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INRIA and JCDecaux Sign an Innovative Technological Transfer Contract for the Future Digital City

Purpose of the contract:

Invent a new generation of JCDecaux communicating street furniture based on research results in distributed information technology achieved over the past eight years by INRIA-Rennes.

What is pervasive computing technology?

The aim of pervasive computing is to implicitly assist individuals in their daily lives.

In the scope of outdoor communication, the goal of pervasive computing is to offer people in urban areas the opportunity to acquire digital information delivered by street furniture based on each individual's profile.

City dwellers are increasingly mobile, these individuals clearly seeking to manage and optimise their travel time and to benefit from all types of information that facilitate city life.

The digital revolution has been beneficial in this respect, putting individuals in constant contact via increasingly sophisticated mobile telephones or personal digital assistants with multiple functions.

A research team at **INRIA (French National Institute for Research in Computer Science and Control)** in Rennes has been pursuing research in the field of pervasive computing and the integration of "contextual intelligence" over the past eight years. **JCDecaux**, world leader in outdoor advertising and well aware of the constantly increasing need for information, has decided to develop a 'communicating' street furniture concept based on the technology developed at INRIA.

The approach adopted by the INRIA research team is to process information from objects, based on their position and relative displacement. This principle allows existing objects to be enhanced with onboard "contextual intelligence". This is implemented by means of 'communicating' microcomputers capable of perceiving and influencing their immediate environment, and that interact independently of a global network. These innovative results will enable the large-scale deployment of pervasive computing applications, which up to now have not passed the stage of research prototypes.

The purpose of this contract

This technological transfer contract will enable the development of a contextual information system providing mobile individuals with service or advertising-related information in digital form. In association with the incomparable physical network of JCDecaux street furniture throughout the world, this communication technology will allow city dwellers to access the information they wish to receive.

According to Albert Asseraf, JCDecaux Director for Strategy, Research and Marketing, *"the future of cities is a vast communication space featuring new forms of dialogue. It will become possible to implement a multitude of city services (orientation, identification of significant sites, public transport, etc.) through the physical network provided by JCDecaux"*.

This contract, involving cutting-edge research results and innovative technological transfers between the leading street furniture operator and a pioneering research team, will lead the way towards the digital city of the future.

This contract is all the more important as, from the INRIA's beginnings, its researchers have been concerned with the concrete application of their work. *"By nature, research activities in the field of pervasive computing require more applied and extensive deployment in the real world than do applications in other fields"*, indicates Michel Banâtre, scientific manager of the research team.

This technological transfer contract subscribes to INRIA's philosophy aimed at developing applications that address common and basic requirements of society.

About JCDecaux

In 1964, Jean-Claude Decaux invented the street furniture concept, combining public services and advertising, and installed the first bus shelters in Lyon. Now, JCDecaux has more than 80,400 bus shelters in 30 countries.

JCDecaux is the number one worldwide in street furniture and airport advertising (153 airports), and the number one in Europe in billboard advertising. The Group has 7,900 employees and is present in 3,400 cities with over 10,000 inhabitants in 46 countries. In 2005, it has generated a revenue of 1,745 million euros.

JCDecaux is the only company in the world exclusively dedicated to outdoor advertising and the development of all related activities: street furniture, billboards, transport advertising, and event banners. In 2005, it became the leader in outdoor advertising in China.

For further information: <http://www.jcdecaux.com>

About INRIA

INRIA (French National Institute for Research in Computer Science and Control) is devoted to research in the field of Information and Communication Science and Technology (ICST). INRIA employs a workforce of 3,500 people, including 2,700 scientists (INRIA and partner organisations), in six research units based in seven major geographic regions*. INRIA has an annual budget of 135 million euros, 20% of which comes from its own research contracts and licences. It is actively involved in five areas of research: communicating, cognitive, symbolic, digital and biological systems.

INRIA develops numerous partnerships with industry and participates in technological transfers and the creation of companies (nearly 80) in the field of ICST, particularly through its subsidiary INRIA-Transfert, promoter of four start-up funds.

These international partnerships involve receiving and recruiting foreign students, as well as important exchanges between researchers. Priority is given to geographic areas with strong economic potential such as the European Research Area, Asia and North America, while maintaining basic activities with South America, Africa and the Middle East.

* Aquitaine, Brittany, Lorraine, Ile-de-France, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur and Rhône-Alpes.

For further information: <http://www.inria.fr>

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