

**Emil Kaburuan**

# Spiritual Enlightenment in Virtual Worlds. Designing a Religion Site in Second Life

**Doctoral Thesis / Dissertation**

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**National Cheng Kung University**  
**Institute of Creative Industries Design**  
**Doctoral Dissertation**

**Spiritual Enlightenment in Virtual Worlds:  
Designing a Religion Site in Second Life**

虛擬世界中的精神啟迪：Second Life  
遊戲裡的宗教網站設計

**Student: Emil Robert Kaburuan**

**Supervisor(s): Chien-Hsu Chen, Tay-Sheng Jeng**

**July 2012**

National Cheng Kung University


Doctoral Dissertation

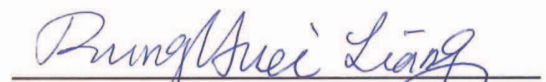
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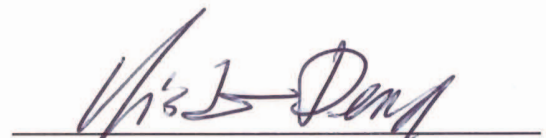
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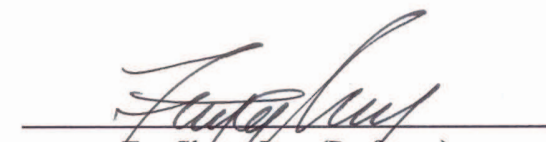
  
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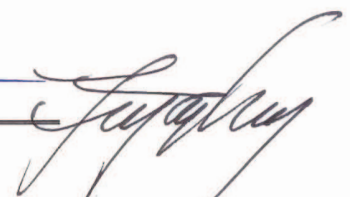

  
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博士論文

虛擬世界中的精神啟迪：Second Life 遊戲裡的宗教網站設計

Spiritual Enlightenment in Virtual Worlds:  
Designing a Religion Site in Second Life

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*“Fear of the LORD is the foundation of true knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.”*

*Proverbs 1:7(NLT,2007)*

Tainan, July 2012

# ABSTRACT

The growing of Internet users is amazing. Among these users, there are users who even practice their religion online. A study conducted by Pew Internet & America Life Project found that 64% of the America's 128 million Internet users have done things online that relate to religious or spiritual matters (Internet & Project, 2004). In response to this need, there are some churches and missions' organization started doing online ministry. In line with this development, there is another medium arise called Virtual Worlds. USATODAY and the Christian Post reported that Leaders of Christian, Jewish and Muslim sites estimate about 1,000 avatars teleport into churches, synagogues or mosques on a regular basis while hundreds more list themselves with Buddhist, Pagan, Wiccan and other groups (Grossman, 2007; Kwon, 2007). This research is based on Christian Theology with narratology and ludology as video game study's on designing a religious site in the Second Life®. This study answers questions like; *what are the significance features of Second Life for spiritual enlightenment to its users? And what are the design patterns of the "religious site" (the site as mentioned in RQ1)?* It uses "research through design" by "Design-Implementation-Evaluation" of a religious site in Second Life. The findings suggest that Second Life and its features could be transformed into "sacred" place and give spiritual enlightenment to its users. The features of Second Life which provide spiritual enlightenment to its users include: Animation, Audio Visual and the Interactive Environment. There are four design principles in resulting of this research including; Storytelling, Mapping, Affectiveness and Virtual Ritual which could be used in designing religious site in Second Life.

*Keywords: Ludology, Narratology, Religion, Second Life, Virtual Worlds*

## 中文摘要

網路使用者的成長率驚人，其中已有許多人在線上進行宗教活動。根據 Pew Internet & American Life Project 調查顯示，美國的 1 億 2 千 800 萬網路使用者，當中有 64% 曾經進行線上宗教活動，或是其他與精神信仰相關的事務 (Internet & Project, 2004)。有鑑於此需求，一些教堂與佈道組織開始從事「線上服務」。隨此發展，「虛擬世界」成為一個佈道新興媒介。依據 USA TODAY 和 The Christian Post 報導顯示，基督教、猶太教和回教的主要網站共約有 1000 位虛擬化身固定造訪，佛教和其他異教網站則有數百位虛擬化身。(Grossman, 2007; Kwon, 2007)。本研究是基於基督教神學觀，以「敘事學」和「遊戲學」角度來設計宗教啟迪網站於 Second Life 遊戲中。本研究解答幾項問題：在 Second Life 的虛擬朝聖，何種精神啟迪的特性顯著地影響玩家？有哪些「宗教網站」的設計圖像表現？本研究採取「透過設計的研究」(research through design) 方法，於 Second Life 遊戲中的宗教網站進行「設計-執行-評估」的設計程序。本研究結果建議可善用 Second Life 以及其遊戲特性（包含動畫、影音和互動環境），將之轉換為神聖儀式所在地給予玩家精神教化。四個宗教網站設計法則可應用於 Second Life 類型遊戲設計為：說故事、可對應性、有效性、以及虛擬儀式。

關鍵詞：遊戲學、敘事學、信仰、Second Life、虛擬世界

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