

From the IMCL2008 Conference Chair

The world is witnessing a revolution in mobile and computing technologies which will transform all handheld devices into small computers with multimedia, web browsing and gaming capabilities, and desktop work environments with office software, in addition to the usual telephony on mobile networks and the Internet.

The International Conference on Interactive Mobile and Computer Aided Learning, IMCL, hosted annually by Princess Sumaya University for Technology, Amman, Jordan, comes as a response to this challenge in the Middle East. The conference is part of an international initiative to promote technology-enhanced learning and online engineering world-wide. The initiative includes a series of conferences such as the International Conference on Interactive Computer Aided Learning (ICL), Villach, Austria, the International Conference on Interactive Computer Aided Blended Learning (ICBL), Florianopolis, Brazil and the International Conference on Remote Engineering and Virtual Instrumentation (REV). All of these conferences are organized under the umbrella of the International Association of Online Engineering and are supported by the online journals:

- International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies (*iJIM*),
- International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (*iJET*) and the
- International Journal for Online Engineering (*iJOE*).

The 3rd international conference on Interactive Mobile and Computer Aided Learning, IMCL2008, took place in the period 18-20 April 2008 in Amman, Jordan. The conference has attracted over 120 scientists from all-over-the-world to present state of the art research in the fields of mobile learning, e-learning and virtual engineering. The conference covered all aspects of mobile learning as well as the emergence of mobile technologies, services, implementation and implications for education, business and society.

The conference was actually a very convenient forum to investigate how this type of technology-enhanced learning can facilitate learning process in different learning situations for diverse groups of learners. In fact, researchers have exchanged results, findings, tools and ideas that may contribute to knowledge and growth in this new and fast evolving field. The conference was indeed a truly lively international forum for eLearning developers, researchers and enthusiasts in the Middle East to meet and exchange experiences with leading international experts and to encourage the study and implementation of mobile applications in teaching and learning.

The conference presented an opportunity for educators from Jordan and the region to facilitate dialogue, sharing and networking between diverse cultures with regard to the optimal use of emerging technologies. The participants were provided with the newest state of the art on portable devices and their role in university education and potential benefits for learning purposes. Examples of the implementation by laptops, Tablet PCs, palmtops, mobile phones, PDA, smart phones, WAPs, GPS and a navigational system, WWW-access via Bluetooth, WLAN or GPRS were presented, accompanied by experimentations to demonstrate their coherence and feasibility.

The conference has also hosted a number of international workshops and demonstrations of the latest technologies, systems and exciting new learning materials.

Nine keynote speeches have also contributed a great deal to the success of the conference:

- Rob Reilly, MIT Media Lab, USA,
- Mike Sharples, University of Nottingham, UK,
- Susan Patrick, North American Council for Online Learning, USA,
- Josep M. Duart, Open University of Catalonia, Spain,
- Christian Bock, Fujitsu Siemens Computers, Germany,
- Cathleen Norris, University of North Texas, USA,
- Elliot Soloway, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA,
- Fabrizio Cardinali, Giunti Labs, Italy,
- Ulf-Daniel Ehlers, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany.

Summarized we can say that the conference was a full success. The 4th International Conference on Interactive Mobile and Computer Aided Learning, IMCL2009 will take place from 21 to 24 April 2009 again at PSUT in Amman.

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