

Letter from the Editors

Welcome to the first issue of *Wi*, a publication initiative of the Mobile Digital Commons Network. The purpose of this online journal is to highlight and disseminate the on-going research results of two years of collaboration amongst designers, theorists, artists, engineers, software developers as a research network in mobile, wireless and gaming technologies. The title for our journal, a homonym for “why,” reflects the spirit of critical and creative self-reflection on the process of inter-disciplinary digital media production.

The content of *Wi* has been shaped by the members of MDCN. This first issue reflects some of the pressing questions that we have engaged with as a network researching and developing creative non-commercial applications for mobile digital technologies such as the cellular telephone and the personal digital assistant (PDA).

Wi opens with a brief mapping of the MDCN by Michael Longford, who, along with Sara Diamond, is the principal investigator (or PI) of this network. Following this, you will read a piece by Maroussia Lévesque, Lucie Bélanger and Jason Lewis from Cityspeak who describe how the concept of p2P (private to public) informs their project, which brings private short messaging systems (SMS) from the small screen into public space. This is followed by submissions from members of the EMU team, whose task it is to “evaluate mobile users” within the context of the MDCN.

Alison Harvey’s paper discusses the liminal magic circle as a motif in the production of digital games. Andrea Zeffiro defines and interrogates the new media art practice of ‘locative media,’ a body of ideas, research and artistic practices where many of the MDCN situate their mobile interventions. Janice Leung focuses on a specific mobile device, the cell phone, and attends to the tensions produced in its uptake by artists working within the larger context of the

telecommunications market. Neil Barratt questions our use of a collaborative and open-source software, TikiWiki, as a communications strategy for interdisciplinary research.

Given our intent to make **Wi** act as a collaborative resource for researchers working in these areas, Janice Leung has selected a number of mobility related websites for readers to peruse.

Currently, **Wi** springs directly from the research now occurring in the MDCN, and will be published 3 times until the end of the project in March 2007. However, we hope that these initial issues act as a template for an online journal open to all researchers working in these inter-related areas of communications, new media, art, design, and engineering. If you have ideas for submissions, suggestions or any other comments, please contact the editors Barbara Crow and Kim Sawchuk at editors@wi-not.ca.

Finally, special thanks to Janice Leung, Neil Barratt and Andrea Zeffiro for their intellectual input and technical contribution. Without their energy and collective enthusiasm, we would still be asking “why not?”

Barbara Crow and Kim Sawchuk

Editors

Toronto, Ontario; Montréal, Québec