This device punishes you for skipping a workout

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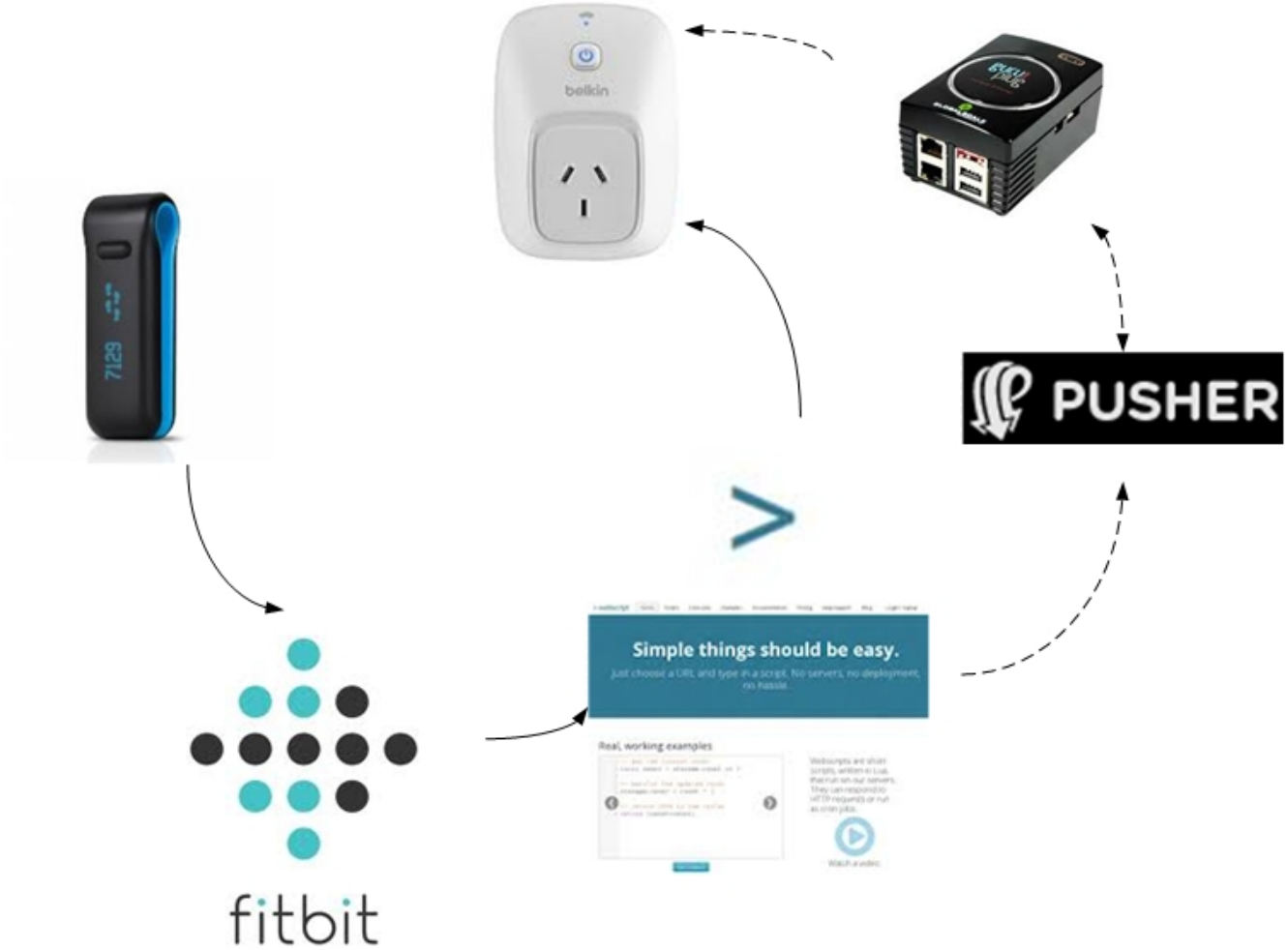
We've all done it. You come home from a long day at the office. Sit down on the couch to watch a little Walking Dead. You feel a little guilty that you haven't hit the gym or gone for a run, but you figure no one will know. But then your television set turns itself off, then your phone goes down, then your iPad, and then your reading lamp switches off and leaves you in the dark. You may have thought no one was paying attention to your slovenly ways, but your Fitbit was watching.

It may sound a little Orwellian in a dramatized example, but it's not a bad idea for a fitness tracker to be able to eliminate the distractions that often get in the way of scheduled workouts. Obviously, this thing won't get rid of the big distractions—please don't have it babysit your kids—but it can knockout the smaller, unnecessary time-wasters that consume a 21st century lifestyle.

Technically, this requires a FitBit and Belkin WeMo hack, not just the products, but it could greatly improve your health.

First, let's look at the two products individually.

FitBit [1]is a device that will track your steps, distance, and calories burned as well as sync with your computer or smart phone. It also allows you to set fitness goals.



The Belkin WeMo [2] is a power-outlet that you can use to wirelessly control any electronics that are plugged into it via an app. It's designed for that 'did I unplug the hairdryer/spaceheater/charger' moment that we've all had. You just log onto the app and switch the WeMo off.

The hack—the script is available at Building Internet of Things [3]—links the two devices to create a system that shuts down a designated electronic—they mention the fridge but we don't recommend that—if you fail to meet your fitness goal.

It's easy to say 'just get up and do something', but the truth is people aren't doing that. Rising obesity levels indicate that we have to try something else, and if forcing yourself to turn off electronics and work out is how we have to do it, I say bring it on.

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http://www.ecnmag.com/blogs/2013/02/device-punishes-you-skipping-workout

Links:
[1] http://www.fitbit.com/
[2] http://www.belkin.com/us/wemo
[3] http://blog.buildinginternetofthings.com/