

431 Fiction Design: Way to Die

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“Way to Die” is a nomination game, using social media to get people involve. The inspiration is the “ALS Ice Bucket Challenge” and the Households Earthquake Potential Hazards list in Vancouver city website.

The mechanics of the game is as follow. When people being nominated, they will look carefully around their home, and find out one object that could be a hazard when earthquakes attack. After they identify the danger, they need to shoot a video of pretending to be killed by this hazard. Players are asked to post the video online within 24 hours, and then nominate five more of their friends.

The intension of the nomination game is, from pretending to be killed by hazard objects in fake earthquakes, they are actually eliminate the risk of being actually killed in real ones. We are hoping by playing, people will actively look for hazards at home, and find even more by watching their friends' videos. The most important thing is, removing or fixing them after.

We also try to focus our design on how people willing to participate in it. So we decided to ask people to make video instead of taking photos. What is more, we ask people to be playful, dramatic and creative when making the video. We feel that dramatic and hilarious videos are key factor to making the game appealing and interesting for users, which is one of the big success factors of ALS Ice Bucket challenges.

We are playing the thin line of “Being Funny” and “Being Serious” when we designing the game. In one hand, we want the “actors” to be dramatic enough that audiences will laugh out when they watch them. In the other hand, we want to make sure that people will actually feel seriously about the issue, because it is actually a very serious thing to think of. We balance them by including notification in the challenges along with the instruction and videos, such as “Thanks for participating, hope you had fun. Please remember, the most important thing is actually go ahead and fixing the hazards. You will be much safer when real earthquakes comes.” The other possible solution is, the city of Vancouver staff can seasonally pick some videos (top watched), and make an official mix of the game. In this way they can educate the public what objects are real hazards, and what are not.

Last but not least, we want to expand the scope of the game in the future. At the current stage, we are focusing on finding hazards at home, because we think homes has enough safety threats, which are shockingly easy to fix. In most cases people just ignored it, so we want to raise their awareness. If we have enough time, we think it's compelling to have more themes other than home, such as workspaces, and open spaces. We thinking people can be more creative while playing with different locations, and more importantly, they can discover more hazards.