



AARNet demonstrates "GeoDome" inflatable high-definition 3D theatre for first time in Australia

NASA takes QUESTnet conference delegates on guided tour of the universe

Photographs of the GeoDome in action at QUESTnet are available to download from:

<http://gallery.eventphotos.com.au/pri.php?gid=269&gal=tk1f3u3b> (password:pr)

Gold Coast, AUSTRALIA " 8 July 2009 " AARNet, Australia's Academic and Research Network, is demonstrating the GeoDome " an inflatable, immersive 3D theatre " for the first time in Australia, at this year's QUESTnet conference on the Gold Coast from July 7-10.

QUESTnet delegates will have the opportunity to experience an interactive, narrated tour of NASA's Digital Universe Atlas guided remotely by NASA, the American Museum of Natural History or any of the partners in the GeoDome network. This will include 1080-pixel high-definition video feeds through a fish-eye lens in real time.

Chris Hancock, CEO of AARNet said, "AARNet is continually seeking new, innovative technologies to engage Australian students and make the curriculum come alive. The GeoDome is an excellent example of a collaborative, interactive tool that can add real value to the learning process for students from kindergarten to year 12. We are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead with this technology and the benefits it will bring to school children."

The GeoDome uses unique software and technologies found in online gaming to engage users and provide an interactive, immersive, visual-spatial experience.

"We are using the demonstration at QUESTnet to look beyond the GeoDome's existing capabilities, to developing our own applications and to further integrate high-definition video conferencing and other interactive learning experiences for students," Chris Hancock said.

The GeoDome can be set-up in less than 30 minutes and provides a fully enclosed, immersive theatre environment for a classroom of students. It enables audiences to navigate through, interact with and collaborate on high-definition images, video and presentations.

The GeoDome immersive learning environment is powered by the Uniview visualisation platform. Uniview brings to life multiple scientific databases, including the Geoscope, which streams high-resolution satellite imagery; the Octopus networking system enabling collaborative connectivity anywhere on Earth; and Digital Universe, the world's most extensive and accurate 3D atlas of the observable universe.

Nick Cross, Manager of Education Outreach for AARNet, said, "The GeoDome is an exciting innovation to enrich student learning experiences.

The GeoDome presents school age students with a combination of visual-spatial, kinaesthetic and auditory representations of complex and diverse data sets, giving form to subject matter that can be difficult to decipher from paper, and ultimately delivering on greater depth of understanding. The 21st century learning agenda is about supporting students to pose the right questions and to develop an investigative wonder and fascination about all aspects of the world around us. We are excited about the potential this presents for Australian schools."

Doug Matthews, President of The Elumenati, creators of the GeoDome said, "The GeoDome was designed to provide users with transformative learning experiences. By presenting complex concepts in an immersive, easy-to-understand, visual context, learners of all ages can benefit."

"We are very pleased to demonstrate the GeoDome technology to Australians at QUESTnet and we are looking forward to engaging with AARNet to further develop tools that will suit the needs of Australian schools." The annual QUESTnet conference provides an opportunity for IT network professionals to develop their professional and technical knowledge and gain an understanding of key strategic issues underpinning the development, deployment and maintenance of local and international telecommunications networks.

For more information on GeoDome: www.geodome.info For more information on QUESTnet: www.questnet.net.au

- ENDS -

About AARNetAARNet Pty Ltd (APL) is the company that operates Australia's Academic and Research Network (AARNet). It is a not-for-profit company limited by shares. The shareholders are 37 Australian universities and the CSIRO. AARNet provides high-capacity leading edge Internet services for the tertiary education and research sector communities and their research partners. AARNet serves more than one million end users who access the network through local area networks at member institutions. For further information, please visit: www.aarnet.edu.au.

For further information, please contact:

Rachel YorkMax Australia(02) 9954 3492rachel.york@maxaustralia.com.au

About the GeoDomeThe GeoDome immersive learning environment consists of an inflatable dome, digital projector, and interactive software. The network of GeoDome users includes NASA, NOAA, science centers, research universities, public schools, visualization labs, and more. The GeoDome was developed by leading immersive design firm The Elumenati (www.elumenati.com). For further information, please visit: www.geodome.info.

For further information on GeoDome technology, please contact:

Hilary McVickerThe Elumenati+1. 612.605.0826 x715hilary@elumenati.com