

FP6 Coordination Action No 33909

<http://www.peachbit.org>

Deliverable:

D4.5 Outreach Report

Instrument:	Coordination Action
Contract number:	33909
Start date of project:	1 st May 2006
Duration:	36 months
Project Coordinator:	Giulio Ruffini, Starlab; giulio.ruffini@starlab.es
Document Reference:	Peach-A41-D45-V1.02
Document submission date:	Friday, 08 June 2007
Document version:	Issue 1 out of 3
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REVISION RECORD

ISSUE	DATE	UPDATES	AUTHOR
1	11/05/07	First draft	M.Smyth, Napier
2	17/05/07	Second draft	M.Smyth, Napier

ABSTRACT

This document will report the main activities undertaken in Year 1 of Work Package 4 of the Peach Project. The fundamental objectives of this work package are to promote Public Understanding of Presence research and foster Market Interaction. The team is responsible for Activity 4.1 Public Understanding and is tasked with defining objectives and communication strategies to reach the public and to analyse issues and hurdles for public acceptance of Presence Research.

The document will describe how these tasks have been addressed in Year 1 through three major activities. Firstly, through the design and development of the Peach web site. Secondly, through the production of an e-zine entitled Keho with the purpose of providing a vehicle for the dissemination of Presence research. Finally, through the organisation of a series of public events at the Edinburgh International Science Festival with the aim of encouraging debate among the general public concerning the potential for impact of Presence research. The document will conclude by describing the various promotional material created to support these Outreach activities, together with descriptions of events where the team has disseminated the work of Peach.

KEYWORDS

Outreach, dissemination, Web portal, Keho, e-zine, Science Fair Event, promotional material

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1 INTRODUCTION

This document will report the main activities undertaken by the Peach team in Year 1 of WP4 of the Peach Project. The fundamental objectives of this work package are to promote Public Understanding of Presence research and foster Market interaction. Specifically, NU as work package leader, is responsible for Activity 4.1 entitled Public Understanding and is tasked with defining objectives and communication strategies to reach the public and to analyse issues and hurdles for public acceptance of Presence research.

These tasks have been addressed in Year 1 through 3 major activities. Firstly, the design and development of a Peach web portal. Secondly, the production of an e-zine entitled Keho with the purpose of providing a vehicle for the dissemination of Presence research. Finally, the organisation of a series of public events at the Edinburgh International Science Festival with the aim of encouraging debate among the general public concerning the potential for impact of Presence research. The remainder of the report will describe these activities in more detail.

2 PEACH PORTAL WEB DESIGN (WWW.PEACHBIT.ORG)

2.1 THE RATIONALE

In order to create a single point of access to information about the activities being undertaken as part of the Peach project, a web site has been developed and is hosted at Starlab on a dedicated server. The intended audience for this web site include both academic and industrial researchers active in the field of presence and also individuals from other fields of research who could contribute to Presence research.

2.2 THE STRUCTURE OF THE PEACH WEB PORTAL

The A4.1 activity team has proactively collaborated with the A1.1 team gathering dissemination information, and reviewing the efficiency of the Peach web site. Moreover, the A4.1 team has also proactively participated with A1.1 team to define the structure and contents of peachbit.org.

Peachbit.org is composed of the following elements, see Figures 1 & 2:

- A top part which contains:
 - ° a top-horizontal menu fully dedicated to provide information about the results achieved by all the different activities of the Peach CA
 - ° a left-vertical menu focused to provide information about the CA itself
- A central part has been subdivided in two columns:
 - ° The left column (Peach News) provides relevant information of the Peach CA: deliverables, events, documents, etc. It is a summary of the main CA latest achievements
 - ° The right column (Presence News) provides relevant information of the presence research field external to Peach and also includes information about the Peach e-zine, current and past issues and subscription details (see Section 3).
- A bottom bar including:
 - ° a bottom-vertical fast information search menu to inform the user about:
 - contact details
 - frequently asked questions
 - siteMap to facilitate navigation
 - ° The Google search tool to find, in a fast way, information inside peachbit.org
 - ° Relevant web layout information like:
 - Announcement of this web as the official Peach web to avoid copyright problems
 - Webmaster web
 - Web update date

The top-vertical menu provides overview information about the CA and that the top-horizontal menus and submenus relate to the different Peach activities as follows:

- Trends is related to A1.1 activities except the who is who
- Research is related to A1.2 activities

- Measurements is related to A1.3 activities
- Ethics is related to A2.1 activities
- Visions is related to A3.1 activities
- Outreach is related to A4.1 and A4.2 activities



Figure 1: Top part of <http://peachbit.org>. Includes clear view of the top-horizontal menu, and the left-vertical menu, as well as the home e-zine composed of two columns. One focused to provide CA information (left), and the other one focused to provide presence general information (right).

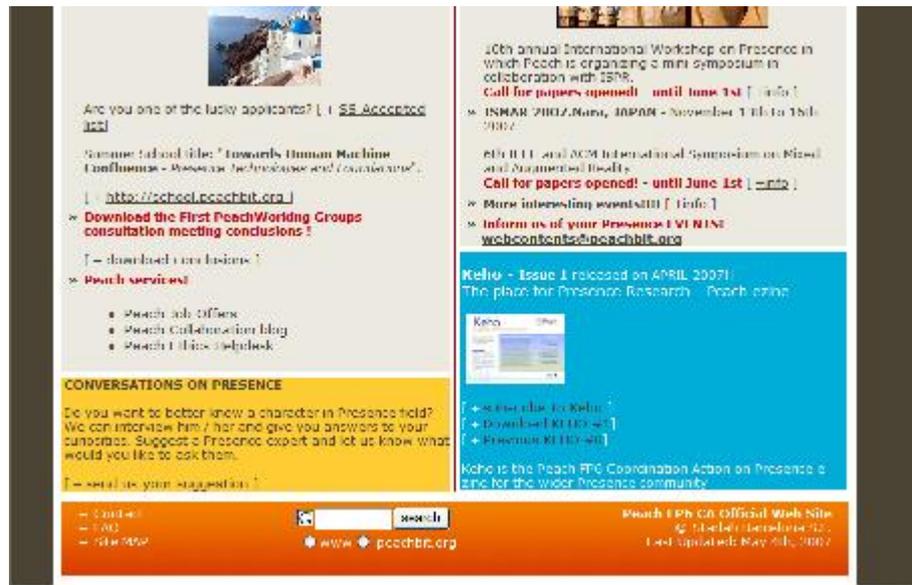


Figure 2: Bottom part of <http://peachbit.org> web. The image contains a bottom bar where the fast information search menu is provided together with the Google search tool and layout general info.

2.3 EVALUATION

The web site does not currently include an explicit statistical system to record the number of visits to peachbit.org. As an alternative the statistical record of visits offered by Google has been included in the system, and at the end of the second period the A4.1 team will be able to report to the EU the degree of dissemination of this promotional tool.

3 KEHO – THE PLACE FOR PRESENCE RESEARCH

Under Activity 4.1 Dissemination, the team had responsibility for the design, production and dissemination of an e-zine. The target audience for the e-zine was both the general public and the Presence research community. All editions of the e-zine would be hosted on the Peach website (www.peachbit.org) and would be available for download, together with an option to subscribe to future editions.

3.1 DESIGN CONCEPT

From the outset the design of the e-zine was seen as central to its audience appeal and therefore its ability to communicate. It was envisaged that it should have the look and feel of a magazine and this should be maintained whether it was viewed on screen or in a printed format. To inform this process a number of both commercial and academic e-zines were viewed. During this phase of the work a periodic on-line magazine produced by the San Francisco branch of the Industrial Design Society of America (www.idsa-sf.org/inca.htm) became influential in the teams thinking and subsequently acted as a model on which to base the format of the e-zine. In parallel with this activity a number of informal discussions took place with a graphic designer who worked with colleagues in Starlab. This was fruitful in that it enabled the team to communicate the vision for the e-zine and also provided a useful source of feedback. Subsequent to these activities the team at NU were able to identify the necessary skills for the e-zine editor position associated with the Peach project.

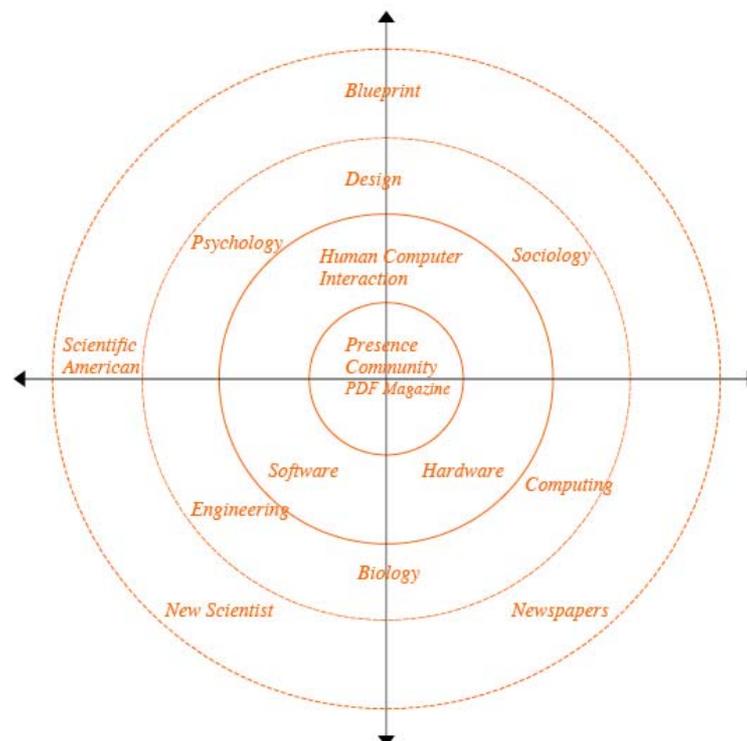


Figure 3. Communities and Fields that could contribute to Presence Research

The presence community has several parts (see Figure 3):

- At the centre are people who already most connected to the community, they may be actively engaged in current presence research, aware of the Peach project, and have signed up to Peach WinGs;
- Around the centre are individuals who may be aware of, and interested in, presence as an area of research, and actively keep up-to-date on developments in the field;
- At the edges of the community are people who are studying or working in related fields, who may not have developed an awareness of presence research, but who would be interested to know more about it if they were provided with relevant, appropriate information. These people may be interested in the e-zine but not ready to engage with the Peach project. This is likely to be a large potential audience for the e-zine.

3.2 THE AUDIENCE

Whilst the first of these groups is rightly served through the central Peach site, others will be interested in the Keho e-zine but may be unwilling or not ready to engage with the Peach project. Keho aims to address all these different groups in an accessible and engaging way. The presentation style will be close to a professional magazine and will cover a wide range of presence-related topics; it will introduce readers to new research, discuss issues and spark debate. The content will include: short articles; scenarios taken from the presence Integrated Projects; reviews of books and events; profiles and laboratory overviews; news items and letters. An associated web site might also include animation, audio and video files, RSS feeds, debate and other social activities. Back issues could be indexed and searchable and readers will receive an email alert when each new issue is published.

3.3 THE RATIONALE BEHIND KEHO

The choice of the name Keho for the e-zine was deliberate as Keho is a Finnish word that refers to the phenomenology of mind and body as was felt to capture some of the main themes current in the field of presence research. From the outset Keho has been viewed as a vehicle through which the Presence community can connect, both with itself and critically with other fields of research that could contribute to the debate. The philosophy of the e-zine is that it should be accessible to these diverse audiences and, while supporting the existing presence community, it should also reach out to others and thereby encourage greater participation.

3.4 THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

3.4.1 The Production of Issue 0

In order to maximise the initial impact of the e-zine and to specifically target the presence community, it was decided to produce a concise "issue 0" in time for the PM2 and IST 2006 at Helsinki. This issue was in the form of a prototype so that comments and feedback could be made in time for the first "real" issue 1, which was scheduled for publication in April 2007. Issue 0 of Keho went live on the Peach website some weeks after the IST event but paper copies of the e-zine were available for delegates and publicity material was distributed during the conference (Figure 4). Some sample pages from issue 0 of Keho are provided in Figure 5. The e-zine was publicised on a variety of Presence and related discipline mailing lists, including Presence-L and the British HCI Group. This alerted researchers to the existence of the e-zine but also called for contributions and provided instructions for subscription to future editions of Keho. Full text of the mail can be found in Table 1.

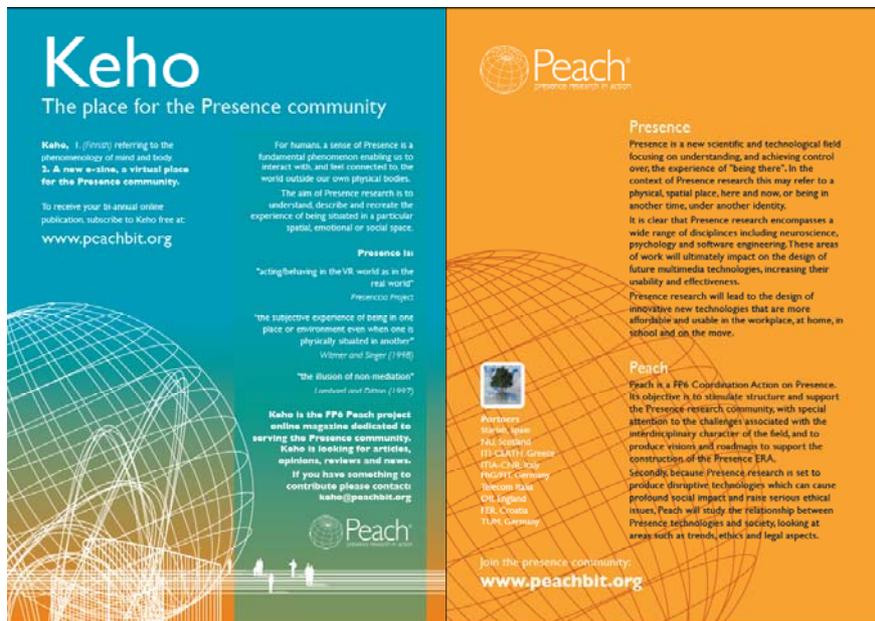


Figure 4. Front and Back pages of Keho publicity flyer distributed at IST 2006.



Figure 5. Sample pages from Issue 0 of Keho e-zine.

Keho – the place for Presence research

Keho is a new online magazine for the Presence research community. It is the e-zine of Peach, a European project aimed at supporting Presence research. The first issue of Keho will be available to download from the Peach website www.peachbit.org in Spring 2007. A sample issue is online now.

Contribute

Keho is looking for input from people working in the field of Presence. Do you have news about an interesting project or an event to share, an opinion about the direction Presence research is, or should be, taking, or perhaps an idea for a feature on Presence research in action? We would welcome your suggestions for articles for Keho. If you would like to contribute to the first issue please get in touch with the editor, before January 31st, i.helgason@napier.ac.uk or have a look at the Keho wiki: <http://keho.pbwiki.com>

Subscribe

If you would like to be notified when the first issue of Keho is available please subscribe to the mailing list at keho@peachbit.org

Keep us in touch

We would like to be kept in touch with your activities. If you have a news mailing list please add the Keho editor: i.helgason@napier.ac.uk

About Peach

Peach is an EU-funded, Sixth Framework Programme Coordination Action on Presence, which aims to promote and support the networking and coordination of research and innovation activities. Its objective is to stimulate structure and support the Presence research community, with special attention to the challenges associated to the interdisciplinary character of the field.

Secondly, because Presence research is set to produce disruptive technologies which can cause profound social impact and raise serious ethical issues, Peach will study the relationship between Presence technologies and society, looking at areas such as trends, ethics and legal aspects. Peach is also working to foster contact between researchers and the market, and enhance the public understanding of Presence research and technology.

Table 1. Text of Keho Mailshot.

3.4.2 The Production of Issue 1.

The experience gained during the production of Issue 0 of Keho alerted the team to areas where more time would have to be scheduled, most notably in the overall proofing of the e-zine content. To formalise this process a production schedule was created and agreed among the team (see Table 2).

	Date - 2007	Week
Initial planning meeting at Napier: Discuss possible articles and ideas, draw up detailed list of contents, authors to be approached etc.	Wed 10th January	1
Deadline for notification of intention to contribute to e-zine	Wed 31st January	4
Send copy of outline/concept design to Starlab for comment	Wed 7th February	5
Deadline for submission of articles & other material	Fri 16th Feb	6
Release final draft paper copy for review and comments at PM2 and WinG meeting, and for Starlab to proof read	Thurs 8th & Fri 9th March	9
Deadline for notifying Napier of any corrections / amendments	Frid 16th March	10
Final issue uploaded to Peachbit site, in time for April Science festival event.	Frid 23rd March	11

Table 2. Production schedule for Keho Issue 1.

The aim was to produce Issue 1 of the e-zine to coincide with the Presence events being staged at the Edinburgh International Science Festival in April 2007.

Issue 1 of Keho contained a number of diverse articles that reflected the issues that are in the forefront of researchers' minds and have the potential to impact on the lives of all in the future. Riva considered whether robots can ever experience a sense of presence and what implications this could have for future interactions, while Harrison and Mair reflect on the role of audio in conveying presence in both real and virtual environments. Finally, Schroeder discussed the ethical issues of presence experimentation in the light of the debate surrounding the recent virtual Milgram experiments undertaken by Slater and colleagues.

The issue included information about forthcoming presence events and also reviews of relevant conferences and workshops. Regular sections including job offers, a collaboration blog and a Peach Help Desk aiming to provide support in the areas of ethical, legal and gender issues were also provided. The e-zine also provided a section detailing the latest progress on the 4 Integrated Projects funded under the FP6 Presence Initiative. Sample pages from Issue 1 of Keho are provided in Figure 6.



Figure 6. Sample pages from Issue 1 of Keho e-zine.

3.5 THE RELATIONSHIP OF KEHO WITH PEACH AND WITH THE INTEGRATED PROJECTS

To date the 'taster' edition (Issue 0) and the first complete edition of Keho (Issue 1) have been produced by the team. As a consequence of the production, the relationship between Keho and Peach has begun to crystallise. Keho is part of Peach in that it is produced under the auspices of the project and at a tangible level is hosted on the Peach website. In essence this means that contact with the e-zine has to take place via the Peach website, which from a project standpoint makes complete sense. Where this relationship becomes more problematic is the intended audience of the Peach website being somewhat at odds with the more public facing Keho. Over the remaining time of the project it is envisaged that this relationship will develop in a positive manner as all members of the Peach project remain committed to the support and development of the Presence community.

In a similar manner, the first two editions of Keho have failed to develop stronger links between Peach and the IPs. From the outset it was envisaged that the work conducted by the IPs would be a major source of content for the new e-zine. This has not transpired and is an area where the Peach project will have to become more proactive. This, coupled with the advances made within the IPs should provide more content and subsequent dissemination of the research via Keho.

3.6 CONCLUSIONS

In the first year of the Peach project, one full edition of Keho has been published together with an initial 'taster' issue. While the form of Keho remains in development and the mechanisms the e-zine provides continue to be explored over forthcoming issues and the creation of an e-zine that both informs existing researchers and invites others to participate is an ideal to which the editorial team remain committed.

4 THE SCIENCE FAIR EVENT

4.1 THE EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FESTIVAL

The third strand in the team's work on the Outreach work package (WP4.1) was the organisation of a public Science Fair Event aimed at disseminating the output from Presence research to the general public and thereby encouraging a more eclectic debate concerning the impact of such work on peoples' lives. This was scheduled for March 2007.

Every Easter a Science festival is held in Edinburgh, Scotland. This is a large event with hands-on activities aimed at 8 – 12 year olds and a public talks programme aimed at members of the general public. The event is well publicised with 50,000 brochures produced, many more visiting the festival web site and over 100,000 people attending the events. About 9000 people attend the public talks programme.

The team discussed possible involvement with this festival with the organisers, finally agreeing to host two public talks and a public panel debate to be supported by the Peach coordination action for Presence research. Further support was secured from Napier University.

In 2007 the Edinburgh International Science Festival ran from April 3rd to April 17th in 2007. The talks were scheduled for the 5th and 7th April with the panel on the 6th from 2pm – 5pm. Approximately, 33 people attended the talk on April 5th and around 23 attended the talk on April 7th. Over fifty attended the panel. The talks were publicised through a programme published by the Science Festival, see Figure 7.



Figure 7. Web based publicity material for presentations at the Edinburgh International Science Festival.

The talks were titled as follows:

- Future Places: Augmenting the real with virtual worlds – Prof David Benyon, Napier University, Edinburgh.
- Social interaction: within virtual environments – Prof Mel Slater, Imperial College London and ICREA-Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Barcelona.

4.2 THE PUBLIC PANEL

To support the talks in the main Science Festival, a public panel session was also organised. The panel was entitled 'Replacing the Real: the role of artificial experience in society'. It was attended by approximately 45 people. The web site entry for this part of the event was as follows.

In the next few years virtual reality technologies will provide incredibly realistic simulations of the real. At the same time concerns about terrorism, global warming and population growth will make travel and other real experiences more dangerous and expensive. As a result people's experiences of places and other people, of history and culture will be increasingly mediated by technologies. In this panel forum leading figures from literature, architecture, transport and cultural heritage will lead a discussion of the benefits and dangers that arise as we replace the real with simulated experiences.

The panel was chaired by Professor David Benyon with contributions from Peter McColl, a politician, Oli Mival, a researcher in computing, Richard Murphy, an architect and Chris van der Kuyl, a games developer. Publicity material for this event and the 2 talks within the main science festival is provided in Figure 8 together with images of all 3 events in Figure 9.



Events are taking place during the Edinburgh International Science Festival as part of the work of the PEACH Presence Research in Action project to promote greater public understanding of the concept of Presence. Organised by PEACH Presence Research in Action www.peschbit.org

Thursday 5th April 6pm - 7pm	Friday 6th April 2pm - 5pm	Saturday 7th April 4pm - 5pm
Future Places: Augmenting the real with virtual worlds	Replacing the Real: the role of artificial experience in society	Social Interaction within Virtual Environments
Public Talk: Professor David Benyon, Centre for Interaction Design, Napier University What is presence? How do we know where we are? How will we know how to distinguish the real from the unreal?	Public Panel discussion In this panel forum leading figures from literature, architecture, transport and cultural heritage will lead a discussion of the benefits and dangers that arise as we replace the real with simulated experiences.	Public Talk: Professor Mel Slater (ICREA-Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain) Mel Slater discusses the exciting new research involving humans and virtual humans in environments simulated by a computer.
National Museum of Scotland, Lecture Theatre, Chambers Street Tickets £7/£5 from: www.sciencefestival.co.uk	Penthouse, Point Conference Centre, Bread Street Tickets for this event are free: to reserve please email: Uedgson@napier.ac.uk	National Museum of Scotland, Lecture Theatre, Chambers Street Tickets £7/£5 from: www.sciencefestival.co.uk

Figure 8. Publicity material for the Public Dissemination events at the Edinburgh International Science Festival

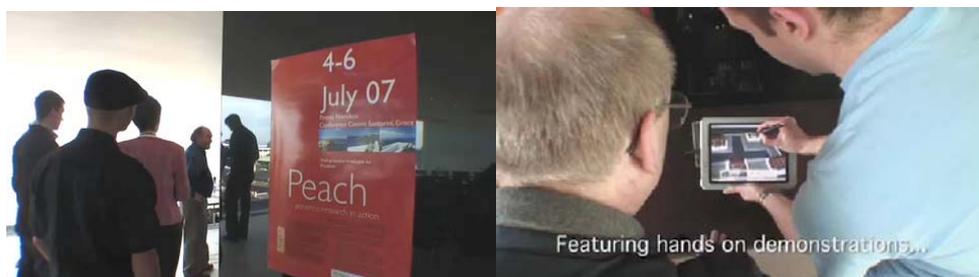




Figure 9. Images from the 3 events organised during the Edinburgh International Science Festival, 2007.

5 OTHER OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

5.1 PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL: PEACH POSTERS, BROCHURES AND FLYERS

As part of the ongoing Outreach activity a range of promotional material, some targeted at specific events, has been created by the A4.1 team. Posters have been created to promote the work of Peach at conferences, (Figure 10), flyers announcing the participation of Peach at IST2006 and the release of the Keho e-zine (Figures 4 & 11), posters for IST2006 Peach + Intuition + eChallenge2006 + S2S² Networking session, postcards announcing the Science Festival Events (Figure 8) and an initial Peach brochure (Figure 12).

All the previous posters can be downloaded from the **Documents** section in the left-vertical menu of peachbit.org.

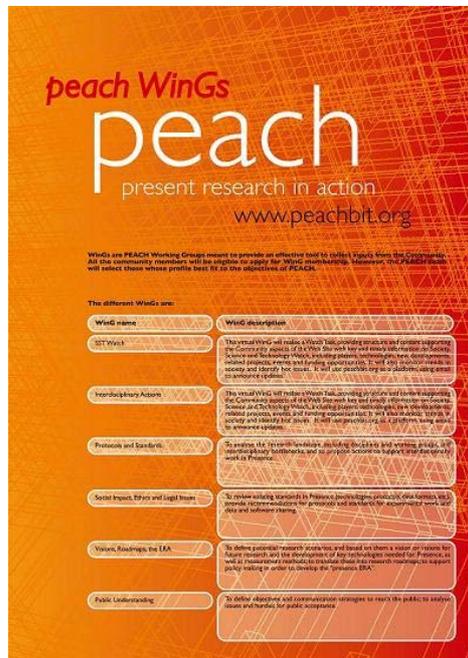


Figure 10: Peach sample poster

Peach organized in collaboration with Intuition and S2S² a Networking session in IST2006. Furthermore, in collaboration with Presencia the CA also organized a Workshop for the same event. For this reason, a flyer to inform presence community of both conferences was done. Within the flyer detailed information of both events was provided (title, time, location, contact info, etc.). The flyer sample is provided below:

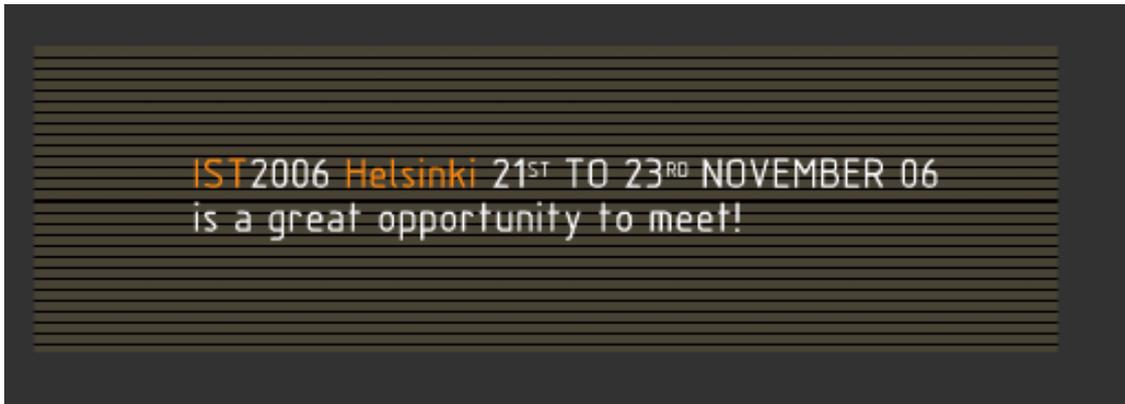


Figure 11: Sample flyer promoting Peach participation at IST2006

One of the activities organized for the networking session with the aim to encourage discussion between the attendees, was the design of 4 posters related to Peach which contained provocative questions, for example:

- What is presence?
- Ethical and social issues in presence technologies;
- Gender issues in Presence research.

The resulting discussions led directly the to production of several articles published in Issue 1 of Keho.

As part of the team's ongoing commitment to Outreach a more detailed Peach brochure has been finalised and is scheduled for release during the first month of the second period of the project, (Figure 12).

In a similar vein, the team continues the process of establishing links with the press, both specialised and general. This will continue over the life of the project.

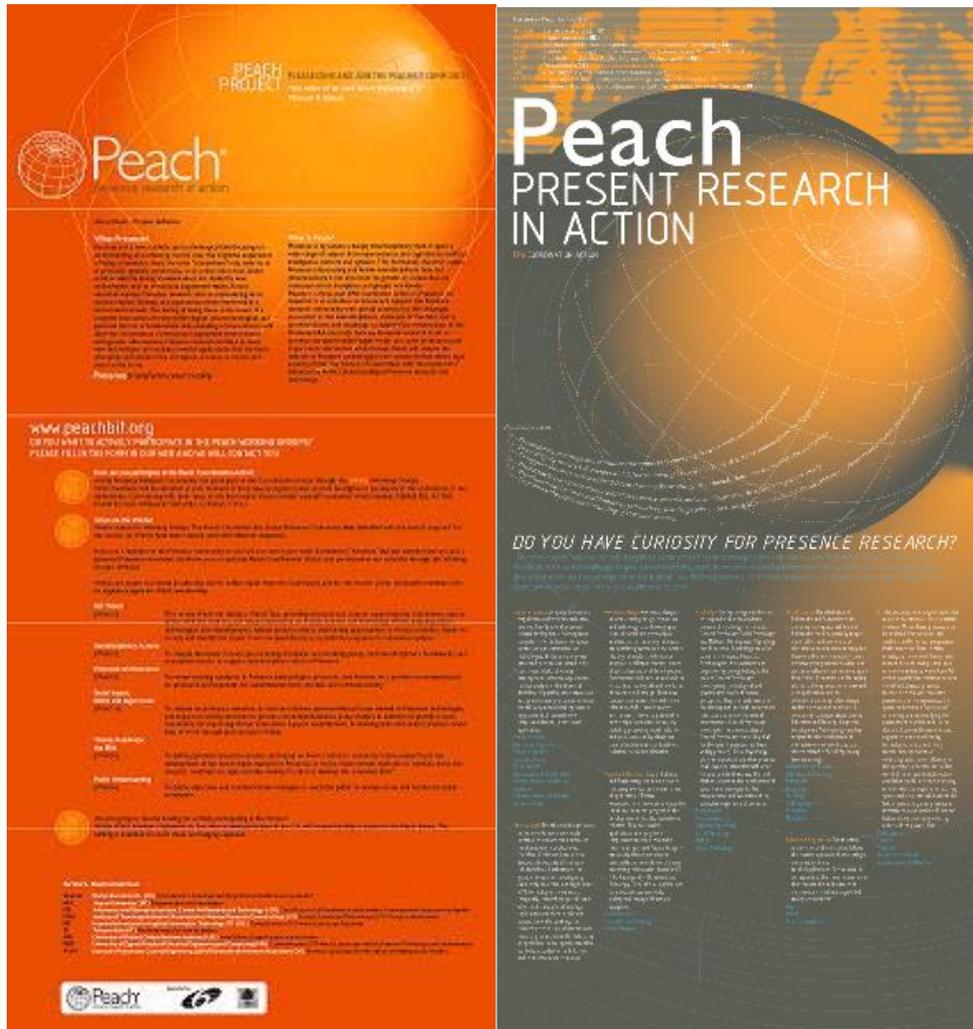


Figure 12: Peach Brochure

5.2 PEACH WING6 CONSULTATION MEETING 1 – BARCELONA

As part of the Peach project's commitment to disseminate its work to the Presence research community, NU ran a WinG6 Consultation meeting in Barcelona. At this meeting the Outreach plans and activities of both NU and TI were presented to an invited audience of Presence researchers. The main conclusions of the discussion group were as follows:

- The need to be proactive in connecting to professional bodies that can contribute to the debate on Presence Research;
- To acknowledge that different communities require different mechanisms to enable this connection to occur;
- To emphasise to industry what the Peach community can offer.

The discussion concluded by reflecting on how important it was to make dissemination personal, both in terms of contacts but also how the work of the community is presented to the public.

5.3 ENACTIVE 06

The Enactive/06 conference took place in Montpellier, France, Nov. 20th and 21st 2006. It is the annual conference of the Enactive network of excellence. Enaction, "to bring forth", is a loose knit group of philosophies concerned with knowing by doing.

A panel entitled 'Enaction and the Concept of Presence' was organised by David Benyon and Elena Pasquinelli with panellists Wijnand Ijsselstein, George Papagiannakis and Thomas Stoffregen. The aim of the panel was to bring together the presence community and the enactive community to discuss key common concepts. Each of the panellists addressed the following issues; believability and its relationship with realism; connectedness and immersion. Informal feedback indicated the popularity of the panel's subject matter, together with the possibility of running a similar event at Enactive 07 in Grenoble, France with the focus on Enaction in Arts. There are no doubt other opportunities waiting to bring together – or at least to link together – presence and enaction, and the phenomenology of knowing.

5.4 ECHALLENGE2006

eChallenge represents one of the most prestigious events for presenting concrete results coming from European take up action or innovation programs. The target audience of this event is composed by 600 delegates from leading commercial, government and research organisations around the world, who aim to bridge the Digital Divide by sharing knowledge, experience, lessons learnt and good practice in thematic areas including Networked Business, eGovernment and eDemocracy, Technology Enhanced Learning, Collaborative Working Environments, eHealth, GRID, Knowledge Management, Smart & Virtual Organisation and International IST Collaboration. Starlab had a stand in the conference, and half of the stand's decoration was dedicated to Peach. Moreover, considering that most of the participants in eChallenge would be present in IST2006. Starlab distributed a Peach promotional flyer, where the Workshop and Networking sessions organized for IST2006 were announced.

6 CONCLUSIONS

In year 1 of WP4 and specifically relating to A4.1 Public Understanding, the team have successfully designed the Peach web portal, designed, edited and published two issues of an e-zine entitled Keho that aims to give a place for Presence researchers to communicate among themselves but critically also to encourage other disciplines to join in that debate. To support public understanding of Presence, the team has run three separate public events as part of the Edinburgh International Science Festival. Finally, the team has produced a variety of promotional material, contributed to the first Peach WinG Consultation Meeting by leading WinG6 discussion into Public Understanding and has organised a successful panel session at Enactive06 and participated at eChallenge2006.