Preface

VS-Games 2011

Welcome to the Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Games and Virtual Worlds for Serious Applications (VS-Games 2011) which was held on 4-6 May 2011 in Athens, Greece. VS-Games 2011 was jointly organised by the national Technical University of Athens (NTUA) and the Interactive Worlds Applied Research Group (iWARG), Faculty of Engineering and Computing, Coventry University, and was awarded technical sponsorship by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).

The term ‘Serious Games’ covers a broad range of applications from Adobe Flash-based applications to fully immersive 3D environments where users interact with large volumes of data through sophisticated digital interfaces. The shift towards immersive world applications being used to support, among others, education and training activities, marks the beginning of new challenges that present considerable scope for collaborative and multi-disciplinary research solutions, as well as opportunities for innovative development. VS-Games 2011 addressed some of the significant challenges of the cross-disciplinary community that work around these serious application areas by bringing the community together to share case studies of practice, to present virtual world infrastructure developments, as well as new frameworks, methodologies and theories, and to begin the process of developing shared cross-disciplinary outputs.

We were pleased to have received a high quality of international submissions. In total, we received 45 submissions and each full paper had 4 reviews while short papers, posters and workshop papers received 3 reviews. We had submissions from 25 different countries from all over the world. This year’s accepted papers cover a diverse set of topics in the following two main streams of the conference: games and virtual world applications for serious purposes. In particular, submissions included: case studies for serious games, virtual worlds and games technology, serious games methodologies, serious games and virtual worlds for cultural heritage, serious games and virtual worlds for health and learning in virtual worlds.

We have also organised 2 workshops, which were held at the last day of the conference. The first workshop (Natural Interaction and Player Satisfaction in Games) aimed at bringing together specialists from machine learning and vision, computational intelligence, affective computing, and multimodal interfaces to discuss advances in designing and measuring player experience and affect induction, sensing and modelling. The second workshop (Leveraging the Potential of Virtual Worlds) aimed in examining the ways in which the capabilities of Virtual Worlds can be exploited. We are interested in both technological and sociological approaches as well as in case studies showcasing the areas that can benefit from using Virtual Worlds and the challenges and risks involved.

From the submissions, 15 full papers were accepted, of which 3 were in ‘Case Studies’, 3 in ‘Virtual Worlds and Games Technology’, 3 in ‘Serious Games Methodologies’, 2 in ‘Serious Games and Virtual Worlds for Cultural Heritage’, 2 in ‘Serious Games and Virtual Worlds for Health’ and 2 in ‘Learning in Virtual Worlds’. There were 12 accepted short papers of these 2 were in ‘Case Studies’, 3 in ‘Virtual Worlds and Games Technology’, 3 in ‘Serious Games Methodologies’, 2 in ‘Serious Games and Virtual Worlds for Cultural Heritage’ and 2 in ‘Serious Games and Virtual Worlds for Health’. We furthermore accepted 5 posters and received 2 invited papers from the keynote speakers. We also had 2 workshops of which the ‘Natural interaction and player satisfaction in games’ workshop accepted 4 full papers, whereas the ‘Leveraging the Potential of Virtual Worlds’ workshop accepted 5 full papers.

We would like to thank the local Organising Committee for all their hard work towards making the conference possible. Also special thanks go to our student volunteer Mr. Athanasios Vourvopoulos for his valuable help before and during the conference. In addition, we would like to thank all of the members of the IPC, the external reviewers, the authors, the workshop organisers as well as the 2 keynote speakers.
who made this conference a success. Finally, the sponsors of the conference iWARG, SGI, Foundation of the Hellenic World and IEEE have made valuable contributions to the conference.

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