The 2008 International Symposium on Collaborative Technologies and Systems
(CTS 2008)
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CTS 2008 PANEL SESSION

Collaborative/Virtual Worlds are Here To Stay …..
So What Is Technology Doing To Help?

PANEL MEMBERS:

Mark Ackerman, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, USA
Geoffrey Fox, Indiana University, USA
Doug White, University of California at Irvine, USA

Moderator: Vance Saunders
Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp., Ohio, USA

Location: Conference Theater

ABSTRACT:

This year's CTS Panel discussion will focus on two observed hypotheses or view points: First, there doesn't seem to be any new or exciting collaboration technology being developed. We seem to have reached a technology creativity plateau. Second, new uses of our existing technology are being developed and they are having an impact on our society(s).

As one looks at the different collaboration technologies that exist today, one discovers these technologies have been around for 5 – 10 years. For example the Web, IR Chat, Video Tele-Conferencing (VTC), shared spaces (e.g. bulletin boards, white boards, etc.), applications sharing and remote access (e.g., virtual development of a single document or presentation) and email have all been around at least that long. Even more interesting is to observe that the Web, IR Chat and bulletin board/black board technologies are the only ones that really get used today.

While there doesn't appear to be any new breakthrough collaboration technologies being developed, there continues to be new and creative applications of the existing technology that one could argue are and/or will have an impact on the global society. Teenagers walking down the street side by side using IR Chat to communicate (versus talking to one another) means something. "Living" in a virtual world of My Spaces, Face Book, U-Tube, E-Bay, Snoops.com, on line bill paying and on line gaming provides many conveniences and includes many risks.

This year's panel will explore these two viewpoints and stimulate discussion around such questions as:

- What impact is the "virtual" aspect of today's social networking having on our society today?
- What does the future look like based on these impacts?
- What improvements to our existing technologies need to be made?
- What new technologies should we be focusing on for the future?
- Etc.

PANLEISTS SHORT BIOS:

Mark S. Ackerman is an associate professor in Computer Science and Engineering in the College of Engineering and in the School of Information at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Before the University of Michigan, Mark was an associate professor at the University of California, Irvine and a research scientist at the MIT/Laboratory for Computer Science's Project Oxygen. Along the way, he constructed the first home banking system in the US, programmed three Billboard Top-10 games (for the Atari 2600), and worked on the X Window System toolkit. He has published widely in Human-Computer Interaction and Computer-Supported Cooperative Work. Mark's research group is currently working on projects that include distilling community brainstorming, analyses of large-scale online QA forums, expertise finding systems, pro-active awareness, community health informatics, and privacy in pervasive environments.

Geoffrey C. Fox (8122194643, gcf@indiana.edu, http://www.infomall.org). Professor Fox received a Ph.D. in Theoretical Physics from Cambridge University **a**nd is now professor of Computer Science, Informatics, and Physics at Indiana University. He is director of the Community Grids Laboratory of the Pervasive Technology Laboratories at Indiana University. He previously held positions at Caltech, Syracuse University and Florida State University. He has published over 550 papers in physics and computer science and been a major author on four books. Professor Fox has worked in a variety of applied computer science fields with his work on computational physics evolving into contributions to parallel computing and now to Grid and multicore chip systems. He has worked on the computing issues in several application areas – currently focusing on Defense, Earthquake and Ice-sheet Science and Chemical Informatics. He is involved in several projects to enhance the capabilities of Minority Serving Institutions.

Douglas White is a professor of Anthropology at the University of California-Irvine. He co-founded and has chaired the Social Networks PhD program and within the Institute for Mathematical Behavioral Sciences chairs the Social Dynamics and Complexity research group as well as the UC four-campus Human Sciences and Complexity videoconference. He is on the governing Council of the European Complex Systems Society, served as President of the Social Science Computing Association and the Linkages Development Research Council, and was chosen to chair the Science Board of the Coordinating EU-wide project *Action For The Science Of Complex Systems And Socially Intelligent Ict*. He founded the World Cultures e-journal in 1985 as part of the movement for open access scientific data and publication and founded the open access and peer reviewed Structure and Dynamics electronic journal in 2005, where he continues as editor-in-chief. He is a recipient of the U.S. Distinguished Scientist Award of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the "Best Paper in Mathematical Sociology of 2003" Award of the American Sociological Association (2004), and the 2007 "Viviana Zelizer Distinguished Scholarship Award" for the outstanding article published in the field of economic sociology in the previous two years. A reaction to his latest book with Ulla Johansen, *Network Analysis and Ethnographic Problems*, by one reviewer, was that this "could be the most important book in anthropology in fifty years."