

- Better frameworks and empirical measures/metrics that predict collaborative success (e.g., the amount of communication and the perception of communication overload and their relationship to successful project outcome)
- New models of the social and organizational effects of technology (e.g., factors influencing computer-mediated conversations among hundreds of people)

CSCW 98 closed on Wednesday, November 18, with a presentation titled *The Design Studio of the Future* by

William J. Mitchell, Dean of the MIT School of Architecture and Planning. Dean Mitchell is author of *City of Bits*, one of the first books published both digitally and in print. He described geographically distributed architectural design teams, the tools they use today to work together, and their need for collaborative technologies.

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## 4th German conference on CSCW D-CSCW '98 Conference Report

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The 4th German conference on CSCW (D-CSCW '98) has taken place at the University of Dortmund from the 28th to the 30th of September 1998. It is a two annual conference mainly sponsored by the German chapter of the ACM and the Gesellschaft fuer Informatik.

In all 50 papers were submitted. 18 scientific papers and 5 general user reports on project evaluations or experiences have been accepted for presentation. Beside those, 11 posters took part in the poster session. On the 29th the 6 workshops and the doctoral colloquium were held. Three of those workshops focused on rather scientific questions whereas user-related aspects and practical experience were centered in the discussions of the others. Talks, workshops and poster covered the ongoing CSCW-research in Europe. Further information on those can be found on the D-CSCW web site: <http://iundg.cs.uni-dortmund.de/dcscw98/>.

The D-CSCW followed mainly three aims:

- To focus on the mutuality between organizational innovation and computer supported teamwork.
- To join science and practical experiences.
- To provide an interdisciplinary panel for CSCW relevant subjects.

The invited talk of Jonathan Grudin opened up the conference. It gave a future vision of what CSCW may look like in the next years and of how it will become part of our all lives more and more. He introduced the metaphor of the computer as a window which makes the work of others visible and supports coordination.

Furthermore, he pointed out some fundamental findings concerning the user needs and what impact it most likely has on the acceptance if they are not covered.

Still after years of research the central aspect of CSCW is not completely covered yet: this is the question of how to support communication through a computer system suitably. Therefore a couple of talks were dedicated to questions regarding synchronous communication. They presented on one hand a meeting support system for the city council of Stuttgart and on the other some practical experience gained with it. Other talks discussed the possibilities of web- and ISDN-based communication systems for a meeting support, a customer service, tele-classes, facility management and video conferencing.

However, beside synchronous communication support several talks regarding aspects of workflow management systems were given. Here the German research project MOVE (<http://www.do.isst.fhg.de/move/>) was represented with three presentations. Firstly an experience report was given by DHL Worldwide Express who are going to introduce a workflow management to support the process of contract processing in a manifold way. Secondly the concept of showcases supporting the participatory process of continuous improvement in the case of workflow management systems was introduced and finally an evaluation of the state of the art concepts of work allocation currently provided in the context of workflow was discussed. In addition aspects like flexibility and co-ordination of processes provided by workflow management systems were referred to.

The relevance of awareness and comprehensibility as well as co-ordination theories and models is obvious for the discussion on computer supported teamwork. Therefore three sessions were dedicated to such topics.

Here groupware- and web-based concepts for ensuring awareness and an implementation of a role-based system were presented. Beside those theoretical concepts like behavior settings and a theory of cooperation were introduced.

The CSCW research in Germany has been driven in the last years by the diversion of governmental activities between Bonn and Berlin, consequently the up to date results, experience and recommendations for forthcoming projects were presented. The conference was rounded up by the presentation of I-land, which is an environment integrating cooperative hard- and software in an architectural setting.

The six workshops dealt with the following topics: Computer supported Co-operation from the Employee Point of View, Practical Experience with the Implementation and Introduction of Workflow Management Applications, Flexible Co-operation through

Computer Supported Teamwork, From Groupware to GroupAware, Flexibility and Co-operation within Workflow Management Systems and Intelligent Agents in CSCW. Furthermore a doctoral colloquium was held with great success.

All papers, posters and workshop outlines (mostly in German) taking part in the conference are published in the proceedings (information under <http://iundg.cs.uni-dortmund.de/dcscw98/tagungsband.html>).

The conference was attended by almost 140 mostly German participants. However, international researchers attended as well.

As the chairs of the 4th DCSCW we would like to thank all the members of the program committee and the conference staff (partially sponsored by the University of Dortmund) for their support.

Last but not least we hope to see you at the next DCSCW in Germany: The 5th conference will be held September 2000 in Munich and co-organized by Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Reichwald and Prof. Dr. J. Schlichter: <http://telekooperation.de/dcscw2000>.