

Encouraging CHI Collaboration in Latin America

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INTRODUCTION

Designing truly international interfaces requires the participation of a representative international community. The perception of ACM-SIGCHI as an "American" conference is starting to change. ACM-SIGCHI has taken initial action to increase participation from international audiences by creating the International Issues Committee (IIC) (Novick, 98). However, differences in cultures, languages, and traditions, make real international collaboration a very challenging endeavor.

Some differences among international research communities were originally identified in CHI '97 (Boy and Novick, 1997): language, style for writing and reviewing papers, economic disparities, lack of awareness, among others. We believe that, one way to foster international cooperation is to create "cultural clusters," that is, groups that share similar culture, problems and other characteristics.

SIG goals

The goal of this SIG is to bring the Latin-American community together in CHI99, encouraging participation and collaboration in CHI research and development. More specifically, this SIG will identify a set of characteristics that the Latin-American community shares and will help them and the IIC develop new support and collaboration programs.

Format of the SIG

Participant Solicitation

We will solicit participants from different Latin-American countries via e-mail and b-boards. Those interested in participating will be encouraged to bring (or send to the contact person in advance) a brief description of challenges, problems and opportunities for doing research and increasing the participation and interest in HCI in their own countries.

Facilitation of SIG activities

During the 90 minutes provided for this meeting, we will organize participants originated from different countries into groups, and we will follow a presentation-participation schema by group. The participants of the groups will present the problems they have identified in their own countries and together they will identify those that are common to all of them. They will also discuss and try to come up with suggestions as to how to deal with those problems and also how ACM-SIGCHI could support their solutions. After the group work, we will summarize the common problems and the suggestions found by the different groups. At the end of the session we will have a set of recommendations that may benefit all Latin-American countries. The presentation and meeting will be recorded for future analysis.

The schedule of the activities during the SIG is as follows:

1. We will have an opening presentation to identify the purpose and agenda of the meeting. (10 minutes)
2. Participants will introduce themselves and give a short statement on their interest on the meeting. (15 minutes).
3. Groups will be formed and work together to define a list of issues (problems and suggestions) related to the Latin-American community. (25 minutes)
4. Each group will present their list. (20 minutes)
5. We will together merge the lists, defining the common problems faced by the Latin-American community and one or more suggestions of solutions. We will establish priorities to the problems. (20 minutes).

Dissemination of results

We will submit an article summarizing the SIG to the SIGCHI Bulletin.

REFERENCES

1. Boy G. and Novick D. (1997). The SIGCHI International Advisory Task Force. SIGCHI Bulletin. Volume 29, Number 4, October 1997.
2. Novick, D (1998). The SIGCHI International issues committee: taking action. Proceedings of the CHI 98 summary conference, page 374.