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The Metaverse Assembled

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Volume 6, Number 1
The Metaverse Assembled 2013
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Managing Editor's Corner:

Welcome to the First Issue of 2013

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Welcome to the first issue of 2013 which opens our sixth year. Let me use this opening message to first describe the nature and origins of the Journal of Virtual Worlds Research (JVWR) "assembled" approach and then describe the particular diverse nature of this Assembled issue.

Each year, JVWR publishes about 3 issues. Of them, two are topical (for example in 2011-12 we covered "MPEG-V and Other Standards", "Government and Defense", "Managerial and Commercial Applications" and "Asian Perspectives".) The topical issues allow us to plan ahead, define the topics, enlist editors, and allow authors ample time to develop their work. Concurrently, we encourage authors to send us updated research outcomes outside the scope of the topical issues. As we complete a review on such a paper, we publish the paper under the "rush to press" section of a topical issue. Around December of every year, we collect all the papers that were submitted during the year and consider them for the yearly assembled issue.

At the end of 2012, we had about 50 papers to be reviewed. These are papers that were deemed "interesting enough to stay on the list." Of these 50 papers, emerged a set of papers in the virtual arts area. We captured the opportunity, enlisted editors, developed a call – and thus we have a new planned issue on "The Arts" edited by Celeste Guichard, Laura Salciuviene, and Gary Hardee, as Volume 6, 2 due to be published 2013 Q3.

We also had several papers that amounted to a literature review on a particular angle of virtual worlds. We again took the opportunity and launched a call for the "Lantern" issue. Thus, the first thematic issue of our 7th year (next year) will focus on a literature review of 3D3C worlds according to specific topics. The issue will connect with our JVWR workshop in Milan, Italy, on December, 15 2013 (as part of AIS ICIS 2013). For the Lantern issue, the term "topical review" means a review of corpus of

knowledge on one aspect of virtual worlds. It can be a classic literature review, a more formal statistical meta-analysis or other forms suggested by authors.

Many of the papers in this issue came from the "SLACTION 2012" event. This real/virtual yearly event founded by Prof. Leonel Morgado, encourages and collects many of the innovations in the field. Prof. Leonel Morgado and Prof. Nelson Zagalo were kind enough to edit the entire issue. We thank them for their work and service to the community.

This 2012 assembled issue includes the following papers:

- In "Language Learning in Virtual Worlds: The Role of Foreign Language and Technical Anxiety" the author Sarah E. Pasfield-Neofitou explores the nature of Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) online multiuser 3D virtual world. The general case of using virtual worlds for learning complex tasks is examined. The general question raised by the paper is: what is the value of such worlds (assuming multi user full 3D worlds) beyond the halo effect to learning. This is – like many other issues in our field – a work in progress and an invitation to further study the effects of virtual worlds.
- In "vManagement: Initial Exploration of Management Practice" the authors Susan Wurtz, Dale Cyphert, and Leslie K. Duclos explore the emerging meaning of vManagement in the virtual settings. This is a real case study of allocating resources, giving "orders", enticing ideas, and working as teams. The context is real - NOT a simulation. In the words of the authors, this is a "rich case study to examine why and how the virtual environment generated norms of power and empowerment for which traditional management practice was not effective."
- In "Virtual Worlds as a Tool to Facilitate Weight Management for Young People" the authors Michael James Taylor, Dave Taylor, Myutan Kulendran, Paul Gately, and Ara Darzi explore the creative idea of using a virtual world to help kids manage their weight. While "virtual" may seem very far from the physical challenge of weight management, the images of the avatars skating together, or visiting "The Imperial College Wellbeing Centre in Second Life" bring a new angle to the issue. Beyond the technical background (for example what kids age 13-17 had to say about the use of virtual worlds) this brings creative ideas both psychological and physical.
- In "Do As We Do, Not As You Think: The Effect of Group Influence on Individual Choices in a Virtual Environment" author Phil Kraemer fulfils a dream of many social researchers. He re-creates "Asch's (1951) classic finding of group influence, in which participants often respond in accordance with choices expressed by other members of a group, regardless of the accuracy of those choices." On two of the reported trials, confederate avatars unanimously chose incorrectly before the actual participants made their choice. Results showed that on these trials participants were significantly more likely to choose in accord with the confederate's choices, relative to participants tested as single avatars. According to this paper, the results generally support earlier research on group influence and extend these findings to a virtual world environment. My take: people are the same in the real and in the virtual – for good and bad. On a research note: virtual worlds present a unique opportunity of experimentation.
- In "Architecting Scalable Academic Virtual World Grids: A Case Utilizing OpenSimulator", authors "Charles J. Lesko, and Yolanda A. Hollingsworth present a

specific case focuses on the detail leading to deployment of the solution, solution selection and incorporation of various virtualization technologies to maximize institutional hardware resources. They present 10 functional requirements, and how they fulfilled them. This paper could serve as a guide for those looking to install such a virtual worlds system.

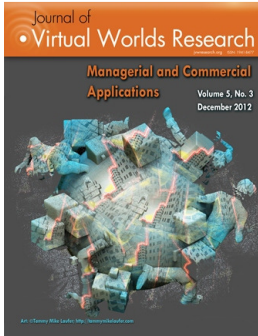
- In “Virtual Archaeology in Second Life and OpenSimulator” authors Luís Miguel Sequeira, and Leonel Morgado present an overview of the different approaches to virtual archaeology projects; in particular, the last type shows a novel approach to virtual archaeology which is not found in other platforms. The paper shows how a universal virtual (such is Second life or OpenSimulator) world can be used to allow users from all over the worlds virtual access to experiences only kept for the few in the past.

These six papers present the diversity of topics and research methods in our field. JVWR will continue to encourage this diverse approach as we explore and expand our field.

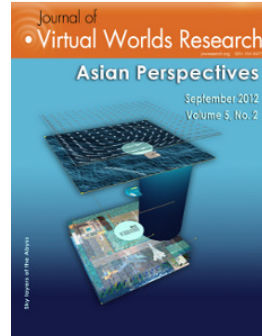
As a reminder:

- Check the summary of our ICIS 2012 Orlando workshop on Augmented Reality (<http://jvwresearch.org/index.php/2011-06-12-18-46-09/11-events/49-araticis2012fullprogram>)
- Our web site includes a special page on events in our field (<http://jvwresearch.org/index.php/2011-06-12-18-46-09>).
- We have a special page that includes a cover view of all our past issues (<http://jvwresearch.org/index.php/past-issues/all-issues>). They are listed here for your enjoyment.
- You are also welcome to join our Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/TheJVWR>) and/or subscribe to our mailing list (on the top left of <http://www.jvwreserach.org>).
- You can follow our twitter @TheJVWR (<https://twitter.com/theJvwr>).
- You are all invited to participate (or present) at our meeting at ICIS 2013 in Milan. (<http://jvwresearch.org/index.php/2011-06-12-18-46-09/10-cfps/53-cfp-3d3c-virtual-worlds-topical-lantern-review>)





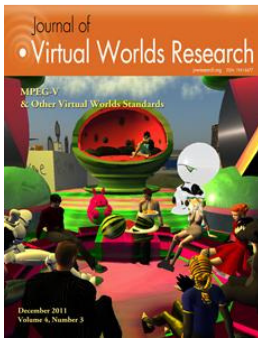
*Vol 5, No 3 (2012):
Managerial and Commercial
Applications*



*Vol 5, No 2 (2012):
Asian Perspectives*



*Vol 5, No 1 (2012):
Assembled 2012*



*Vol 4, No 3 (2011):
MPEG-V and Other Standards*



*Vol 4, No 2 (2011):
Government and Defense*



*Vol 4, No 1 (2011):
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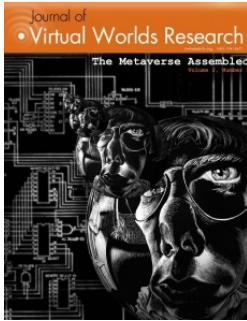
*Vol 3, No 3 (2010):
The Researcher's Toolbox II*



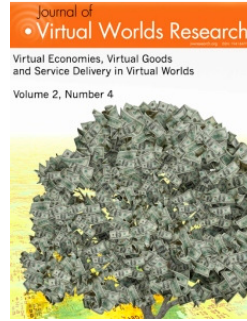
*Vol 3, No 2 (2010):
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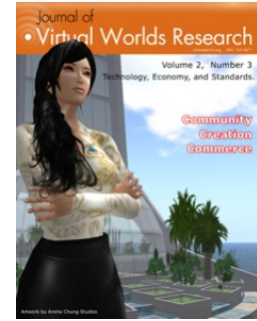
*Vol 3, No 1 (2010):
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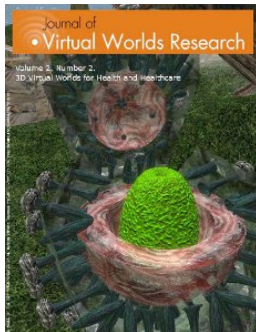
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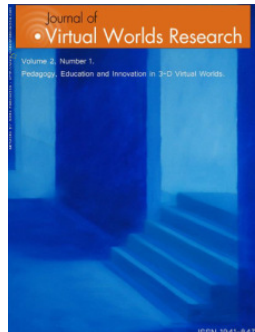
Vol 2, No 4 (2009):
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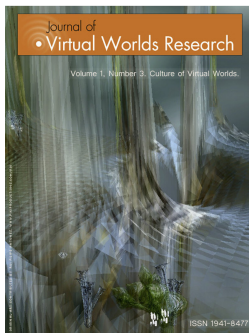
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Vol 2, No 2 (2009):
3D Virtual Worlds for
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Vol 2, No 1 (2009):
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Vol 1, No 3 (2008):
Cultures of Virtual Worlds



Vol 1, No 2 (2008):
Consumer Behavior in
Virtual Worlds



Vol 1, No 1 (2008):
Virtual Worlds Research:
Past, Present and Future