

WorldsAway

Ever go to a party where the evening dragged on forever? Now you can dress up, drop in for a quick chat, meet five new friends and be home in less than 15 minutes -- without leaving your computer.

Combining the social dimension of chat services with the graphic dimension of multiplayer games, WorldsAway will allow thousands of CompuServe members in the U. S., Europe, Japan and 150 other countries worldwide to meet, interact and yes, even party, while building an online virtual community.

Unlike traditional chat rooms and multiplayer games, in which the communications environment disappears when users leave the room, WorldsAway will offer a permanent visual space and shared context for consistent interaction. Through character representations of themselves -- called avatars -- users will be able to create facial expressions, exchange objects and gesture to one another as they take part in a variety of social activities such as renting an apartment or running a business.

WorldsAway utilizes a sophisticated client/server design to deliver rich graphical animation at standard modem speeds. Because the user's computer (client) rather than the remote server does most of the animating work, even a 2400 baud modem can deliver satisfactory performance.

The first world in WorldsAway is the Dreamscape, a fantasy adventure environment. As users explore the Dreamscape, and as other virtual pioneers join them, they will find many new and intriguing places to visit.

Fujitsu is currently testing WorldsAway on CompuServe. It is expected to become available to all members in Autumn 1995.