

Preface

Decades ago, the mention of ‘digital cities’ made us think of visually simple and relatively primitive early Internet and Worldwide Web representations of aspects of real cities, particularly in terms of culture and community. Currently, we have divergent views and expectations of digital or information and communication technology (ICT) when looking at the role that this technology can play in our ideas about our future, digitally enhanced cities. Broadband information highways have been introduced to connect countries, regions, cities, and their infrastructures worldwide. These infrastructures include governmental, business, transportation and mobility, and safety and security services. Underlying the development of these infrastructures, we have research and development on information and communication technology, research on information systems, software engineering, network technology, security and privacy, and human–computer interactions. Of course, it is possible to go into more detail and mention signal processing, nanotechnology, smart materials, machine learning, artificial intelligence, and many subareas of behavioral sciences.

In recent years, ICT has made it possible to talk about intelligent and smart cities. The focus of intelligent and smart cities can be on providing such cities with a competitive advantage over other cities. This advantage needs to come from an awareness that the comprehensive employment of advanced ICT can help to solve problems related to transportation, mobility, energy distribution, and safety and security as well as help in urban development, crucial decision-making, and stimulating innovation and economic development. Having these issues taken care of in the most efficient way is something we expect of those who develop and offer employment of smart technology.

Citizens of intelligent and smart cities may be satisfied with having an efficient home, office, and city environment. However, they usually want more, which is where issues, such as social and intimate relations, affect and emotions, playful and social interactions, entertainment, leisure and health-related needs, and playful, entertaining, recreational, and humorous activities emerge. When we discuss developments in research on intelligent and smart cities, can we also distinguish

developments that address these affective, social, and playful aspects of our daily lives?

In this book, we address the issue of playfulness and playability in intelligent and smart cities. Playful technology can be introduced and authorized by city authorities. This can be compared and is similar to the introduction of smart technology in theme and recreational parks. However, smart technology becomes embedded in real-life city situations and allows real-time use by city dwellers. Thus, we can investigate how embedded smart technology can play a role in the generation and understanding of affective, playful, and humorous activities and events. Moreover, we can study how smart city technology can be used in playful, participatory design of changes in an urban environment or allow those changes to be implemented by city communities themselves.

Chapters in this book address pervasive games, urban games that change a city into a ‘gameful city,’ urban experiences and how to involve residents in urban city design and development. Chapters also address the playful hacking of smart city technology, mischief in smart cities, and the use of smart technology to introduce playful interactions between citizens and smart city technology in public spaces. Civic hacking that introduces playful community applications is also a topic addressed in this book. Publicly available data and infrastructure and accessible or hackable sensors and actuators can all help introduce playful applications and interactions and make an environment or city more playful and playable.

I’m grateful to the many authors who contributed to this book. They not only contributed with chapters but also acted as reviewers for two or more chapters. In addition, Dhaval Vyas and Chamari Edirisinghe helped with reviewing chapters. My thanks also go to Steffen Walz for his willingness to write a Foreword for this book. As usual, the Springer staff was very friendly and helpful, making it a pleasure to realize this publication.

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