



the institute for advanced studies

hosted by the University of Strathclyde

Distance Communication Workshop

Thursday 22nd October 2009

11am-5pm

You are invited to participate in a workshop on DISTANCE COMMUNICATION taking place in the Institute for Advanced Studies, 11am-5pm on 22nd October 2009. This is a cross-disciplinary workshop investigating the issues involved in making communication at a distance an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

The theme that will be explored in this workshop is DISTANCE CONFERENCING. This is not just a matter of recording and archiving talks and discussions, but designing and developing new approaches to supporting rich interaction by remote means. This is highly cross-disciplinary and input is sought from designers, educators, social scientists, scientists and engineers. There will be a selection of talks, demos and hands-on activities. Please come along and contribute to this cross-disciplinary event.

Please contact Maria Fox (maria.fox@cis.strath.ac.uk) to register your intention to attend so that catering can be arranged. Details of the schedule will be circulated shortly.

Distance Conferencing

As the world approaches Peak Oil it becomes increasingly unrealistic, in terms of world resources, to rely on regular international travel as a way of doing business. Academic and Business-related travel accounts for the vast majority of international flights taken each year, and it is becoming increasingly necessary to find alternative ways for academic and commercial business to be done.

Whilst technology already exists to support video conferencing, online archiving of recorded speeches and presentations, online management of conference resources and even online participation in conferences and meetings, the technology to support satisfactory social and personal interaction at a distance is still at an early stage of development.

Technology development is obviously a key part of this, but first it is necessary to understand what would best support successful interaction, what users would enjoy using and how the enjoyable experiences associated with meeting up with colleagues in one's research or business community

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might be effectively reproduced remotely. A major challenge is to educate the academic and business communities to accept the need for change.

In this workshop we will examine the principles of effective communication at a distance, exploring the social, educational, aesthetic and technological facets of the problem. The workshop brings together academic experts in Human Computer Interaction, engineering, art and design and social pedagogy, with developers of systems designed to support distance communication. Distance Lab is promoting the use of the term "slow communication" as an analogue of the "slow food" movement, intended to focus attention on the pleasures of communication for its own sake rather than simply the effectiveness and efficiency of factual communication. It is this slow communication that has to be successfully achieved before people will really accept online conferencing as an alternative to the diverse pleasures and benefits of physical meetings.

The workshop will be run by Professor Maria Fox, a Computer Scientist from the University of Strathclyde, and Dr Stefan Agamanolis, the Director of Distance Lab. The event will be held in the Institute for Advanced Studies, University of Strathclyde, on 22nd October 2009.

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