Interactive TV: A New Interaction Paradigm?

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INTRODUCTION
This SIG will bring together practitioners and researchers who are involved in the design of Interactive TV services (iTV). iTV services have been launched across much of Europe, as well as in the USA. However, most of the trials conducted on the feasibility of these services are commercially sensitive. Little is known publicly about what makes for a successful interactive TV service, and there are no established guidelines for the development of usable iTV services.

The aims of this SIG are to:

- share findings from recent usability studies of iTV services

- discuss the implications of these findings for the design of future services

- identify future research issues that should be addressed by the HCI community

FOCUS OF DISCUSSION
To start the discussion, the SIG leaders will share findings from independent studies that they conducted in November 1999 across a number of interactive TV services launched in the UK. These findings cover the usability of a range of Electronic Programme Guides and shopping services which display different approaches to the design of iTV services.

We will facilitate discussion around a number of questions that are fundamental to the future development of iTV services:

What aspects of usability are most important to the design of iTV services? How do these aspects of usability differ to those that are important for other types of products?

How effective are GUI and Web design conventions when applied to the design of iTV services? Is it appropriate to carry over metaphors and conventions from other forms of interactive service?

How do users conceptualise and navigate the TV environment of multiple channels and services?

What are the usability implications of the TV remote control and wireless keyboard as input devices?

What methods and techniques are most appropriate when investigating the usability of iTV services? Are new methods and techniques required?

OUTCOMES
The outcome of the SIG will be a set of research issues that will form the basis of a preliminary research agenda for the HCI community.

We also intend to set up a network of iTV researchers that can drive future research into the usability of iTV services by collaborating and sharing insights gained through their own work.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE SIG LEADERS
The SIG leaders are both active in the area of iTV research, carrying out commercial projects and independent research.

Owen Daly-Jones is a Senior Consultant at Serco Usability Services, who specialises in the usability of iTV services. Owen works on projects that span a wide range of emerging technologies, and he has a particular interest in cross-platform issues related to iTV services.

Rachel Carey is Manager of Serco Usability Services. Rachel consults on a wide range of Internet and iTV projects. Prior to joining Serco Usability Services, she was a Senior Consultant at The Hiser Group, based in Australia.