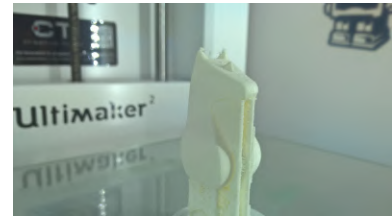# Open Lab Hours: Summary for September/October 2016
with Nico Reski & Romain Herault

As with the prior Open Lab Hours status reports, we would like to inform, report and reflect on the happenings during the first half of the autumn term HT 2016. Enjoy the read, as we hope to welcome regulars as well as newcomers in the future!

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Summary September/ October 2016

Several first year master students came to get advice on how to conduct a literature review, and more specifically how to find scientific papers relevant to their area of interest and investigation. Once more we pointed the students towards Mendeley[1], a platform for managing and sharing research papers. This tool, offering a web interface, as well as desktop and mobile apps, was presented to the students in order to help them organize them-

selves efficiently right from the start of their studies. This year we started officially introducing our master studies to the LaTeX type-setting system. Mendeley will be a valuable asset also for this, since it supports the export of its bibliography in BibTeX format.

Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) are two growing topics in the discussion during the Open Lab Hours. Since Nico is particularly interested in these topics, conversations around these areas of interest could usually unfold during every session. If you

are interested in either VR or AR, do not hesitate to stop by.

Working with Unity[2] is also a subject of growing interest during the Open Lab Hours. Together with various students we had a look into different foundations using Unity, e.g. how to create simple animations, how to compile an Unity app to Android and iOS mobile operating systems, and how to use Unity to create a basic AR application using either ARToolKit[3] or Vuforia[4]. While AR-

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[1]https://www.mendeley.com/

[2]https://unity3d.com/
[3]https://artoolkit.org/
[4]https://developer.vuforia.com

ToolKit is open-source and a long established toolkit to create AR applications, Vuforia is a more closed alternative, which is easier to setup with Unity though (talking from own experiences).

Besides the conversations about AR and VR, another topic that seems to become more and more interesting to the students was 3D printing. Our 3D printer, the Ultimaker 2[5] is a great consumer 3D printer, which was rated one of the best 3D printers available in 2014. Romain spent some of his time with maintaining our device, while presenting it to our visitors and attendees. The software provided to slice the 3D model and allow the printer to create the model has been recently updated and some testing has been done during the Open Lab Hours as well in order to test the recent, further developed features, to support the printed artifact during the printing procedure. Discussions went also around the different ways of printing, and opportunities for new services such as 3D printing on-demand via networks. This is an on-going discussion, which will continues in the coming month as one of our master students is very interested in this topic.
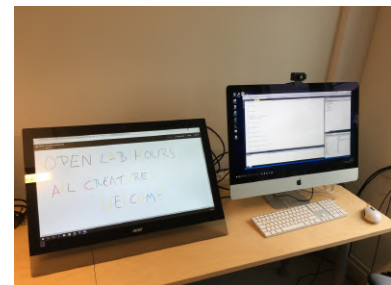
This semester, we also tried to start organizing more structured discussions around specific topics. Our first attempt was with a group of bachelor students presenting their idea about an indie gaming platform[6]. With nine people in the room, they received a lot of comments, thus being able to obtain a lot of feedback for their idea. We feel this discussion was a win-win situation, as we a) had a overall fruitful conversation and productive session, and b) the students could collect data for their course project. If this kind of activity sounds interesting for you, whether it is for a course or not, please feel free to contact Nico and/or Romain. We will gladly try to arrange such an activity again in the future.

Communicating ideas and concepts in a clear and understandable way is not an easy task, and many people fail to create posters that do both, efficiently communicating information and being aesthetic. As part of his current teaching activities, Romain handles for the graphic branch of the bachelor program in the course Digital Grafik 1[7]. As a final exercise (and challenge) for this course, he offered students to create a poster illustrating all they have learned during this course. This exercise led the discussion of several of the Open Lab Hours sessions on the topic of typography. Many people forget than typography can be integrated as design element to help attracting the attention, and not just be there to allow people to read. Many new students' posters will be available to see in our labs starting at the beginning of November 2016.

This completes the status report for the latest Open Lab Hours happenings. We hope you got an overall idea of the latest activities. If you have any questions, feel free to drop both Nico and Romain an email, or just stop by sometime during 09:00 to 12:00, Fridays, D2270 (Interaction Lab), D-Building, Campus Växjö.
All creatures welcome.s

For more information, please head over to
`bit.ly/OLHMediaTechLNU`.

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[5] `https://ultimaker.com/`
[6] `http://mediatech.lnu.se/moodle/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=1725#p6004`

[7] `https://lnu.se/kurs/1me312/20162/67165/`