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Beyond “Smart-Only” Cities: Towards Humane, Sociable and Cooperative Hybrid Cities

Smart cities pose new challenges for all stake holders: urban planners, city administration, public and industrial infrastructure and service providers, community organizations, businesses and finally the citizens. They require and depend on appropriate and customized services and support, but - in many cases – have to adopt “solutions” presented to them which are not always designed with their needs in mind. The hype about smart cities and technology-driven urban developments is to be critically reflected. A citizen-centered design approach is needed for developing efficient and citizen-oriented solutions, reconciling people and technology, so that they can gain acceptance by all stake holders involved. The city is not only providing an infrastructure but should be viewed as an interface and a service to its inhabitants. People must be in the loop and in control. The overall goal is to design a humane, sociable and cooperative city and then to decide which technologies and specific design objectives are appropriate to meet the requirements.

Most of these deployments are based on “smart” technologies. Therefore, it is necessary to reflect on the underlying rationale and implications of smart technologies. What does “smart” means? Intelligent? Automated, strictly controlled by algorithms? Artificial Intelligence? Without humans involved? Autonomous – as in autonomous, driverless driving? How much will and should our urban life depend on smart technologies? How much control will and should people still have? How about: Smart spaces make people smarter and not more dependent? There are many open issues which require to critically reflect and to redefine the “Smart-Everything” paradigm, which confronts us not only in the smart city of the future. Another important aspect of smart cities (and smart technologies in general) is the issue of privacy, currently mainly discussed only in the virtual world of social media, but having even stronger implications in smart hybrid urban environments.

About the Speaker

Dr. Dr. Norbert Streitz (Ph.D. in physics, Ph.D. in cognitive science) is a Senior Scientist and Strategic Advisor with more than 35 years of experience in information and communication technology. Founder and Scientific Director of the Smart Future Initiative launched in 2009. From 1987-2008, he held positions as Deputy Director and Division Manager at the Fraunhofer Institute IPSI, Darmstadt, e.g., founding and managing the research division "AMBIENTE - Smart Environments of the Future". Teaching appointments at the Department of Computer Science, Technical University Darmstadt for more than 15 years. Before Fraunhofer, he was Assistant Professor at the Technical University Aachen (RWTH), where he founded and managed ACCEPT (Aachen Cognitive Ergonomics Project). At different times of his career, he was a post-doc research fellow at the University of California, Berkeley, a visiting scholar at Xerox PARC, Menlo Park, and at the Intelligent Systems Lab of MITI, Tsukuba Science City, Japan.

Principal Investigator and Manager of many projects funded by the European Commission (EC) (e.g., Disappearing Computer Initiative, Ambient Agoras, Towards the Humane City, ...) and by industrial and public national and international funding agencies. Reviewer and evaluation expert for the EC, member of Editorial and Advisory Boards, consultant, keynote speaker.

He has been organizing conferences as general or program chair. Currently, he is the program chair of the International Conference on Distributed, Ambient and Pervasive Interactions (DAPI) which is now in its sixth edition as DAPI 2018 (<http://2018.hci.international/dapi>).

He has published/edited 25 books and authored/coauthored more than 150 scientific peer-reviewed papers. His research and teaching activities cover a wide range of areas: Cognitive Science, Human-Computer Interaction, Hypertext/Hypermedia, Computer-Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW), Ubiquitous Computing, Ambient Intelligence, Privacy Enhancing Technologies (Privacy by Design), Interaction and Experience Design, Hybrid Worlds, Smart Cities and Smart Airports.