

January members' newsletter

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2005 will be a most important year for TAHI. Notably, TAHI will have two completed trials to announce to the industry. These trials will have proved many things and shown some of what is possible in delivering services to home-based users. Our achievements have not gone unnoticed by the EU commission where TAHI is seen as successful and committed – this is a way into Europe for TAHI and its members.

There will also be important opportunities in Europe with the Sixth Framework Programme, especially with TEAHA and with SmartHouse both of which have strong TAHI representation.

There are, as this newsletter is published, opportunities in the DTI Innovation Competitive call and it may well be possible to get funding to extend and flesh out the TAHI Open Architecture or further develop the Services modelling work.

What is most important for TAHI, its trials and members is to build on the trials and deliver deployments of TAHI services, systems and products to large numbers of home-based users. TAHI has developed a Future Strategy Document that proposes:

- a TAHI team to plan to take the trials into deployment
- a series of forums directed at particular sectors to attract their organisations to use TAHI methods and to join in TAHI's mission
- a conference that publicises the results of the trials
- a series of forums specifically to help SME members find opportunities
- a working group for engaging with FP6
- and immediately, a group to work on new projects for the DTI call

All of this will be discussed in a session following the formal business of the Annual General Meeting. This is scheduled for the 3rd of February, and will be in London. The AGM will, as always, have formal resolutions and the financial report, but it is hoped that we can complete these quickly and concentrate on how we can take TAHI forward into 2005.

We wish all our readers a prosperous new year and look forward to a year of profitable activity and achievement by TAHI and its membership.

Stephen Pattenden

TAHI Secretariat.

Subs reminder

This year's subscription for TAHI membership is now due. We would appreciate payment by the end of this month to

Contact us

To include your news and views in the TAHI newsletter, please [email](#) or call Mike Windsor on

ensure you continue to receive access to all membership services, including the right to vote at the AGM on February 3.

You can pay by BACs to account number 02611317, sort code 30-97-66; or make cheques payable to The Application Home Initiative Limited and send to Church Farm Barn, Rickingham, DISS, Norfolk IP22 1EG.

Don't forget to let us know of any changes to your mailing and contact details.

DTI Innovation Call

There are likely to be opportunities for TAHI members to collaborate to take advantage of the latest round of DTI funding.

The competitive call for collaborative research and development projects covers several areas of interest to TAHI:

- Pervasive Computing - £9million of funding has been set aside for projects that address some of the major technical challenges including: telecare; digital content; applications, services and tools; reliability and monitoring of in-service performance and integrity
- Design, Simulation and Modelling - Ensuring the widest possible business benefit from the techniques and technologies developed for use in one application area to be exploited in other. An indicative £17million has been allocated to support a broad-ranging portfolio of projects in areas including: environmentally friendly transport; creative industries; micro-electronics; manufacturing processes, and the modern built environment.
- Imaging Technologies - indicative DTI funding of £6 million is available to support the innovative development and use of imaging systems technology for healthcare and security applications.

TAHI secretariat Stephen Pattenden said: "I think there are areas where some TAHI members can form groups that tackle various problems that may have become apparent in the trials, TOA or modelling work. There will also be value in creating links between work in this call and EU FP6 Call 4."

In all, £80 million of funding will be available for companies to carry out collaborative R&D in nine high-priority technology areas. More information about this and other research and development support is on the [DTI website](#).

The deadline for submitting a 5-page outline application is February 7 2005, but there must have been a notification of an intention to bid by 31st January. If successful, project teams will be invited to submit full applications on March 7, with responses required by May 3.

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Coming Up

[TAHI AGM](#)

January 19, 2005
Advantica, Loughborough.

[TAHI SA meeting](#)

February 3, 2005
10am
Thistle Hotel, Victoria,
London

[Connected Home Care](#)

February 2
CBI Conference Centre,
London

[CeBIT 2005](#)

March 10-16
Hannover, Germany

[The Connected Home 2005](#)

April 6-7
Crowne Plaza Hotel,
Marlow

[The Smart Home Show](#)

April 14-17
NEC Birmingham

[INSTALL @ PALME](#)

April 24-26
International Exhibition
Centre, Dubai, UAE

[CONNECTIONS™ 2005](#)

May 11-13
Hyatt Regency Burlingame
San Francisco

[CEDIA The European Home Technology Show 2005](#)

June 28-30
International Convention
Centre
Birmingham

[IFA 2005](#)

September 2-7
Berlin

In the area of Networked and AudioVisual Systems and Home Platforms (NAVSHIP) it is understood that €63 Million has been allocated for new projects. The closing date for the call is March 22 and TAHI would like to hear from anyone interested in putting forward a proposal.

There are other EU FP6 directorates with equally large budgets – Security Systems €63M, Broadband €65, Knowledge Based Systems €112, ICT for Innovative Government €46, eLearning €54, Biomedical systems for Healthcare €75.

Much of TAHI's existing work would make a significant contribution towards a major demonstrator covering the whole of the intelligent home marketplace, according to TAHI Secretariat, Stephen Pattenden (telemetra@telemetra.com)

"As an additional benefit, a large-scale demonstration platform would assist in the adoption SmartHouse requires," he said.

"Since the aims of SmartHouse and TAHI are strongly aligned, and that this is much in line with both EU and UK Government objectives, it is likely a proposal in this area would be acceptable provided it was well constructed and supported.

"Because EU projects require Pan European organisation involvement, engagement in such a project would take TAHI strongly into the EU and towards becoming a Pan European organisation."

The timescales of such a bid proposal and its acceptance would mean that it might be possible to carry over the ends of the TAHI trials into a large scale UK Demonstrator part funded by the EU.

For more information of FP6 Call 4, see the Commission's CORDIS website at: http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=174

Broadband & Wi-Fi trends



Image © Intel

Now that Broadband can be provided as a viable service for most UK homes and Wi-Fi sales are increasing, perhaps the UK will see the same percentage levels of Broadband growth as other countries and in particular the US.

Mind you, something had better happen to the pricing models.

According to the International Telecommunication Union, the UK pays \$6.37 per 100 Kbps whilst the US pays \$3.53 and certain quarters in the US are complaining that their high prices will impede productivity and competitiveness.

Perhaps they have something to worry about when Hong Kong charges half of the US prices, Korea only 7% of the US price and Japan only 2.5% of the US price. Before we start thinking that low Broadband prices are only available outside the EU, Belgium pays only \$1.15 per 100 Kbps, 18% of the UK price. So, the good news is that UK PLC is on the move but has some way to go.

In common with the US we are starting to see growth in Wi-Fi within the home. The US had perhaps just under 4 million homes with Wi-Fi at the end of 2003 and this is predicted to have almost doubled by the end of 2004.

So, will Wi-Fi be the only solution for networking in the existing home? Not according to Parks Associates, who see a hybrid of solutions delivering consumer needs, perhaps as many as 60% of homes will have hybrid networks.

So, the TAHI inspired Equipment Management and Service Aggregation trials probably got that right then! Both support hybrid networks.

Parks Associates, a market research and consulting firm based in Dallas, Texas, have produced a White Paper on "The Future of the Home Network" and this can be downloaded from their web-site www.parksassociates.com. There is also a White Paper on "Digital

Much of their work is US-focused but if the old adage is true then what happens in the US happens in the UK a few years later. But let's hope lower Broadband pricing catches up more quickly!

ESRI applies ergonomics to EM trial



The work done by [ESRI](#), the Ergonomics and Safety Research Institute, is crucial to the success of TAHI's Equipment Management (EM) trial. Programme manager Mike Patterson sums it up pithily – ESRI makes sure we get maximum bangs for our buck.

It is evaluating a range of products and services for the connected home to ensure they are "fit for purpose", usable and safe. Put simply, ESRI is the nearest thing to a crystal ball when it comes to assessing product viability.

Of course, the actual process of analysis is rigorously scientific. Ergonomics draw on human sciences such as physiology, psychology, biomechanics and anthropometry to ensure that the design of products, systems and environments matches the physical and mental abilities and limitations of users.

Based at Loughborough University, ESRI is where the worlds of academia and commerce coincide and with over 55 members of staff it is one of the largest sources of independent ergonomics and human factors expertise available in the UK.

Following laboratory experiments in the Advantica test house at Loughborough, the ESRI team is now taking the EM trial into the real world with a set of tests involving 15 guinea-pig households retrofitted with a range of smart home equipment and monitoring devices.

These trials aim to test the functional performance of the equipment (can data be collected and transferred across the network?) and the user interaction (what does the EM system offer that is of value to the users?), taking in energy use, boiler service, appliance repair, holiday security, home ambience, break-in and welfare monitoring.

The work involves evaluating the system installed in homes, as well as gathering opinions on the wider issues of smart home technology. As many people as possible in each household are being involved to get a wide perspective of the systems impact and user experiences.

The evaluation techniques – including ethnographic studies, surveys and interviews to provide both qualitative and quantitative data – will ensure that maximum "rich and robust" information is captured from participants during the full course of the trial.

Mike Patterson said: "The ESRI team are doing a great job ensuring that we really get value from the trial using non-intrusive research. They have risen to every challenge and are squeezing every last drop of information from the tests."

Information will be collected before, during and after the trial, monitoring system development and how people familiarise themselves with the functionality. Data from the evaluations will be analysed and reported, with the findings disseminated within the trial.

ESRI is also a key member of the Service Aggregation trial applying the institute's skills to the design of the user interface for the "Living Room" scenario based on Set Top Box technology and to researching the impact of the 50 user trial in the Leicester area.

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