

Hand movements challenge computer mouse

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The computer mouse could become a thing of the past and hand gestures a thing of the future if Los Angeles-based G-speak has its way, a report said.

The fledgling company started by John Underkoffler says it has contracts with federal agencies and aerospace companies interested in its idea first seen by a wide audience in the 2002 Tom Cruise film "Minority Report."

In that film, Cruise uses hand gestures to control a 3-D computer environment.

While Underkoffler said he had worked on developing G-speak technology before "Minority Report," audiences had surprisingly positive reactions.

"So in a weird way we'd been able to use the film mechanism to prototype a technology," he told the Los Angeles Times.

But some say the technology may never displace the mouse.

"It turns out people are lazy," Palo Alto, Calif., Research Center's Ed Chi told the newspaper. "They don't want to move a lot to interact with their technology."

Plus, he said, special steps would be needed to get computers to recognize the difference between command gestures and those made, for

example, during phone calls.

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