



Annual Scientific Meeting

50 years of Fitts' law

Professor Errol Hoffmann

Visiting Professor

Department of Industrial Engineering and Logistics Management
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Date: 12 May 2007 (Saturday)

Time: 5:00 to 6:00 pm

Venue: ST522, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Dr Hoffmann received his undergraduate and graduate degrees at the University of Melbourne in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. He studied in the field of fluid mechanics for his M.Eng. Sc and Human Factors for his PhD research. His PhD work was on human control of motor vehicles. Later he taught Human Factors in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Melbourne. He has worked as a 'fill-in' teacher at SUNY at Buffalo and currently at HKUST.

Attending lectures by the late Ron Cumming during his PhD program gave him an introduction to Fitts' law (this was in the early 60s, not long after the original publication by Fitts of what is now known as Fitts' law). It was with some enthusiasm that he reanalyzed the data of Fitts and showed that the models used for the more complex tasks were quite incorrect. A paper submitted to the journal 'Human Factors' was promptly rejected on the basis that it did not present anything new. Since that time all the ideas have been shown to be correct and original!

This original enthusiasm for the beauty and simplicity of Fitts' law has led to many papers on the use of Fitts' law, many of these being written with graduate students. In this talk, he will attempt to demonstrate some of the methods that have been used to derive Fitts' law – some valid and others not so – and some of the applications of Fitts' law. Google Fitts' law and you will find 407,000 entries. This might give some indication of the importance that is placed on this simple relationship for movement time.

The Hong Kong Ergonomics Society is a member (Federated Society) of the International Ergonomics Association. We aim to advance the science of ergonomics in Hong Kong by promoting research, application and education in ergonomics.

Enquiries and registration: Ms Ida Yiu at 9236 7879 or email: ida_yiu@jltasia.com