



TIDSE 2006 Pre-Conference Demo Workshop:
The Authoring Process in Interactive Storytelling

Sunday, 3rd December 2006; 9:00 – 20:00

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION and ADVANCE PROGRAM

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVE

Over the last several years, conferences in the field of interactive entertainment have showcased numerous presentations concerning concepts and technology for Interactive Digital Storytelling: runtime systems, such as story engines, intelligent / autonomous agents, drama managers and conversational systems. They focus on solutions to the problem of combining dramatic storytelling with user interactivity. In contrast to the many technical contributions concerning runtime performance, few discussions have been initiated about the question of how a new breed of "interactive storytellers" would create concrete original artefacts with the proposed systems. In our opinion, the authoring process is likely to be a serious bottleneck for generating innovative products in the future.

This workshop takes a detailed and applied look at the creative process currently associated with state-of-the-art technology. Creators, researchers and tool developers present authoring approaches, show hands-on examples of creation and discuss with each other the prospects of a shared understanding of the future production process in Interactive Digital Storytelling. Demonstrations cover the principles and usage of visual editors for non-programmers, as well as the detailed steps of using script languages in an explained design process.

In order to better compare different creative approaches and philosophies, a reference story is used, serving as a shared theme for short demonstrations: the widely known Grimm's tale of "Little Red Cap" (German original: "Rotkäppchen"), sometimes also known as "Little Red Riding Hood". (For a text source see <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm026.html>)

Each contributor to the main demo program presents a brief treatment showing his/her particular adaptation of "Little Red Cap" to the philosophy of the respective interactive storytelling system. Then, the associated authoring steps and tools are demonstrated and illustrated by means of a short piece of content prepared in advance. Following up, plenary discussions in the context of the creative process include questions, such as:

- What is interactive storytelling, anyway?
- What is the scope of an author's work; who or what controls the resulting plot, and how?
- What constitutes the production chain in Interactive Digital Storytelling, which steps does it involve, and which cycles?
- Which aspect causes the biggest work load?
- How does collaboration between experts of different domains work?
- What kind of editors and tools exist? What aspects can or could be handled by visual authoring tools, and where is programming really required?
- How much of the process is intuition and creativity, and how much is software engineering or simply assiduity?

WORKSHOP ADVANCE PROGRAM

This program is preliminary and may be subject to minor changes. It covers the schedule of the main program of demonstrations showing "Little Red Cap" adaptations. Further periods (breaks, closing session) provide the possibility for all participants to show and discuss demonstrations of tools and concepts, and enable the breakout into open space discussions.

Participation is limited to 30 participants to enable focused discussions. It is free of any cost; only personal expenses for ordered lunch will apply (we will organize a pizza service). So please bring some Euro's for your own expenses. Participation requires an email-application before the deadline including a short personal position statement. Acceptance of complete applications is based on a "first come, first served" policy.

Sunday, 3rd December 2006; 9:00 – 20:00

09:00 Registration, meet & greet, demo installations

09:30 INTRODUCTIONS

Organizational and thematic overview [Spierling, Iurgel]

Personal introductions [1 minute per person, all participants]

SESSION 1: 3 Quick demos (15min demo/15min Q&A) & 30min summary/discussion

10:15 Ido Iurgel: Cyranus. "Red Cap's Nightmare"
10:45 Ulrike Spierling, Sebastian Weiß: Scenejo. "Meddling"
11:15 Knut Hartmann: Hierarchical Authoring Tool. "Play with the Devil"
11:45 DISCUSSION and transition to "open space"

12:15-13:30 LUNCH ("pizza taxi") /// Parallel demos and open space discussions

SESSION 2: 3 Quick demos (15min demo/15min Q&A) & 30min summary/discussion

13:30 Stéphane Donikian: DraMachina.
14:00 Mark Riedl: Fabulist / Automated Story Director.
14:30 Marc Cavazza, Fred Charles, David Pizzi: Narrative and Planning Formalisms.
15:00 DISCUSSION and transition to "open space"

15:30 - 16:30 COFFEE /// Parallel demos and open space discussions

SESSION 3: 3 Quick demos (15min demo/15min Q&A) & 30min summary/discussion

16:30 Nicolas Szilas: IDtension. "And the wolf became vegetarian... "
17:00 Michael Kriegel, Ana Paiva: FearNot!-architecture "FATiMA".
17:30 Chris Crawford: Storytron.
18:00 DISCUSSION and transition to "open space"

18:30 SHORT CLOSING REMARKS

Summary, follow-up, possible publication [Spierling, Iurgel]

18:45 RED CAP surprise (cake and wine!) /// Last possibility for demos and open space

(... around 20:00, optional: Gradually adjourn to a cosier place such as a bar nearby ...)

2nd and "last" **CALL FOR PARTICIPATION** (10 November 2007)



How To Participate: From now on, there are **two options** of how to apply for participation:

- 1) As an active participant in the discussions.
- 2) As an active participant, additionally presenting an **Authoring System for Interactive Digital Storytelling** in the demonstration area during breaks.

Deadline for applications: **22 Nov 2006**.

(Warning: Try to apply earlier. The number of participants is limited to 30. Complete applications will be considered in the order received!)



For Registration, please send an application email to the organizers (spierling@fh-erfurt.de and ido.iurgel@zgdv.de), containing a one page text with the following information:

- 1) Personal information and a brief position statement in the topic of the workshop.
- 2) In case you want to demonstrate an Authoring System for Interactive Storytelling during the breaks, please apply explicitly adding a description of the system, as well as spatial and technical requirements.



After Acceptance: Please be prepared to provide us **before 30 November** with one or two MS-Powerpoint slide(s) to be used during our introduction round (1 minute per person); containing your personal information and position statement in brief. Further, be prepared to be an active participant and bring along your open questions, comments and visions. Any contribution of thought in the context of creation is interesting. We will arrange for an open space environment that allows to easily initiate and follow up debates in the breaks and to let all participants be active.



Take Away: We envision a small friendly workshop with lots of practical insights, open discussions and fun. We appreciate very much any level of technical contribution. We don't worry about software bugs or unfinished systems; we rather want to gain a better understanding of the general creative production process in our field. We believe that at the end of the day, participants will take away valuable insight into the interactive story "factories" of others, as well as important feedback for their own work. Workshop results are subsequently reported on the Web. Depending on the results and discussions at the workshop, a joint publication will be considered.

Contact: Please feel free to send us questions and suggestions.

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