

April 04, 2019

Ivan Gris

Chief Technology Officer
Clinical Professor of Information Systems

Education

2015	Ph.D. in Computer Science, The University of Texas at El Paso
2011	M.S. in Computer Science, The University of Texas at El Paso
2010	B.S. in Computer Science, The University of Texas at El Paso

Professional Experience

Postdoctoral Fellow, Technology and Commercialization (TEC) Partnership,	El Paso, TX	2015 - 2016
The University of Texas at El Paso		

- Designed and developed Startup Tracker Texas, a website supported by a grant from the UT System that enables researchers and entrepreneurs to form teams find seed-funding and gives access to entrepreneurship resources across the UT system.
- Mentored teams participating in the Paso del Norte Venture Competition.
- Helped organize and analyze participation effectiveness of a local I-Corps program.

Doctoral Researcher, Interactive Systems Group,	El Paso, TX	2012 - 2015
The University of Texas at El Paso		

- Developed Embodied Conversational Agents (ECAs) capable of speech and gesture recognition.
- Conducted human-computer interaction research, focusing on the paralinguistic and non-verbal behavior of ECAs with an interest in virtual rapport generation on human-ECA interactions.
- Led a team of 5 to 12 graduate and undergraduate students working on ECA research and development.
- Developed a speech-based application with a virtual agent to build familiarity between humans and agents across time.
- Analyzed users' personality traits and gestures by collecting and curating a multimodal corpus.
- Designed, coded and contributed to develop tools and modules for ECA creation that assist developers in storytelling management, gesture capture, gesture recognition, script parsing, and user experience design.

Research Associate, Cyber-ShARE Center of Excellence	El Paso, TX	2012 - 2015
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- Developed phase one of the Virtual Learning Commons (VLC), a web service to enable informal science education.
- Developed software to support geoscience and environmental science applications.
- Administered Linux servers.

- Conducted research in various fields of computer science, including software engineering, collaboration and social networking systems, eLearning systems, semantic web, service-oriented architectures, and other web-related fields.

Business Experience

Founded two virtual reality companies. Presented entrepreneurship workshops in Mexico and at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in DC. Mentored entrepreneurship events, hackathons and competitions, and attended a startup accelerator program.

CTO, Boost Human (formerly Beacon Hill VR):

El Paso, TX

2018 - 2019

Mixed reality smart tools for industry and manufacturing

- Lead the technical effort to develop VR and XR industrial solutions for simulation, training, manufacturing, logistics, and quality assurance.
- Direct research grant efforts as principal investigator for research and development activities through government funds for small businesses.

Founder, Inmerssion:

El Paso, TX

2013 - 2017

Engaging Experiences in Virtual Worlds

- Founded a high-tech startup that enables people to build engaging and rewarding relationships with characters in immersive virtual worlds.
- Directed two business applications with intelligent virtual agents, created several prototypes, and managed customer relations and 10 – 14 developers for each project, including developers, engineers, artists, sound designers, testers and other miscellaneous positions.
- Lead our development team from design to release of several virtual agents applications.
- One of nine companies elected to participate in Creative Startups, an accelerator focused on the creative industry. Unofficially named the company with the highest potential of the cohort.
- Collaborate with companies around the world (URBSI and 12FPS) to develop immersive virtual characters.

Skills

C#

Unity

Project Management

Software Engineering

Web Services

Augmented Reality

Java

Agile Development

Development Lifecycle

Web Development

Virtual Reality

Human-Computer Interaction

Refereed Publications

Published more than 20 conference papers, plus workshop publications, and technical reports. Research interests focus on interactive systems, including intelligent virtual agents, spoken-language dialogue systems, and virtual reality. Recent publications include

Novick, D., Gris, I., Rivera, D. A., Camacho, A., Rayon, A., & Gutierrez, M. (2015, November). The UTEP AGENT System. In Proceedings of the 2015 ACM on International Conference on Multimodal Interaction (pp. 383-384). ACM.

Gris, I., Novick, D., Camacho, A., Rivera, D. A., Gutierrez, M., & Rayon, A. (2014, August). Recorded speech, virtual environments, and the effectiveness of embodied conversational agents. In International Conference on Intelligent Virtual Agents (pp. 182-185). Springer International Publishing.

Gris, I. (2013, December). Adaptive Virtual Rapport for Embodied Conversational Agents. In Proceedings of the 15th ACM on International conference on multimodal interaction (pp. 341-344). ACM.

Awards

- UTEP's 20 in their 20's
- Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation (2015)
- Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation in Engineering (2015)
- Departmental Award for Outstanding Doctoral Student in Computer Science (2015)
- UTEP AGENT System - Outstanding Demonstration, ACM International Conference on Multimodal Interaction (2015)
- Web Portal for Seed-Funding Programs - Best Poster: Tools, VentureWell OPEN Conference (2015)

Press	Prototypes
The Conversation: http://bit.ly/2j9NDiH TIME: http://ti.me/2aYkPY1 Creative Startups: http://bit.ly/2iVVLUK Daily Texan: http://bit.ly/2bYStil UTEP: http://bit.ly/2thkkD4 & http://bit.ly/2sMYbZT	Demo Reel: http://bit.ly/2jIL4Zn Harry Potter: http://bit.ly/2jc0swS Merlin: http://bit.ly/2jAHiwZ