

Newsletter

Editorial

The last twelve months have seen us become heavily involved with a variety of virtual world related projects, principally around Second Life.

One commentator said that the virtual worlds explosion “was like the Internet, but this time we know what to do”. Given the relative ease with which we can make use of existing web material, start generating 2.0 related sites for SL like SLBuzz and Snapzilla there has to be a lot of truth in that. The difference though is that the Internet will probably only ever be a giant store and communicator of information. Virtual Worlds could become a lot, lot more.

We have already had a couple of serious, business conversations which sounded like Science Fiction stories. But with each we could see exactly what needed to be done to implement them with today's technology. As Torchwood's Captain Jack says, “The 21st Century's when it all changes. And you've gotta be ready.”

David Burden
Managing Director

Our Newsletter is sent out two to four times a year to customers, prospects and friends of Daden Limited.

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Second Life



We sent out a business briefing on Second Life to our readers back in October, just as the virtual world burst onto the media scene. We don't intend to rehash that here, so if you need to read some background on Second Life and virtual worlds please go to the web site and download either that one-pager, or our 16 page white paper on virtual worlds.

We first got involved with Second Life just over 2 ½ years ago. The world had around 10,000 members then. At the time we were also in other worlds such as There and Alpha World, and in fact we've been in a wide variety of virtual worlds since the dawn of the web (the first we went in only let you be a 2D fish – the simplest avatar they could find).

Now Second Life has over 4 million users, and is growing at around 1 million users a month. Yes it has its growing pains (we're glad we don't have to log on during peak US usage – although the US now accounts for only 30% of users), but its important to see Second Life as an example of virtual worlds – not the be-all and end-all of virtual worlds.

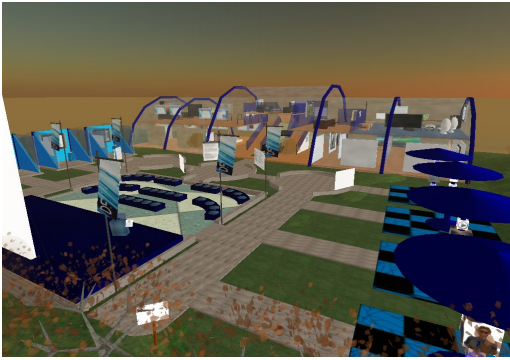
To our mind virtual worlds are fundamentally a new media. In time (as we suggest at left) they may become more than that, but for now they are a “new” medium to sit alongside the web, TV, radio, print and so on. Like any new medium it brings its own challenges, its own language, its own stars. Businesses, organisations and brands need to understand what works in this media, and what doesn't. They also need to realise that not all virtual worlds are the same, and to make sure that they use the most appropriate virtual world for each message (we recently suggested that a client might need to invest in 3 different worlds in order to fully cover all of its properties).

The key question though has to be what makes this medium different? What projects will work better in a virtual world than in any other medium? For us the answer is simple – social interaction.

Virtual Worlds are a social space. You move round, see other avatars, and talk to them. You notice clothing, positioning, gestures, accessories. In marketing we often talk about creating a dialogue with your customers. Well virtual worlds are all about dialogue. Seeing your customers “avatar to avatar” rather than “face to face” may seem strange at first, but it can be a far richer experience than talking on the phone, or typing in a forum. In a virtual world people talk to people. Customers, viewers and fans can gather round and watch their favourite films or TV or video, they can listen to music, or create things. They can chat, and they can build friendships and knowledge. And community can't help but grow.

Download our white paper from <http://www.daden.co.uk/pages/000042.html>

Digital Futures



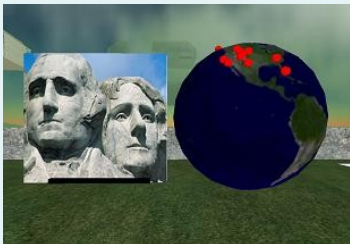
One of the big projects we've been involved in recently is the Digital Futures build for Media Training Northwest (MTNW) in Second Life.

MTNW is charged with delivering commercial and technical training to media organisations and creative industries individuals in the North West. Digital Futures is their latest initiative to bring traditional media people into the digital/web 2.0 era. As part of this MTNW wanted to establish a meeting place in Second Life where programme members could meet, access resources and view films and other media.

Working with their consultants NMP we purchased an island in Second Life (the Digital Futures sim), and built a complex consisting of a central area, media booths, and a main building with offices, an Academy and gallery and exhibition space. The island was launched at the Digital Futures conference in Manchester on 7th Feb 07.

The island has seen a steady flow of visitors since launch, and the in-world user group is growing. In March MTNW will be holding their first event purely in Second Life on the island.

SL Mashups



We always love a good mash-up, and Second Life is a great place to do them. The image above shows a globe in Second Life displaying Google Earth feeds, in this case for Discovery Channel. Click on a location dot and it displays any image in the feed – hear Mt Rushmore. We've even managed to get our Nabaztag rabbit hooked up to SL so it tells us who's visiting our offices in Second Life.

Contacting Us

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We're always keen to have a chat about life, business, technology, or even how we can help your business grow.

Tech Watch

Download a Tech Brief from the web site for more details of these and other new technologies, and learn how they could help your business.

Pipes: Yahoo recently launched something called Yahoo Pipes. The name refers back to the old Unix system where you could use pipe (the | symbol) to send the output from one command into the input of another. This let you take some basic building blocks of Unix commands and quickly put together a powerful piece of information processing script.

Yahoo's pipes do a similar thing but a) they use RSS feeds as their source (and output) material, and b) use a drag-and-drop graphic interface to build the pipes from a set of processing widgets. Yahoo provides starter feeds, widgets and pre-built pipes, but you are free to add your own.

A simple example. Say you wanted to read all about XYZ Limited, you could just bring in all the news feeds you wanted, but pipe them through a filter that only includes stories mentioning them. Want stock data, photos or locations to go with them? Just add other widget to the pipe which pull in stock feeds, Flickr photos, or plot the results on GoogleMaps.

We're more than happy to come and give you a **FREE** briefing on Pipes, Widgets and related technologies to see if they can be of benefit to you. Just give us a call.

We've also ...

- Educated 30 executives from a major UK broadcaster on virtual worlds and helped them develop ideas for exploring this new medium
- Started helping a UK university establish its presence in Second Life
- Spoke at the ICT and the Third Sector event organised by Intellect's Digital Inclusion Team
- Provided code and support to a major UK charity to support in in Second Life for their big bi-annual event in March.

Daden on Radio 4

Daden MD David Burden was on Radio 4 twice during Feb 07, both times for the new ClickOn technology magazine programme. The first item was on the connected home, with David showing off wi-fi streamed audio and the Nabaztag. The second involved David helping BBC report Rajesh Mirchandani interview Simon Stevens, who has Cerebral Palsy, in Second Life.

About Us

Daden Limited is an Information 2.0 company focused on using emerging technologies to better identify, analyse, and communicate information. Our current focus is on Virtual Worlds such as Second Life, and using our experience of Artificial Intelligence and accessibility to communicate information in new and original ways.