



SEARCH:

- 2 FREE ISSUES
- RENEW-GET 2 FREE ISSUES
- CUSTOMER SERVICE
- FREE DIGITAL ISSUE



HOME MAGAZINE ARCHIVE INNOVATION FUTURES WEBLOG MIT INSIDER FORUMS

SUBSCRIBER LOGIN

E-mail:

Password:

Help

TOPICS

- BIOTECH / HEALTHCARE
- BUSINESS
- COMPUTING
- ENERGY
- NANOTECH
- SECURITY
- SOFTWARE
- TELECOM / INTERNET
- TRANSPORTATION
- EXPANDED LIST**

▼ ADVERTISEMENT ▼

➤ Topic > Software > Interface

Automatic Icons Organize Files

September 17, 2004

Everyone knows it is more difficult to memorize a set of facts or words than a set of pictures. Everyone also knows it is way too easy to misplace files on a computer.

Researchers from the University of Southern California, MIT, and ESC Entertainment are aiming to improve the lost-in-cyberspace problem with a tool designed to tap people's facility with pictures.

The system, dubbed VisualID, automatically generates detailed icons for specific files. It assigns similar icons to related files by mutating the original icon in a series. The degree of mutation depends on the degree of similarity of the file names, which gives the user an approximate visual sense of saliency, according to the researchers.

A sticker-dispensing version of the system allows icons to be put on real-world objects.

The software version of the system could eventually be used as a view-by-appearance mode in a file browser similar to the existing view-by-date mode, according to the researchers.

Adding a VisualID to the other textual information might reduce fatigue and increase reliability in systems like air-traffic control where a person has to repeatedly scan the same data and make quick decisions, according to the researchers.

The sticker versions of the icons could be applied to real-world objects like nearly identical tools on a submarine or the space shuttle.

It would take three to five years to develop the system fully, according to the researchers. They presented the work at Association of Computing Machinery (ACM) Siggraph 2004 conference held in Los Angeles August 8 to 12.

Technology Research News

WEBLOG

David Appell @ 9/27/2004 4
[Riding on Virgil](#)
My blogging co
Richard Brans

Wade Roush @ 9/25/2004 2
[Sir Branson in](#)

Simson Garfink @ 9/25/2004 9
[Curious About Games](#) ---

TODAY'S TI

- [E-Governm](#)
Monaco? 1 countries r websites tc services.
- [Bank Tran](#)
- [Japanese s](#)
Keep Tabs
- [Sir Tim Be](#)
- [Plastics Ea](#)
- [Engineers](#)
Microsoft F
- [When Bot](#)
- [Switzerlan](#)
National Re
- [Nanotubes](#)

PREDICTIV

Will Google ha
end of the day

FREE EMAI

Sign-up now fo
EMAIL:

▼ ADVERTISEMENT ▼

imagination at work

imagination to work

Invite your friends to collaborate

➤ TECHNOLOGY REVIEW RELATED ARTICLES