In-depth

Reconstructions of Medieval Wolfenbuttel in Showcase 4

selection of subjects and themes to create a personalized "story", appropriate to his or her interests and the time available for the visit. Such stories will be spoken by avatars, which will also populate virtual reconstructions, addressing (possibly through alternative versions) still unresolved questions about
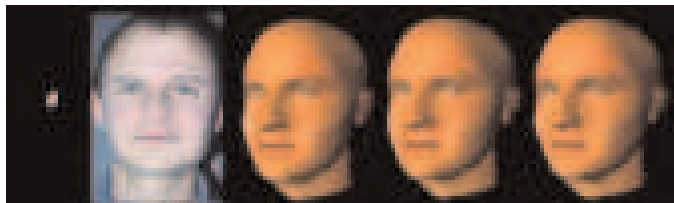
Creating avatar expression in Showcase 6

the ancient inhabitants of the site – their dress, their behavior, and their physical stature and appearance.

Showcase 7 is more concerned with archaeological research as it plans to produce models for archaeological documentation compliant with the CIDOC-CRM and applicable excavations, survey and collections. It does not ignore visual communication issues, aiming at recovering past images for this goal.

Showcase 8 uses images for 3D accurate and photo-realistic modelling. It is being applied to such famous examples as the destroyed Bamiyan Buddha statue, of which very little documentation exists – and no physical remain at all, after the Taliban destruction. This showcase uses a world famous example to demonstrate that even so difficult cases can be managed.

Whenever presented, showcases not only have increased the awareness among culture professionals of the IT potential, being very well accepted; but also new proposals were suggested for further applications.

Avatars are also the core of showcase 6, using interactive storytelling, which allows the visitor to choose from a large

---

Showcases are a great challenge for EPOCH to involve users and for partners to participate in the Network's activity. Even if their budget allocation is limited, showcases may create new opportunities for partners – directly involved in their development or not – for new joint activity with cultural institutions needing similar applications. For this reason, the bursary program includes the possibility of short secondments for young researchers to be involved in showcase development. According to this plan, young researchers from any partner may temporarily move to work with another partner involved in a showcase, to improve their training and develop a similar application at their home institution. This has happened in Summer 2004 for showcase 5 and the related additional application will be reported at VAST2004. It must be noted that the home partner of the participating researcher has zero budget within EPOCH. In this case, EPOCH funds travel and accommodation for the young researcher, enabling her or him to move and stay with the host partner for a period of up to two months. Without such support, the secondment costs should be supported by the home institution or by the researchers themselves.

This opportunity is one of the advantages available for all EPOCH partners, in particular for those partners that are not directly involved in budgeted activities. Others are support for EPOCH-approved course organization and scholarships for course attendance. The latter may facilitate own students to go abroad and improve their training, or provide an additional international audience to own courses. The two Summer courses in Hungary and Romania are examples of how partners not participating in funded activities may benefit of EPOCH partnership. EPOCH also provides support for events related to its scope organized by partners, individually or jointly.

Brokerage is finally another concrete example of an opportunity for partners to be further involved and receive funding from EPOCH.

Apart from financial support, all EPOCH partners benefit from being in the Network, concurring to shape the Research Agenda and forming Network's plans. As always in life, this requires some initiative on the partners' side, submitting proposals and pointing out new fields of intervention. For active institutions, the Network may be a valuable way for exetnding their activity by establishing new contacts and starting new projects.