



# Report from the field of Co-Creative Excellence

by Gabriela Ender, July 07, 2007

## Worldwide OpenSpace-Online® Conference on Open Space Technology (OST) 2007

Co-Sponsor



Co-Inviters:

- \* Harrison Owen/USA [www.openspaceworld.com](http://www.openspaceworld.com) \* Open Space World [www.openspaceworld.org](http://www.openspaceworld.org) \*
- \* Open Space Institute Australia \* Open Space Institute Canada \* Open Space China/Mark Pixley \*
- \* Open Space Korea/Stanley Park \* Open Space Institute Sweden \* Open Space Taiwan/Gail West \* Open Space Institute USA \* Host of 15th annual WOSonOS (2007/Ukraine) \* Host of 16th annual WOSonOS (2008/USA)/Lisa Heft and Friends [www.openingspace.net](http://www.openingspace.net) \* Genuine Contact™ Program Co-owners \* Sheila Isakson/USA \*



---

# Worldwide OpenSpace-Online® Conference on Open Space Technology (OST) 2007

A large international group of Open Space Technology (OST = face-to-face Open Space) Practitioners from around the globe is looking back on a fantastic worldwide real-time Internet community gathering. Together with Harrison Owen (discoverer of OST, 1985) and other international Co-Invited, Gabriela Ender (inventor of OpenSpace-Online®, 1999-2007) had invited participants to a 4-hour Worldwide OpenSpace-Online Real-Time Internet Conference on Open Space Technology (OST) with the title: "Open Space Technology: What have we learned and where can it lead us next?"

## The Invitation

If you are interested to see the invitation web-page with brief information about OST and OpenSpace-Online® you are warmly invited to [click here >>>](#)

## Special Conference Setting

Because of the large number of registrations this special global free-of-charge community event, sponsored by NEULAND [www.neuland-world.com](http://www.neuland-world.com), was run as "Two simultaneous OpenSpace-Online conference events" - same theme, same real-time, same duration.

## Participants from Around The Globe

The invitation went fast, far and wide and on **June 30th/July 1st, 2007** almost 100 OST colleagues and friends from the following 25 countries signed-on into the conference to join this unique worldwide community event:

**Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Czech Republic, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Korea Rep., New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan-China, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States of America**

All participants "came" together at the same time. All from a different location, region, country and continent and all committed to stay for the full 4 + hours. Some people attended at noon, some at midnight, some from a sofa, their office, a summer cottage or even from a dock on a lake.

## Diverse Backgrounds and Working Fields

They came from diverse working fields such as ...

Business Consulting, Change Management, Change Facilitation, Leadership Training, Universities, Organizational and Individual Health and Effectiveness, Research of Self-organization, Project Management, Team Building, Executive Development, Facilitator Training, Interactive Conference Design, Knowledge Economy, Resource Development, Art Education and Community Building, Social Projects, Human Resource Development, Adult Education, Conflict Management, Communities concerned with sustainability issues, Sustainable Urban and Regional Development, Information Technology, Initiating and Facilitating Global Networks, Landscape Sciences, Language Technology, Career Counselling, Conscious Evolution and Global Mind Shift Co-creating, Conflict Theory, Community Mediation, Marketing for a company with 750 employees, Finance, Sales and Real Estate, Environmental Education, ...

## Co-Creative Excellence in Real-Time

Most of the participants started the OpenSpace-Online® conference software in good time before mutual conference start. They filled out their personal contact data and business profiles for the participant's list and conference book and were quickly ready to meet and greet new and old friends for a 30minutes foyer-chat.

After 'greeting and meeting' the text-based conference was opened by COMOSO, the virtual Open Space Facilitator. All participants were guided smoothly through successive phases as opening circle, creating a shared agenda, discussing topics in various sessions, café talks and private one-to-one conversations in the café area, summarizing the topic sessions, prioritizing topics, sharing next ideas, finding first agreements and/or planning first next steps and collective closing circle. Both conference groups had an extraordinary wonderful time, full of engaged wholehearted discussions and full of joy. Altogether 32 topics were raised and discussed in single workshops by both, OST newcomers and well experienced colleagues. The flow of knowledge sharing and socializing were extreme powerful and joyful.

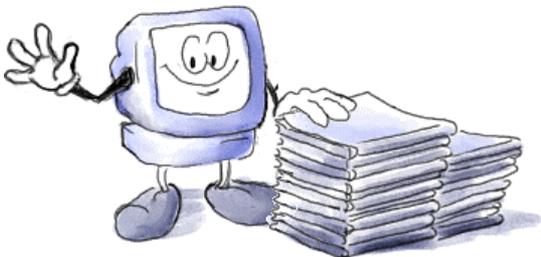
A few comments from the closing:

- \* *"I think what we have learned is that OST can lead us to take our next evolutionary step."*
- \* *"Let's do more Open Space!!! That is an action, isn't it?"*
- \* *"I learned that what we choose to practice is key."*
- \* *"It has been a great pleasure to participate. There has been a lot of knowledge and wisdom."*

- \* *"I have thoroughly enjoyed being with all of you in this wonderful process. I am excited about new possibilities."*
- \* *"Big Thanks to all for sharing your ideas and experience, I had a great time!"*
- \* *"Thanks to all my international friends for openly sharing your perspectives with me. This has been a grand experience."*
- \* *"It will take me some days of 'processing the learning' to realise exactly how much I have learned :) Thanks all."*
- \* *"This has been a very stimulating engagement. OST is now on my list of current research topics. I look forward to becoming an OST practitioner from the United States and adding to the volume of research we current have on the dynamic methodology of collective human interaction ... thank you for this significant discover in my professional work and personal life."*

## Conference Documentation

At the end of the OpenSpace-Online conference(s), after almost 5 amazing hours, every participant received his/her "own" conference book at the press of one button and just a moment later as well the other complete conference book via email. The extensive documentation contains all single comments and all generated contents (except foyer-comments and private one-to-one café talks), the personal contact data and business profiles of the participants, proceedings and each single arrangement made during the conference. This all together make the conference book itself a piece of 'knowledge art'. The participants were able to immediately use the conference books in either digital or printed form. (Hint: based on a policy of "trust and data protection" the OpenSpace-Online GmbH does not forward OpenSpace-Online conference books to no-attendees.)



During the next days, weeks and months there will be much potential for each participant to catch up on mutual learning, results and on "old and new" friends. Now, many of the participants look forward to meet some of the participants and other OST colleagues for the first time in person. For example at the next annual face-to-face OST community gathering (WOSonOS) in San Francisco, USA, California in summer 2008.

## After the Global Gathering

Right after the end, Harrison Owen sent the following message through a group of 540 international OST practitioners and friends:



*"Thanks to Gabriela Ender and her wonderful crew, we were treated to a marvelous global gathering. And we didn't have to go anywhere! Actually I tuned in from my dock on the lake (WiFi reaches just that far) - so there I am with a fresh breeze in the face, water lapping at my feet and in constant communication with friends and colleagues from all over the world. The software is seamless, and if you have ever been in the Open Space, it feels just like the real thing. But I do have to admit that I missed the eye-to-eye contact, and maybe more than that the hugs that seem to be a regular feature of Open Space. But that is a small thing. Gabriela has done a wonder. She should be proud and I know that if you ever have a chance to experience OpenSpace-on-line for yourself or with/for a client, you will not be disappointed. It is the real thing - sans hugs. Harrison"*



## First Questionary Results

Approx. one hour after the end of the conference(s) all participants were asked to help evaluating the event in order to support future worldwide OpenSpace-Online® conferences for the OST community as well as future software enhancements by sharing personal rating and feedback. Together with a big Thank You to all attendees each person received an email with a link to a special online questionnaire. Only 48 hours later more than 25% of the participants had send their rating and statements and till today (July 07, 2007) more than 38% filled-out the feedback form. What a GREAT contribution!

In the following for all interested readers some testimonials, the current status of participant's personal rating and at the end of this event report a few Thank-You-Messages from participants to Neuland and future financial sponsors.

### A.) TESTIMONIALS

**Ms. Helen Bishop, United States of America:** *"I take with me the experience, unusual for me, of being able to participate fully, to expand my own "tool kit" of resources, and to contribute to this groundbreaking event, without having to worry about whether the site would be accessible to my*



---

wheelchair, whether I'd be able to get into the room, use the bathroom, network, find food. The space was opened for me in the most inclusive way possible. Thank you all for making this happen."

**Mr. Pankaj Bhargava, India:** "Extremely well designed software. Very inviting, user friendly & bug free. Very well moderated session too."

**Ms. Eiwor Backelund, Sweden:** "I didn't have very high expectations because I was tired and thought I could just be a butterfly. But after a few moments I found myself involved in deep discussions on topics I am passionate about. After the meeting I was really energized. One thing that surprised me very much was the high rating my own topic got. I thought not so many were interested because in the start we were only two people in the group but later many more showed up. It is so interesting and you should always be prepared to be surprised, because you will be. Many times the surprises are about the depth of the learning and the richness of the conversations. ... I think OpenSpace-Online has a potential to be very beneficial to generate and capture learning in addition to different online university programs. In the program where I have been enrolled, I have missed something that could give us an opportunity to discuss in real time."

**Ms. Sheila Fraser, United Kingdom:** "I can think of several groups internationally it would be useful for. I now need to calculate costs and raise the funds."

**Mr. Prabu Naidu, Singapore:** "I have always been wondering how to unfreeze and prepare the participants before an OST - especially in those situations where the culture (organisational or national) is not used to freedom of expression in a room filled with higher powers / authorities. Hence, I convened a topic on that subject and received good amount of valuable ideas and experiences from other OST practitioners."

**Ms. Patricia Black, United States of America:** "This software can have powerful implications for community building and developing leadership skills in youth."

**Mr. Charles Savage, Germany:** "What fascinated me was the conversations that went on beyond the words being written. Strangers were connecting and from the initial stumbling around, but the end a meaningful community had arisen. The "emotional" power of a context that brings community is what really fascinates me."

**Ms. Catherine Pfaehler, Switzerland:** "I was a bit scared to find out if an online tool could be as good as a real OS conference. Much to my surprise, I enjoyed the online conference greatly, and the encouragement to move and have my personal little buffet ready (which we then shared online...)"

*created much fun and sense of the "real thing". There was as much learning involved as in a face to face conference for my topic. What I liked especially - and where OOnline is superior to an OS face to face conference - is the fact that I could answer to something said in my own pace. Swiss people speak Swiss dialects, so already German is a foreign language to us, which means that we take longer to formulate something (the same is true for English, of course). So by the time I am clear of what I want to say or write, somebody else has already spoken. In the online version, I can use the @# and still make my statement without the fear of disturbing the new thread."*

**Ms. Eva P Svensson, Sweden:** *"I think that by having an event with participants from the west-coast to the east-coast of USA, to Europe, India, Coast Ivory, to Australia - really makes a difference in the world. By connecting people in an easy way like this - talk about a possible way to heal our world..."*

**Ms. Jane Quinn, United Kingdom:** *"I am used to open space meetings and was concerned about the missing bit of the introductions, seeing people as we opened and closed the space and the real coffee breaks. Once it started, everyone participated fairly quickly and the comments were flowing. It was also much easier to move from session to session by just clicking a button so that was good. The online facilitation kept us all on track and the close was brilliant, with identifying key topics for everyone to take forward with actions. Now it's over (or I feel not, it has just begun) I need to reflect on the great notes and see how I can move this forward. If I need to go back to some people about their comments, either to expand or reconfirm, I have all the contact information. An extremely well organised event."*

**Ms. Dr. Christa Gescher, Germany:** *"A great tool for everybody who wants or needs to be connected with people who are not available face-to-face. OpenSpace-Online has a pleasant layout, a clear structure, a user friendly navigation, it is highly efficient, and it's fun!"*

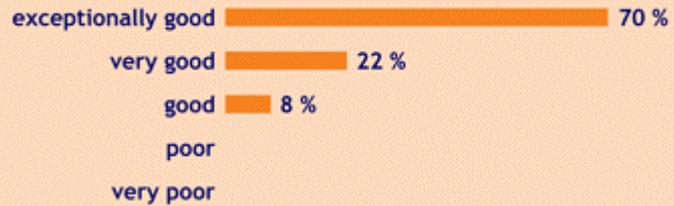
## B.) PERSONAL RATING

### Participant's feedback about BEFORE the Online Conference

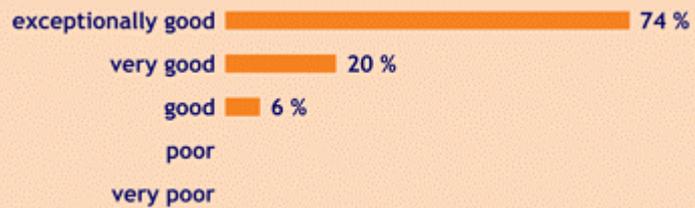
1.) The invitation- and registration web-page for this event was:



2.) The technical preparation (OpenSpace-Online® 2.0 software download and installation) was for me:



3.) Seven participants had IT or other questions. They found the support team helped:

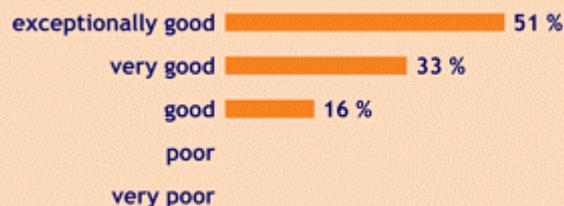


## Participant's feedback about DURING the Online Conference

4.) The theme and title of this OpenSpace-Online® Conference were:



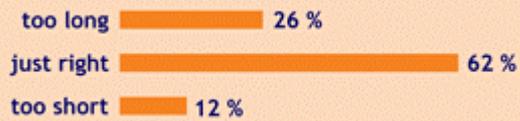
5.) The discussion and collaboration within this OpenSpace-Online® Conference were:



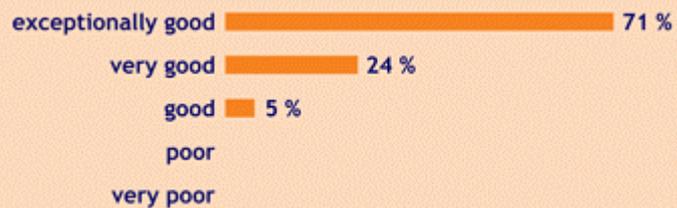
6.) The networking and socializing within this OpenSpace-Online® Conference were:



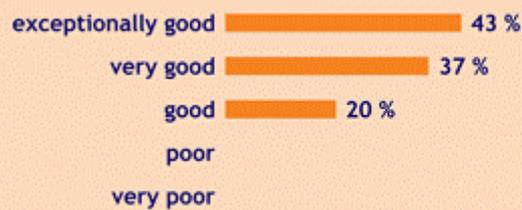
7.) The duration of the entire OpenSpace-Online® Conference was:



8.) The intuitive and virtual-led structure of the OpenSpace-Online® Conference were:

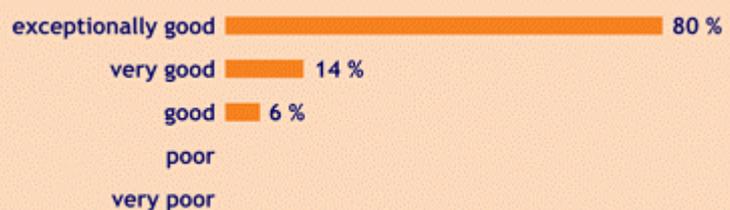


9.) The group size of this OpenSpace-Online® Conference was:

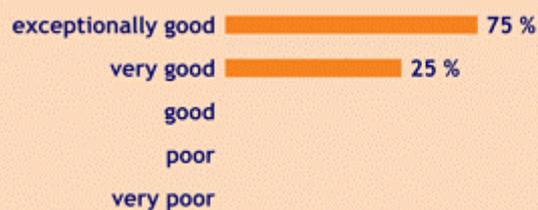


## Participant's feedback ABOUT this Online Methodology

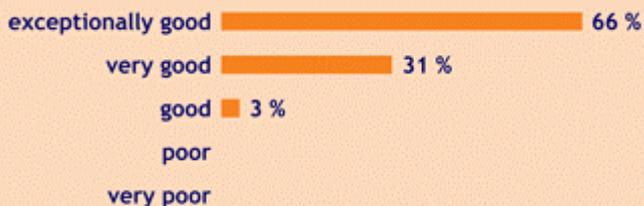
10.) The idea & utility of the OpenSpace-Online® Methodology is:



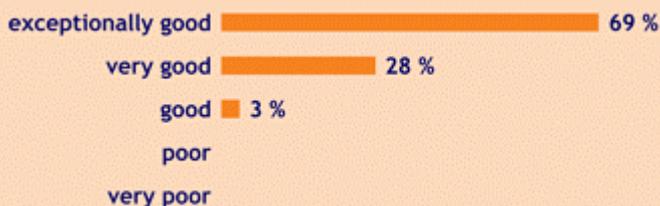
11.) The clarity & structure of the OpenSpace-Online® Software 2.0 is:



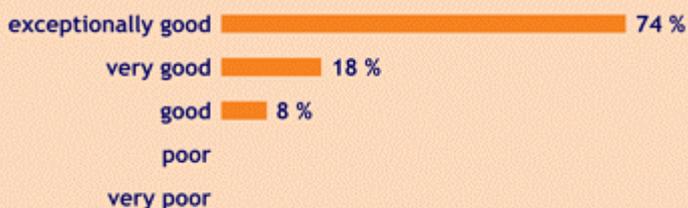
12.) The graphics of the OpenSpace-Online® Software 2.0 are:



13.) The usability of the OpenSpace-Online® 2.0 Software are:

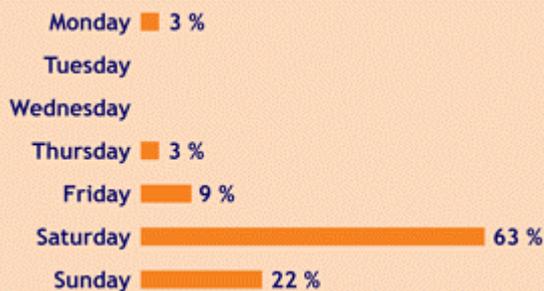


14.) The conference documentation of the OpenSpace-Online® 2.0 Software is:

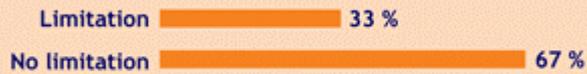


## Participant's feedback about FUTURE OpenSpace-Online® Conferences for the OST community

15.) The best days for future OpenSpace-Online® Conferences would be:



16.) Participants were invited to express whether they would prefer to set a registration limitation of



125 participants to run one single OpenSpace-Online® conference (as the OpenSpace-Online® Software allows 5 to 125 participants per conference) OR if they want to allow as many as possible registrations to possibly run simultaneous OpenSpace-Online® conferences if more than 125 colleagues would be interested to take part.

## C.) Thank You Message to Current and Future Sponsors

Very appreciative messages were entered into the Online Questionary by the participants. Here a few examples:

**Mr. Prabu Naidu, Singapore:** *"To potential sponsors, you could sponsor this event and draw on a wide, diverse global audience to help give you ideas for new product concepts, improvement of existing products, etc. You will probably get more quality inputs in a short time than engaging a consultancy to do it for you at a fee higher than the sponsorship of this event!"*

**Mr. Pankaj Bhargava, India:** *"This has the power to tap into several minds and use for resolution of critical issues in a collaborative way."*

**Ms. Kat Haber, United States of America:** *"Thank you, Neuland, for your generous support of this powerful innovation in community connecting and complex solution networking. I would find means of employing this process in the NGO's and businesses with which I work."*

**Ms. Bettina Boyle, Canada:** *"Thanks to the sponsor. It's really important to be able to offer these events for free in order to encourage and allow broad participation from different people different places in the world. I am a student and really enjoyed the opportunity."*

**Ms. Helen Bishop, United States of America:** *"I am very grateful to the sponsor for this Conference, who made it possible for so many people to participate in this groundbreaking event without having to worry about affordability. This is a critical aspect of economic justice, and organizations that sponsor this kind of Conference will get my complete support, including word of mouth to let people know of their efforts."*

**Ms. Gabriela Avram, Ireland:** *"Thank you very much for giving us this opportunity today!"*



---

**Ms. Bev Carter, Canada:** *"I was impressed with the possibilities of engaging people at one time from all over the world!! I would see great possibilities for specific world issues beyond process or methodology issues."*

**Ms. Patricia Black, United States of America:** *"Thank you for supporting the open space for open space facilitators. I hope you will consider sponsoring other groups in a similar way, especially youth organizations. I think the software can be used in powerful ways to build community with youth."*

**Ms. Paulette Lieska, United States of America:** *"As a new participant to OS, I felt a deep excitement through the process to immediately connect with others across the globe and begin to share ideas and plans for how we might reduce conflict on the planet and raise awareness of the possibilities of greater tolerance and understanding. Everyone in the conference was friendly and respectful and eager to be supportive to those ideas or possibilities that might deepen our abilities to communicate more effectively. This is a VERY worthwhile organization to support."*

**Ms. Christy Lee-Engel, United States of America:** *"What a wonderful gift, for our whole worldwide community to be able to participate in this conference, at no cost! The financial sponsorship is such a valuable contribution to the work that we're all doing, connecting with each other to share ways of making a better world."*

**Mr. Charles Savage, Germany:** *"Neuland has always struck me as a cutting edge company. We have a Neuland flip chart that we use all the time, and the pin boards are standard fair. It is really nice to see Neuland reaching out in new ways to help build reflective communities."*

**Mr. Stanley Park, South Korea:** *"The financial sponsorship as demonstrated by Neuland will be appreciated by open space practitioners around the world."*

**Ms. Jane Quinn, United Kingdom:** *"The opportunity to communicate across the globe through this service has produced the beginnings of a campaign for world peace, made possible by the people who sponsor such events. I would like to express my thanks for being invited to such an extraordinary experience and also to those that made it possible and will do so in the future. Thank you."*

**Ms. Eiwor Backelund, Sweden:** *"Using OpenSpace-Online is a great tool for learning together. To be able to connect with colleagues all around the world in this way, is exceptionally good."*



---

**Ms. Dr. Christa Gescher, Germany:** *"Dear Sponsor Neuland GmbH, Thank you very much for sponsoring the wonderful event Worldwide OpenSpace-Online Conference on Open Space Technology on June 30, 07. Being together with people from all over the world, all meeting at the same time "in the same place", several hours of sharing ideas and experience, discussing, learning, contributing, having fun, making new friends - Gabriela Ender, her great OpenSpace-Online and Neuland GmbH made that possible. Thank you so much for this!"*

**Ms. Eva P Svensson, Sweden:** *"I would very much say my thanks to Neuland - who sponsored this World-wide Open Space Online event! It was a great opportunity to connect with OS-friends all over the world. And I also think that this event with participation all around our globe gives a special energy of hope and peace."*

**Mr. Cesar Umali, Philippines:** *"I wish to thank Neuland for sponsoring WOSONOS on line. If it were not for this, I won't be able to experience an ost event. That was indeed a great sponsorship. May your tribe increase. Thank you again!"*

**Ms. Catherine Pfaehler, Switzerland:** *"Thank you very much, Neuland, for having sponsored this event. Your company, supplying everyday work material for us as OS professionals, has shown a true commitment to our community through this sponsorship. It's wonderful when something flows back to us (next to your good products - e.g. I'm a great fan of your markers whose writing doesn't leak through the pages to the floor or the next page, but stays on top of the page it is written on)... This creates a strong link to you as a supplier. I am sure this will be honoured through all of us in the future. I would therefore appreciate a link to your online-shop and the indication if you ship to Switzerland and other countries outside the European Community."*

## **Thank you and let's open up new vistas :)**

Thank you for your interest in reading this event report! Again a big thank you to all fabulous participants, to all who contributed afterwards with such valuable feedback and thanks a lot to our great sponsor Neuland and all helpful co-invited! My team and I were most delighted to organize and conduct this unique global real-time community event. We look back with lots of joy and we are happy, that so many people love our new software edition 2.0. And as every time, we could learn a lot. All comments, ideas, and rating results will help us to become better and better. I trust, that all the wonderful testimonials will help us as well as many other non-profit and profit organizations worldwide in planning and conducting OpenSpace-Online® conferences for own internal and/or external groups with the help of financial sponsors and/or partners.



---

One participant from Sweden sent me this message: *"Thanks a million Gabriela and team for this on-line method and for making this possible. Wouldn't it be nice if we could have an on-line WOSonOS every year..."* Yes, this would be great. I think, that a Worldwide OpenSpace-Online® Conference for our OST community a few weeks after our next face-to-face WOSonOS in San Francisco, summer 2008, can be again a great thing. See you offline and online :)

With best wishes to all readers

Gabriela Ender

CEO, OpenSpace-Online GmbH

**Further information about OpenSpace-Online®**

Internet: [www.OpenSpace-Online.com](http://www.OpenSpace-Online.com)

[Cost-free eBook about the Online Methodology](#)

[Flash Software Presentation](#)

Contact: [contact@OpenSpace-Online.com](mailto:contact@OpenSpace-Online.com)

**Further information about OST (f2f Open Space)**

Open Space World community website:

[www.openspaceworld.org](http://www.openspaceworld.org)

Contact person for WOSonOS 2008 in San Francisco, USA:

Lisa Heft: [lisaheft@openingspace.net](mailto:lisaheft@openingspace.net)