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Multimedia Transport and Teleservices

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Preface

Although many distributed multimedia applications now exist as pilot projects on local networks, these prototypes have yet to be translated into realistic applications running over large scale heterogeneous high-speed networks. To help bring about this important transition, a number of initiatives such as the COST 237 Multimedia Telecommunications Services project in Europe and the Multimedia Communications Forum in the US have recently been established. These groups identify a *lack of generic system support* as the primary technological factor holding back the deployment of realistic, large scale, distributed multimedia applications. There are two basic technologies required to make feasible such support: an appropriate *transport service* for communications needs, and a suitable set of generic multimedia teleservices to provide a framework for application development.

It is now accepted that significant enhancements to existing transport services are needed to adequately support large scale distributed multimedia applications. In particular, the transport service must be extended to support quality of service configurability and multicast/multipeer connectivity, and must be supported by a variety of high-speed network types. The area of multimedia teleservices is equally crucial. Generic high level services, such as multimedia enhanced email, conferencing frameworks and shared application frameworks, are necessary to ease the evolution from present day pilot applications to commercial inter-operable products. The present workshop addresses both of these technological areas with particular attention paid to the *integration* of the two. The emphasis of the workshop is on service and architectural aspects of distributed multimedia application support from the transport layer upwards.

In total, the call for papers resulted in 46 papers being received from 14 countries. Following the review procedure, the program committee selected 18 papers to be presented at the workshop and 6 papers to be presented at a poster/demo session. The workshop's keynote address will be given by Roland Hüber, director of the European Commission's RACE/ACTS research programmes, who will no doubt provide us with a stimulating opening to the workshop! His talk is entitled "Multimedia communication - making use of all senses and resources". The workshop proper is organised as a series of sessions and an ongoing poster display. The six sessions cover the following subject areas: teleservices, technological support for teleservices, quality of service and synchronisation, multipeer communication, broadband network transport and variable bit rate video transport.

COST 237 Multimedia Transport and Teleservices is organised by the CEC COST 237 Multimedia Telecommunications Services Project and hosted by Alcatel Austria AG. Many people have worked hard in preparation for the workshop - the COST 237 Steering Committee in planning the event in the first place, the Program Committee in reviewing and selecting the technical papers and posters and, of course, the local Organising Committee. I hope you will all join me in thanking Alcatel Austria AG for agreeing to host our workshop in the beautiful city of Vienna, and in a special vote of thanks to Helmut Leopold who has done all the *real* work as Chair of the local Organising Committee.

September 1994

David Hutchison, Conference Chairman

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