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Welcome, Luke

University of Warwick HDR video gets first public airing

12th September 2011

By Duncan Tift - Deputy Editor, West Midlands



A scene from Morgan Lovers, used to highlight HDR video

NEXT generation video, pioneered by researchers at the University of Warwick is to be publicly demonstrated at a new exhibition in Holland.

HDR - High Dynamic Range - video captures a wider range of light intensity levels found in real scenes ranging from direct sunlight to lowlight images.

The university, together with collaborators WMG, goHDR Ltd and Altera Toronto Technology Center, has created an embedded system that can be connected to existing domestic televisions, allowing them to display HDR content.

The partners are to give the first public demonstration of HDR-enabled television at the IBC 2011 event in Amsterdam.

Using a standard television they will show a specially created short film called 'Morgan Lovers' which was shot, manipulated, and can be displayed entirely in HDR.

The film is also a collaborative venture, this time with local film maker, Vermillion Films, and Morgan Cars. It was brought about through WMG's International Digital Laboratory's SME programme, which is funded by Advantage West Midlands.

HDR video captures a wider range of light intensity levels found in real scenes ranging from direct sunlight to lowlight images. HDR imagery offers a significantly enhanced viewing experience even when the higher contrasts are reduced, such as on computer monitors or televisions.

The increased lighting of HDR content also provides better depth perception, allowing a person to watch a 3D programme without the need to wear special glasses.

Professor Alan Chalmers, of WMG, said: "This project has brought together worldwide expertise in HDR imaging from the University of Warwick with the innovation and in-depth market knowledge of goHDR and Altera. Together the partners have demonstrated the technical and commercial viability of HDR-enabled television."

He said HDR video has very large data and computational requirements. This creates significant challenges for video processing on a low power embedded platform such as a television or set-top box.

However, the university's system achieves a high compression ratio with minimal perceptual loss. This makes it a very attractive proposition should it be developed commercially.

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