

# Introduction

## **Andras Kemeny**

Technical Center for Simulation, Renault  
Arts et Métiers ParisTech  
andras.kemeny@renault.com

I had the privilege to organize the first Driving Simulation Conference in Sophia Antipolis, close to Nice at the Côte d'Azur, in 1995, with the support of Renault and ISIA, the Institute Superior of Informatics and Automation. It was then already an international conference in the fields of driving simulation, for the community of research and training simulators, automotive and train applications, simulator architecture and human factor studies. The main idea was to bring together engineers and researchers, computer scientists and psychologists, physiologists and physicians, developers, managers, experimenters and even sales managers (though the latter were not authorized to present product papers at the conference).

As the conference worked fairly well, I had the chance to be able to continue in Lyon, in 1997 and afterwards in Paris, in 1999, 2000, 2002, 2004 and 2006 with the only exception of a 2001 edition, again organized in Nice with the support of Renault and ISIA. The others were organized with the support of Renault, the CNRS (the French National Scientific Research organization) and the College of France and from 2002 with the active support of INRETS (the French National Research organization for Traffic and road Safety Studies).

These were the glorious years, plenty of freedom and finance to carry out research and to build driving simulators, with people who were disinterested in traditional carrier making but attracted to a new area of research, gathered from almost everywhere, Europe, the United States, Japan and even Korea, China and Australia, at a time when the international economical exchange and technological and workforce transfer were not as common as they are today. Driving simulation was not yet a key area for the Industry but pleasantly tolerated with a vague feeling that some day it could be somehow useful.

Our success gave way to the birth of the DSC NA, the Driving Simulation Conference North America, in 2003 and DSC Pacific and Asia, in 2006. The organization of these conferences became a little complicated with lots of discussions about where and when these conferences had to be organized, until the recent economical crisis came and wiping out the already planned DSC NA conference. The DSC Scientific Committee, renamed as DSC Europe SC, since the births of DSC NA, has decided to continue and I had again the chance to organize the 2008 and 2009 editions in Monte Carlo, with the support of Renault and hosted by the Imagina conference organization.

These last two years were the difficult years, rated down as a second rate conference on the lower floors. The economical crisis was there and expectations both in *Industry* and *Public Research* were growing. Digital vehicle prototypes were planned to reduce the number and cost of physical prototypes, as well as enhance engineering design robustness. Road safety and large collaborative project goals were demanding immediate results, without providing adequate tooling and human resources. Nevertheless research of the last decades started to give some results and we have decided to come back to Paris with the renewed help of INRETS and co-organized with the active help of Arts et Métiers ParisTech.

I have now the chance again to have a historical classified buildings for our conference, this time that of Arts et Métiers, which is comparable to that of the College de France or the Ministry of Research of the glorious days of 2000, 2002, 2004 and 2006. We will have our Interactive 3D Vision Simulation Cocktail Party at the house of the Major of Paris, 13<sup>th</sup> arrondissement in the huge and beautiful *Salle des Fêtes* with a 3D demonstration similar to the Avatar 3D film projection, only with scientific goals and without Hollywood support.

So everything seems now to be again on trajectory with some major driving simulation papers and events. The previous years have seen the development of computer graphics developments, motion platform design, validation studies and industrial, human factors and training applications. You will find these trends again with new developments and new facts. Some of the latter concern the enlarging field of studies around the scale factors, trying to deal with the consequences that in a virtual environment the ideal scaling of the different perceptual modalities seem to differ that of the *Real World*, supposing that there is one.

Another new development concern open formats (OpenDrive and RoadXML) and open sources (OpenSD2S), showing that if the standard industrial driving simulation software packages are still rare on the market, though with enhanced maturation, there is a place for open sources. Those will hopefully allow post-docs and independent labs to access the driving simulation field without expensive and sophisticated tools and large financial support, before moving towards more traditional organizations and contribute to the simulation community with creative approaches and new results.

Last but not least, new developments are the new bookstore edition of the DSC Proceedings in the Editions of INRETS and the selection of the best papers for publication in the JCISE Special Issue in Driving Simulation. All these events make me believe that we enter a new era of glorious days of Driving Simulation Conferences which should continue at this new location in the coming years with enhanced paper and poster quality and a developing driving simulation community.