

NEM GA NEWS

Successful NEM General Assembly led by new Executive Director

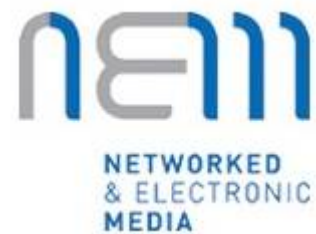
November 2007: The European Technology Platform NEM (Networked and Electronic Media) held its fifth General Assembly (GA) in Brussels on 22 and 23 October 2007. About 100 delegates from 90 member organisations participated. Delegates learned more about the work of the NEM Initiative and about recent and future Calls for Proposals for the seventh Framework programme. Slides from the presentations can be found on the NEM Initiative's website, www.nem-initiative.org. The General Assembly was led by the new Executive Director, Jean-Dominique Meunier (Thomson).

In his welcome Mr Meunier emphasised the importance of the NEM sector - a market of €600 Bn annually. He said the NEM Initiative is now organised, but needs to strengthen its ambition, leadership and vision.

Two complementary presentations described the success of the Framework 7 first call and gave some suggestions for likely topics for future calls. Luis Rodriguez-Rosello from EC Directorate D2 (Networked Media Systems) gave a view from the physical network towards the services and content the network would carry, whereas Stefano Bertolo of Division E2 (Content and Knowledge) looked from content towards the networks that would carry it. They described the areas that would be covered by successful projects from the first call - and topics likely to be included in the third call, to be launched in December 2007.

The General Assembly heard that the NEM Vision statement had been revised and updated during the year, as had the Strategic Research Agenda (SRA). The NEM Vision represents 'where we would like to get to' whereas the SRA details the R&D needed if we are to get there. Delegates were invited to join in a more radical revision of the SRA in the coming year.

Other NEM activities that were presented included a position paper on mobile TV, prepared in response to the Commission's communication published in July 2007. And a number of new projects in the NEM area - from proposals that were successful in the seventh Framework first call - made presentations of their intentions. A call was made to extend the coverage of NEM beyond Europe, promoting cooperation with R+D stakeholders from other Regions around the world.



The NEM Chairman, Jean-Charles Hourcade, Thomson CTO, gave a short address on the second day. The NEM Initiative needed to work more on content - to be more pro-active than reactive. 'Now that the NEM initiative is well-organised', he said, 'it needs to choose perspectives on which to focus: the 3-D world, the digital home, digital cinema, future internet, ...'

A highlight of the GA was a presentation on Networked Media of the Future by Professor Nadia M. Thalmann, MIRALAB - University of Geneva. Professor Thalmann led an EC Task Force on Networked Media: long term research; she gave a vision of pervasive personalized media services without the need for central control. This would require extensive research on richer media exchange, distributed control, and community intelligence. It would offer enhanced audiovisual-based interactions at the community level to empower 'virtual communities'.

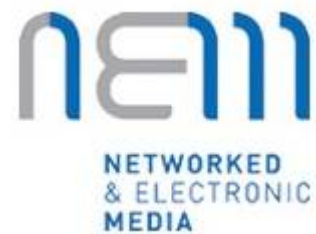
Marius Enache described the activities of the Romanian NEM Mirror Group, one of several national initiatives associated with NEM. He described the Romanian plan for research, development and innovation 2007-2013 and the operational programmes co-financed from European structural funds. He said Romanian companies were looking for partners in the NEM area and asked NEM members to consider Romanian partners when forming new projects.

Jean-Dominique Meunier

The new Executive Director of the NEM Initiative, Jean-Dominique Meunier (42), entered the Thomson Group in 1989. On 1st September 2007 he was appointed as Thomson Funding and Cooperative Programs Director. In 2004, he had become Managing Director of Thomson R&D Center in Rennes, the largest R&D center of the Thomson Group, with more than 400 engineers. After having been deeply involved in the creation and the setting-up of the French Media & Networks cluster, he was elected Vice-Chairman of its executive board and became General Secretary of Thomson R&D France. Before that, he was the Managing Director of Thomson Plasma, a R&D center of 70 people located close to Grenoble.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

European Technology Platforms, of which NEM is one, provide a framework for addressing major technological challenges. They are an effective means for defining research and development priorities, timeframes and action plans in the areas where Europe's future growth, competitiveness and sustainability depend on technological advances. They focus on areas of significant economic impact and high societal relevance where there is high public interest and scope for genuine value



added through a European level response. They are potentially a powerful instrument in achieving a better structuring of activities at European level and contributing to the achievement of the European Research Area.

The NEM initiative addresses the convergence of digital broadband telecommunications, broadcast, media and content industries, consumer electronics and information technologies. This convergence is giving birth to a new and exciting sector that will provide advanced personalized services, delivered seamlessly over technologically transparent networks, to improve the quality, enjoyment and value of life of European citizens. It will also maintain Europe's lead in relevant highly technological fields. NEM membership includes representatives from all industrial sectors related to NEM and today includes over 600 members.

Since the early phase in December 2004, the NEM Initiative has made good progress in a number of areas, specifically on:

- Defining a European Strategic Research Agenda in the NEM sector;
- Promoting the inclusion of NEM related technologies and research areas within the European and Member States' research programmes;
- Working with the European Commission, and other public and private organizations, to address issues beyond research that will affect the timely transfer of new technology into marketable products and services;
- linking up with activities within EUREKA, national activities and related international work;
- actively informing interested organizations to extend the Membership of NEM, to keep open and representative involvement of all interested stakeholders.

The General Assembly allows all members of NEM to discuss the priorities for the work of the technology platform, to confirm its structure, and to elect new members of its managing bodies. The Assembly also allows close networking among interested researchers, enabling them to identify potential partners with similar interests.

Press contact

Andrew Oliphant

NEM Vice-chair "Liaison"

E-mail: info@nem-initiative.org

Website: www.nem-initiative.org