

mscape

Pervasive Computing Lab

HP has created a prototype software suite and website to enable people to design, create and share context and location-based experiences, games and tours with friends, family and others, anywhere in the world. It is available via the website – www.mscape.com – and HP's virtual idea sharing forum, Idealab.com. The technology overlays digital sight, sounds and interactions on the physical world to create immersive and interactive experiences called mediascapes.

Users equipped with a GPS-enabled mobile device running the mscape player can move through the physical world, triggering digital media – images, text, sounds, audio and video – in response to physical events such as location, proximity, time and movement. Blending online information with gaming, storytelling and the outdoors, mediascapes can offer people of all ages a new way to experience their surroundings.

Development of the software toolkit has been guided by public trials created in collaboration with film-makers, games designers, educationalists, students and artists. Applications have included the re-enactment of Bristol's riot of 1831, a two-hour walk with rangers around Yosemite national park in California and a game to help historic prisoners escape from the Tower of London.

The website provides everything people need to develop their own mediascapes, including training and tips to get started. There are numerous ready-made mediascapes at the site ready for use.

Since it was launched in 2007, more than 1,000 people have registered on the site, more than 5,000 have downloaded mscape software and 220 mediascapes have been uploaded to the website. These can be downloaded and enjoyed by anyone with a GPS-enabled HP iPAQ or other handheld device running the Windows® Mobile operating system and using a headset. Some 10,200 such downloads had been made by the end of 2007.

The mscape site provides the opportunity to create a world-wide community of people who want to create and use pervasive, location and context-aware experiences – and share them with others around the world.

For HP, mscape is an opportunity to share prototype applications and to give users the chance to create new experiences and give their feedback to the mscape team.

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