



New Media for a New Millennium

PRESS RELEASE

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Movies to become unique to each viewer

**Want a romantic version of Star Wars? Or your own cut of Big Brother?
A new EU project aims to personalise our viewing and create a new media genre.**

The recently launched EU project 'New Media for a New Millennium' (NM2) is developing a set of software tools aimed at creating a new media genre. In the same way that TV did not just provide radio with pictures, NM2 aims to be the catalyst for entirely new genres of audiovisual media. The project will enable viewers to watch a personalised production from a larger pool of original content. By illustration, viewers could elect to watch a short romantic production of a movie like *Star Wars – Attack of the Clones*, or only those parts of a historical documentary that relate to art, or their own versions of reality TV shows like *Big Brother*.

To enable this new media genre, NM2 will create innovative production tools that will ensure all personalised versions of the media are attractive and engaging. In addition, NM2 will create a new mechanism for retrieving media content and creating the personalised stories. The enabling technologies behind this new form of multimedia storytelling include broadband connectivity, cheap mass storage, intelligence at the edge of data networks, and object-based media techniques.

Peter Stollenmayer from Eurescom, NM2's co-ordinator, said: "Media productions in digital formats will soon become user driven. This new experience is interactive, personalised and based on developing new ideas about non-linear narratives. Viewers will be able to interact directly with the medium and influence what they see and hear according to their personal tastes and wishes. Media users will no longer be passive viewers but become active engagers."

Dr. Doug Williams from BT, NM2's technical project manager, said: "The three-year project has an ambitious aim: to identify a new mass market media genre. The new media genre will allow stories to be adapted, on the fly, for an individual viewer. We think this will be immensely attractive for viewers and for advertisers, but it means we have to think about the whole production process from concept to credits."

John Wyver from TV producer Illuminations Television Limited, a NM2 partner, said: "The software tool that we produce will be extremely sophisticated. It's not just a matter of stringing together the romantic or action portions of a production. The tool has to know which bits fit together both visually, by observing the time-honoured rules that go into editing, and in terms of the story. Only then will the personalised version both make sense and be aesthetically pleasing."

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New Media for a New Millennium

Seven different media productions will provide the test cases for the NM2 production tools. These range from news reporting and documentaries through a quality drama serial to an experimental television production about love. NM2 brings together media creators, scholars and producers with communications engineers, software developers and social scientists in order to advance media development. The 13 partners from eight European countries cover a wide range of skills and cultural backgrounds. As an Integrated Project under the 6th Framework Programme of the European Union, NM2 is partly financed by the European Commission.

About NM2

NM2, New Media for a New Millennium, is an Integrated Project under the European 6th Framework Programme in the thematic priority of Information Society Technology. The main goal of the interdisciplinary project is to create new production tools for the media industry. These tools will enable the easy production in technically standardised formats of non-linear, personalised media genres based on sound and moving images suitable for transmission over broadband networks. NM2 is running from September 2004 to August 2007.

The project has 13 partners from 8 European countries:

Technical

BT, UK (technical project manager); Joanneum Research, Austria; Goldsmiths College, UK; Telefónica I+D, Spain; Sony Netservices, Austria; Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

Media production

Cambridge University Moving Image Studio (CUMIS), UK; Illuminations Television Limited, UK; University of Art & Design Helsinki, Finland; University of Ulster, School of Art & Design, UK; Malmö University, Arts and Communication (Sweden)

Consumer behaviour & business analysis

Netherlands Organisation For Applied Scientific Research – TNO, Netherlands

Management

Eurescom, Germany

NM2 website: www.ist-nm2.org

About EU Framework Programme 6

The EU Framework Programme 6 (FP6) has two main strategic objectives: Strengthening the scientific and technological bases of industry and encouraging its international competitiveness while promoting research activities in support of other EU policies. FP6 is focused on a number of thematic priorities, including Information Society Technologies.

EU FP6 website: <http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/home.cfm>

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