Hunting for Uncle Roy

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If you ever had the urge to walk into "Where's Waldo" — and really who hasn't — you should check out the Orwellian-sounding "Uncle Roy All Around". The Manchester, UK-based game is a high-tech version of hide and seek where players can interact online and on the street and work together to search for an elusive "Uncle Roy". The game, developed by a group of artists called Blast Theory along with the Mixed Reality Lab of the University of Nottingham, began in 2003 and extends for a few week session per year — this year it takes place on April 18th to May 8th. Gameplay takes place for about an hour each day in which a virtual Uncle Roy sends out digital hints of his whereabouts via wireless PDA, with street players searching the cityscape, constantly querying passersby if they are Roy or not (that doesn't sound irritating at all), while online players direct the street players to various destinations through text messages. The companies behind "Uncle Roy All Round" say the game changes the way the players interact with the city, which sounds enlightening and all that but we have a sinking suspicion that this hunt for the phantom Roy will turh out a little more like "Waiting for Godot".