
Editorial

Xavier Fischer*

ESTIA, Technopôle Izarbel,
Bidart 64210, France,
E-mail: x.fischer@estia.fr
*Corresponding author

Alain Bernard

Ecole Centrale de Nantes – IRCCyN,
1, rue de la Noë,
BP 92101, Nantes 44321, Cedex 3, France
E-mail: alain.bernard@ircyn.ec-nantes.fr

Biographical notes: Xavier Fischer develops Research Studies on Interactive Design. Author of more than 40 major papers to invited conferences, he is also the General Chair person of Virtual Concept in International Conference. He works to the development of efficient virtual and shared tools dedicated to a large international community interested in the interactive techniques in design: for fostering transversal and transnational research (virtual platform, incubator of projects, international master, etc.) and for making it visible in international level new results (well-known dissemination tools). He is in charge of significant project having industrial soundness in the field of aeronautics and ski industry.

Alain Bernard, graduated in 1982, obtained his PhD in 1989. As an Assistant Professor, he worked from 1990 to 1996, in Ecole Centrale de Paris, on Product, Technology and Process Modelling. From September 1996 to October 2001, he has been Professor in CRAN, as the Head of the Mechanical and Production Engineering team. His main research topics are related to RE, KBS, CAPP, product and process modelling, integration of economical and human aspects. His actual position is Professor and Deputy Director for Research at Ecole Centrale de Nantes and in IRCCyN (Head of the 'Virtual Engineering for industrial engineering' project).

Virtual concept 2005 was held in Biarritz (France) from the 8th to the 10th of November 2005. Virtual concept is nowadays well-known as the only international conference regarding new instruments and approaches based on high-realistic multisensorial virtual prototyping fostering industrial innovation.

During the three full-days, 300 practitioners have gathered themselves together around the original 100 conferences, tutorials, workshops, industrial sessions and professional exhibitions.

The presence of numerous industrialists has confirmed the relevance, the success and the efficiency of some recent tools highlighted by virtual concept since 2000. By reinforcing the concept of interactivity within the industrial process or by allowing

the virtual interaction principle to be developed, the recently, provided *Interactive Design and Manufacturing methods* are really pioneering. Each year, experts from industry, virtual reality, design and manufacturing studies, mechatronics, mechanical and numerical engineering academic fields meet themselves and exchange in virtual concept for exhibiting novel innovation aided solutions.

Each Year, virtual concept shares world experts between the magnetism of the paradisiacal places and their curiosity in interactive methods; this success has led to the present Special Issue providing the highly-interesting contributions presented in virtual concept 2005, in Biarritz (France).