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SIECI OJASMA



FORUM VIRIUM HELSINKI - ANNUAL REVIEW 2009

In 2009, Forum Virium Helsinki significantly expanded its operations. By the end of the year, there were a total of 23 ongoing projects in five main areas: traffic and location based services, healthcare and wellbeing, learning and education, media, and innovation communities.

Project cooperation with the City of Helsinki's administrative departments has increased, which accounts for the fact that this year our operations are expected to almost double in size. Our turnover for 2009 was 1.4 million Euros.

"Our finances have remained firm and our partnerships have developed in a positive direction despite the slump in the economy at large," explained Forum Virium Helsinki's CEO, Jarmo Eskelinen.

Public data opening into wider use

The opening of public data became a very topical theme in Forum Virium Helsinki's activities in 2009. We actively developed our partnership with the Helsinki Metropolitan Area in the Open Data project and took part in arranging The Apps for Democracy Finland competition, which aimed at finding new ways to use information produced by public sector. The competition was a success! This year the search for new ideas continues and will be run by The Finnish Society for Online Democracy.

"The opening of public data will benefit citizens, municipalities, research bodies and enterprises alike; it will help to create services and new business activities. According to European Commission estimates, public data is worth around 27 billion Euros a year in business activities," said Eskelinen.

The most important open data initiative is the Helsinki Region Infoshare. Over the course of the three year project, the region's regional information will be made open to the public. The work will be carried out in collaboration with the City of Helsinki Urban Facts and the other municipalities in the metropolitan area. Information describing the Helsinki region, or its parts, will be compiled on a website where it can be easily found and used. The service compiles pools of data which can then be used by citizens or enterprises to create new services.

Helsinki Region Infoshare is taking part in the Ministry of Employment and the Economy's KIITO programme. Helsinki Region Infoshare is progressing at a tremendous pace and the beta version of the web service will be launched this year.



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Focusing on City dwellers and users

Forum Virium Helsinki's operations are based on user-centred innovation model. The largest living lab environment is the Healthy Helsinki programme, which is situated in the Herttoniemi district of Helsinki. There are 13 sub-projects currently running within the programme.

At the end of 2009, the development phase of the Healthy Helsinki programme was completed and the project moved into the implementation and distribution phase. At this time the responsibility for coordination, and media and communications was transferred to the City of Helsinki's Health Centre. Forum Virium Helsinki concentrates on the development of digital services within the project.

The Stadi.TV, established year 2009, will begin its activities this year. The project concerns a new city TV channel

where users produce content alongside professionals. The channel will broadcast videos filmed by city dwellers next to traditional journalistic content. Citizen will also be able to participate in creating the concept for the channel. Stadi.TV can be accessed through a wide variety of platforms: television, web page, online TV and mobile phones. The programmes can be watched in traditional channel format or as on-demand service.

Stadi.TV is a result of collaboration between Forum Virium Helsinki, Arcada University of Applied Sciences, the media culture organisation m-cult, Elisa Plc, and the City of Helsinki.

Towards design year 2012

In November 2009, Helsinki was named the World Design Capital. Forum Virium Helsinki was actively involved in drawing up Helsinki's successful application. The

theme for the year is Open Helsinki - Embedding Design in Life. The idea is to present a broad approach to design. Design will be seen as a means of finding user-initiated solutions to everyday situations. It is also considered that participation will promote the cultural, social and economic development of the city. What we are talking about is creating a better everyday life.

The aims of Helsinki's World Design Capital year and Forum Virium Helsinki coincide in many ways. As a result, Forum Virium Helsinki is creating a strategic partnership with World Design Capital Helsinki 2012.

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