

Press Release

Plattner Institute Launches Worldwide Educational Web Platform "Open HPI"

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Potsdam. The Hasso Plattner Institute for Software Systems Engineering (HPI) plans to offer free online courses starting in September for all who are interested. As a forerunner in Europe, the Institute would like to make worldwide interactive online courses, taught by its computer science professors, available via the new Internet platform www.openHPI.de. The courses will be offered in English and German. To take part, it is only necessary to be registered at the "openHPI" portal. This is possible as of now. There are no admission restrictions for the online courses, which are embedded in a social learning network. Those who have mastered the material - offered free of charge - have the possibility to take a final exam on the Internet and receive a certificate from this renowned Institute. HPI is one of the pioneers of teleteaching in Germany.

The first online course is to be conducted at the beginning of September by Prof. Hasso Plattner, founder of HPI and co-founder and chairman of the supervisory board of software giant SAP, said HPI director Prof. Christoph Meinel in Potsdam. The course lasts two months and provides an introduction to the subject of the revolutionary new in-memory database technology. This technology was researched at HPI starting in 2007 under Plattner's direction and then successfully implemented together with SAP. Both partners received the 2012 German Innovation Award for their work. Called In-Memory Data Management, this innovation enables the flexible evaluation of huge amounts of data - so-called big data - to be carried out with lightning speed. In the past, this used to take hours or even days.

Plattner heads the HPI specialized area of Enterprise Platform and Integration Concepts. HPI estimates that there will be several thousand participants in Plattner's worldwide-accessible online course. Shortly thereafter, the HPI Web University will be offering an introduction to the technology of the World Wide Web. Open HPI will gradually be expanding its online course offerings over time.

New Ways of Conveying Knowledge Transform the Conventional Learning Process

"The new method of conveying knowledge offered by our online courses also opens the social components of e-learning," said HPI director Meinel. "Open

HPI" makes available learning videos and other material and exercises on the Internet every week. "Learners first work independently on the course subjects, with the help of learning videos in the network, discussing them with other course members and instructors on the Internet. At the same time, they check their progress based on the provided self-tests," explained the Internet professor. Up to now, the Potsdam Institute has offered around 4000 video recordings of complete lectures and many more video podcasts of single lecture excerpts for free online use through its own platform www.tele-task.de as well as via Apples iTunes U (<http://itunes.hpi.uni-potsdam.de>).

With this initiative, the Hasso Plattner Institute builds on the completely new approaches in the US. Just several months ago, the universities of Princeton and Stanford together with two others founded the platform "Coursera," while Harvard University in cooperation with Massachusetts Institute of Technology announced their platform "edX." "What we will be offering on our international online learning platform www.openhpi.de, goes in the similar direction of integrating interactive education with social media. However, thematically we concentrate fully on information technology, offer a shorter more concise learning experience and completely free ourselves from the strictures of the semester scheme," said the HPI director when citing differences to the US approach.

According to Meinel, the online courses covering basic and current information technology topics will offer newly structured sequences from HPI's lecture videos, but also self-tests, exercises, supplementary materials and discussion forums. The length of an online course at HPI Web University is limited to two months. This offer focuses on professionals who wish to improve and expand their computer science knowledge for their job as well as enhancing their skills with a view to career advancement. "But also students and others with a personal interest in IT topics are part of the target group," said Meinel.

Open HPI Uses the Institute's Innovative Tele-TASK technology

The HPI has already addressed the growing need for professional, branch-oriented knowledge transfer with its tele-teaching, which is based on lecture videos ("e-lectures"). It focuses on the increasing demand for flexible learning on the go. Whoever downloads the current HPI podcast on his or her compact mobile player is always prepared – whether it be on the bus, in the waiting room or outside in the park. The latest contents can either be downloaded singly or subscribed to with a mouse click as an ongoing course or lecture series, for example when intensive study before a test is desired or just to fill in any missing information gaps.

As reflected in user numbers, it has become increasingly popular to retrieve the latest knowledge via free university-learning videos on the Internet. For

instance, HPI has already registered four million downloads of its lecture podcasts on the platform iTunes U from Apple. The short videos available on the topic of information technology - numbering in the meantime 6,700 - have so far been downloaded an average of 22,000 times per week. Since January 2009, the HPI has been among the first four institutions of higher learning in Germany to make university subject matter available on the international platform of the Apple corporation. On its own teleteaching portal www.tele-task.de, HPI offers around 4,000 video recordings of complete lectures and over 10,000 video podcasts of lecture excerpts. These come from nearly 1,500 teachers and have been retrieved more than 26 million times.

This valuable material is the foundation for future online course on www.openhpi.de, the new Tele-Task Web University of the IT Institute. Tele-Task is the abbreviated form of "Tele Teaching Anywhere Solution Kit." This innovation system solution was developed some years ago for the recording and transmission of lectures and presentations via the Internet. It is characterized by its very simple operation and distinguishes itself in that the video and podcast show the speaker's laptop or board presentation synchronously. Conventional learning videos have until now only transmitted the speaker and offered a parallel presentation of the slides.

Short Profile of Hasso Plattner Institute

The Hasso Plattner Institute for Software Systems Engineering GmbH (HPI) in Potsdam is Germany's university excellence center for IT Systems Engineering. It is the only university institution in Germany offering bachelor and master programs in "IT Systems Engineering" - a practical and engineering-oriented course of studies in computer science, in which currently 460 students are enrolled. The HPI School of Design Thinking is Europe's first innovation school and is based on the Stanford model of the d.school. It offers 120 places for a supplementary study. There are a total of ten HPI professors and a further 50 guest professors, lecturers and contract teachers at the Institute. HPI carries out research noted for its standard of excellence in its nine topic areas, as well as in the HPI Research School for PhD candidates, with its further research branches in Cape Town, Haifa and Nanjing. HPI teaching and research focuses on the foundation and application of large-scale, highly complex and interconnected IT systems. The development and exploration of user-driven innovations for all areas of life is an additional area of importance. HPI always earns the highest positions in the CHE university ranking.

Note to editors: Prof. Hasso Plattner's scientific work entitled "In Memory Data Management" was published by Springer Science (ISBN 978-3-642-29574-4). The cover illustrations may be found here:
<http://images.springer.com/covers/978-3-642-29574-4.tif> .

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