west coast.

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