For many, the biggest problem with email communication is that often statements are taken out of context, subsequently leading to numerous exchanges to clear the misunderstandings. Such problems aren’t new and are a fact of life in any single-media communication, unless detailed contextual information accompanies the messages.

Compare this with face-to-face communication, which naturally engages all of the senses. Without effort, we’re capable of context-aware speech and gesture recognition.

For example, on hearing a sentence, we infer as much from the tone, timbre, and variability of the audible sound as the sentence itself. That, augmented by observing the gestures, further enhances our comprehension.

This process of information fusion, which we’re capable of doing effortlessly, must be incorporated into our computerized multimedia systems if we’re to develop compelling applications. Such aggregation and integration of information comes about when we take into account the many correlations that exist among different strands of media types.

In other words, it isn’t sufficient to process, analyze, and comprehend the content information inherent in each single media type. What we need is the ability to fully exploit joint characteristics—aesthetic and otherwise—of different strands. To put it another way, we must treat multimedia as correlated media. That’s how we can improve perceptual quality of multimedia presentations.

Wrapping up this discussion of correlated media, I’d like to share the news of my relocation. Starting January 2004, I will be at Wright State University. My new email is golshani@cs.wright.edu. I look forward to my new locale and to hearing more from this lively community in 2004. MM

Readers may contact Editor-in-Chief Forouzan Golshani at golshani@cs.wright.edu.

We’d love to hear from you!
Submit your thoughts for publication in our new column, “Reader’s Remarks.”

Email Forouzan Golshani at golshani@cs.wright.edu.