

TouchLab Brings the Future to the Present

World Premiere for Next-Generation Interactive Presentation / 3D Becomes Child's Play / „Minority Report“ Made in Frankfurt

(Frankfurt/Main / Darmstadt, October 2009) – Smart gentlemen in fine suits are standing around an oversized table which has them spellbound. They follow the action on a giant display and projection screens that they literally have in their hands. They can see the Earth spinning, with airplanes flying through the atmosphere, the point of view changing rapidly, and all of this in 3D. There is no sign of a keyboard or a mouse. The futuristic audio-visual content is controlled by hand movement alone. However, this is not a scene from a science-fiction blockbuster such as „Minority Report“, but reality at the Paris Air Show 2009, the world premiere of TouchLab, the next generation, interactive, multi-media infotainment and presentation system.

At the world's largest air show this summer, the TouchLab Lounge, as part of the exhibition stand of air and space travel giant EADS, caused a sensation amongst top-class VIP guests from all over the globe. These visitors, who would already have been familiar to Multi-Touch-Technology thanks to the iPhone, were the first anywhere to discover the next generation TouchLab experience. TouchLab is the first system to make this futuristic presentation form workable in the third dimension. The hi-tech milestone has been developed in the Rhein-Main area, Germany, by Frankfurt-based creative agency for new communication NewMedia Yuppies (NMY), in cooperation with the Fraunhofer Institute for Digital Graphical Processing (IGD) in Darmstadt.

3D-Capability makes TouchLab a Milestone

„With TouchLab it is possible to move into a really high-quality 3D world for the first time“, explains NMY founder and Chief Executive Sebastian Demmerle, (32), „and this makes it a milestone“. Peter Eschler, (34), Head Software Developer and partner in NMY adds, “Users have a completely new virtual experience by interactively controlling extremely complex 3D data in real-time“. Going way beyond PowerPoint, videos or previous Multi-Touch applications, TouchLab can be used by companies as a completely new level of multimedia presentation. The trick is that TouchLab is the first device which uses intelligent connections between content in a single, enclosed application. TouchLab makes explaining particularly complex products and services easy, because of its fast, flexible and fascinating user-experience.

TouchLab brings the Future to the Present

TouchLab not only brings the Future to the Present but is also future proof: TouchLab's software is based on internet technology, making the integration of multimedia content in the coming 3D standards for internet browsers and smart phones effortless. „The three-dimensional future will happen, but TouchLab is already here“, says Demmerle, delighted with the result of the TouchLab developers' hard work. The device uses infra-red based, multi-touch technology

Page 2
to recognise the user's finger positions. „It is just like using a mouse and keyboard, just without a mouse and keyboard“, says Eschler, explaining the device's simplicity of use. Another secret behind TouchLab is the integration of

hardware and software in a way not seen elsewhere. By keeping strictly to open standards the existing and future input and output components can be easily integrated.

100 Days and one Goal: to make TouchLab-Vision Reality

The development and completion of TouchLab was a tense race against time. The creative specialists had to complete the project within exactly 100 days from the contract being awarded. Information architects, software developers, concept writers, copywriters, 3D experts, film makers, sound designers and photographers worked together on this difficult, exciting and ambitious task, as well as the trade fair stand designers and post-production technicians. Even whilst en route to Paris some gremlins in the system had to be identified and removed. „Through the hard work of the fantastic professionals in the media and marketing industries the project, despite the enormous pressure, always stayed on schedule“, recalls the NMY chief. „It was teamwork at its best and that allowed us to deliver successfully and on time“ The cooperation also ran absolutely smoothly with the renowned Fraunhofer Institute, who provided the technological basis with their software „InstantReality“ and took on some of the programming. „Close communication and a great synergetic effect helped bring us considerable success“.

The Age of the TouchLab has begun – and the Sultan is already waiting

Although the age of the TouchLab has only just begun the demand is already huge. This should come as no surprise when you consider the massive range of situations where TouchLab could be used. High-end product animations, simulation and edutainment applications, architectural visualisations and art installations could all be realised brilliantly with TouchLab. The automobile, pharmaceutical, civil engineering, air and space, machine building, electronics and chemical industries are particularly well situated to benefit from displaying complex and impressive 3D images. Other strong markets have been identified and the Frankfurt NMY team are looking internationally. „Kuwait, Qatar, Dubai and the UAE are the main areas of interest“, says Demmerle. „When he saw it in Paris the direct advisor of the Sultan of Bahrain said he would expect to see TouchLab in the Sultan’s palace the following week.“. Whether here or on the other side of the world „The demand for high-quality communication tools which cause a sensation, gain a lot of attention and are seen to be more exciting than the competitors’ offerings is always growing, at trade fairs, events and in showrooms“. At its first-ever outing in Paris, EADS, the first TouchLab customer, had all of their expectations surpassed. TouchLab became the hot topic of conversation and stayed there! „EADS is now planning on using TouchLab much more widely, for future trade shows as well as in their showrooms“, says NMY Chief Executive Demmerle, rightly pleased with product’s success.

Complicated Technology, Child’s Play to Use

What can appear to be a highly complex system on paper is actually child’s play to use. Everyone can use TouchLab and ever increasing numbers will.

Page 3

A modular version is planned which will scale to suit every customer’s requirement and budget. As well as hardware and software the NMY team look after the support and creative content. However, the TouchLab pioneers are not resting on their laurels, but are already working on their „Advance System

Experience“, with new features, such as gesture-based control detection. This will allow TouchLab to recognise body movements in open space, without any need for the user to touch anything at all. And when that happens „Minority Report“, made in Frankfurt, will become actual reality.

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