

## Combined virtual and local meetings in Magic Lounge

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The Magic Lounge project aims to develop a virtual meeting place that will be of benefit to people living in remote places. The user group, comprised of eight inhabitants drawn from the small islands of Denmark, is taken to be representative of this wider constituency. Utilising a scenario which has emerged from preliminary user studies, the potential benefits of the Magic Lounge are conveyed in the form of a video presentation. The presentation is based around the activities of a marine history group based on the island of Ærø.

The activities of the marine history group are relevant to the overall aims of the Magic Lounge in a number of respects. Firstly, it touches on the activities of local interest groups, which data obtained from users suggests is an important aspect of island life. Secondly, the subject of the group's interests is one which has a special relevance to island inhabitants. Finally, the fact that the group is based at the museum of marine history in Ærø, while drawing its membership from across Denmark, means that certain members have difficulties participating in the meetings.

The presentation shows how the Magic Lounge can be used to facilitate remote access to meetings. So far marine meetings have only been by people physically attending them. However, Magic Lounge opens the new possibility that some people meet physically as they are used to whereas others attend the meeting via ML. This is possible if the room in which the physical meeting takes place has a well-equipped computer which can connect the participants in that room to Magic Lounge where they will meet the distance attendees. The marine history club has a computer with camera, microphone and loudspeakers, which enables the club to exploit all the Magic Lounge facilities, and a fast connection is available from the meeting room.

One distance participant has a well-equipped computer with camera, loudspeakers and microphone and he has an ISDN connection. A few minutes before the marine history meeting starts he turns on his computer and modem and logs on to Magic Lounge. The meeting room is already logged on. Another remote participant also joins the meeting. However, he only has a telephone. He is informed by Magic Lounge on who is logged in, and the people in the physical meeting room tell him who are actually present. The presentation will show the three participating partners having a marine history meeting via Magic Lounge.