

Editorial

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A couple of months ago, we were in Rome for the fourth edition of the Game and Learning Alliance – Gala Conf 2015 (<http://www.galaconf.org>). The conference has been a success both for number of participants and for quality of the presented works, leading to interesting discussions and exchanges.

Best papers have been selected and authors are now preparing the extended versions of their works, that will be reviewed for an upcoming special issue on the International Journal of Serious Games.

In a ceremony during the conference, best serious games were awarded the SGS awards, both in the category business and academy.

Workshops, particularly in the fields of healthcare, intelligent transportation and management, have revealed interesting trends, especially in the mentioned application fields.

During the conference, the annual general assembly of the Serious Games Society was held. Among other decisions, the assembly selected the venue for Gala Conf 2016, that will take place in Utrecht, the Netherlands, on December 5-7, 2016. Also, in collaboration with the Laval University, SGS is organizing Gala Quebec, October 11-12 2016 in Ville de Quebec, Canada.

I now proceed with a short presentation to the papers featured in the current issue of the IJSG, which is the first one of the third year.

Boletsis and Mc Callum [1] present the “Cognitive Augmented Reality Cubes” (CogARC) system, a serious game for cognitive training and screening, utilising an interaction technique based on Augmented Reality and the manipulation of tangible, physical objects (cubes). The game is a collection of cognitive mini-games and is, primarily, targeting elderly players. A preliminary usability study provides interesting insights into the game design elements, integration of Augmented Reality, tangible interaction of the system, and on how elderly players perceive and use those interaction components.

Sinclair and Livingstone [2] examine combining the complementary strengths of Petri Nets and serious games for an accurate design of complex systems. The novel contribution of this work is a serious game prototype of a complex system design that has been checked thoroughly. Underpinned by Petri Net analysis, the serious game can be used as a high-level interface to communicate and refine the design. Improvement of a complex system design is demonstrated by applying the Petri Net and serious game integration to a proof-of-concept case study.

Moeller and Kyvsgaard Hansen [3] investigate new analog (not digital) serious games and learning tools in the Danish market, with a focus on the drivers and influencing factors during their development and the effort of making a business out of the serious games. Besides from uncovering some of the basic motivations to design and develop serious games, the paper – which is based on close interaction and semi-structured interviews with serious game developers - shows how the game developers’ interaction with the end-users and their different business strategies, influences the way the game is developed.

The study by Kreutzer et al. [4] examines the use of a game-based training approach for enhancing surgical team communication skills. Participants who played the game achieved improved declarative knowledge, and had greater levels of training transfer relative to the control group. These results suggest that game-based training may be a promising mechanism for improving teamwork in the healthcare industry.

The paper by Hendrix et al. [5] investigates whether games can be effective cyber security training tools. The study is conducted by means of a structured literature review supplemented with a general web search. While there are early positive indications, there is not yet enough evidence to draw any definite conclusions. There is a clear gap in target audience with almost all products and studies targeting the general public and very little attention given to IT professionals and managers. The products and studies also mostly work over a short period, while it is known that short-term interventions are not particularly effective at affecting behavioural change.



References

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