CITYCLUSTER
From the Renaissance to the Gigabits Networking Age

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CityCluster is a virtual networking matrix, a creative high-tech container with original technological features such as navigation, interactivity and its own graphic and style. Within this container, multiple environments, ambiences or cities both real and imagined, can be hosted, coexist and relate to one another through a common, virtual territory, interconnected by high-speed network, enabling remote participants to interact and collaborate in a single shared environment. This framework may be expanded, modified, enriched, developed, and produced ad hoc in accordance with the nature and typology of the environment to be incorporated. Visitors, with their own creativity and communicative skills, can become protagonist and/or free citizen: navigate, interact, intervene, exchange structures, objects and ideas and or create their own ideal environment. A virtual-reality networking interface display, a VR-pathfinder called Meta-Net-Page was designed and implemented ad hoc for *CityCluster* as the main interactivity tool for the user.

"From the Renaissance to the Megabyte Networking Age" is the first *CityCluster* virtual-reality networked application. The virtual application offers its visitors a thrilling interactive journey departing from the Renaissance and continuing to the super wideband networking of the Electronic Age, breaking the barriers of time and space in real time. Florence metaphorically represents the "Renaissance Age," Chicago the "Gigabits Networking Age." Each virtual city is inhabited by a group of avatars: David, Venus and Machiavelli in Florence and Mega, Giga and Picasso in Chicago.

The system has been designed to produce an integrated computing facility and to implement a high speed digital container in which multiple environments may coexist and be interconnected within a common, virtual territory. *CityCluster* can be adapted to a number of diverse cities or virtual environments. Local and non-local interactive visitors can experience a shared environment in local and in remote locations through high speed networking.

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