

## Preface

Digital cities constitutes a multidisciplinary field of research and development, where researchers, designers and developers of communityware interact and collaborate with social scientists studying the use and effects of these kinds of infrastructures and systems in their local application context.

The field is rather young. After the diffusion of ICT in the world of organizations and companies, ICT entered everyday life. And this also influenced ICT research and development. The 1998 Workshop on Communityware and Social Interaction in Kyoto was an early meeting in which this emerging field was discussed. After that, two subsequent Digital Cities workshops were organized in Kyoto, and a third one in Amsterdam.

This book is the result of the 3rd Workshop on Digital Cities, which took place September 18–19, 2003 in Amsterdam, in conjunction with the 1st Communities and Technologies Conference. Most of the papers were presented at this workshop, and were revised thoroughly afterwards. Also the case studies of digital cities in Asia, the US, and Europe, included in Part I, were direct offsprings of the Digital Cities Workshops. Together the papers in this volume give an interesting state-of-the-art overview of the field.

In total 54 authors from the Americas, from Asia, and from Europe were contributed to this volume. The authors come from Brazil (two), the USA (eleven), China (three), Japan (fourteen), Finland (two), Germany (two), Italy (three), Portugal (two), the Netherlands (eight), and the UK (seven), indicating the international nature of the research field.

This volume is organized as follows: It starts with an introductory chapter which briefly describes the developments and challenges of digital cities research. The introduction also summarizes the papers included in this volume. The eight chapters in Part I present a series of in-depth case studies of digital cities and community networks, showing the commonalities and differences in experiments from all over the world. The last chapter in this part is an effort to compare the cases. Part II of the book consists of four chapters, each proposing a specific design of a platform for digital cities and virtual communities. Part III focuses on data and knowledge modeling approaches for community systems. In Part IV, issues of participation and design are discussed, as well as systems for monitoring the use of community systems. This part concludes with a chapter on the relations between real space and media space. Part V focuses on experiments with the use of information and communication technologies for improving local social capital in very different contexts. Four chapters discuss small and large experiments in different countries, urban as well as rural ones.

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Peter van den Besselaar  
Satoshi Koizumi

## Organization

### Workshop Chairs

Peter van den Besselaar Social Sciences Department, NIWI-KNAW,  
Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences,  
&  
Amsterdam School of Communications Research, ASCoR,  
University of Amsterdam

Satoshi Koizumi Digital City Research Center, Japan Science and  
Technology Corp.

### Program Committee

Jun-ichi Akahani NTT Communication Science Laboratory, Japan

Allesandro Aurigi University of Newcastle, UK

Fiorella De Cindio University of Milan, Italy

Noshir Contractor University of Illinois, USA

Vanessa Evers University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Toru Ishida Kyoto University, Japan

Satoshi Koizumi Digital City Research Center, JST Corp, Japan

Peter Mambrey Fraunhofer Gesellschaft and Duisburg University,  
Germany

Carolien Metselaar City of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Douglas Schuler Evergreen State College, USA

Sheng HuanYe Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China

Peter van den Besselaar Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences,  
The Netherlands

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