INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FEATURES LEADING VOICES ON IMPROVING INTERACTION BETWEEN PEOPLE AND COMPUTERS

CHI 2008 Probes How to Balance Art and Science in Computer-User Interfaces; First Time Design Theatre Creates Unique User Experience

FLORENCE, ITALY — March 5, 2008 - The leading international conference for Human-Computer Interaction, CHI 2008, will bring together the foremost authorities on how people interact with their computers. The conference, sponsored by the Special Interest Group on Computer Human Interaction (SIGCHI), an active community within the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), runs from **April 5-10 at the historic Fortezza da Basso**, in the heart of Florence. Internationally renowned experts in design, education, engineering, management, research, and usability will present original ideas and applications on how to drive innovation in the ways people experience technology.   A first-time Design Theatre at the conference will enable presenters to make their results come alive for the audience.

"We are fortunate to be in the birthplace of the Renaissance and the cultural developments that have made Florence a mecca for human creativity," said Mary Czerwinski, Co-chair CHI 2008. "The conference will focus on the need to balance the artistry and aesthetics that make the user experience meaningful with the practical technology applications that underlie today's computers and electronic devices," said Czerwinski, Research Area Manager of Microsoft Research's Human-Centered Computing groups.

CHI 2008 Co-chair Arnie Lund noted the international flavor of the event.   "CHI 2008 will attract experts from nearly 40 countries from every continent and from every community that comprises this critical field. These are the world's leading authorities, who are creating technology that harmonizes with human capabilities, goals, and social environments, and improves how users and computers interact by making computers more compatible with human needs," said Lund, Director of User Experience for Microsoft's Mobile Platforms Division.

The conference features hundreds of sessions for the 2,000 expected attendees covering a wide range of research in human computer interaction. Presentations include studies on improved video navigation, interactivity on mobile phones, activating text-to-speech, the challenges of mobile learning, measuring trust in Wi-Fi hotspots, and exploring human robot interactions, among many others.

The opening keynote speaker at CHI 2008 is **Irene McAra-McWilliam**, **Head of the School of Design at the Glasgow School of Art**, and previously at the Royal College of Art in London, where she headed the Interaction Design Department. Using examples from art, psychology and science, she will reflect on the concept of creativity, and the ability to deal positively with complexity, paradox, and ambiguity in processes where uncertainty is certain. The conference closes with keynoter **Bill Buxton of Microsoft Research**, a computer scientist and designer specializing in the human aspects of technology. Buxton contends that great design equates to great experience. His presentation examines the design process as a comprehensive approach that involves everyone in the product production chain.

Organizations contributing to the financial support of the conference include (Hero Level) Microsoft Corp.;(Champion Level) Autodesk; Google, Inc.; the National Science Foundation (NSF); Oracle, SAP AG; and SourceForge (OSTG). For more information about the conference or to register, visit www.chi2008.org

 About ACM
 *ACM, the Association for Computing Machinery **http://www.acm.org**, is an educational and scientific society uniting the world's computing educators, researchers and professionals to inspire dialogue, share resources and address the field's challenges. ACM strengthens the profession's collective voice through strong leadership, promotion of the highest standards, and recognition of technical excellence. ACM supports the professional growth of its members by providing opportunities for life-long learning, career development, and professional networking.*

About SIGCHI
*The ACM Special Interest Group on Computer-Human Interaction **http://www.sigchi.org** is the world's largest association of professionals in the research and practice of computer-human interaction. SIGCHI serves as a forum for ideas on how people communicate and interact with computer systems. This interdisciplinary group of computer scientists, software engineers, psychologists, interaction designers, graphic designers, sociologists, and anthropologists is committed to designing useful, usable technology which has the potential to transform individual lives. SIGCHI has more than 60 local chapters for HCI professionals across five continents, publishes the SIGCHI Bulletin quarterly, and co-sponsors conferences and workshops to advance the field of computer-human interaction.*

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