

# Travel report from Net.ObjectDays 2005

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## The conference

Net.ObjectDays is a yearly international conference in Erfurt, Germany. This year it took place September 19–22. The main topics of the conference are software architecture and Internet technologies: Java, .NET, Web services, model-driven architecture, XML... I was there for attending the whole conference, and for presenting our paper *Composing Ad-hoc applications on ad-hoc networks using MUI*, at a workshop called Mobility Aware Computing.

Visiting this conference was very interesting and rewarding indeed. The following are some highlights from the talks:

- The main keynote was by Dave Thomas, who, among other things, is one of the persons behind the Eclipse IDE. He talked about the challenges of application development. His interest now was in so called Very High Level Languages, where skilled programmers write programs for very specific tasks, e.g. at the New York Stock Exchange. These programs live only for a few hours, but utilize thousands of processors at the same time.
- Andreas Raab from HP Research Labs demoed Croquet, a very cool 3D collaboration environment, with an integrated scripting programming environment in the 3D world. Mr Raab explained how they made heavy use of distributed computations. This meant that they could invite almost any number of spectators to a game, as long as these people do not interact, and just look (they perform their own computations).
- Steffen Meschkat from Google talked about Ajax, a technology for building Web applications, where more processing is done at the client side. He discussed experiences from building Google Maps, and demonstrated live over the Internet. The result was impressive, but it was striking that much seemed to be based on JavaScript, which has been around for quite some time.
- At the Mobility Aware Computing workshop, Gabor Paller from Nokia Research Center presented a paper which I found interesting. It was about a technique for increasing Java performance on resource-constrained devices. The idea was to introduce a new bytecode for explicit memory deallocation. This bytecode was to be inserted by a tool, after data-flow analysis of the program, with the purpose of getting less garbage collection.

## The town

Erfurt is the capital of the German state of Thuringia. It has a nice city centre, with many fine buildings from medieval times. These were presented to us at a city tour one night, where we got to see traces from both Martin Luther and the Swedish king Gustav II Adolf. There is a calm atmosphere, in part thanks to the tram network, which means that there are few cars in the centre. I also experienced some cultural differences, compared to Sweden. E.g., at McDonald's, the staff came around to the tables, serving coffee after the meal. Very nice!