

Demola Showcase 2.6.2009

## Online games take off

New ways to interact online with four webcam-controlled games for pre-schoolers and a mod platform for more advanced game tweekers as developed by two nimble Demola teams.

### Demola teams:

Teams of 5 and 8 students from Tampere University of Applied Sciences and Tampere University

### Completed projects:

- Animal Carnival – webcam-controlled online game for small children
- Summeri-tuunaamo – modifying platform for online games

### Business partner:

YLE TV2



Positive feeling is what these games are all about, states producer **Maiju Suutari**.



Appreciating the final touches on the Animal Carnival game with the team are **Wesa Aapro**, YLE and **Ari Närhi**, Tampere University of Applied Sciences.



**Eva Leppänen** and **Vilja Heinonen** feel enthusiastic about the Summeri concept.

*”It’s essential to plan your project thoroughly, or it will end up in bits and pieces”, sums up Niko Kosonen, programmer in the Summeri project.*

*”The lesson of this project was that you can use the webcam this way – and it really works”, says Wesa Aapro, business partner, YLE TV2.*

# Demola project report:

**Joint project by two Demola teams and YLE TV2 developed motion-controlled games for kids along with a platform enabling avid teens to make their own versions of web games.**

## Wave and dance: gameplay for kids

Four different motion-controlled games, aimed at children aged 3 to 6, were created by the Demola team for YLE TV2's "Pikku Kakkonen" website for kids. Ability to read or to control a mouse are not necessary, children can just swing their arms, wave and dance to play them.

The interface uses a webcam with motion detection software for capturing the movements of the player's hand, head or body. The original idea, teaching a game character to fly, soon evolved to include many more activities: picking apples from a tree, catching airborne carrots, waving when you know the right answer in a quiz, and jamming while sitting down in a dance game. In true "Pikku Kakkonen" spirit these games are more encouraging than competitive, everyone's a winner here.

In close co-operation with the team was business partner **Wesa Aapro**, who also had a hand in programming and testing the project. Learning how motion-capture technology works with online games was an important goal reached by YLE, says Aapro.

Programmers **Tuomas Rinne** and **Matti Särkikoski** agree that the most challenging aspect of the project was making game logics work smoothly with camera technology. The best part for the whole team was witnessing the separate parts form a well-functioning, playable entity.

## Summeri-tuunaamo introduces web-game modding

No less than bringing game modding culture to web games has been the ambitious objective of Summeri-tuunaamo project. Summeri is YLE TV2's magazine program for teenagers aged 12 to 15.

Demola team created a web game platform with which you can for example modify the graphics of a Flash game. Ease of use was fundamental to the idea, you don't need sophisticated programming or image manipulating skills to modify games with it. Naturally, you can share these mods with your friends, too.

At this early stage the platform has a limited toolkit to keep the learning curve low. It allows the user to download a Flash game, use drawing tools and manipulate the images included in the program. Future development could enable the platform to be used to modify any Flash game. The mod platform was created with the newest version of Action Script. A natural evolution of this concept would be modifying the platform itself.

The original idea was developed quite a bit further during the process, says business partner **Wesa Aapro**. The final product is an amazing new concept that will be used in future development projects with the internet services of YLE's Summeri program.

