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Microsoft Turns Your PC into a Ground-Based Telescope

Just one out of over 100 key research projects

Your home PC has the chance to become one of the most powerful ground-based telescopes in the world. Microsoft revealed that World-Wide Telescope will enable users to access technology that will enable them to explore distant stars, galaxies and quasars via millions of images from the Sloan Digital Sky Survey. A map of a large portion of the universe will be a few clicks away. "What we've done is give people the ability to become digital astronauts," said Microsoft Research Senior Vice President Rick Rashid. "You can explore deep space from the comfort of your living room. These will be tantamount to guided tours of the universe. People will have an immersion way to search, explore and discover the universe much like MSN Virtual Earth." "This is just an example of the innovations from Microsoft Research. In fact, the Redmond Company will unveil in excess of 100 innovations outlining the future of computing at the Microsoft Research TechFest 2007. TechFest is Microsoft's annual showcasing of research projects. "TechFest is one-stop shopping to see and experience the breadth of software innovations we're pursuing that will allow people to explore their interests more deeply and share the things they care about more easily," added Rashid. Out of the large volume of key research projects, Microsoft highlighted the World-Wide Telescope; Mix: Search-Based Authoring, and Boku. Microsoft combined the magic of software programming with the Xbox console in Boku, a virtual robot in a simulated world. "There is an ongoing and deepening crisis in computer science," Rashid added. "Our goal is to stem the tide by showing young kids the magic of software programming."