

# Cityspeak, Citywide

A Mobile Digital Commons Network Project

**A presentation proposal submitted for consideration to**

**MOBILEFEST 2006**

**by**

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# Cityspeak, Citywide

Presentation Proposal for Mobilefest (São Paulo)

## Overview

*Cityspeak, Citywide* was inspired by the desire to answer the following question: what does it mean for an individual to intervene in the public sphere in early twenty-first century urban environments?

Participants use their SMS- and web-enabled cellphones or wireless PDAs to send text to a common server. The text is combined with real-time data from the location and processed using the NextText<sup>1</sup> text visualization software. The resulting stream of text is layered back onto the locations in the form either of large-scale projections or displayed on large-scale video monitors.

*Cityspeak, Citywide* asks how artists and other cultural activists can convert the medium- and large-scale screens from visual bullhorns of commercial desire to nodes of shared commentary.

The project deals with public voice, and is fit to complement the “The mobile technology as communication tool and Social Action” panel. Situated in the arts/democracy categories, it can be used to propel change around who gets a word in the public sphere. We would like to present *Cityspeak* as an embodiment of the agency made possible by mobile technology.

## Presentation Details

Our presentation will deal with theoretical underpinnings of *Cityspeak, Citywide* and will be accompanied by visual material. Mrs. Lévesque will give the presentation in Portuguese. Additionally, we would love to do a *Cityspeak* installation at Mobilefest.

## Support Material

Please visit

[http://obx.hybrid.concordia.ca/research/semantics/cityspeak/research\\_cityspeak.htm](http://obx.hybrid.concordia.ca/research/semantics/cityspeak/research_cityspeak.htm)

On top right is a movie documenting the *Cityspeak* installation at the SAT in May of 2005.

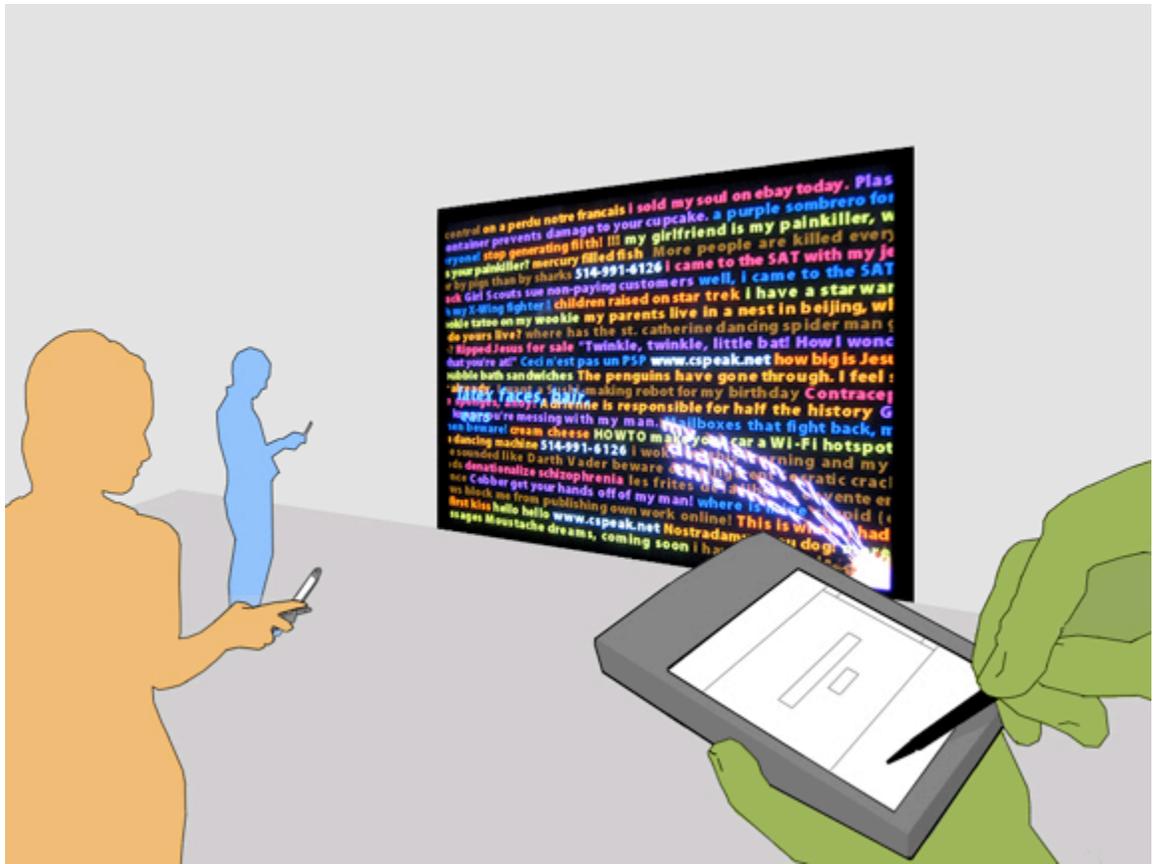
We encourage you to also visit

[http://obx.hybrid.concordia.ca/research/semantics/intralocutor/research\\_intralocuteur.htm](http://obx.hybrid.concordia.ca/research/semantics/intralocutor/research_intralocuteur.htm)

This will give you an idea of the full range of expressivity possible with our approach to dynamic and interactive texts.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://obx.hybrid.concordia.ca/research/nexttext/research\\_nexttext.htm](http://obx.hybrid.concordia.ca/research/nexttext/research_nexttext.htm)



**Figure 1** *Cityspeak*. Text messages from each individual sources are given the same color to allow users to follow their particular submissions.



**Figure 2** *Citywide* takes the *Cityspeak* notion of supporting dialogue about one particular place and extend it across an entire city. However, *Citywide* presumes that there are a number of local *Cityspeak* installations. These are installations in a café or bar or anywhere else there is free wireless internet access and a public screen The users on the left and right are working with a laptop. This allows them to participate in the local chat as well as chats occurring in other locations in the city. The local chat is also displayed to a monitor in the café.



## **Participants**

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