

Niels Ole Bernsen  
i3net coordinator  
nob@nis.sdu.dk  
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## **Siena and beyond**

It rained in Siena during much of the three days of the i3 Annual Conference '99. I remember being soaked three times in one day half-jogging between the hotel and the beautiful [Museo della Scala](#) where the exhibition and much of the conference took place. But, as Scandinavians have to say to make sense of where they live, bad weather does not exist, only inappropriate clothing.

Everybody was there, more than 300 of us, researchers from academia, design and industry, viewers and reviewers, in addition to the actors, the video gang from Milano, the journalists from [Liberal](#), [Sky Channel](#) and elsewhere, the flocks of kids doing on-the-spot design at the exhibition stands – in fact, the programme was too full for anybody to enjoy it all. Still, whatever else we individually managed to accomplish, we all spent time at the exhibition, presenting and witnessing impressive achievements in innovation and technology transfer. Even several of the newly-started experimental school environments (ESE) projects strutted with exploitable stuff. One envious participant complained that mixing advanced IT research with innovative design wasn't being practised in the US.

So, the i3 formula of design, cutting-edge research, and users is a good one. Like the much-copied i3 community concept of focused research programmes (including one-third industry ready to take up results), a supporting infrastructure, and being together as much as work commitments allow, that formula can be expected to be copied widely.

How about the future? Some of it has been fixed. Seven i3 projects will exhibit together at [IST'99](#) in [Helsinki](#) on 22-24 November 1999. The next [i3 Spring Days](#) will take place in [Athens](#) on 1-3 March 2000, and the third [i3 Annual Conference](#) will be held in [Jönköping](#), Sweden, on 13-15 September 2000. These will be major occasions for showing what the i3 community is accomplishing. Some things are

very much in motion. [i3magazine](#) has a massively expanding readership. The new external communications manager, [Rossella Magli](#), is hard at work to tell our i3 stories world-wide. Work is going on to ensure i3 sponsoring from companies world-wide. And the schools website is in the process of connecting more than 50 European schools involved in ESE research, a unique exercise in itself. Part of the future is not in our hands, but it seems likely that the FET [Disappearing Computer](#) initiative will be an i3 one. And part of the future is for us to divine and invent; you may want to use the i3 future probes (see the i3news section on p XXX of this issue for more information) for this purpose.

Finally, what needs to be done? One thing is setting up a lively web-based forum for discussing just that. Another is allowing the i3 community to expand: new i3 members are cordially invited ~~to~~, as are contacts from organisations world-wide who wish to discuss collaboration with the i3 community. The new [i3net Coordinating Group](#) was elected in Siena (more on this on p XXX of this issue); tell your nearest CG representative what you think should be done or what should be done better or differently.