

## **Ambient Kitchen**

Background (download PDF)

The Ambient Kitchen in Newcastle University's Culture Lab explores the use of pervasive computing technology for assisted living in a domestic setting, particularly in relation to older people living with dementia.

Sensors and displays in the physical environment and appliances allow the wireless collection of activity data and the display of helpful information. Cels was approached to help with funding and project management due to its regional expertise in the commercialisation of assistive technology and in the fields of ageing and health.

Project

The Ambient Kitchen is a collaboration between the Institute of Ageing and Health, the School of Computing Science and the Informatics Research Institute (all at Newcastle University), the Centre for Usable Home Technology (University of York) and Cels.

Cels worked with the academic community to develop a unique interactive facility that showcased the potential of new technology to develop assisted living environments.

Cels provided marketing support to orchestrate a high quality PR campaign. This was designed not only to raise the profile of the Ambient Kitchen within the region and within the scientific community but also to give it a national, mainstream profile and raise interest amongst those who might be in a position to replicate elements of the Ambient Kitchen commercially.

Outcome

Funding from Cels has enabled the development of three applications that demonstrate the capabilities of the ambient kitchen:

- Activity monitoring – by tracking the manipulation of objects in the kitchen using ShoeMote and digital jewellery worn by users, it is possible to monitor the level and type of activity of an older person.
- Nutrition advisor – based on the food items selected, the food advice system will propose meals and advise on nutritional matters.
- Sequence prompting – voice prompts and small lights are used to prompt people with dementia to carry through the full sequence of actions involved in an activity.

The PR campaign was also highly effective, leading to the project being featured favourably in national and regional newspapers, in the international trade press and on regional TV and radio and the web.

The Ambient Kitchen is continuing to allow researchers to explore new ways to support the

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decline in people's cognitive and physical abilities and it is envisaged that within a few years, kitchens in new homes will offer some of these technology features as standard.

Key Services:

- Project management
- Funding
- Commercialisation expertise
- Marketing & PR support
- Access to networks

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