duliö Olé! — A Mobile, Swarm-intelligence Based Football Game
Game proposal for the European Football Championship 2008 Austria - Switzerland

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Figure 1: "duliö Olé!" — location based football game

Background

The internet pioneer Howard Rheingold predicts in his book "Smart Mobs - The Next Social Revolution"[1] that collaboration, mobile communication and permanent internet connectivity will mutually amplify. Thereby, the idea of a "virtual" community overlaps with real life. Zorah Mari Bauer's artistic research project "Viennese Stories" focuses on the potential of this "social revolution".

"Viennese Stories"[2] is a collection of mobile location based concepts which exemplify co-creative and user oriented applications. It focuses on social tools which are embedded within existing communicative "ways of live". Handy-cam and micro blogging, buddy functions, telephony, bulletin boards, chat, etc. do not only exist in "virtuality" anymore. They are also usable directly within the experience context of the user. Location based services provide these ways of communication with a real spatial basis. Welcome to the world of games 3.0! Mobile collaborative gaming cultures become available by means of the new parameter "location", adding the proximity of social acting and behaving.

The lecture states that these new formats are based on real life. They are not only creating new potentials for gaming, but also real social possibilities which have to be shaped accordingly. This is exemplified by means of the swarm-based football game "duliö Olé!" which is part of the application oriented research project "Viennese Stories".

Game Concept

During the European Football Championship 2008 and especially for the finals, numerous fans will visit the city of Vienna. Duliö Olé! offers the fans the opportunity to play a common game while lingering through the city. The special thing about Duliö Olé! is that on a virtual playing field with real geographical reference, a virtual match-ball has to be moved into the goal by means of the usage of mobile phones. The teams do not consist of dedicated players. Everyone with a mobile device can join spontaneously, thereby becoming part of (and contributing to) the "swarm-intelligence". At the beginning of the European Championship, the fans vote by means of SMS which national team they want to send to the finals. The two teams with the most votes will compete in the game.

Game Instructions

A central place in the city should be chosen, which will be heavily frequented by the fans. In order to kick along, one has to be on-site within the area (i.e. within the respective mobile network cells) which is overlaid by the virtual playing field. The players send a number

between 1 and 4 (representing four possible directions) by means of an SMS to the provider. Through this, the ball is moved towards the opposing goal. Depending on the number of teammates moving the ball in the same direction, the ball is moved at different rates.

The teammates must act collaboratively to reach their goal. Since location-based services include the closeness of social acting and behaving, the teammates are expected to agree on their behavior to enhance their scoring chances.The playing field, the current position of the ball and the score are displayed on large video screens on-site. Additionally the course of the game is sent continuously to the mobile phones of the participants and interested visitors (by means of WAP-Push). The game can also be followed on an associated internet site, which also offers the opportunity to make a bet.

Details

Figure 2: "duliö Olé!" - details

By means of a statistical overview, the interested player receives background information about the running game, e.g. the distance to the goal or the current number of opposite player (in order to call for reinforcement).

The visitors can comment on the current situation of the game by means of SMS or MMS ("micro blogging").

Based on the idea of football player picture collections, the team members can post their personal profile (nick name, contact, favorite music, hobbies, portrait picture) to a player gallery online, thereby staying in touch with each other even after the games.

The game can be scheduled for the duration of the championship. It is also possible to plan for multiple games with a shorter duration. The members of the winning team are participating in a lottery (car, plasma TV or a meeting with football stars). The game provider can identify the players by means of the preceding SMS communication.

Marketing

The title duliö Olé! suggests a combination of yodel and cheer sounds. Yodeling resembles the two alpine countries Austria and Switzerland, where it is an inherent part of the image building. The marketing concept communicates this folkloristic quotation in a trendy way.

"duliö Olé! Olé! holdio diriaho…", a significant word order containing the title of the game, can be extended into a retro championship hit. It would also resemble an appropriate ring-tone for mobile phones. Because of its onomatopoeic and tongue twister impression, the title duliö Olé! has a high recognition value, also for the non-German speaking audience (especially if it is also communicated visually).

An attractive pricing policy regarding the mobile services being used (SMS, MMS) is a prerequisite for the fans coming from different countries to participate. Social commitment through participation could be an additional motivator: a certain percentage of the price paid for each SMS is used for social sponsorship (e.g. for the promotion of young athletes).

1   Rheingold, Howard. 2002. *Smart Mobs. The Next Social Revolution*. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing.

2   Bauer, Zorah Mari. 2008. *duliö Olé! - A mobile, swarm-intelligence based football game. Game proposal for the European Football Championship 2008 Austria - Switzerland.* www.zorah-mari-bauer.de