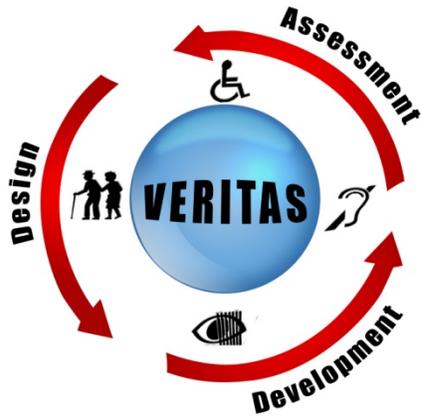


PRESS RELEASE



Project number: 247765

Project acronym: VERITAS

Project full title: Virtual and Augmented Environments and Realistic User Interactions To achieve Embedded Accessibility DesignS

Starting date: 1 January 2010

Duration: 48 Months

VERITAS is an Integrated Project (IP) within the 7th Framework Programme, Theme FP7-ICT-2009.7.2, Accessible and Assistive ICT

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Fraunhofer leads an International Consortium Winning the Grant For Research and Development Project On Introducing Simulation-Based and Virtual Reality Testing to Support Accessible Product design and Development.

STUTTGART, GERMANY – March 10, 2010 – The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft announces that they are leading the VERITAS project (Virtual and Augmented Environments and Realistic User Interactions To achieve Embedded Accessibility DesignS). VERITAS is an integrated project under the 7th Framework Programme of the European Commission on accessible and assistive ICT. The €12M accessibility research and development effort brings together 32 European companies and organisations that collaborate on the VERITAS Project.

It aims to develop, validate and assess tools for built-in accessibility support at all stages of ICT and non-ICT product development, including specification, design, development and testing. Motivated by the clear lack of systematic accessibility assessment frameworks and the need to involve real disabled users, the goal of VERITAS is to introduce simulation-based and virtual reality testing, utilizing virtual users, at all stages of assistive technologies product design and development into the automotive, smart living spaces, buildings & construction, domotics), workplace, e-health and infotainment applications areas. VERITAS aims to ensure that future products and services are being systematically designed for all people including those with disabilities and functional limitations as well as older people. Furthermore, VERITAS plans to promote its results to the appropriate standards organisations for consideration and

potential adoption and also to make them available through an open framework. More information can be found at: <http://veritas-project.eu>.

Participants in the VERITAS Project include: Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft zur Förderung der angewandten Forschung e.V. (Germany, Coordinator), Centre for Research & Technology Hellas / Informatics & Telematics Institute (Greece); Centre for Research & Technology Hellas / Hellenic Institute of Transport (Greece), FIMI s.r.l. (Italy), Instituto de Aplicaciones de las Tecnologías de la Información y de las Comunicaciones Avanzadas (Spain), Centro Ricerche Fiat Società Consortile per Azioni (Italy), Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas (Greece), Continental Automotive France SAS (France), University of Newcastle (UK), Scuola Superiore Di Studi Universitari e di Perfezionamento Sant'Anna (Italy), La Plateforme Europeenne Des Personnes Agees et Retraitees (Belgium), BYTE COMPUTER S.A. (Greece), RE:Lab (Italy), Università degli studi di Trento (Italy), Virtual Reality & Multi Media Park S.p.A. (Italy), Marie Curie Association (Bulgaria), Ceske Vysoke Uceni Technicke v Praze (Czech Republic), Universität Basel (Switzerland), Indesit Company S.p.A (Italy), DOMOLOGIC Home Automation GmbH (Germany), LMS International NV (Belgium), ATOS Origin Sociedad Anónima Española (Spain), Asociación de Investigación de la Industria de juguete, conexas y afines (Spain), Piaggio & C. S.p.A. (Italy), Smartex s.r.l. (Italy), Human Solutions GmbH (Germany), Bauunion 1905 GmbH (Germany), Hypertech S.A. (Greece), I+ srl (Italy), University of Salzburg (Austria), Brunel University (UK), Universidad Politécnica de Madrid / Life Supporting Technologies (Spain), Universität Stuttgart (Germany).

The VERITAS project is supported by a distinguished scientific advisory board comprised of worldwide leaders in the field of design and accessibility.

“Accessibility should be deeply embedded from the very beginning, that is, in the design concept of products” says Dr. Dimitris Tzovaras, VERITAS Technical Coordinator and Research Director at the Centre for Research and Technology Hellas. “The VERITAS project aims to establish this new paradigm for design at all stages of assistive technologies product design and development into the automotive, smart living spaces, (buildings & construction, domotics), workplace, e-health and infotainment applications areas.”

“Designing accessible products means a better design for all of us. In particular disabled people and the aging part of our society will benefit from our innovations in the engineering process” says Dr. Manfred Dangelmaier, the co-ordinator of VERITAS and director of the Business Area Engineering Systems at Fraunhofer IAO. “Using VERITAS results will enable designers and engineers to make most products better usable for everybody.”

The VERITAS Project will involve research and prototypes that address a broad range of impairments related to vision, hearing, mobility, cognitive resources, as well as the needs of older people (independent and dependent).