

Meeting Minutes June 26, 2006

Subject: Working Group "Organization / Finance"

To: All working group members,
project management

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Wiki: <http://www.edutech.ch/wiki/pmwiki.php>

Date: June 26, 2006 **Time:** 14:00 - 16:00 **Place:** Breeze Session

Participants:

Christian Schmid	CS	BFH
Eva Seiler	ES	UniZH
Jacques Monnard	JM	UniFR
Martina Harrer	MH	UniSG
Sonja Gisler	SG	PHTG
Stefano Tardini	ST	USI
Urs Gröbriel	UG	FHNW / project mgmt
Rolf Brugger	RB	edutech / project mgmt
Daniela Isch	DI	at rete ag / project office

Absent:

David Aymonin	DA	EPFL
Patricia Gamberoni	PG	HES-SO
Benedetto Lepori	PL	USI

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1. Introduction				
1.1	The group has commented on the list of requirement specifications beforehand. This online meeting is meant to discuss the input and come to conclusions for the individual topics. The indexing used below (F1 etc.) refers to the Excel spreadsheet on the wiki (http://www.edutech.ch/misc/WG_Org_Fin_Req_Spec.html)	I		
2. Repository				
2.1	JM briefly presents the LeMill repository and its functionality.	I		
2.2	Is a central repository necessary, or are local ones preferred? ES: Both national and local ones are required so that the people can	I		

¹ I : Information / T : To-Do / D : Decision

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	use whatever they prefer. JM: Not sure about this.			
2.3	<p>F1: Import/export functionality</p> <p>Should it be possible to directly upload content or should uploading be monitored?</p> <p>JM: Direct uploading should be possible, because people might be deterred otherwise.</p> <p>ES: The process for uploading must be very simple, but it also takes quality assurance. A central editorial department would be one possibility.</p> <p>MH: Authors should have the freedom to choose whether they want to upload content themselves or get help from the local CSPC. What would be necessary is some sort of central editorial department responsible for quality assurance.</p> <p>ST: Agreed, but recommends local editorial department for quality control.</p> <p>JM: There's no danger that teachers deposit low-quality content.</p> <p>ES: If the repository is also meant for work in progress, then a central editorial department is not possible. For finished content, however, centralizing would be better in order to avoid that each institute has their own standards.</p> <p>MH: Quality assurance can only refer to technical aspects only, not pedagogical etc.</p> <p>JM: Depending on the amount of learning objects, it might take a big editorial team. Rating possibilities would be a different way of the ascertaining quality.</p>	I		
2.4	<p>F1: Import/export functionality</p> <p>Who is responsible for uploading content? Preference: Teachers/authors should have the possibility to upload content directly themselves, because a mandatory involvement of an editorial department might be deterring. Local help should be available on demand, however. In case the quality of the content turns out to be insufficient, further action needs to be taken.</p>	D		
2.5	<p>F2: Indexing, metadata</p> <p>JM: As little metadata as possible should be required, because people are deterred if it takes too much effort or is too complicated.</p> <p>MH: Use a form with mandatory/optional fields. The mandatory fields would have to be defined beforehand by specialists.</p> <p>JM: E.g. a mandatory description field with key words for classifying the content; maybe with the possibility to add key words.</p> <p>RB: Does that mean that there should be no object without metadata in the repository?</p> <p>MH: Yes, but it should also be possible to assign metadata to a</p>	I		

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	<p>course as a whole, not only to individual parts.</p> <p>RB: That would mean that the granularity would be rather coarse, as in reality only courses or modules would then be assigned metadata.</p> <p>MH: Assigning metadata should be possible on all levels, and it should be up to the teachers to choose the level for metadata.</p> <p>ES: Agreed.</p> <p>JM: It would be good to have the possibility to use the same metadata for a whole group of objects (except for object-specific fields).</p> <p>JM: A good search engine would find things even without much metadata. LeMill, e.g., uses only very little metadata.</p> <p>RB: Individual pictures, e.g., can't be found if metadata is assigned to entire courses only.</p> <p>MH: Testing is necessary to better understand user behavior.</p>			
2.6	<p>F3: Access to existing databases</p> <p>MH: Not very important, no need to discuss here.</p>	I		
2.7	<p>F4: Support for math. formulas, etc.</p> <p>JM: Depends on content, no need to discuss here.</p>	I		
2.8	<p>F5: Multilinguality</p> <p>MH: Content should be able to handle multilinguality, but the system itself doesn't have to multilingual since authors usually understand English. Also, a single language makes it easier to define specifications. If it turns out that multilinguality is required, it should be dealt with in a next step.</p> <p>ST: Agreed, it is not necessary to have a multilingual interface.</p> <p>JM: However, English is deterring for some people.</p>	I		
2.9	<p>F5': Social tagging and enrichment by users</p> <p>JM: Interesting remark by DA (rating, tagging).</p> <p>MH: Good idea.</p>	I		
2.10	<p>F6 Access rights:</p> <p>JM: The repository should be as open as possible.</p> <p>RB: Who is the owner of the content? Should authors have the right to decide who has access rights?</p> <p>MH: Yes, but it would be good to show all metadata anyway, so that someone can get in touch with the author.</p> <p>JM: This question needs to be clarified with all institutions individually.</p>	I		
2.11	<p>F7: Multi-client capable:</p> <p>JM: Even if there are several repositories, they should appear to the searcher as one single repository.</p>	I		
2.12	<p>F8: Free/anonymous access to content</p>	I		

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	JM: see access rights above.			
2.13	F9: variable/customizable layout/look-and-feel not important.	I		
2.14	<p>CM10: Reusability of content and design</p> <p>UG: This seems to be in opposition to the requirement "as little meta-data as possible".</p> <p>The requirement towards the system would be: A certain amount of specified metadata should be possible.</p> <p>MH: It's up to the author whether the entire context or only parts of it are uploaded.</p> <p>UG: At the beginning, especially communities will use the repository, and they might agree on certain formats.</p> <p>RB: Does anyone know of any scenarios that work presently where content is being shared among institutions? And if so, under what conditions is the repository being used?</p> <p>MH: No, but if we don't think in such scenarios, we don't need to discuss a national platform.</p> <p>JM: Don't know any examples, but this shows that community building is required.</p> <p>UG: There are several examples of collaboration among universities, but these didn't use repositories. With regard to future development, repositories should nevertheless be taken into consideration. However, we need a realistic assessment of its viability. What would be the criteria?</p> <p>ES: Idea of the repository originated in the consensus that many institutions have their own LMS and will want to keep it. The question is whether content can be deposited somewhere and be used in one's usual environment. Normally, universities working together agree on a common LMS and log in there, which is why they don't need a common repository. Therefore, we wouldn't solve the problem of the teachers.</p> <p>MH: Teachers feel at home with their own system. Only few of them would upload something to a national repository. Yet, in cross-institutional projects they would have to.</p> <p>ES: To come back to Rolf's question: Ask operators of repositories.</p> <p>RB: Have already done some research on this: all of them are using it with the same LMS or with compatible formats. E.g. the ARIADNE project shows that it is very difficult to motivate authors to take all the trouble: they don't see any added value and therefore don't use it.</p> <p>Hence the critical questions: Where does it work? Which general conditions must be met so that it works?</p> <p>JM: In a similar project, teachers were paid for uploading content – so it would take some sort of incentives, at least at the beginning.</p>	I		
2.15	CM11: Reuse of entire courses, modules or parts of courses	D		

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	JM: The platform should support all levels of granularity.			
2.16	CM12: Compliance with SCORm and other standards JM: Wrong group, not so important for us. Easy to implement.	I		
2.17	CM13: Versioning JM: Useful, but makes it difficult and complex. ES: Would be good, but it's not clear whether it is really needed.	I		
2.18	CM14: Minimal national standards JM: related to question at beginning. MH: It's not a question of the system. UG: If the system supports different kinds of reviews (peer, technical etc.) – which kind of quality control should be supported? ES: Customer rating (like Amazon) is an attractive feature. JM: Agreed. RB: This shouldn't be too difficult to implement from a technical point of view	I		
2.19	CM15: Techn./ped. standardization of learning resources JM: not regarded as important issue. RB side-remark: This was a very important aspect for the WG Ped. It is about pedagogical standards regarding the specification of learning goals and would mean more metadata. MH: A rating system would produce standards. ES: We have to look at it from our point of view. JM: Not important in our group; we leave it to the specialists.	I		
2.20	U16: Easy to use / only little metadata JM: Distinguish between mandatory and optional metadata. See also above.	I		
2.21	U17: Solution for legal issues JM: People shouldn't be kept from restricting content, but it should be as open as possible.	I		
2.22	U18: Ease of use JM: no training should be required for using the system. Must be simple.	I		
2.23	T19-23: JM: leave them to WG IT to discuss	I		
2.24	C26: User community JM: Is there a need for a user community? ES: If system is open source, the question of a community is important in the long run.	I		

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2.25	S28: Services available from peers or a commercial partner JM: Not necessarily about repositories.	I		
3. E-Learning Helpline				
3.1	JM: No need for national helpdesk. ST: Agreed. Helpdesk should be local. MH: Agreed. No need for meta-competence center. Most questions are about details and can be answered locally. ES: Agreed.	D		
3.2	Community of experts in e-learning: ES: Would be very useful; interesting to have knowledge exchange. JM: FNL was successful. The problem is that if nobody is in charge, it's difficult to keep a network alive. UG: Project mgmt will pick up this idea in another context, not in the OSS selection process.	I		
4. Integration services / Development of "middleware" services				
4.1	Integration of tools: MH: Some are already realized locally, depending on platform used. Maybe do it step by step. JM: Difficult to discuss; we would need to know the scenarios of the individual institutions. SWITCH needs to know which ones are the most frequently used LMSs and tools.	I		
5. Next Steps				
5.1	RB and UG thank the group for the helpful comments on the spreadsheet as well as for all their efforts and their commitment in general.	I		
5.2	Project mgmt will send out an info pack on the status and the further proceeding.	T	PM	

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