

Virtual Conferencing: E-Learning, E-Participation and E-Governance

BackGrounder: Expertise Heiner Benking:

(see also <http://benking.de/culture/E-conferencing-expertise.pdf>) ([htm](#))

A word of caution:

I presented at CAMP '85 (World Computer Graphics Association) the main theme of the Conference: COMPUTER GRAPHICS FOR MANAGEMENT; MARKETING AND SALES with the ironical undertone slide: “Computer Aided Everything” – CAE. With some cartoons, I presented the potentials and challenges of visualisation, making sure we have to go beyond CA-Engineering.¹ I find nearly 25 years later this “E” and there seems to be still little difference if “e” stands for Engineering, Electronic/Distance, or Everything. This text explains the human dimension and impact when applications are done for positive collective ends, not just for a certain group.

Over the past two decades, I shifted from “Environment” and “Education”, and now to enhancing **Communication and Conferencing**. I insist that there has to be a (Personal) and (Humane) Dimension involved. We focused on a **Humane Information Society**² in the early/mid 90ies (HIS not IS) with the German Society for Informatics on Environmental Information. We explained the dangers of “Visual Demagogy” in 1987, the challenges and dangers of Virtual Reality in Tübingen 1993. For the past 20 years, I have worked as facilitator on dialog and deliberation in local, “physical” groups. I am mentioning this to point out that I am not the Cyberjunky or Electronic Wizard which abound in the new technologies, with plenty of hastily and inappropriately implemented, technology-driven exercises concerning the Human Condition and Predicament³.

Looking at the simplistic use of ICT, I have to emphasize, as just discussed with Prof Arnold Kaiserslautern, that all these fabulous E-technologies are only enablers. They can help learners come to informal, practical, cross-disciplinary and innovative learning in REAL LIFE. They can help with real PROJECTS, where the learners have to get the insights, the in-between of the patterns and processes “that connect.” In so doing, they overcome the ancient “frontal” style of indoctrination used in the “Chinese School” and the Nuremberg Funnel. Informal learning, participation and democracy need to get to relevant and trusted quality information– and so we can see that all the E’s are connected: **E-Learning, E-Participation and E-Governance**. Alone by themselves, they are utterly insufficient! and can be dangerous; but in some cases, they can be helpful. People should not just go somewhere, but make sure they contribute and make differences that matter! Good eLearning should connect expertise and minds to the best and brightest ideas and solutions to given problems⁴!

For a more general reference to my credentials please see some “milestones” in the footnotes and links. For example, lecturer at the IBM International Executive Briefing Centre in LaHulpe (mid 80ies), Computer Graphics, Creativity, Cognition, Communications and Design and Visualisation lectures and presentations since the early 80ies, or a list of positions, like in the early days of the Computer Graphics Industry... or the sometimes only local events and side-events [see](#): or my [jump-page](#).

¹ The ideas for two new journals were “born” at this “key-note marathon”. (I will create a list of reference materials and “milestones” at the end of this text - A time-line can be found here and some titles and links can be found here:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Benking>

² <http://benking.de/information-society-1998.htm>

³ We cautioned about the unintended consequences and rebound-effects in presentations on ROBUST PATHS to Global Stability at a conference with Futurists, Policy, Philosophy and Civil Society groups in 1995, which was later published by the WFSF and the European Community, have a look at work in the [Beyond Poverty and Work in the Information Society and the other sections](#).

⁴ It is obvious that the optimum idea and experience can not be corralled and maintained behind walls and not for given times – and that cross-scale, cross-subjects and intercultural issues of our modern times demand new approaches and shared orientations – please see this “work-in-progress” for some grounding and perspectives here [\[9d\]](#) and [\[EcoTHEE\]](#) in progress ([powerpoints](#)) for cross-media publications...

Virtual Conferencing: Expertise Heiner Benking:

A Timeline of Applications in the field of **Electronic Communications**

(for application areas (Social, Cultural, Technical, or Democracy Deliberations please check out this [“jump-page”](#)).

1981-88: Co-Laboratory in Video-Aided Instructions VAI courses for senior international high-tech, policy and management clients - Video-Course and Primer: TELEMATICS and CIM - Computer Integrated Manufacturing Partner: Arthur d'Little (lead) Advanced Systems, IBM, for CIM also Apollo Domain, Auto-trol Technology. I have presented some background slides here. Please see [slide 6](#).

1989-92: Consultant (G7- EEES & UN-project) on meta-data and harmonization, see UNEP General Assembly and the coordination across agencies, media, scales, countries, languages ... UNEP-HEM www.benking/Global-Change/

1995/6: G7 study on Distance Learning – participation on various international and European governmental and policy hearings and meetings representing Sprachbau.

Since 1996/7: [Global Learn Day](#): Friend and Technology-Outlook (in the crows nest) of the initiator of the concepts of the virtual journeys Dr. John McLaughlin. Later contribution at the various annual GLOBAL LEARN DAYS with John Hibbs (now “skipper”-President) (latest journey 2007) see <http://www.bfranklin.edu/>

Since 2000: International Side Events and Virtual Side events in co-laboration with IHTEC as an OPEN-FORUM – P-N-W Positive Nett-Works, see: www.p-n-w.net/events/

2000: Network Worldwide Project, Expo 2000, Hanover, various distance and local side events during the whole summer, presenting the [Millennium Project \(AC/UNU\)](#) and participating/reporting on the Global Dialogues, <http://www.radiobridge.net/www/expo.html>

2003: OpenSpace-Online Conference: Global Learning and Shaping the Future – New Learning for new Societies, part of Global Education Week (Council of Europe), more at: <http://www.ihtec.org/index.php?id=186> or: <http://www.cafeweltgeist.org/open-forum/OsoDocu/>

2004: EWOC: Evolution of World Order Toronto multi-national video-conference with Canadian Education Ministers and others– organizing local FU-Berlin contributions about Literacy etc. EWOC and IHTEC; see Council on Global Issues, www.c-g-i.info

Since 2005: External consultant ijgd, International Youth Community Services, earlier consultant Information and Communication, for all offices, looking into Computer-“Telephony”, Virtual Co-laboration and Conferencing, etc. www.ijgd.de

2006: Virtual e-conferencing Keynotes for handicapped speakers. See ALS patient (since 10 years leaving the bed and unable to move at all (except the eyes) doing from her bed in Berlin invited keynote in Turin ([EyeGAZE Conference](#): see online [docu](#) with slides, video and film clips) - see also next slides

2006: ONLINE MULTIMEDIA CONFERENCE BRIDGE <http://www.pnyv.org/idec2006/> for IDEC 2006 in Sydney. IDEC: International Democratic Education Conference, <http://www.idenetwork.org/>

Since 2006: CoLaboratories and [Agoras for the 21st Century](#). The author is part of the Knowledge Management Team, former Lovers of Democracy, which is based on the work done by one of its members on the Original Prospectus for the Club of Rome, Alexander Christakis, and explore also virtual methods called Colaboratories for the Future, towards an Agora for the 21st Century. A designerly effort is presently under way to meet virtually to help design the [OBAMA VISION](#), in support of the Vision of the incoming President in the US.

2008: 1001 Dialogues informal and virtual add-on to major 37 countries campaign of ALF Anna Lindh-Foundation, German Node. See also 1001 dialogues and [100 001 diversities](#) side events ([Docu](#)) See also: <http://open-forum.de/events/> and “[Outcomes](#)”.

2009: 10001 Seeds of Change at UN - Earth Day, in Vienna and UNESCO-DESD in Bonn. Special Side and Virtual gatherings and round-tables. Please see docu in progress here and some related sites: <http://open-forum.de/10001-Seeds.pdf> <http://10001seeds.wordpress.com/> <http://mindprint.tv>