Ambient Intelligence for the networked home environment

Fifteen of Europe's leading companies and research establishments in mobile and home networking, software development, consumer electronics and domestic appliances have joined together in Amigo – an integrated project that will realize the full potential of home networking to improve people's lives.

Home networking has already emerged in specific applications such as PC to PC communication and home entertainment systems, but its ability to really change people's lives is still dogged by complex installation procedures, the lack of interoperability between different manufacturer's equipment and the absence of compelling user services.

By focusing on solving these key issues, the Amigo project aims to overcome the obstacles to widespread acceptance of this new technology. The project will develop open, standardized, interoperable middleware and attractive user services, thus improving end-user usability and attractiveness. The project will show the end-user usability and attractiveness of such a home system by creating and demonstrating prototype applications improving everyday life, addressing all vital user aspects: home care and safety, home information and entertainment, and extension of the home environment by means of ambience sharing for advanced personal communication. The Amigo project will further support interoperability between equipment and services within the networked home environment by using standard technology when possible and by making the basic middleware (components and infrastructure) and basic user services available as open source software together with architectural rules for everyone to use.
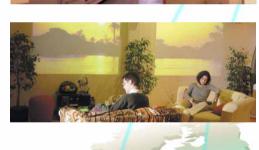
Amigo
EuProjects

The Amigo project is a huge step towards general introduction of the networked home and towards Ambient Intelligence by solving the main technological issues that endanger the usability of a networked home system, as well as creating clear end-user benefits by introducing intelligent user services and attractive prototype applications.

The key objective of the Amigo project is to make the technology not only work from a technical point of view, but to make it work in such a way that it motivates all people to use networked home systems with great ease and pleasure. This is also the reason to spend much effort in developing attractive user services and application prototypes that will make the end-user benefits of a networked home system immediately clear. The use of an Amigo networked home system must relieve the boredom of household tasks, support contacts with family and friends and cause pleasant experiences and easy information retrieval.

As acceptance by the end-user is of vital importance, the Amigo project takes a user-centric design approach: the usability and social issues associated with the different scenarios will be investigated by user-interaction specialists and psychologists conducting lifelike tests in Europe's leading 'home laboratories', including Philips Research's 'HomeLab' in the Netherlands, France Telecom's 'Creative Studio Lab' in France, the Fraunhofer Institute's 'InHaus' laboratory in Germany and Ikerlan's 'Domolab' in Spain. These labs are all reconstructions of home settings, making it possible to observe people in a home situation for longer periods of time. Additionally in Italdesign Lab the Amigo specialists will test the usability in the professional domain.

HomeLab
(Philips)

InHaus
(Fraunhofer)

Creative Studio Lab
(France Telecom)

Domolab
(Ikerlan)

Italdesign Lab
(Italdesign-Giugiaro)

http://www.amigo-project.org