



January 4-7, 2011, The Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort & Spa, Koloa, Kauai, Hawaii.

Track: Internet and the Digital Economy

Minitrack: Virtual Worlds in the Workplace

The adoption of innovative collaborative technologies in organizations is a complex process. Not only are organizations' size and hierarchy influential factors to the process, but equally important are the ways in which visions of technology inspire and motivate people. Virtual worlds (VWs) are persistent, computer-simulated environments where users interact synchronously through avatars, moving in a 3D geography, manipulating digital objects. Virtual worlds are potentially important platforms for computer-supported cooperative work because of their capacity to provide a strong sense of co-presence and to create virtual geographies populated with virtual objects. In this minitrack, we will investigate how, at the organizational level, virtual worlds can be used as a viable and legitimate innovative collaborative technology that can persist beyond the initial cool-factor. Will it take a "killer app" to give legitimacy and viability to virtual worlds in the workplace?

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Bonnie Nardi is an anthropologist in the Department of Informatics at UC Irvine. She has studied blogging, instant messaging, and gaming. She has been conducting participant-observation research in VWs since 2005. Bonnie's book *My Life as a Night Elf Priest: An Anthropological Account of World of Warcraft* (University of Michigan Press) will be available June 2010.

Wendy Ark is a researcher at Advanced Research Consulting in San Diego, CA. She designs and creates spaces in virtual worlds that support socio-technical interactions. Her primary interest is analyzing socio-technical interactions to understand how businesses can leverage technologies based on social networks to create better user experiences.

Shaowen Bardzell is assistant professor of HCI Design in the School of Informatics at Indiana University. She specializes in socio-cultural computing and has published on space and place and intimate interactions in virtual worlds. She is currently co-editing a special issue on Feminism and HCI for *Interacting with Computers*.

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