VERITAS newsletter N°1

SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME
FP7-ICT-2009.7.2
Accessible and Inclusive ICT

Virtual and Augmented **E**nvironments and **R**ealistic User **I**nteractions **T**o achieve Embedded **A**ccessibility Design**S**
http://veritas-project.eu/

Starting date: 1 January 2010
Duration: 48 Months

Editorial

Welcome to the first issue of the VERITAS Newsletter.

This 6-monthly, fully accessible communication tool on the VERITAS project will provide information on project progress, announces of important events and other up-to-date news addressed to the VERITAS network, policy makers and the scientific community.

Each issue is available both in PDF and accessible HTML format via http://veritas-project.eu/category/newsletter/.

The VERITAS vision

VERITAS aims to develop, validate and assess tools for built-in accessibility support of ICT and non-ICT products under a holistic framework. The objective is to introduce simulation-based and virtual-reality testing at all designing stages of assistive technologies products in 5 application areas: automotive, smart living places, workplace, health and wellbeing, and infotainment.

VERITAS wants to ensure that future products are systematically designed for all, including people with disabilities and older people and plans to promote its results to the appropriate standards organisations for consideration and potential adoption.

A newsletter about:

- Project presentation
- Current developments
- Upcoming events

Upcoming Events

IADIS International Conference Web Virtual Reality and Three-Dimensional Worlds 2010
27 – 29 July 2010, Freiburg, Germany.
Link to event website.

1st ÆGIS Conference

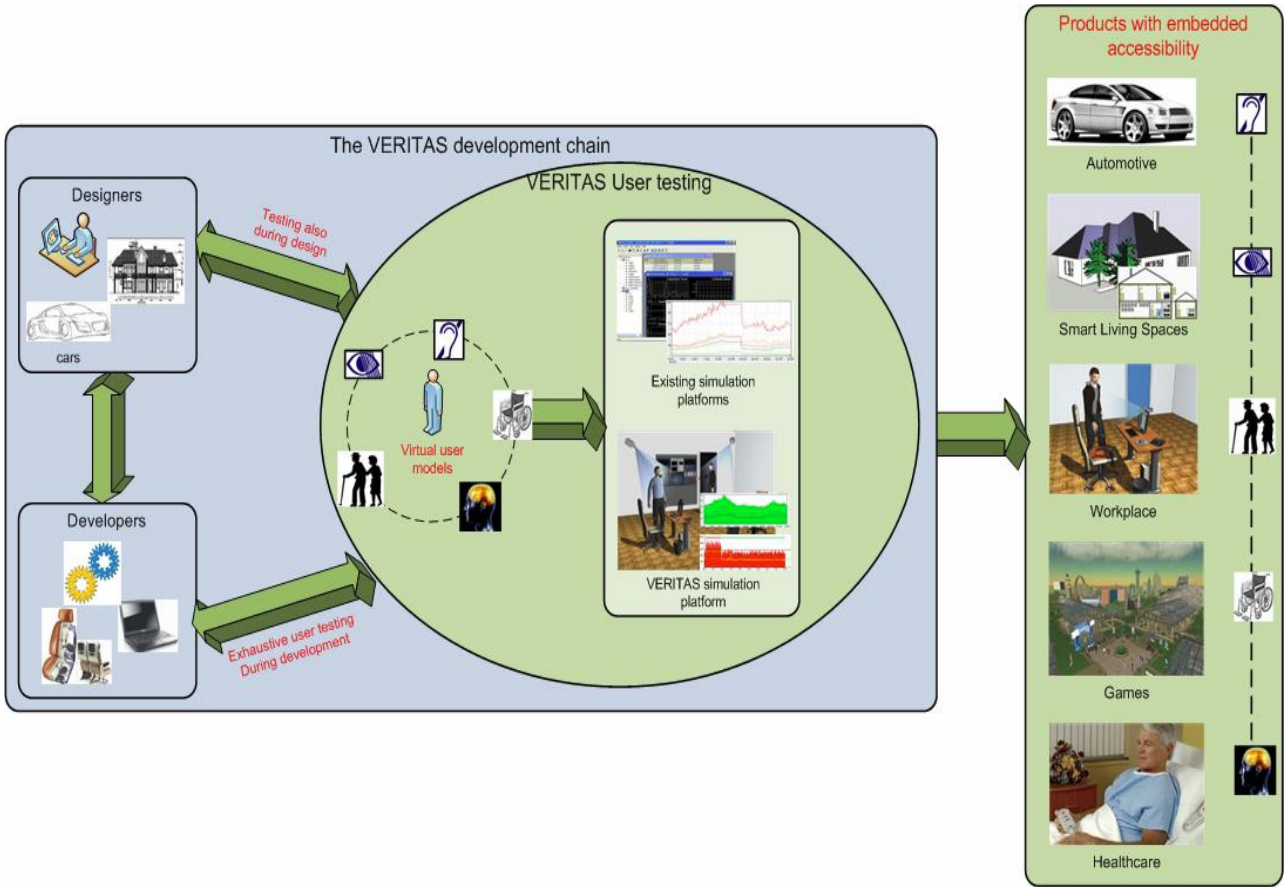
7-8 October 2010, Seville, Spain
Link to event website.

VERITAS Concept and Objectives

VERITAS aims at delivering to product/software developers 'generic' instructions, embedded in an empowering virtual reality platform, for exploring new concepts, designing new interfaces and testing interactive prototypes that will inherit universal accessibility features, including compatibility with established Assistive Technologies.

VERITAS objectives are:

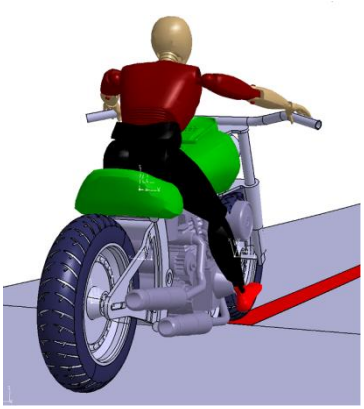
- To investigate and develop an open library of various categories of virtual user models, especially focusing on groups in risk of exclusion, e.g. older people, people with disability (vision, hearing, speech, motor), people with co-existent condition, etc.
- To develop an Open Simulation Platform (OSP) for virtual reality simulation and testing of new products at all stages of iterative product planning and development in the following domains: a) automotive, b) smart living spaces, c) workplace design, d) infotainment and e) personal healthcare and wellbeing.
- To research and develop methodologies for introducing the VERITAS simulation and testing framework to a wide variety of ICT and non-ICT applications.
- To research and develop a framework for immersive virtual user simulation and testing, i.e. putting the developer in the position of the user through virtual/augmented reality simulation.
- To research and develop innovative concepts for ambient, multi-device, universally accessible and usable multimodal interfaces through virtual reality simulation.

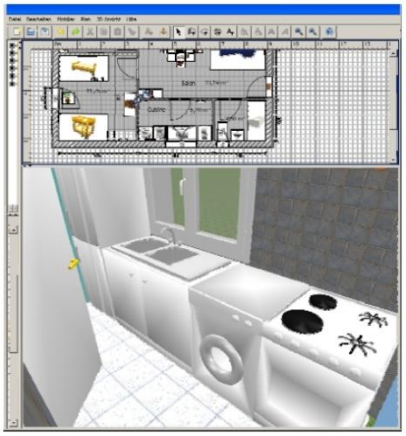


VERITAS Application Areas

- **Automotive:**

Car (Interior design, In-Vehicle Information Systems, Advanced Driver Assistance Systems) and Motorcycle. VERITAS concept will constitute a key enabler to favour mobility (and thus inclusion) of older people and people with disabilities in both cars and motorcycles, by using existing virtual environments and virtual users for simulating accessibility and testing.





- **Smart living spaces: Buildings, Constructions, Interior Design and Domotics.** VERITAS will complement an existing virtual reality platform with a set of functions which will introduce the “disability factor” during the design phase. Ideally, libraries will be created to let the users of these programs check and validate their designs in a variety of scenarios, with people with different degrees of disabilities.

- **Workplace: Workspace Design, Collaborative Tools.** The integrated VERITAS simulation platform in an external simulation application will be utilised to perform accessible workspace design both in the context of office scenarios and more complex workplace environments. Extensive testing and iterative optimisation of the designs and the developments will be performed with virtual users.

- **Personal HealthCare and Wellbeing:**

Remote Patient Monitoring, Patient Education and motivation, Mobile device as interface for older people.

There is the need to design personal healthcare products/ solutions/services to allow accessibility and usability and to meet the acceptance of this special category of users. VERITAS will propose a virtual simulation platform to comply with this.

- **Infotainment:**

Social networks and Collaborative Games for Mental/Physical Training.

The VERITAS simulation platform combined with the gaming simulation models will be integrated in a commercial virtual application, thus enabling the simulated interaction with the virtual user in the context of a real game scenario. Ideally the simulation will take place with real external participants as a test bed that will include interactions with the scene environment, communication with other players and all aspects of human behaviour included in the metaverse. Moreover, VERITAS will provide to the developer multimodal interfacing tools to enable the conversion of the game content into information that is easily perceivable by users with disabilities.

VERITAS End User Perspective

The VERITAS end user target group includes designers and developers as well as beneficiaries. Concretely, the project mainly addresses the following categories of end users:

- Designers and developers of ICT infrastructure, applications and services in the aforementioned 5 application areas.
- People with disabilities who experience one or more of the following mild to severe impairments:
    - Blind and low-vision impairments
    - Motor impairments
    - Cognitive impairments
    - Hearing impairments
    - Speech impairments
- (in)Dependent older people according to following subgroups:
    - 'Young' Elderly: ages 55-64
    - Elderly: ages 65-74
    - 'Old' Elderly: ages 75 and older

Moreover, to test and evaluate the VERITAS 5 application fields, according to the UCD Methodology, pilots for developers and designers will be organised at 4 pilot sites (Germany, Greece, Italy, UK), while pilots for beneficiaries (people with disabilities and older people) will take place at 5 pilot sites (Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, Greece and the UK).

Views from the project partners

Dr. Dimitris Tzovaras, VERITAS Technical Coordinator and Research Director at the Centre for Research and Technology Hellas and, *Dr. Manfred Dangelmaier*, the co-ordinator of VERITAS and director of the Business Unit Engineering Systems at Fraunhofer IAO shared their views on the VERITAS project.

Dr. Dimitris Tzovaras: "Accessibility should be deeply embedded from the very beginning, that is, in the design concept of products. 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."

Dr. Manfred Dangelmaier: "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. Using VERITAS results will enable designers and engineers to make most products more usable by everybody."

VERITAS European Survey: Become part of it!

VERITAS is undertaking a survey among designers and developers that will help us to better understand the design and development process of products and services for people with disabilities and functional limitations as well as older people.

If **you are a designer or developer** active in the design and development process in the automotive, smart living spaces, workplace, eHealth and/or infotainment domain, then we kindly invite you to complete our survey on:

- Automotive
- Smart living spaces
- Working environment
- E-health
- Infotainment

The questionnaires have been designed to identify the industrial user needs of designers and developers per application sector in terms of procedures followed for the design and development of new products and their potential relation with the older people and people with disabilities in VERITAS project. Its evaluation will be the basis to implement appropriate tools and methodologies in order to increase awareness and need for accessibility.

Data provided by participants will be considered and analyzed only in an aggregated anonymised format. To take part in the survey please visit: http://veritas-project.eu/2010/04/european-survey-on-the-design-and-development-process-of-products-and-services-for-people-with-disabilities-and-functional-limitations-as-well-as-older-people/.

VERITAS User Forum: Register now!

Designers and developers, people with disabilities and older people will be the main users and beneficiaries of the VERITAS system. They are invited to dedicated User Forums for the exchange of practices, knowledge and visions. Members of the User Forum will also have the opportunity to apply for participation in testing of VERITAS services and will be able to participate in project conferences at a reduced fee. Equally, all User Forum members will receive the project's 6-monthly newsletter.

To become part of the User Forum, both in the virtual space and during the User Forum meeting, please **register online** at http://veritas-project.eu/2010/04/user-forum-online-registration/.

SAVE THE DATE:

The first User Forum meeting will be held in the first week of December 2010 in Prague!

Consortium List

The project consortium involves 32 organisations from 11 countries:

No	Participant Name	Country
1	Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft zur Förderung der angewandten Forschung e.V.	Germany
2	Centre for Research & Technology Hellas / Informatics & Telematics Institute Centre for Research & Technology Hellas / Hellenic Institute of Transport	Greece
3	FIMI s.r.l.	Italy
4	Instituto de Aplicaciones de las Tecnologías de la Información y de las Comunicaciones Avanzadas	Spain
5	Centro Ricerche Fiat Società Consortile per Azioni	Italy
6	Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas	Greece
7	Continental Automotive France SAS	France
8	University of Newcastle upon Tyne	UK
9	Scuola Superiore Di Studi Universitari e di Perfezionamento Sant'Anna	Italy

No	Participant Name	Country
10	AGE Platform Europe	Belgium
11	BYTE COMPUTER S.A.	Greece
12	RE:Lab	Italy
13	Università degli studi di Trento	Italy
14	Virtual Reality & Multi Media Park S.p.A.	Italy
15	Marie Curie Association	Bulgaria
16	Ceske Vysoke Uceni Technicke v Praze	Czech Republic
17	Universität Basel	Switzerland
18	Indesit Company S.p.A	Italy

No	Participant Name	Country
19	DOMOLOGIC Home Automation GmbH	Germany
20	LMS International NV	Belgium
21	ATOS Origin Sociedad Anónima Española	Spain
22	Asociación de Investigación de la Industria de juguete, conexas y afines	Spain
23	Piaggio & C. S.p.A.	Italy
24	Smartex s.r.l.	Italy
25	Human Solutions GmbH	Germany
26	Bauunion 1905 GmbH	Germany
27	Hypertech S.A.	Greece

No	Participant Name	Country
28	I+ srl	Italy
29	University of Salzburg	Austria
30	Brunel University	UK
31	Universidad Politécnica de Madrid / Life Supporting Technologies	Spain
32	Universität Stuttgart	Germany

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Visit the VERITAS Twitter page: http://twitter.com/VeritasProj
Visit the VUMS (Virtual User Modeling and Simulation Cluster) page: http://veritas-project.eu/vums