Ping was originally intended as a visual ride through the Internet in the free airtime of various TV stations. Today, it is a 3D datascape created interactively by Internet users.

Imagine a self-generated movie: the flight of Eye Agents through fields of gravitation triggered by world-wide distributed data objects. Based on hyperlinks in a World Wide Web map, Ping creates a distributed interactive multimedia environment (the 4D virtual datascape) that gives users a visual impression of networking. A virtual camera device called Eye Agent automatically renders a flight through the datascape, generating broadcast-quality output. Interactive creation takes place through the WWW interface, which allows users to explore the datascape and contribute and position their objects on an interactive map.

The Ping datascape is composed of all netwide distributed map elements, which can be movies, geometries, or still images. It is generated by the users' remote interaction. What the Eye Agent sees is the datascapes' geometric representation composed of all netwide distributed map elements retrieved from their original locations. As it moves around on the 3D datascape, the Eye Agent controls the visual side of this self-generating movie on the Internet.

Users who view the datascape at SIGGRAPH 95 can jump into the datascape directly.

Their images appear on the interactive map and become part of the datascape. The Eye Agent character is tuned to view the datascape in the SIGGRAPH-generation mode with Jum-Ping and flying humans. As computer technologies converge with television, Ping explores the possibilities of user interaction and representation within interactive broadcast media.

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