FP6-IST-002020

COGNIRON

The Cognitive Robot Companion

Integrated Project

Information Society Technologies Priority

D10.5.1
Press release about kick-off, project logo, draft of project leaflet

Due date of deliverable: 31/01/2004
Actual submission date: 31/01/2005

Start date of project: January 1st, 2004 **Duration** : 48 months

Organisation name of lead contractor for this deliverable:
GPS & LAAS-CNRS

Revision: final
Dissemination level: PU

Press Release about kick-off, project logo, draft of project leaflet

For any publicly funded research endeavour of a certain size visibility towards the stakeholders and the public is mandatory. The tax payers have the right to see what their money is used for. Visibility of RTD activities and technology marketing is furthermore crucial for creating awareness for new technologies and preparing new markets. Within that context the project undertook some actions to ensure visibility towards the stakeholder of the project and to create awareness regarding the technology developed in the project and its socioeconomic potential : this included the design of a project logo and a project leaflet.

Press Release about Project kick-off

Briefly after the project kick-off, which took place in Toulouse at LAAS on January 20-21 2004, a project Press Release has been published by the consortium, written by the Project Management Team members. The press release was initially drafted in English, to reach a wider audience, and has then been translated by the project partners' respective external relations and communications offices into the partners national languages : German, Swedish, French, Dutch etc. ….

COGNIRON
The cognitive robot companion

Project Press Release

The European Commission launches the IST-FET project COGNIRON : 'The Cognitive Robot Companion'.

Toulouse, Feb. 17, 2004

On January 20, 2004 the kick-off meeting of the COGNIRON project took place. The project was officially launched by the European Commission on January 1, 2004 under contract no. FP6-IST-002020 within the Sixth Framework Programme, Priority IST-2002-2.3.4.2. COGNIRON is one out of three so-called "Integrated Projects' within the IST-FET (Future and Emerging Technologies) Proactive initiative "Beyond Robotics".

The overall objectives of this project are to study the perceptual, representational, reasoning and learning capabilities of embodied robots in human centered environments. The project will develop methods and technologies for the construction of such cognitive robots able to evolve and expand their capacities in close interaction with humans in an open-ended fashion. Expected results are basic methods, algorithms and architectures, and their integration, long-term experimentation and scientific evaluation on embodied robotic systems in different settings and situations.

The COGNIRON project aims at the development of a robot able to serve humans as companions in their daily

In the focus of this research endeavour is the development of a robot whose ultimate task is to serve humans as a companion in their daily life. The robot is not only considered as a ready-made device but as an artificial creature, which improves its capabilities in a continuous process of acquiring new knowledge and skills. Besides the necessary functions for sensing, moving and acting, such a robot will exhibit the cognitive capacities enabling it to focus its attention, to understand the spatial and dynamic structure of its environment, to interact with it, to exhibit a social behaviour, and to communicate with other agents and with humans at the appropriate level of abstraction according to context.

The design of the cognitive functions of this artificial creature and the study and development of the continuous learning, training and education process in the course of which it will mature to a true companion, are the central research themes of the proposed project.

The proposed research and technological development efforts in COGNIRON have a strong focus on basic research. In order to understand and implement the fundamental processes enabling cognition in artificial embodied artefacts, and to achieve the objective of developing a cognitive robot companion, the project will address the issues of representations, understanding, reasoning, and learning mechanisms and interaction with humans and other agents. It will be organized along seven long-term research and technological development activities (RA) that enable to tackle these issues.

- RA1 *Multi-modal dialogues*
- RA2 *Detection and understanding of human activity*
- RA3 *Social Behaviour and Embodied Interaction*
- RA4 *Skill and Task Learning*
- RA5 *Spatial cognition and multimodal situation awareness*
- RA6 *Intentionality and initiative*
- RA7 *Systems level integration and evaluation*

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Figure 3: Page 1 of the press release which has been published by the consortium Following the project kick-off (Toulouse, January 20-21, 2004).

[1] NB : the project template wasn't initially used at the time of the kick-off, as the design has been finalised and implemented a few months later only. This is here an a posteriori example of the use of the project documents templates.

Project Logo

Another crucial state in the definition of a project identity was the conception and design of a project logo. GPS worked on that issue for a certain number of months : a total of 25 proposals have been made to the consortium. Below are shown some examples.

Figure 1 to 7 : Some of the initial project logos proposals made by GPS.

The logo issue has taken quite more time than initially expected, as there wasn't any real consensus within the consortium and it has proved to be challenging to summarise the project scope and research questions in a communicative but yet simple logo design : the man-machine interaction and the 'companionship' was not easy to convey.

Finally, after long discussions, the choice has finally been made for the following logo, which is in used since the summer of 2004 :

Figure 8: Final project logo

The project logo is now adapted to fulfil the project needs, like for instance for the project website and/or project presentations :

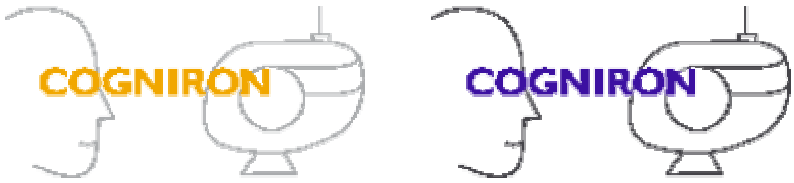

Figure 8 and 9 : Examples of variations of the project logo

Project Leaflet

Finally, a project leaflet has been designed. While the actual project leaflet was under conception, and being discussed, in order not to lose an opportunity to communicate about the project, a provisory factsheet has been prepared, shown below.


COGNIRON

The Cognitive Robot Companion

An Integrated Project funded under the European Union's Sixth Framework Programme for European Research and Technological Development (2002-2006)

Project Details

Contract number : FP6-IST-002020
Duration: 48 months
Start Date: 2004-01-01
End Date: 2007-12-31
Project Cost: 8.03 million euro
European Commission Funding: 6.11 million euro
Other funding sources : Swiss Government (560 000 euros)

Participants

1. LAAS-CNRS - Laboratoire d'Analyse et d'Architecture des Systèmes (LAAS), France (Coordinator)
2. Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), Switzerland
3. Fraunhofer Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Angewandten Forschung E.V - Fraunhofer Institute for Manufacturing Engineering and Automation (FhG-IPA), Germany
4. Kunglika Tekniska Högskolan (KTH), Sweden
5. Universiteit van Amsterdam (UWA), The Netherlands
6. Universität Bielefeld (UniBi), Germany
7. University of Hertfordshire (UH), United Kingdom
8. Universität Karlsruhe – TH (UniKarl), Germany
9. Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), Belgium
10. Gesellschaft für Produktionssyteme GmbH (GPS), Germany

Overall Project Objectives

COGNIRON aims to:
- study embodied systems in human centered environments involving perception, representation, reasoning, learning and interaction
- develop methods and technologies for the design of robot companions
- build up European excellence in cognitive robotics

Project abstract

The overall objectives of this project are to study the perceptual, representational, reasoning and learning capabilities of embodied robots in human centred environments. The project will develop methods and technologies for the construction of such cognitive robots able to evolve and grow their capacities in close interaction with humans in an open-ended fashion. Expected results are basic methods, algorithms and architectures and their integration and long-term experimentation and scientific evaluation on embodied robotic systems in different settings and situations.
In the focus of this research endeavour is the development of a robot whose ultimate task is to serve humans as a companion in their daily life. The robot is not only considered as a ready-made device but as an artificial creature, which improves its capabilities in a continuous process of acquiring new knowledge and skills. Besides the necessary functions for sensing, moving and acting, such a robot will exhibit the cognitive capacities enabling it to focus its attention, to understand the spatial and dynamic structure of its environment and to interact with it, to exhibit a social behaviour and communicate with other agents and with humans at the appropriate level of abstraction according to context. The design of the cognitive functions of this artificial creature and the study and development of the continuous learning, training and education process in the course of which it will mature to a true companion, are the central research themes of the project.

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Figure 10 : Overview of the provisory project factsheet

This project factsheet has been used in at least two opportunities : the demonstration of UH's PeopleBots at the Science Museum in London and the exhibition of the robot BIRON by the UniBi team at the IST2004 event (for more details about these dissemination activities see Section 5.2 of the Periodic Activity Report and deliverable D8.3.1 – *Project presentation at major conferences).*

The final version of the project leaflet is now ready for printing. The Project Management Team has opted for a somewhat uncommon format, with a folding structure, to make it quite attractive to the project neophyte.
The project leaflet provides a comprehensive overview of the project, with the consortium members, the funding sources (FP6-IST-FET and the Swisss Government for the involvement of EPFL), the project objectives and the different research activities which are being implemented. It is intended as one of the major direct communication tools for the project and will be used for a year at least, to be distributed at some selected events and conferences, and also for the partners themselves to contribute to the project promotion within various types of events they will attend.

Figure 11 : Project leaflet – section 1

Figure 12: Project leaflet – section 2