THALES

nuVa Collaboration Solutions

As the pace of globalisation increases, many teams are becoming split between sites and countries. This leads to the stresses of travel and increases costs in terms of money, time, and impact on the environment. The Virtual Collaboration Solutions (VSC) team at Thales Research and Technology (UK) Ltd (TRT (UK)) has developed nuVa - a hands-on, user-centric Collaborative Work Environment (CWE) enabling split-site teams to work effectively and hold multi-way meetings, securely and in real-time.

nuVa allows users to be immersed in a real-time, digital representation of a desk-top working environment facilitating everyday work actions that are central to a business environment. As a result, the amount of travelling to and from meetings is reduced. This gives considerable cost savings, with the added advantage of promoting and allowing more ad hoc meetings between team members.

nuVa: THE CONCEPT

The uptake and use of CWEs is dependant on whether they provide real benefits, in terms of increased and enhanced business communications, and non-intrusive and intuitive interactions that are a real alternative to face-to-face working. nuVa addresses these issues by exploiting the realities of how we, in a business environment, really

work. For example, when a project team discusses progress, work structures, documentation and so forth, we annotate and edit works in progress, we create and visualise new ideas and concepts and, most importantly, we resolve problems and issues often by visual and/or textual means. To accomplish the majority of these tasks we need a shared work area that is visible to everybody. Traditionally, this means meeting with groups of people at a single location, in a single room around a desk!

Now, with nuVa, TRT (UK) has combined an innovative, virtual work area that is shared between disparate users simulating a visual, interactive desk-based environment that mimics a real-world 'round-table' working situation in a secure environment. Team members can share all manner of electronic material whilst using natural user input devices such as pens to comment on and highlight, edit and develop documents with colleagues, securely, in real-time irrespective of distance.

nuVa: THE DEVELOPMENT

To assist in the development of nuVa, TRT (UK) has utilised advanced multimedia technologies. These technologies are used through multimedia applications to minimise, by means of effective virtual environments, the distance between individuals. In the case of nuVa the effective distance between disparate teams of people is minimised.

Underlying the user-centric concept of nuVa is the realisation that data has to be shared securely between user groups and subsets of those users. nuVa incorporates a multi-layered security model that ensures meeting participants can communicate in nuVa-space in complete privacy. All flows of data between nuVa platforms are encrypted using the latest security technologies developed by Thales UK. Additionally, nuVa allows different communication levels to be established, facilitating sub-groups of meeting participants to communicate and share data as an aside to the main session.

nuVa Collaboration Solutions
Welcome to a new way of working

nuVa: THE BENEFITS

Using nuVa opens up a whole host of possibilities to the business community, and financial savings quickly become apparent.

Here are just a few of the benefits nuVa will facilitate:

- A significant reduction in travel costs
- The rapid and frequent dissemination of critical information securely
- A more flexible work-force
- A more efficient use of man-power
- More ad hoc communications intra- and inter-organisations
- The formation of more diverse, global partnerships
- Improved carbon footprint due to a decrease in business travel
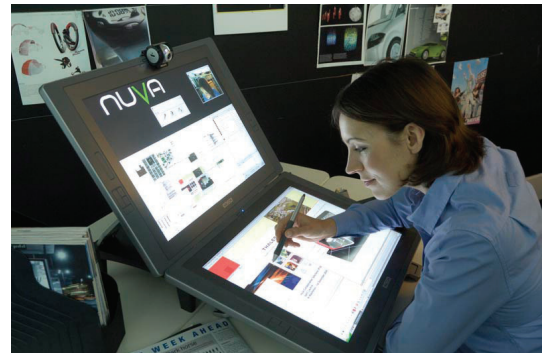- A better work/life balance for employees

nuVa: HERE AND NOW

Successful trials of the system have been undertaken within Thales UK divisions enabling disparate teams co-working, in real-time on software design and development. Other groups are investigating its use as a time-efficient and highly effective way of collaboratively working on all manner of project documentations, contract negotiations, and large scale design works. The flexibility of nuVa allows any kind of electronic media, documents, photographs, CAD drawings etc… to be collaboratively viewed and annotated. Additionally, nuVa allows multiple users to edit, in real-time, material in their native PC-based applications.

The nuVa configurations centre on the unique selling point that is the visual, interactive work-space. The configurations are:

- nuVa Desk – a large, horizontal desk designed to accommodate multiple people working around it at any one time
- nuVa Mini – Desktop version of the nuVa desk, comprising PC monitor and tablet displays utilising standard input devices
- nuVa Whiteboard – An Interactive Whiteboard version more appropriate to larger seminar sessions and of particular use in the co-ordination of Crisis Management

nuVa: THE FUTURE

Current enhancements to the nuVa architecture have led to scaled versions of nuVa being developed for the mobile market. The future of nuVa could allow the application to be available on an array of mobile devices enabling secure, real-time, collaborative working, anytime, anywhere!

Here, in the VCS group, we are continually looking to develop the next 'must-have' concept that will allow further user-centric collaborative developments. The nuVa application provides the perfect architecture and baseline to continue our innovations in this ever-evolving area.

ABOUT TRT (UK)

TRT (UK) is a Thales company specialising in advanced research and development. It works closely with its sister companies around the world to develop new technologies and provide close support to the Thales group of companies. In addition, a wide range of consultancy and development services are offered to governments, agencies and industry.

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