

**Winterthur Belgium got off to a uniquely interactive start for the year :
1200 employees in control of a spaceship negotiating the twists and turns of Kegopolis, the city of
the future ... the future of the company.**

Auditorium 2000, the entire personnel of the Belgian branch of the Winterthur group are gathered for the almost annual start-of-year meeting. During a 2-hour session Mr Desseille, company President, will present the development plans for the coming year ... nothing unusual about that?

The presentation begins with two films on a giant, 12-metre screen. The President takes stock of the year past making use of additional large screens showing figures, graphs, animations and more.

Then, suddenly, the tone of his speech changes - it turns towards the future of Winterthur and the commitment that will be required from each member of staff. And to place even greater emphasis on their involvement, ***the floor is handed over to the entire audience*** who are now in control of an interactive experience, a three-dimensional presentation of the choices that have to be made to take the company forward.

How it worked

An 'event leader' positioned herself on the stage at the foot of the giant screen to give the long-awaited signal to open the mysterious envelopes.

The envelopes contained two light sticks – one green and one pink. These were what enabled the whole event to progress; the pink stick was used to mean turn left and the green stick to turn right.

The desires of the audience then determined the route taken by a vehicle travelling through Kegopolis, a virtual world, a city where all of the roads were designed in the form of hair-raising roller-coaster rides.

The vehicle changed direction according to the exact proportions of pink and green shown by the audience. A camera analysed the wishes of the audience in real time and transmitted these movement pulses 20 times per second to the central computer that then generated the image.

The task of the audience was to travel through Kegopolis, a virtual city. Along the way, they came to various crossroads showing choices to be made to determine the future of Winterthur. President Desseille gave advice to assist the members of the audience in making their decisions. On the screen, the accurate transmission of the information allowed the audience to view the trend developing instantaneously, i.e. whether in favour of the road on the left, or the right.

Technical note.

The project was developed on the basis of the simulation and virtual reality techniques used by flight simulators.

The software used to run the event, the audience analysis system, the virtual worlds and the sound effects were created in their entirety by *de pinxi*.

The central computer used was a Silicon Graphics Onyx IR graphics station generating a very high resolution image (1280 x 1024 points) in real time, with 60 images per second and incomparable clarity and antialiasing.

A Barco R12000 DLP projector was used with the 11 m screen, providing a cinema-standard image.