



HOST begins the experimentation phase

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Aspects of interest:

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Progress of the project

In the past months, HOST consortium has been working hard in the **co-design process**, which is linked to the first part of WP2, in order to define the architectural system of the software and related interfaces in the sample of users in France, Italy and United Kingdom.

From now on, the main focus of the project is the **experimentation phase** in each country and the continuous **evaluation** of the different steps undertaken.

Also, it has already started the development of the **Exploitation Strategy**, which tries to ensure that HOST results will endure beyond the lifetime of the project reaching the right stakeholders in a format and at a time that enables them to benefit from them.

Co-design phase

France

In France the experimentation was prepared with the support of 15 seniors from Lyon 9 and La Mulatière, women and men, from 60 to 85 years old (see our last newsletter). Distributed in 2 groups, they helped to specify end users requirement and to co-design services in terms of purpose, functionality and ergonomics. Thus during the year 2012, seniors have participated to almost 20 workshops animated by Erasme.

At the end of this first stage, the results were:

- The definition of complementary Services “host com” and “host org”
- The delivery of a stabilized version of these services
- A kit of user’s manuals, in order to simplify the training of technology (i.e. tablet and “host” package services)
- A communication plan with tools as a short video and a presentation leaflet (“say organization rather than memory...”)

All these deliverables have been elaborated with the support of co-designers.

Furthermore, the co-design stage has produced recommendations for the implementation of the experimentation phase, as the support needed by the future volunteers. Finally, the co-designing stage has also allowed to finalize the assessment protocol including the questionnaires that have been prepared at the beginning of the project by Finabitat AeA, as well as the documents of information and registration as ethic chart and consent form.



Italy

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In Italy 20 users from Borgaro, Orbassano, Cesena, Lizzanello and Rome participated to the co-design during 18 months (from May 2011 to October 2012). HOST product offers several services available in accordance with agreements with local structures operating on the territory: house management, communication with local “circle of support”, services at home and home maintenance, health and medical assistance, e-commerce services (culture and entertainment, wellness and care). All the services are available to the users through interactive TV, or tablet PC indifferently. Users do not like to use the Smartphone. Its utility will be tested in the further phase.

The main results indicated that:

- More interest in entertainment and company services than in health-related.
- Most needed services are: transport, accompaniment and home delivery (drugs, shopping, etc.).
- Knowing to be able to have access to further services in the future ensures the users, even if they do not have any specific immediate need.
- Relevance of receiving specific training for the use of the device, also by using tutorials and manuals, and to have technical “advisors” in order to ask questions online, in case of problems.

United Kingdom

The experimental site was situated in Muskham View, Newark near Nottingham, in middle England, where 24 users participated in the experiment from September 2011 until September 2012 – the number of participants decreased to 18 people due to health problems. The experiment is however on-going. The technology employed was High Definition digital TV. The service offered access to TV; People and Contacts (family and friends, NCHA support, photograph albums and chat facilities); Health and Well-being; Events and Alerts including a Calendar; Services; and Help through the digital TV.

A participative ‘co-design’ approach was taken. Participants were involved in a three workshops where the service content was defined and the ‘look and the feel’ of the service specified. This included participants identifying topics, ranking the importance of topics and designing the icons that would appear on the screen to enable, intuitive, selection of topics.

Evaluation focused on two areas: seniors’ perception of the participative process and secondly the initial implementation of the service. Interviews were chosen as a method because previously the use of a survey required a large amount of help, from staff at Muskham View, because older participants found it difficult to complete the survey on their own. Fifteen seniors were interviewed during July 2012. They were asked about whether they valued participation; whether their ideas were taken on board etc. With regard to the service, seniors were asked about the user interface and the content of the service.





Experimentation phase

In **France** the experimentation began in December 2012 (recruitment) and will end in July 2013. More than 60 volunteers asked to participate, and 38 people have been finally involved. All are tenants of the housing company Opac du Rhône, and live in urban and semi-rural sites spread in the Rhône district. All the volunteers use to live in classical social housing. As during the co-design stage, they are male and female aged from 60 to 85 years old.

Participants are asked to use the tablet and the HOST platform (as sending a message, sharing pictures, consulting information from the social housing company or an event scheduled by a caregiver). On this purpose, specific user's manual and a hotline were settled according to the results of the co-design phase. Furthermore, each user is invited to give a weekly feedback in a diary created by AGIM laboratory. Bugs, errors, difficulties, problems, etc. are recorded and will be analyzed, through a technical chart records at every call for help from the user.

Before and after this experimental phase, which is planned to last around 6 months per participant, the questionnaire developed by Finabita-AeA, is used as evaluation tool, completed by standardized scales and some tasks to be realized on the iPad. The partner in charge of the evaluation synthesis, AGIM, will provide a full comparative analysis of the results,.

In **Italy** the experimentation involves 20 users and has begun on December 2012. It will most probably extend until at least 4 months beyond the originally scheduled ending date (June 2013). Every user has selected some services in relation to his/her needs, and all the services are among those identified during the co-design phase. The chosen interfaces are tablet + TV, although it may add a few experimentations with the smartphone, in order to widen the experimental set. The experimentation is developed in three phases. The first is centered on the training for the users and the volunteers, on the HOST platform. The second phase is focused only on the use of the platform, without the services, with a direct supervision of the technological and social housing partners. And the final phase involves the start of the services and the beginning of the complete experimentation of the HOST platform.

In **United Kingdom** thanks to the feedback on the system provided by participants some changes and improvements have been introduced on interface design and content. Generally feedback on design was positive. However, specific features such as picture size, use of acronyms, background colour for messages, different functionality within TV and HOST mode were highlighted and these have been addressed. Challenges for the experimental phase imply: keeping the system up to date; shortening steps to information; and re-categorising information (for example, placing Doctor information under Help, as well as contacts).

Disseminating HOST

Since the launch of the project, HOST has been widely disseminated through several means, publics and contexts.

Several articles have been published in international and national magazines as: *AeA Informa* (Italy), *Entre Mayores* (Spain), *L'Edilizia* (Italy), *Assistenza Anziani* (Italy), *La revue du CRDSU* (France), *Le Progrès* (France) or *European Year of Active Ageing "Preparing the future"* (International).



Moreover, HOST has been presented in several sound conferences and meetings at international level with different kind of participants as researches, SMEs, users' organizations, policy makers, etc. These are some examples:

- **AAL Forum 2011 and 2012** (Lecce, Italy / Eindhoven, The Netherlands)
- **The International Telecare & Telehealth Conference**, on November 2011 (London, United Kingdom)
- **3rd International Conference of Ageing and New Technologies**, on April 2012 (Castellón, Spain)
- **BRAID Project Final Conference**, on May 2012 (Prague, Czech Republic)
- **7th International Conference on Interdisciplinary Social Sciences**, on June 2012 (Barcelona, Spain)
- **The SFTAG scientific Conference** on October 2012 (Paris, France)
- **Conference Preparing the future: Ageing and Affordable Housing**, on November 2012 (Brussels, Belgium)

Additionally, people interested can find a **promotional video** on HOST project – elaborated for the AAL Forum 2012 – at this link: <http://www.aalforum.eu/video/host-video>



Next appointments

- **AAL Forum 2013 on 24th – 26th September in Norrköping (Sweden).**
- **Open Conference of the HOST project in Brussels on October 2013** (exact date to be confirmed soon).

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