

Press release

Global E-Learning: The China-Germany Internet Bridge Turns Ten

October 12, 2012

Potsdam/Beijing. An exceptional form of Chinese-German cooperation is marking its anniversary. For ten years Chinese students have been able to experience a German professor teaching them what Internet security means in English online. This special anniversary of global e-learning will be celebrated on October 25th in the presence of German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle at the Hasso Plattner Institute (HPI).

HPI director Christoph Meinel gave the first Internet-transmitted lecture as a computer science professor at the Trier Institute for Telematics on October 29th, 2002. The lecture, held in front of German students, addressed the topic Internet vulnerabilities and attack points ("Weaknesses and targets"). Chinese students, in a lecture hall at the Beijing University of Technology (BJUT), also followed Meinel's lecture projected live on a screen via the World Wide Web. "It was extraordinary because for the first time students in the People's Republic of China were taking part in online courses at a foreign university," recalled the teleteaching pioneer, who in 2004 became the director of HPI in Potsdam, where he continued the cooperation with China there.

Already several years ago, Meinel made the transition from offering the Internet lectures per live stream to recording and then uploading them to a UT Beijing server. In this way, the Chinese students no longer need to download a lecture from the HPI server in Germany. Once a year, after the end of lectures, Meinel flies to the Chinese capital where he is involved in consulting as well as holding oral exams for the lecture participants. Those who pass receive a certificate from the University of Potsdam.

When the ten-year existence of the Internet Bridge to the "Middle Kingdom" is celebrated on October 25th, Meinel's colleague Prof. Baocai Yin will be among the Chinese guests. He was dean of the computer science faculty at BJUT in 2002 and also one of those responsible for setting the teleteaching collaborative work in motion. He additionally led the information and communication technology team for the Olympics in Beijing in 2008.

In the meantime, the HPI has greatly expanded its collaboration with China. A branch of the HPI Research School began its work there in November 2011. Five Chinese PhD students, under the joint supervision of their professors,

are contributing to research on the topic of "Mass Data Analytics and Knowledge Discovery" at the 50 member HPI Research School. The HPI regularly conducts German-Chinese workshops with Shanghai University on the topic of cloud computing. The Potsdam institute, which operates Europe's first innovation school for university students, is additionally working with the Communication University of China (CUC) in creating a Design Thinking program.

A piece of scientific history in German-Chinese collaborative e-learning was already written in 2002 with the „Internet Bridge" when the HPI set another milestone at the beginning of September 2012. It was then that the Hasso Plattner Institute began a new era in knowledge transfer offering open and free of charge online courses on information technology topics. Since then, more than 15,000 interested participants have been using the contents presented on the interactive Internet educational platform www.openhpi.de.

The first online course, offered by founder Prof. Hasso Plattner, co-founder and chairman of the board of software company SAP, lasts two months and provides an introduction to the subject of a revolutionary new main memory database technology. The language of instruction is English. At the beginning of November, HPI director Meinel is conducting an online course in German focusing on the technical foundation of the Internet.

Note to editors:

Find more details about the Internet Bridge here:

http://www.hpi.uni-potsdam.de/meinel/projekte/internet_bridge.html

If you want to attend the celebration on October 25th, 2:30 pm CET, in the HPI lecture hall, Prof.-Dr.-Helmert-Str. 2-3, 14482 Potsdam, please register with an e-mail to presse@hpi.uni-potsdam.de.

Profile of the 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 d.school model. 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 every part of life is an additional area of emphasis. HPI always earns the highest positions in the CHE university ranking. Since the beginning of September the Institute has offered openHPI, an interactive Internet educational network that is open to everyone.

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