

DADEN LAUNCHES BUSINESS PARK IN SL

Daden has just launched a new managed business park in Second Life. The park, called Daden Cays, is the ideal location for businesses and organisations looking to set up in Second Life without the hassle of buying or managing their own land or island.

Set in a tropical reef environment, DadenCays has been designed as a low density collection of exclusive island plots. The islands are connected by a ribbon of lagoons and common areas that can be reached either by boat, teleporting or in some instances by bridges. Facilities include a 60 seat auditorium for formal conferencing and central plaza for more informal gatherings.

Tenants can choose between one or two storey office buildings equipped with basic furniture, video screens, a simple web browser and display boards. The layout ensures that each tenant has the privacy of their own island unit but with easy accessibility to shared central facilities.

Daden's Managing Director, David Burden says *"DadenCays works just like a real world business park, creative hub or innovation park. You pay an annual rental and in exchange we provide you with a safe, managed environment in which to do business in Second Life"*.

Visit the park at DadenCays <128, 128, 26>



CONTENTS

Daden Cays

Open Source virtual learning tool - PIVOTE

Events - Where you can find us

Southampton University Campus



OPEN-SOURCE LEARNING SYSTEM FOR VIRTUAL WORLDS, THE WEB AND IPHONE LAUNCHED



A new open-source learning system called PIVOTE has been launched which lets educators and trainers build learning exercises on the web and then play them in virtual worlds, on the web, and even on mobile phones.

The PIVOTE system was developed by Daden as part of a UK Government Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) funded project, called PREVIEW, looking at problem-based learning in virtual worlds which we've previously covered in earlier issues of the newsletter.

A key element of PREVIEW was to explore how Second Life® could be used for training paramedics at St George's, University of London and Kingston University – and the resulting system is now being made available as the PIVOTE open-source system.

PIVOTE exercises are created on the web using a simple forms-based application. In virtual worlds virtual objects are linked to the activities in the training session, and exercises

played out in an immersive space. Users can also view images and video, and hear audio recordings. Web and mobile phone users can access the same text, media content, and exercise structure, but without the immersive capabilities of virtual worlds. All student activity is logged and ready for export into a learning management system.

Daden's Managing Director David Burden says, "PIVOTE offers 3 key advantages over existing approaches to creating learning content for virtual worlds. Firstly it allows tutors to create the content on the web without having to learn about the intricacies of each virtual world. Secondly, it lets institutions move training exercises between virtual worlds – so they aren't locked in to one platform. Finally it allows users, regardless of virtual world access, to practice the same training exercises."

With PIVOTE all the structure and information content of an exercise is stored on the web, not in the virtual world. Since the structure and content are also separate users

can experience the same exercise but with different levels of detail - from guided exercises for beginners, to assessment exercises for experienced students. It also allows tutors to easily and quickly create new scenarios from existing templates.

Alan Rice, Senior Lecturer in Paramedic Science, at St George's, University of London said *"This programme provides the students with a fun learning environment, where they can afford to make mistakes online, which they could not afford to make in the real world. When they make a mistake online, they are always keen not to make the same mistake again."*

Fiona Cropp, a second year paramedic student from St George's, who has tested the application, says: *"It's a really useful tool. It's much better to be able to actually perform treatments rather than just talk about it. Everyone is online at the same time so you can bounce ideas off each other and make an informed decision. I had never used Second Life before, but I found it really easy to get on with."*

David Burden, Daden's Managing Director continued *"Whilst created initially for training medical professionals in Higher Education, we believe that PIVOTE could become a valuable tool for anyone delivering training or education in any topic at any level in a virtual world."*

PIVOTE has been released as open-source under a GPL v3 license. It currently supports users in Second Life (and OpenSim), but it is possible to create interfaces for other virtual worlds. Organisations can use PIVOTE either by downloading and installing the software on their own servers, or by using a hosted service (such as the one offered by Daden).

**For more information on PIVOTE visit
<http://www.pivote.info>.**



EVENTS - WHERE YOU CAN FIND US

23-24 March 09	Coventry	David is presenting a paper on emotions in automated avatars at VS_Games 2009 an IEEE supported academic conference at the Serious Games Institute.
24-25 March 09	Brighton	David is speaking on PIVOTE and the PREVIEW project at the Elsevier Computer Assisted Learning Conference.
26 March 09	Daden Cays, Second Life	David will be the guest speaker at the Metaversense "New Instruction and Training Frontiers" seminar to be held at the Daden Cays auditorium in Second Life on 26 Mar 09. David will be giving a demo of PIVOTE and our autonomous avatars.
30-31 March 09	Muscat, OMAN	David will be speaking at the eGames Serious Games Conference
21 April 09	Sunderland	Learning in a Virtual Worlds Conference 2009 in association with the University of Sunderland and sponsored by The Higher Education Academy
23-24 April 09	Washington, DC	National Defense University Washington, DC Federal Consortium for Virtual Worlds Conference
28-30 April 09	Baltimore, Maryland	Medbiquitous Annual Conference - David is delivering a plenary session at the conference in Baltimore for the MVP standard used by PIVOTE
7 May 09	London	David is speaking at the 4th Apply Serious Games Conference and Virtual Worlds 2009 Expo & Conference

SOUTHAMPTON UNIVERSITY IN SECOND LIFE

Daden have been working with the University of Southampton to help them establish a cohesive Second Life presence to bring together all their Second Life activity.

Whilst representing the natural landscape of the real world campus - including the stream running through the site - much of the area has been left largely undeveloped. This is primarily to encourage educational and research based activities to be created by the University community. The campus, contains several key areas, the first of these is a Welcome Centre, the hub of the island where people can post their interests and ideas for activities.

It also houses an auditorium for events and lectures and a scale model campus which includes 2D & 3D images of the campus site. The 3D model, over a Google Map of the site, also allows visitors to bring up panoramic views of some of the key university buildings as well as videos about the University.

The remaining space has been divided up into sandbox areas for Schools and groups to work and experiment in.

Visit the island at University of Southampton <199,53,32>



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