Second Life

Extending Community to Globally Dispersed Learners

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We didn’t start out to do this

The initial impetus for the virtual worlds project was:

How do we help incoming freshman make more intelligent choices about which residence hall is ‘right’ for them?
Traditional Approach

Baker Hall | Random | Simmons Hall

362 Memorial Drive
Cambridge, MA 02139
Front desk: (617) 253-2345

290 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139
Front desk: (617) 258-2345

229-243 Vassar Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
Front desk: (617) 253-5107

View Location: Baker Hall
Go to visit Baker Hall

View Location: Random
Go to visit Random Home

View Location: Simmons Hall
Go to visit Simmons Homepage

### Building capacity:
- 344 beds

### 06-07 Cost per semester:
- single $3102 double $2741
  - Plus $250/semester for preferred dining membership

### House tax for 06-07:
- estimated $75/semester

### Health/Allergy consideration:
- elevator, no smoking inside, no pets (except fish)

### Upperclass room sizes:
- singles, doubles

### Freshmen room sizes:
- doubles
Residence Halls Differ

Simmons Hall
Character varies

Random Hall
How do we capture ‘culture’?

What can we do to better convey the real differences in residence hall environments to incoming freshman?

What would a good systems design engineer do?
IDEO’s approach to design

Designing space as a narrative and identity

...exchanging the idea of a place for place itself.
Enthnographic Analysis

Team of interviewers:
- an anthropologist
- a graphics designer
- a game designer

Interview students in different residence halls. What “matters” to them? What do they value? Where/how do they engage with each other in the dorm?
Initial Models from GHOST

A game-based environment students would play before coming to campus - learning about the local environment

Elements of Habbo Hotel, SL and Sims Online
What about SL?

Let’s look at SL stats from January 2007.
Total hours used by all residents

Land size (km²)


Notes:
- A region is 65,536 sqm
- A private island region costs either $195 per month or $295 per month depending upon when it was bought
- Mainland pricing ranges from $3 per 1000 sqm to $10 per 1000 sqm
- A km² equals 1,000,000 sqm
- Manhattan Island is approximately 60 km²

10/31/2006
12/31/2006
11/30/2006
1/31/2007
Population snapshot


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>% of Residents</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>31.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>12.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>10.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>8.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>6.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>3.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>3.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>3.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>2.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>1.48%</td>
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The top 3 countries accounting for over 50% of the active users speak 3 totally different languages: English, French, and German. How is communication hindered in-world?
M/F vs. time

- 65.00%
- 48.75%
- 32.50%
- 16.25%
- 0%

Female | Male

January 2007

June 2005

September 2003

Interesting tidbit on this slide:
What occurred in June 2005 that brought the gender so close together?
Then something opposite occurred....
Something is happening
We want one...but........
**We needed to talk to IP Counsel**

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TOS Monster

Indemnification
NMC to the Rescue
We’ve finessed the space, now what?

Question: Can we call the sim in SL MIT?

Issue: Use of the MIT “brand” in the context of commercial software.

Answer: the MIT Island is being controlled by MIT personnel, *as approved by the SL Committee*, for the benefit of MIT Affiliates - it’s ‘OK’
Who is the SL Advisory Committee?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First</th>
<th>Last</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Dept.</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Category</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>Mitchell</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Program in Media Arts and Sciences</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wjm@mit.edu">wjm@mit.edu</a></td>
<td>Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>Larson</td>
<td>Changing Places (Architecture &amp; Media Lab) Professor</td>
<td>Department of Architecture</td>
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<td>Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Takehiko</td>
<td>Nagakura</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Department of Architecture</td>
<td><a href="mailto:takehiko@MIT.EDU">takehiko@MIT.EDU</a></td>
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The rules in SL are the same as in RL
Proxy Ownership
Early arrivals to class
spotlight: creating student space in a virtual world
Second Life design competition
Rules of the Competition

MIT Second Life Student Design Competition:
Conveying Residential Living and Culture in Second Life

NEWS 3/21/07: We’re holding an online tutorial in Second Life today at 5pm. The event will be in Second Life, but many of us will be logging on in room 10-337. Stop in and join us!

The goal of this project is to design and create a student-created space within Second Life that represents the MIT campus. These architectures will be represented by clusters of pods. The pods will be modular, replicable, and easily customizable, such that any MIT student can join Second Life and with little foreknowledge create and add their own pod to a cluster. It is not necessary for the architecture to resemble the visual appearance of actual MIT structures. What will be important will be the manner in which the pods are created, and how they interact and connect with each other.

Each team will be faced with two tasks in this, namely:
1. To submit a written proposal detailing how the pods would be created, describing their properties, and demonstrating how they would fit together
2. To actually create an instance of the proposed pod within Second Life, as described by the design scheme in part 1. Teams may also optionally create a cluster structure.

At the end of the competition submissions will be judged, and the winning team will receive a $500 prize!

Sponsorship

The Second Life Design Competition is sponsored by the $100k MIT Entrepreneurship Competition® and the Education Arcade®.

The Office of Educational Innovation and Technology (OEIT) within the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Education, provides support and direction to the MIT Second Life virtual world initiative®.

Thanks also for the support and assistance by the MIT Home Page Team, IS&T, for their on-going help and policy assistance.

What is Second Life?

Second Life is an online virtual world in which people can interact, play, do business, and communicate through avatars. MIT is actively exploring the potential for enhancing teaching, learning and creative expression using Second Life. For more general information about Second Life check out the Second Life Website®, learn about educational uses of Second Life at the New Media Consortium Second Life Blog® or read more at Wikipedia®. For information about MIT’s activities to use Second life for teaching and research, contact OEIT® or call 617-253-1981.

http://confab.mit.edu/confluence/display/sldc
“But the thrill we’ll never see is the thrill you’ll get when you get your picture on the cover of web site MIT”
Audio streamed for teaching
What if students build those attributes of their culture that the administration doesn’t currently (want to) see?

A former Dean of Undergraduate Students saw “red” in exposing student culture more publicly.
Next Steps - Second Life

project list

1. GHOST project - SL edition - building virtual residence halls in SL; sort of a 3D FaceBook

2. Urban Planning - layout, zoning, landscaping ideas for virtual worlds

3. Student Architecture Design Competition - Learning Spaces

4. Disabilities: Living Second LIfe with a Disability plan
What’s next?

5. Visualizing Cultures - Perry's introduction of the "West" to Japan

6. Visualizing Cultures II - interaction between physical VizCult museum exhibit and the virtual representations of it

7. Architecture in Virtual Worlds - from closed plan to open plan to virtual plan

8. Projecting the “MIT community” globally
Thank you.

Your progress: http://confab.mit.edu/confluence/display/
Pop Quiz

What/who (?) was the first avatar widely viewed on the web? -- Phil? -- coincidence? I don’t think so!

Phil the avatar in Apple’s Knowledge Navigator ad, 1987.