

## Aushang

Fachbereich 4: Informatik  
Institut f. Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungsinformatik

Prof. Dr. **J. Felix Hampe**

Haus: Universitätsstr. 1; D-56068 Koblenz  
Post: Postfach 201602; D-56016 Koblenz

Sekretariat: +49-261-287-2520  
Durchwahl: +49-261-287-2524  
Telefax: +49-261-287-2521  
E-Mail: hampe@uni-koblenz.de  
<http://www.uni-koblenz.de/~iwvi>

Koblenz, den 10.09.07

### Undertake your Diplomarbeit in Australia!!

An opportunity exists to spend 6 months in Adelaide undertaking research for your Diplomarbeit as a part of Prof Paul Swatman's CreWS team. We cooperate closely and thus candidates get the chance of living and working down under!

At the University of South Australia, you would work with an established local research group which observes creative teams – such as software engineers, strategic planners, military command and control teams, research teams – in action. The empirically based models which emerge from this research are used to drive the design and evaluation of context-contingent ICT support.

The current opportunity – available for 6 months during 2008 – is for a student wanting to complete a Diplomarbeit or Master Thesis in software engineer/information systems. The student would build a collaboration environment, fully instrumented for detailed analysis, within a simulated world environment – the popular “Second Life” – then, guided by the EEH (Exploration and Evaluation Harness) which we have developed as a part of our CreWS project, undertake preliminary analysis of collaboration and requirements engineering for potentially effective ad hoc collaboration support.

Perhaps the two most significant problems distinguishing distributed (from conventional) team meetings are:

**Parity:** every participant should have the same access to the discussion thread – the same chance of being heard, etc – as they would have had in a meeting being held conventionally)

**Opportunity for network building/socialisation:** a significant benefit off face-to-face meetings is the opportunity for pairs of participants, or larger groups, to break off for a chat... which may or may not be a part of, or even relevant to, the meeting

The foundation for the conventional approach to resolving these problems is exemplified by HP's "Halo" system – an ICT, bandwidth and A/V-technology intensive (though extremely expensive) video-conferencing system. Most CSCW environments implicitly embrace this kind of foundation and proceed with further ICT-based collaboration support tools.

This project aims to trial an alternative – and potentially very much cheaper – foundation. Instead of trying to replicate the "real world" collaboration experience, we propose, within an exceptionally popular commercially available simulation world "Second Life":

- to build a meeting facility in which team-members may interact via their representative avatars
- to capture, and later analyse, activity undertaken by teams collaborating within this environment
- [*in future work*] should the environment prove to have potential as a foundation for distributed collaboration, to specify requirements for, build and evaluate in practice additional collaboration support tools.

Because Second Life is proving to be exceptionally popular (perhaps even seductive) as a simulated environment for social activity, we believe there exists reason to believe (certainly sufficient to support investigation through a research project of this nature) that the environment may contribute to the resolution of the significant problems of distributed collaboration outlined above.

It is also expected that the successful applicant would gain a solid understanding of Australian Rules Football and/or Cricket (dependant on the time of year spent in Australia)

The project and thesis – which must be written in English – will be jointly supervised and examined by Prof Paul Swatman (University of South Australia) [paul.swatman@unisa.edu.au](mailto:paul.swatman@unisa.edu.au) and Prof Felix Hampe (University of Koblenz) [hampe@uni-koblenz.de](mailto:hampe@uni-koblenz.de). Interested students are invited to discuss the opportunity and/or the project with either.