



ACADEMIA ENGELBERG

Media Release

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Opportunities and Risks of Pervasive Computing

Society today is dependent on science and technology. Without them it would be hardly capable of surviving. People make full use of their benefits, but remain fearful of their risks. Controversial expert opinions add to people's sense of insecurity. How to cope with these challenges is the subject of the 2nd Dialogue on Science of the Academia Engelberg at its conference from 15 to 17 October 2003 in Engelberg, Switzerland.

Well-known scientists and moral philosophers, including Prof. Dr. Joseph Weizenbaum, Emeritus MIT, Dr. Heinrich Rohrer, Nobel Laureate for Physics, Dr. Kathinka Evers, Associate Professor at the University of Uppsala, Andy Müller-Maguhn from the Chaos Computer Club, Dr. Reinhold Eberhardt from DaimlerChrysler AG and the Swiss Federal Councillor Prof. Dr. Joseph Deiss, will address the various aspects of Pervasive Computing, its Opportunities and Risks, from their own points of view.

Increasing informationalization and networking

Pervasive Computing is concerned with integrating the smallest of computer processors and microelectronic sensors in everyday objects with a view to making these objects 'smart'. Smart things are 'aware' of their environment and thereby help their users to cope with everyday tasks in a new, intuitive way. While rapid technical advances mean that a lot of concepts are already undergoing field tests in the form of prototypes, the effects of such a comprehensive integration of computer technology in our daily lives are so far difficult to predict. The discussions will focus not on the technical aspects, but on the implications of pervasive computing for social, ethical, economic and ecological developments.

Creating a place of trust

Around 150 personally invited representatives from the spheres of science, business, society and politics will take part in the 2nd Dialogue on Science of the Academia Engelberg, exchanging ideas on the core themes of protection of privacy, data security, social changes and business applications, deepening their mutual understanding and elaborating a set of demands and projects. Based on the presentation of concrete examples and in the framework of discussion rounds, the Academia Engelberg fosters dialogue on issues of the future, so that science and society can find shared paths aimed at positively addressing and shaping these issues.

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