

Remixing Realities: Distributed Studios for Collaborative Creativity

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ABSTRACT

Collaborative Virtual Environments (CVEs) can support interdisciplinary, heterogeneous geographically distributed creative teams. However research and commercial approaches to CVEs to support creative work have focused on implementation, paying little attention to the design of the virtual place that the system creates.

Over the last ten years CVEs have moved out of the lab and into mass-market commercial deployment. Significant investment in virtual worlds (perhaps half a billion dollars in 2008 [3]) has seen technical advances, but the design of the virtual places has not advanced in a comparable manner. Just as in 1998, they still default to the Virtual Office, with avatars on chairs facing a virtual presentation screen.

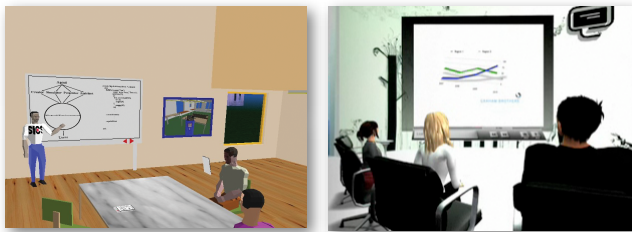


fig 1a. Research Project: *DIVE virtual office*, 1998 [1]

fig 1b. Product: *Immersive WorkSpaces*, 2008 [2]

I am developing a set of design principles for virtual collaborative place, through a process of iterative design. In this process, five draft principles have been derived from existing theories of collaboration and creative place, and from exploratory ethnographic enquiries into real and virtual creative places [4].

The draft design principles are: **1.** Support Reconfiguration, **2.** Mix Realities, **3.** Control Access, **4.** Be A/Synchronous, **5.** Transform Space into Inhabited Place.

Now I am expressing the principles in prototypes which will be introduced into the environments of working distributed creative teams in a programme of action research.

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ACM Classification Keywords

H.5.1 [**Multimedia Information Systems**]: Artificial, augmented, and virtual realities

H.5.2 [**User Interfaces**]: Theory and methods

H.5.3 [**Group and Organization Interfaces**]: Computer-supported cooperative work, Synchronous interaction

Author Keywords

Creativity Support, Place, Geographically Distributed Collaboration, Mixed Reality, Practice-based Research.

General Terms: Design, Human Factors, Theory.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Viveka Weiley is an interaction designer with a background in virtual worlds. His first degree was a B. Design from the University of New South Wales' College of Fine Arts.

He then spent ten years in professional interaction design practice. Working remotely for international clients, Viveka developed an interest in geographically distributed teams. He joined the Creativity and Cognition Studios to begin research into tools for distributed creative collaboration.

Viveka first undertook Honours by Research in the Bachelor of Science in Information Technology, graduating with First Class Honours and the University Medal. He is now in his second year of the PhD programme at CCS under Dr. Yusuf Pisan and Professor Ernest Edmonds.

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