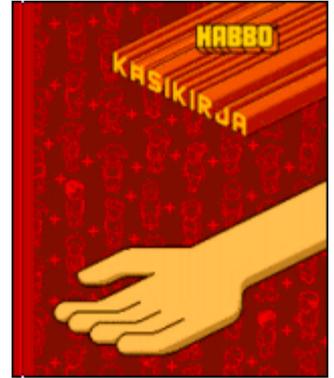


# Interviews

..from the 'Habbo Käsikirja' (Habbo handbook), published in Finland, 2006. Targeted at Habbo users, it contains lots of history facts and imagery from early days. The book also has interviews with 10 people being around Habbo/Sulake from initial stages. Translated by Star-Fighter.



## Apparatus

Sampo Karjalainen - Started: May 2000.

### 1. What do you do at Sulake?

I am the more graphical person of the founder-duo, I did graphical design while kyrpov developed the technical side. Together with kyrpov I designed the Habbo-concept: what Habbo would be like. Nowadays there's multiple roles which I play depending on the situation: I am Chief Creative Officer and I am in charge of whole Sulake's visual concept designing. Another one of my main jobs is to lead the R&D-team (Research and Development). The task of the team is to design new features, games and services - to find out what would be fun for habbo's. In addition to that we study and test new technical applications. We also closely follow other games and services, which utilise technology, analyse them and share vital information about them within the firm.

### 2. What moment in Habbo's history has best stuck in your mind?

I guess it's related to the opening of Mobiles Disco and when the first users entered. The feeling that people meet and get to know each other in a virtual environment you have created is very neat.

### 3. What is the most enjoyable piece of work you have done?

Perhaps the making of Mobiles Disco and the first version of Habbo. There was so much new stuff and you could concentrate on the essential things - and one thing at a time. These days I rarely even open Photoshop or any other program with which I used to do my work. Nowadays I design and direct others. But luckily there still are projects in which I can participate, but they often require hours of intensive concentrating, which is hard to arrange these days.

### 4. Which work of yours would you like to introduce to habbo's?

The designing of the avatars/characters. Already in designing of Mobiles Disco we decided on certain guidelines: the goal was to create Lego- & Playmobile-like characters and the designing began with the familiar retro-look of old computer games. More detailed avatars were made for Lumisota. For Habbo, the avatars developed even more, because private rooms enabled more details for the avatars. As we added details, an idea came to mind that the avatars would iconize or symbolize everyday life in some way. Both the avatars and furniture are caricatures of real life, sort of at least. The look of the avatars was created pretty fast, we just had to create something and we did the first things that came to mind.

The drawing didn't have many steps. First we made a Habbo-prototype and a set of avatar-options. I drew only the first parts, but armask and Doctor Polyfon (*Drken*) began to make more Habbo-variations and created most of the collection we have today. New hairstyles and clothes have been added later on. For China we made Asian-looking eyes as a new option. Japan didn't even want them, because they thought the western look of the avatars was fun. For Japan we did make new clothes and hairstyles though, which are nowadays part of Habbo Club, because the avatars needed some local color.

### 5. What is your biggest dream considering Habbo?

It has partly come true already: if you believed in Habbo and done lots of work for it, it has been wonderful to notice, that other people around the world think of it as a great thing as well. It's also amazing that Habbo has cultural meanings too: we have created new ways of meeting friends and communicating with them.

Internationalization has still plenty of challenges and opportunities. The Habbo-world can evolve much wider, many new aspects can be found and it can change shape like it has done so far. You can never know what Habbo is like in a couple of years!

*6. Reveal something about the designing of Habbo.*

In the early days everything was different: you could swear, hack and steal in Habbo. Hacking was considered great at start - a phenomenon, which was started by the users: we found it interesting to see how the users would modify the stuff we created into something completely different. Then the hacking started to take away the credibility of the service and also disturb other users so it had to be forbidden.

You are able to make your own modes in various computer games and the designers take it into account, that the users create their own content and versions of games. Then you get ideas from the users creations and develop them into future releases of the game. It would be really great if some day the users of Habbo could create their own versions of avatars or furniture without hacking and thus enrich the whole Habbo-world.

*7. What has been the funniest bug in Habbo?*

Posters that could be copied was a very 'funny' thing. There were some tricks, with which you could duplicate posters. Not really funny, a serious bug in fact. Perhaps the funniest bug was when you could modify your avatar for example into a blue colour or take a Cyclops' eye etc. It was also pretty thrilling, when we were launching the pets and some users turned into dogs in public rooms.

*8. Any greetings you would like to tell to habbo's?*

Doing things which interest you - in Habbo or elsewhere - and using time and effort in developing own things gives you a lot. It's an amazing feeling, when you have created something new yourself and see it in other peoples' use and get feedback on it. I'm sure there are many people, who are afraid to do their own things because of the comments they get. But in Habbo you can safely practice and learn to receive different kinds of feedback. Positive comments always give you more confidence to create new things.



# Kyrpov

Aapo Kyrölä - Started: May 2000.

## *1. What do you do at Sulake?*

At the moment I am doing various developing projects, for example habbo's own pages. I am also a part of Sulake's board thinking about subjects concerning the whole firm.

## *2. What moment in Habbo's history has best stuck in your mind?*

The day Hotelli Kultakala opened has stuck in my mind well, also the opening of the UK Hotel. It's a pretty neat feeling, when people start to stream into an empty Hotel.

It was also funny, when habbo's found a way to color their avatars and the Hotel filled up with different coloured avatars. And when the teleports were published: in little time Habbo was filled with mind-blowing teleport-networks. At the time the users could link their rooms for the first time with teleports, virtual doors. Right after the publication we drove info off the database and saw which rooms were linked with each other and how unbelievably many complex and compact room-networks were created.

## *3. What is the most enjoyable piece of work you have done?*

The first Habbo-prototype, the test version. It had a private room where you could order a couple of pieces of furniture straight via your mobile phone. The making of the camera was fun, also. It was interesting to figure out, how the picture could be transferred into the database. And of course it was interesting to see how habbo's began to use it.

## *4. Which work of yours would you like to introduce to habbo's?*

I still have the original plan of Habbo, which I wrote down during Lumisota. We first dreamt about it having own, private rooms and some sort of instant messenger. I showed the plan to Apparatus and we decided to develop it further. ArmasK started to be in too and as a result Hotelli Kultakala was born.

## *5. What is your biggest dream considering Habbo?*

Habbo has become much more popular and bigger than I ever expected. My dream is that Habbo would be long-life and that it would spread into users own pages, and we could create some new ways for the users to express themselves and develop their own stuff. At some point the users could really participate in creating the content, for example design their own furniture and maybe even sell them to other users.

## *6. Reveal something about the designing of Habbo.*

We were at a cottage designing the first hotel and armasK had his own vision on it: would be cool to have a goldfish in your room. That's where 'Project Goldfish' came from and eventually 'Hotelli Kultakala' too. When it was time to spread internationally a new name had to be made up which would work in every language. Retiisi or toto said 'happo' ('acid' in Finnish) and the others twisted it into 'habbo'. We googled and found nothing particular with 'habbo'. 'Hotel Snouthill' was also one bad option. We introduced the name 'Habbo' to Daisy, who was the upcoming Hotel Manager of the UK. She didn't resist the name but wasn't really excited either, same as everybody else, actually. But eventually the name started to sound nice. The first logo read 'Grand Habbo Hotel', but the 'Grand'-part was taken out fairly quickly.

## *7. What has been the funniest bug in Habbo?*

It was actually a rather horrible bug, which appeared within the very first days after the opening of Kultakala. I remember when I was decorating my room and some fellow dressed in black came in and started to pick up all the furniture right as I had placed them in the room. It was pretty scary.

## *8. Any greetings you would like to tell to habbo's?*

Don't scam! :)



# Armask

Ilkka Kallasmaa - Started: May 2000.

## *1. What do you do at Sulake?*

At the moment I am in charge of Habbo's graphical team and also the person in charge of the concept of Habbo. Often I have to check other stuff out too, because I have been a part of Sulake from the very start.

## *2. What moment in Habbo's history has best stuck in your mind?*

There have been many memorable moments. The opening of Kultakala has been the most impressive I guess. On the other hand, I still get the same feeling when we publish a new version of the Hotel and when the users can finally see what we have been planning and doing for a long time.

## *3. What is the most enjoyable piece of work you have done?*

It's funny, how a small rubber duck, which I designed as a fun addition to the bathroom-set, has begun to live a life of its own.

We originally drew animation frames with the duck having its mouth open. The idea was to add a "quack" sound and the higher the duck would be placed, the higher the "quack" sound would have been when clicked - kind of like a duck organ! Luckily it stayed as an idea only...

## *4. Which work of yours would you like to introduce to habbo's?*

I went through my archive and found a couple of versions of graphics I've made. Too bad I haven't documented my work better. I would have had plenty of other stuff too, where you could see the development from sketch into final version. But here are some details from different phases.

(Book shows Mochamaster, rubber duck, duck in Lido, Frank and Piers characters.)

## *5. What is your biggest dream considering Habbo?*

I try not to dream about work.

## *6. Reveal something about the designing of Habbo.*

Hmmm. I programmed the first creating of avatars. It had a genius system, where you could tell the sex of the avatar from its eyes.

Another, a more hidden secret is that when Kultakala wasn't published yet, I, and a colleague of mine, designed a secret sauna space as an 'easter egg'. The drawings were relatively far already. It had to be forgotten when the chief executive officer at that time, nowadays artist and chief scientist, heard about it and didn't quite like it :). We had a lot of unfinished work already and there really wasn't time for any secret projects.

## *7. What has been the funniest bug in Habbo?*

I wonder what has been the funniest... Well, nobody felt like laughing at the time, but when we first sold the posters, you could easily copy them by clicking and moving them. We were in a hurry to fix everything the next day, but the posters had been copied so much in just one night that they were worthless. We had to draw a completely new set of posters.

There have been many other funny bugs and the going has been pretty ridiculous at often times.

## *8. Any greetings you would like to tell to habbo's?*

Well, very warm thoughts.



## Drken

Tuukka Savolainen - Started: May 2000.

### *1. What do you do at Sulake?*

New product concepts and games, which all don't even make it to production. Hehe. First I was a graphic artist and designed Kultakala together with the boys. I was also a graphic artist for Coke Studios (a virtual world created by Sulake for Coca-Cola), where I also designed new stuff and partly took care of client relations. Then I was taken to do a certain project for another American company, from which I moved to Sulake's design team to do advertisement banners. And from there I familiarly moved to do research- and product development work, which seemed nice.

### *2. What moment in Habbo's history has best stuck in your mind?*

Those months when the first Hotel was being done. We worked in the influence of energy drinks and coffee with a low salary, when others were on vacation. But we achieved a lot: Kultakala was made in a couple, maybe three months.

### *3. What is the most enjoyable piece of work you have done?*

Coke Studios, which was up in 2002. There you could create really showy rooms, light effects and other specialities. It was awesome, because before that Habbo had had a phase, where the development wasn't that visible and thus not very interesting for a graphic artist. It was really nice to do pencil sketches and send them to clients, who were always excited about everything. In a way the early period of Habbo was the most fun, but still Coke Studios - maybe because you could do much more vibrant and visually better looking things. It had much more liberty on the rooms and furniture than Habbo had, which still seems to move in the direction Apparatus has decided.

### *4. Which work of yours would you like to introduce to habbo's?*

The Polyfon-furniture range (*Mode*). I had done a cubical range earlier: Basic (*Pura*). Then I began to think about different kinds of pleasant items and materials. The first thing that popped in my mind: an ice cream spoon mixed with plush material. I started to draw and the result was the Polyfon-range, which is known as 'Mode' in other countries. A pink Polyfon Girl -range was also done, nowadays it's called Candy.

### *5. What is your biggest dream considering Habbo?*

That Habbo would become an even better place for teenagers to hang out and it would help them find their own kind of sociability.

### *6. Reveal something about the designing of Habbo.*

We made Habbo originally for adults :). We made a popular teenage product sort of by accident when it was initially meant for people our age. We have had to drop out many ideas because our target audience is teens instead of adults. For example, when we designed the pets, I wanted to make a moose, which would sit in front of the TV and gather all empty pizza boxes and beer... sorry, soda cans around it when left alone in a room :). I also designed that habbo's could get illnesses, like a virus that would turn the users avatar blue.

### *7. What has been the funniest bug in Habbo?*

I made a gigantic cyclops eye and put it secretly on the avatar of UK's Hotel Manager. Otherwise the funniest has definitely been the occasion, when pets were published and giant dogs appeared in public rooms.

### *8. Any greetings you would like to tell to habbo's?*

Have fun and remember to eat green things because I haven't remembered. And remember to brush your teeth.



## Retiisi

Jyrki Myllylä - Started: October 2000.

### *1. What do you do at Sulake?*

Pixels :). I have done all kinds of graphics: web pages, avatars, spaces, furniture, mobile phone games. And yellow rabbits!

### *2. What moment in Habbo's history has best stuck in your mind?*

Many different memories come into mind, like the pre-Christmas party when we invented the Habbo-name. We really toyed with that name. When we eventually ended up with Habbo, we weren't certain at all how it would work, but I guess pretty well as the reception has been so good in all countries.

Another memorable moment in history was Habbo UK's - the first international Hotel's - opening. The UK Hotel was the first hotel, whose life I had the opportunity to follow right from the start. It was great to see how people were so excited about a new hotel: on the opening night habbo's even gathered around the piano at Café Olé and sang the Beatles.

A third memory is related to banning of Kultakalas' most legendary hacker, MikkoTheBoy. I guess the boy has still nearly ten years of ban ahead of him. All the people at Sulake gathered to MikkoTheBoy's laboratory to see Kultakalas' worst hacker leave. He was one of the firsts to know how to hack before actual hacking devices. Those kinds of people were considered as kings in other habbo's eyes.

### *3. What is the most enjoyable piece of work you have done?*

Nearly everything has been enjoyable, but the most fresh in mind is this mobile phone game that I did last. The game has the same graphics and atmosphere as Habbo, but the setting is a bit different: there is also weird animals and exciting events.

### *4. Which work of yours would you like to introduce to habbo's?*

Here is the hotel view for Habbo Australia. I asked to design it because I knew I was going on holiday to Australia - the vacation turned into a work trip then. I took photos of buildings and other details related to culture and nature and got to feel the atmosphere there. I gained inspiration about the things I saw and experienced, and here is the result.

### *5. What is your biggest dream considering Habbo?*

I don't really have a certain dream. Sometimes I do think about how great it would be to get some kinds of connections between different Hotels - a mutual language or something, which would improve the communication of people living in different countries.

### *6. Reveal something about the designing of Habbo.*

Once we made a cyclops head for avatars, but it wasn't an option to choose. I secretly put it onto some of Sulake's staff's avatars. We lurked in the Hotel with just one eye causing confusion among other users. The cyclops had to be removed from the database for good, because hackers learned to hack it on their own avatars and cyclopes started to appear a little too much :).

### *7. What has been the funniest bug in Habbo?*

When we were launching the pets, but they weren't available yet, a user got surprised when he/she went to the park (*public room*) and instead of looking like a normal habbo, he/she had transformed into a giant dog. After our little shock we hurried to fix the bug... :)

### *8. Any greetings you would like to tell to habbo's?*

Happy wishes :).



# Toto

Otto Nieminen - Started: October 2000.

## 1. What do you do at Sulake?

The first three years I was mainly developing Shockwave-applications and coding the features happening in client with Lingo-programming language. I did this alone for almost a year. After that I have been managing teamwork and been in charge of Habbo's development. Now I am in charge of whole Sulake's game development processes, employees and teams.

## 2. What moment in Habbo's history has best stuck in your mind?

Many moments, for example when we figured out a name for Habbo, made the UK Hotel and started to internationalize. I remember reading 'happo' from a soda can as we were thinking about the name and someone - was it Retiisi - twisted it into 'habbo'. The name was better than the rest, even though nobody was really satisfied with it either. Apparatus drew the first logo and after a week the name started to feel good. Before all this, the Finnish Hotel had a room where the people at Sulake at the time could write down their ideas for the name on the notes on the wall. I think the room still exists, if only I remembered the name and password...

Also all types of hacking-phenomena and geno's come to mind. Geno's were people dressed in grey, who wandered around in the UK Hotel and yelled "Follow the path". We tried to kick them out of the service because they harassed other users. We also found a site which advised geno's how to behave in Habbo: dress in grey and yell the phrase mentioned earlier. It's still a mystery where the geno's came from and why they did what they did, but the phenomenon disappeared and hasn't spread anywhere else.

## 3. What is the most enjoyable piece of work you have done?

Challenging ones I can easily count but the most enjoyable... maybe Lido Diving! Others could possibly be Habbo Club and the new trading window, with which you can trade more furniture at once. This reduced scamming, because some pieces of furniture are just so valuable, that you weren't able to trade them safely with the old trading system. For example the DJ Deck could have cost tens or even hundreds of pieces of 'normal' furniture.

## 4. Which work of yours would you like to introduce to habbo's?

- The system that prevents flooding! It was one of the concrete things I made into Habbo. So, if you try to talk too fast in Habbo you get a notice: "You're writing too fast!" and you have to wait for 30 seconds until you can speak again. It had to be inserted because there were a lot of troublemakers: scammers came in through the door and shouted something stupid which disturbed other peoples' conversations. I can't reveal anything else, or else someone will hack it []

## 5. What is your biggest dream considering Habbo?

Sometimes I wish that Habbo would be finished. It feels like there's always something to improve and that new ideas for it have to be developed all the time. I dream that Habbo would be complete and everything would work as it's supposed to! :)

## 6. Reveal something about the designing of Habbo.

Sometimes new features are tested in live-Habbo. For example we have secretly tested sounds in Habbo. So you can never know what's going on in the Hotel, because it doesn't show directly to regular users! :)

## 7. What has been the funniest bug in Habbo?

The bugs from the early days were wild. You could stay in a room for only 15 minutes and suddenly all your body parts flew off and went crazy. Then you had to get out of the room and when you came back, you could again be only 15 minutes there until everything fell apart :).

## 8. Any greetings you would like to tell to habbo's?

Hey there, have fun in Habbo!



## Paolo

Joni Huhmarniemi - Started: March 2001.

### 1. *What do you do at Sulake?*

Programming. Earlier I programmed the Habbo client with Lingo but nowadays I program C++ as well.

### 2. *What moment in Habbo's history has best stuck in your mind?*

One quite exciting and strange moment was the opening of the Japanese Hotel. First of all the fact, that Habbo was opened in such an exciting country as Japan, and later not understanding what the habbo's there said and/or did, was funny. The programming of Japanese letters and text was pretty challenging. I even took a couple of Japanese language courses to know a little what was going on. When the Hotel was opened there, it only had small bugs in some letters and signs, but that's about it.

First I wondered, why Japanese users talked so slowly and strangely in English - phrases, where the verb was last. It turned out that they translated everything from Japan into English with Babelfish (translation machine of Altavista). It translates the phrases word by word; so as the Japanese language has all the verbs at the end of the phrase, the English translations had them too. It sounded and looked pretty funny.

### 3. *What is the most enjoyable piece of work you have done?*

Making Wobble Squabble was fun: especially testing and playing it. Wobble Squabble was the first actual game in the Hotel and thus a little different thing to do. The Rooftop Rumble (*public room*) - where the Wobble Squabble is - was originally made for a Mountain Dew-campaign. We had to program a fun little chute, which would take you out of the room. However, it was taken out when the campaign ended.

### 4. *Which work of yours would you like to introduce to habbo's?*

The so called 'root canal therapy': when the old Kultakala became the new one. All of the coding of Habbo was written again, because the localization - new language and local characters - were hard to insert in the old Kultakala. After this treatment all the Hotels began to use the same base coding, so that adding new stuff and localizing the Hotel became more convenient. We also enhanced some tools, so now the graphic artists can create rooms and other graphical parts more easily. At the same time we saved kilobytes - Habbo is lighter and faster to use, even though it has more and more stuff in it. In the old version any update wouldn't have really worked any more, it was so heavy and clumsy. We are not returning to old Habbo, even though some people miss the original Kultakala in nostalgia :).

### 5. *What is your biggest dream considering Habbo?*

That some day there would come a 'second Habbo', which would have a lot more opportunities to create new things yourself. It wouldn't be a Hotel any more, maybe a small village! A more complicated, but richer world.

### 6. *Reveal something about the designing of Habbo.*

Well here's an 'easter egg', which the users might partly know of already. When you type ":chooser", it opens up a window with a list of all the users in the room. This and a couple of other features were originally meant as tools for the developers of Habbo.

### 7. *What has been the funniest bug in Habbo?*

From point of view of a programmer no bug is funny - they actually take away your sleep :). For example it wasn't funny at all when you could duplicate posters. I got a phone call after work and I had to run back to the office to fix the situation. We didn't get rid of the bug straight away, and so we had to remove the posters from the catalogue until we fixed the bug. Later we realized that the problem was on the server, which didn't register the appearance of the posters.

### 8. *Any greetings you would like to tell to habbo's?*

Do I have to answer? Hey there! :)



# Painimies

Timo Ahde - Started: March 2001.

## 1. *What do you do at Sulake?*

At the moment I'm doing graphics for Lumisota (*Snowstorm*). It resembles the legendary Lumisota-game, but now it's going to get it's own version inside Habbo. So sort of we're going back to the roots. Lumisota was first launched in 1999, when Sulake was just being founded. I and my workmate played Lumisota like crazy, until we decided to work for Sulake.

Painimies still has the best winning percentage in Lumisota!

## 2. *What moment in Habbo's history has best stuck in your mind?*

Initially I came to make Urjala, a medieval role-playing game, which was forgotten when we started to develop and expand Habbo. Maybe the most memorable moment for me was when I created my first own piece of furniture - the Holoboy - and when the users commented on it. Holoboy was made and given as a gift for the users of Habbo UK celebrating the first birthday of the UK Hotel. It was one of the first pieces of the Rares-furniture.

Instant communicating is the coolest thing in every work of Sulake. It's exciting to know that a hotel view you have designed is the first thing tens of thousands of users will see when they enter Habbo. I have done hotel views for example for Brazil, Canada, USA, Germany and China.

## 3. *What is the most enjoyable piece of work you have done?*

Lumisota (*Snowstorm*)! It has been awesome to get to play it again!

## 4. *Which work of yours would you like to introduce to habbo's?*

Here is the hotel view for Brazil. Usually a hotel view is created by first googling details of local hotels and other buildings and then mixing them up into a picture with a good vibe. This helps designing the actual hotel view.

## 5. *What is your biggest dream considering Habbo?*

I hope for more games, for example bowling. Or some kind of Haxbox-machine, which would let users 'hack' their heads invisible, for instance. The effect would only last for a couple of hours, so it wouldn't mess whole Habbo around.

## 6. *Reveal something about the designing of Habbo.*

Nearly every old and new hotel view I've designed has a stone statue as a detail. Some hotel views have it hidden, but nearly every one of them have it.

I've also designed a public space where I've hidden a birthday congratulation for my godfather, but I won't tell which room it's in or where it's hidden :).

## 7. *What has been the funniest bug in Habbo?*

When pets transformed into actual users in the French Hotel and went to sit in the baskets and to eat pet food.

The funkiest I remember (the picture has unfortunately disappeared), was when some user had hacked him- or herself completely blue, it was a cool, blue bunny-avatar.

## 8. *Any greetings you would like to tell to habbo's?*

Don't use all your weekly pocket money in Habbo :).



# Sulka

Sulka Haro - Started: March 2001.

## *1. What do you do at Sulake?*

At the moment I'm designing the web pages for Habbo. I have mostly done 'boring' stuff, like updating tools, which nobody will notice if they work properly. But hopefully someone will notice my hand-print on the Habbo web page when reading this :).

## *2. What moment in Habbo's history has best stuck in your mind?*

The opening of the Japanese Hotel was quite jokey. It was the fourth Hotel and all the Finnish users invaded the Hotel. The Japanese users were a bit frightened of course, because they didn't even have the same language. We had to create a block, which prevented Finnish users to enter the Japanese Hotel. That block was created by me :).

I also remember different kinds of hackings and their preventions: you had to learn to hack yourself before understanding, how some hackers have done what they have. I have caused confusion by wandering around Habbo with a blue, naked avatar and walking on top of water. Whatwasit also had to learn about hacking to realize how to prevent it. But every hole has been blocked from hacking nowadays :).

## *3. What is the most enjoyable piece of work you have done?*

This what I'm doing now: the new home page. A lot of new things, which the users will hopefully like, will be added - as well as stuff the users have wished for and also new surprises, which no one even thought of coming. Surprising the users in a positive way is so much fun.

## *4. Which work of yours would you like to introduce to habbo's?*

The new web page. I am the main concept designer in this project, in other words I gather ideas and combine them into a working result. Then I draw schematics: simple graphical page designs of the web pages and the functions there, which helps the technical testing of the features and graphic artists can design the actual layout.

The largest change to the web page is bringing the content created by the users out from inside the walls of the Hotel, in other words out of the Shockwave-application into the web page. We wanted to make Habbo more approachable with these changes, so you don't have to always load the Hotel, but you can only check out the web site to see what's happening. The pets are supposed to get a chance to visit their owners' own pages, out of the Hotel, some day as well.

## *5. What is your biggest dream considering Habbo?*

Old Kultakala back! Not really :). It would be great if Habbo becomes something you'll be able to play for a long time.

## *6. Reveal something about the designing of Habbo.*

With the moderating tools Habbo has now, you can't give a never-ending ban. So if a user is banned 'for good', it practically means 100.000 hours of ban. That user can come knocking on Habbo's doors again after about 11 years - unless he/she gets banned again :).

## *7. What has been the funniest bug in Habbo?*

The funniest are the situations, when something really strange happens in rooms: for example when furniture or clothes start to float in the air. Sometimes you could find yourself with no head and clothes when getting up after sitting on a chair.

## *8. Any greetings you would like to tell to habbo's?*

It's nice that you like Habbo. I hope we can make using Habbo even more fun in the future!



# Whatwasit

Mikko Köykkä - Started: March 2001.

## *1. What do you do at Sulake?*

I program the Habbo-server, or the code that's driven in Sulake's engine room. At times I've helped updating the Hotel and taken care that the Hotel's keeps rolling and don't die down suddenly. Nowadays a whole herd of solid professionals is in charge of updating, so I leave such detailed things to their concern.

## *2. What moment in Habbo's history has best stuck in your mind?*

The opening of the Japanese Hotel. Weird letters and signs bustled across the screen and I didn't understand anything. Eventually I had to use translation tools found online to see, what was being talked about or what the names of the users I met were. The names were usually really nice, sea- and water-related.

## *3. What is the most enjoyable piece of work you have done?*

A couple of years ago a major hacking boom occurred right in the middle of summer holidays. As I got back to work, I was a bit astonished about the mutants wandering around Hotel's, so to solve this problem, I decided to play the role of a hacker. Because the coolest hacker is the one, who figures something out that others haven't yet, I introduced myself doing something never seen before. I went to hang out among other hackers and confused them by changing the games settings. Popularity was a given and soon I got to hear how hackers work and where their tricks are based on. As I fixed the loopholes, I revealed myself, and many surprised hackers switched from bad to good. After all most hacking was done just to get some attention and not actually disturb anyone. The attention of Sulake was the best possible prize for them, and in the long run many hackers learned to tell us first about bugs they've found to earn some respect.

The point of view to hacking is different between game developers and, for instance, client service people and Hotel Managers, to whom hacking is always a problem. There is certain sustainability and ingenuity in the things hackers do, and that is needed in the work of a professional programmer too. However, there's no understanding from me to users who steal other users' accounts - the best acknowledgement for them would be a call from the police.

## *4. Which work of yours would you like to introduce to habbo's?*

I'll introduce the updating system of the Hotel. Years ago we had a collection of simple web pages, from which we could see what was happening in the Hotel. New pages were born as the hotels expanded. Eventually I, with Sulka, collected all these pages into one solid updating system to the use of all hotels and we developed some new tools as well. Now the system includes lots of different statistics and items, to modify, for example, avatar-information, room maps, Hubu (*Infobus*), the catalogue and even the speaking of bots. It also has an 'extranet', which the moderators use to answer users help calls - and plenty of other things. Nowadays the updating system is as a program nearly as big as Habbo itself!

## *5. What is your biggest dream considering Habbo?*

My biggest wish is, of course, that Habbo would remain the same as it is now - an easy and exuberant place where teens, and why not adults too, enjoy to be.

## *6. Reveal something about the designing of Habbo.*

At one time we had the motto "well done is well planned". I can reveal that nowadays we plan more than do.

## *7. What has been the funniest bug in Habbo?*

I find nothing funny in bugs :).

## *8. Any greetings you would like to tell to habbo's?*

Friendly greetings!



## Tuu

Tuulikki Uotila - Started: February 2001.

### *1. What do you do at Sulake?*

I am the Hotel Manager of Habbo Finland, officially known as Site Producer. Before that I worked as a Head Hobba, in charge of safety in the Hotel, and also took care of client relations. At the very start I was, however, a secretary at Sulake and also did a little bit of everything too. I have enjoyed being a Hotel Manager the most, even though it was really fun to run errands in a small, cheerful firm at the start.

### *2. What moment in Habbo's history has best stuck in your mind?*

The opening of Hotelli Kultakala. It was really exciting to meet the creators of the Hotel for the first time, like drken and armask. I was a bit of a Sulake-fan at the time, first hanging out at Mobiles Disco and then in beta-Kultakala, the first version of the Hotel.

I ended up in Mobiles Disco by accident through a web search engine. I immediately got excited about it, even though there wasn't anyone else besides the Maarit-bot when I first entered. The next time I met other people too, and I heard about Lumisota from a user called Jeena, if I recall correctly. And so I became an active player of Lumisota. However, I was working in a company where I had to talk on the phone a lot and thus couldn't play Lumisota whenever I wanted.

But, I started to visit Mobiles Disco regularly. First we had our own little group and we sat and talked always in our small community. Through meets this community began to expand and became quite firm. Now, thinking afterwards, at that point, outsiders didn't perhaps have the chance to get in the community as easily any more. The users were mainly adults and the Maarit-bot served alcohol also. Maarit also had a kind of dating function: if I wanted, it told who had been asking for me when I was away. It was exciting considering dating.

At some point information about beta-Kultakala started to spread through MSN, and I, with my Mobiles Discopals, tested it with excitement. I used the console to tell kyrpov about bugs and I played a lot of Battleship. At the end of the year 2000 kyrpov asked me, via the console, would I like to work at Sulake, and I sent my details to him with the console (oops, now you shouldn't do that!) and we arranged an interview. Kyrpov and Apparatus interviewed me at Taivas. Kyrpov still laughs at me, coming to the interview wearing a jacket suit, which I wore at work of that time. And then I was hired at Sulake. It didn't have an own office yet and the first month I had to arrange a new office space for Sulake. In March we got to Hietalahti in our first own office. On the first week the Internet connection didn't work and I remember, how Sulka worried about not being able to do anything :).

### *3. What is the most enjoyable piece of work you have done?*

The funniest work I have done at Sulake is being the Hotel Manager. There aren't many cons in being a Hotel Manager - well, if I have to name a few, I'd say reporting and tight schedules.

### *4. Which work of yours would you like to introduce to habbo's?*

When the pets were first brought to Habbo, they were revealed little by little: first some images of the pets' toys showed up, then some pet food ended up in rooms and finally we arranged a competition, whose winners won pets before they were out in the catalogue. That was the first time I got to practically participate in launching something new and unforeseen in Habbo.

Another work I'd like to introduce is VIP visits. The Dudesons-Jukka was the first celebrity, whose visit to Habbo I was arranging. Jukka's visit was a great success, and Jukka has visited us many times after that. At the start we asked celebrities to visit us by contacting them personally or their representatives (record label etc.), but nowadays many celebrities offer to come to visit us themselves. It was pretty funny, when we met Olavi Uusivirta at a press conference at Emma-gala and he told us he'd been waiting for us to ask him for a visit :).

I also like writing bots. What it means is that I create a personality for one of the waiter-robots in Habbo: what name I give it, how it reacts to other users, what its sense of humour is like etc. The hardest thing is to make the conversation work so that you can talk with it. The Cinemas Frank was the first bot I wrote and it still is my favourite, a pretty nice boy (\*blushes\*).

*5. What is your biggest dream considering Habbo?*

My biggest dream as a long term Habbo-user is that Habbo would remain as a fun, creative and developing community, where old and new habbo's would like to hang out in. I would also like to see more versatility in Habbo, different aged people, and make Habbo a place looking more and more like its users.

*6. Reveal something about the designing of Habbo.*

Sometimes if something has gone wrong, we've told it to the users in a slightly different way to avoid unnecessary confusion. For example when London MC was late from his visit to us and he or anybody else hadn't informed us, we told the users waiting for him in the Theatre that his plane will be late. At the same time we phoned the record label and London MC's guide, Alimo, trying to track down our guest. Eventually it turned out that London MC's schedules were a bit messed up and he ended up talking in radio an hour too early. Luckily the man found his way to our office and the visit went along great, for the first time in English.

Celebrities being late and missing isn't really rare. Habbo's own DJ Fuse has also disappeared some day in the past. Mobiles Disco's (*public room*) legendary DJ disappeared from behind the DJ Decks once in a while until he disappeared completely. Later he returned to Habbo to release his CD-collection and he also revealed where he had been - where else than at Ibiza scratching records!

*7. What has been the funniest bug in Habbo?*

From the time of beta-Kultakala I remember how the eyes of your avatar would fly off your head if you went to lie down on a bed. While lying there the eyes stared from the wall. It was also pretty funny, when three habbo's fit in one bed, even though it shouldn't have worked like that. One time my friend Tiits's head was messed up completely.

*8. Any greetings you would like to tell to habbo's?*

It's really nice that so many of you have enjoyed playing Habbo for so long, even though things have changed quite a bit. But maybe that is the funniest thing in Habbo: new and unexpected things happen all the time!



## Cerri

Emma Halmekoski - Started: February 2003.

### *1. What do you do at Sulake?*

I am the Country Manager of Habbo Finland and also in charge of ad sales. Earlier I have been the Hotel Manager and sometimes helped with client service.

### *2. What moment in Habbo's history has best stuck in your mind?*

There are quite many. One was when the pets were launched. It caused quite a hassle in our contact centre but also a rise on visitor numbers.

Another memorable thing was Kultakalan Kuvalehti: editing it and eventually burying it and answering all those questions and beggings. Kultakalan Kuvalehti was a once in a month published web magazine, in which users of Habbo could write their own articles. If an article was published, its writer got a typewriter as a prize. If the magazine was just one day late, my e-mail would fill up immediately with questionings about where's Kuvalehti. Some even tried to bribe me so their articles would end up in the magazine. They offered furniture and wrote compliments about the Hotel Manager, and if the article wasn't published, all anger focused on me.

### *3. What is the most enjoyable piece of work you have done?*

Once, with Tuu, I presented a virtual tour in Habbo for journalists and directors. It was very different when you had business people coming to see what's going on in teenagers' lives. It was fun to follow, how excited and amazed adult people were about Habbo, when they realized, how much there is to do. Moments, when you get to meet some users in person, have also stuck in mind: Hubu-tours and game fairs, where you can talk to users in person and sometimes even hand out autographs - even though it's the Hotel Manager who usually scribbles them.

VIP visits are always cheerful. Workdays become more exciting when there's Jussi69 or The Dudesons-Jukka hanging out at the office.

I get easily excited about games and events Tuu arranges, where the entries are fun: snapshots from Habbo, drawings of Habbo and other creative work. Also competitions, where the users have to battle in teams are fun to watch.

### *4. Which work of yours would you like to introduce to habbo's?*

It was interesting to arrange the Gorillaz-tour in ten Habbo's. In fact, the idea came from Suosikki and their record label. Gorillaz is a British virtual band, whose members perform only through their comical characters. The band itself announced that its members will take a vacation in Habbo for a couple of weeks. August 2005 Gorillaz toured in Hotels for two weeks.

The most exciting thing was that the tour started in the Japanese Hotel. For the first few minutes nobody understood anything. My colleague in Japan began to translate via phone what the users were talking about, and I reported it to the London office where the band was. The visit was similar in every country, first in the Theatre and then the band visited Gorillaz-rooms the users of Habbo had made. The news threshold was broken in every country where the band visited - we got visibility in over a hundred media.

Also The Rasmus visited in the Finnish and UK hotel, but unfortunately the band didn't have time to visit other hotels. VIP visits have been so popular and successful that international stars may be seen in Habbo in the future as well.

### *5. What is your biggest dream considering Habbo?*

That Habbo would maintain the same humour and irony it has now. And that it would remain a place, where you could meet friends and develop your own creativity. And that it wouldn't go too commercial. Of course it would be nice to get a new hotel view in Habbo Finland, with some animation like all the other hotel views :).

### *6. Reveal something about the designing of Habbo.*

Well, to be honest, the Hotel Manager doesn't get Habbo credits the users have spent to him-/herself, like some think. And neither do I. In fact, none of the workers at Sulake get paid with credits, but normally, with real money like in every other job :).

*7. What has been the funniest bug in Habbo?*

At some point we had a user, who reported on every little typo we had written in any text in Habbo by accident. It was easy to fix them, when you got immediate feedback. Now the reporting has stopped, and I don't know where this user has disappeared.

*8. Any greetings you would like to tell to habbo's?*

I'd wish basic patience - both in real life and in Habbo. It's better to play by the rules!