

Sigossee
Notes from the SIGOSSEE meeting in Limerick
June 2-3 2004

1. Attendance

Graham Attwell (Knownet); Alexandar Toedt (Univeristy of Koln); Timothy Hall (University of Limerick); Sara Zondergeld, Raymond Elferink (Raycom); Dirk Stieglitz, Joachim Dittrich (ITB); Brendan Bolger (University of Limerick); George Bekiarides (Ergon KEK); Cormac Mc Clean (Athlone Institute of Technology); Søren Johansen (New Media Lab); Dai Griffiths (Universitat Pompeu Fabra); Peter Becker (Interactive Institute); Ferran Cabrer (CONSENS) Kevin Johnson plus three students (University of Limerick).

2. Welcome to Limerick

Timothy Hall of the University of Limerick explained the founding history of the university, the role and work of the university and of the electronic and computer engineering department.

3. Introduction to agenda

Graham Attwell explained the workshop agenda and said the importance is of the meeting was to provide for an expert discussion with a wider community about OSS. Secondly the meeting served the purpose of reviewing work done so far and reviewing the progress of the working groups. A third important role for the meeting was to develop new ideas

4. Coordinators report

Graham Attwell reviewed progress since the first meeting of SIGOSSEE in Bremen

He said the Bremen meeting had enjoyed wide coverage in the German language printed and on-line press. The website of SIGOSSEE, the OSSite, is up and running (www.ossite.org). The target for the project was 150 members in two years and we already had 149 members. This rapid growth in membership required some rethinking in how we develop the Special Interest Group. SIGOSSEE had been invited to a number of conferences including the 7th International Conference Interactive Computer aided Learning ICL2004 in Austria and the European educational Research Association in Crete. SIGOSSEE was represented at the LearnTech Conference and exhibition in Karlsruhe in February. The first Open Door Days of JOIN were also a success. The Open Door day in Italy was attended by 114 people whilst 150 turned up at the Open Door Day in France.

There were four key strategic steps to be taken in the next three months:

1. Sort out the membership services on the OSsite (and how people can organize groups of SIG members in their own country)
2. Get the research groups operating (he reported that the social and legal issues group coordinated by ITB was already active) and the work on best practices
3. Together with JOIN to get the directory initiative running
4. To produce a plan for future meetings

He suggested that one way to proceed with meeting demand for information would be to develop a Leonardo Da Vinci programme application for a transnational network.

5. Reports from working groups

Brief reports from the four working groups showed that the work progress varied from mostly good intentions (a and d) or a bit more (b) to a written paper in which the problems and questions concerned are sketched (c).

A discussion followed.

ITB presented an extended report on their work on social, legal and economic issues. It was agreed the work in progress would be put on the Ossite in order for partners and SIG group members to contribute to and comment on.

There was some discussion on how to collaborate in the working groups. It is not easy to write collaborative reports. 70 people have said they want to help in the research and we have to give them ways to contribute. Examples of ways this could be achieved included posting poll's, issues and questionnaires ... with questions like: *what is your view on this?*, with the request to answer within a week or so.

6. Working group meetings

The working groups were given a briefing including

- how can we undertake the work more thoroughly?
- How do we involve the people in the SIG?
- Where and how do we exchange information?
- How open are the processes?
- How are the working groups going to be open?
- How can we involve a wider membership?

There was some discussion on membership of the working groups. Søren Johansen, who had not been able to be at the first meeting, asked to join working group (b). Working group a did not meet due to lack of available expertise at the meeting.

The working groups had the following composition:

Group b) Søren Johansen; George Bekiarides; Cormac Mc Clean; Timothy Hall

Group c) Dirk Stieglitz; Peter Becker; Brendan Bolger; Ferran Cabrer

A separate meeting comprising of Graham Attwell; Dai Griffiths; Raymond Elferink; Sara Zondergeld Group met to prepare the public seminar, and to plan the Barcelona meeting

7. Ossite and SIG membership

Graham Attwell opened a discussion on the management of the SIG group and Ossite. The membership form did not record country of origin making it difficult to analyse the membership base. Because it had not been expected that the membership would grow so rapidly there was no database for the membership.

a) It was agreed to develop a database. Raycom would undertake this work.

b) A second proposal was to auto generate mailings to new and existing site members dependent on how they had answered the membership questionnaire.

C0 It was agreed to provide them with a basic membership pack for the SIG group including a t-shirt ("open 24/7"), a new flyer, stickers (euro-coin stickers), a pen. The packs will be prepared by Raycom.

Søren pointed to the need for a clear description of what SIGOSSEE is and especially a press release. This should be put on the OSSite. A FAQ section would be also be a good idea.

We need some local national coordination on a) language skills and b) social, cultural situation. We can contact the people from the same county. Ask them if they are interested to take on the role of coordination, we could engage them by e-mail.

Raymond said when this database is done, we make an interface to it where you can comment and contact others. We make this editable on the homepage level and see the info to make it possible to contact the person who is suited to your interests.

Peter said the database has to be totally public. We have to share details with people who want to share as well like an engine. *We have to make it searchable*

Graham pointed out that this is much more work than anticipated in the application. We have to try and get Leonardo funding for a part of this, building on the work of both the JOIN and SIGOSSEE projects.

8. Organisation of next project meeting in Barcelona

There was a discussion of the next project meeting in Barcelona, Spain .The idea is to have a general introductory session first about what OSS is and then two parallel keynote sessions: a more technical one (e.g. aimed at ZOPE) and a social/ legal one (by ITB e.g.)

It was agreed we have to try and develop a format for meetings like this.

There was a discussion on language. It was agreed to hold the meeting in English but to give the people the opportunity to ask questions and get answers in Spanish.

It was also proposed to combine one of the JOIN project's Open Door Days with the next meeting of SIGOSSEE

9. Public Seminar

The seminar was chaired by Timothy Hall who provided an introductory talk. The speakers were Raymond Elferink who gave a general presentation about SIGOSSEE, OSS, the OSSite, and the JOIN project); Kevin Johnson who presented the PHOENIX program he and others from the university of Limerick have developed: <http://phoenix.ul.ie>); and Dai Griffiths (whose presentation centred on copyright and OSS)

The public seminar was attended by 50 people with a lively discussion following the speakers..

10. Best practice case studies

Ferran Cabre of CONSENS gave a presentation about identifying best practice: Towards Best Practice

Ferran was concerned at the lack of participation remarks in the forums on the OSSite. He proposed to start an expert and advisor group and eForum. He intended to make a summary of best practices for OSS in e-learning in Europe, according to evaluation criteria.

Raymond Elferink said a new bulletin board for SIGOSSEE has just been set up and that he will set up a section of that for Ferran's 'Best Practices' idea. Raymond explained that to make the OSSite more alive it is absolutely necessary that the partners of SIGOSSEE need to contribute regularly. The functionality has to grow and will be growing when we start putting more effort in it ourselves. That it has to become more of a two way communication. The technology of the OSSite has improved (and will be further improved were necessary).

Ferran continued by showing the presentation he made at the International Open Source Conference in Malaga, Spain (2004-02-18) and outlined his European project proposal 'Temotis'. Ferran also showed a form he developed with his ideas to get feedback from the community.

Dai Griffiths expressed a concern about the time available for what Ferran was suggesting. He said that the scale Ferran proposed was bigger than we can handle with the funding we have for SIGOSSEE. Dai said his understanding of the project contract was a study take up of OSS in selected institutions over the lifetime of the project in order to determine Best Practices.

Raymond said we are not planning to provide a roadmap but more of an overview of what people do in OSS in concern to eLearning.

Tim suggests suggested to make a 'snapshot' based on the form Ferran showed and generate an analysis form this. Every member of SIGOSSEE should be involved in this.

It was agreed to find 3 or 4 institutions as the basis for a short caser study.

Cormac Mc Clean offered to undertake this work voluntarily as a member of the SIG.

Peter Berger suggested to combine these twso approaches mentioned in the discussion. and asked what cases we should select? Alexandra Tödt andiscussed two ways of comparing case studies and suggested 'most different cases'. She would develop this approach through the OSsite.

Søren Johansen proposed a check list, a guide-log, for non-computer experts.

It was agreed that:

Tim will underake 5 case studies to illustrate Best Practices. He has cases, link to existing work. He says he is involved in another project, like this project funded by EU, linking small businesses and eLearning.

Cormac offered to work on this in the summer

Alexandra would produce a methodology for case selections

Ferran will make a checklist with which we can research Best Practices

Søren will select the cases and Sara offered to help him if there are many reports

11. Reports from the working groups

Tim of Group B (User Requirements and Usability) gave a presentation and stated we want basic functionality. There are three kinds of users: teachers, administrators & users. Basic level: developed a working classification of learners from least demanding to most demanding in terms of a technological functionality point of view of a learning system. He discerns 6 different learners: ubiquitous learner (learning with meaning to), self-directed learner (choose their own learning), lone learner (follow course on their own), distance learner (part of a group, open courses), teacher-led learner and collaborative learner. Tim: will put all these documents on the OSsite

Joachim of Group C (Social, Cultural and Legal Issues in OSS) says they discussed mostly the same things as in Bremen because of all the 'new' people in the group but says they are good in time because Joachim prepared a report and will post that next week on the OSsite. They agreed on the working plan in the schedule, but two things changed: there need to be an interface with Group B, there are sub-issues that Tim raised and overlaps need to be identified.

12. OSsite

Raymond demonstrated the development of the OSsite, and the new bulletin board.

After the discussion which followed it is stated that we should all be active, Try to contact someone else from the SIGOSSEE partners if you don't know an answer to a contribution someone made. There is a general agreement on the idea of making someone a moderator for 3 forums or so for a week,

Raymond said Pieter Rozendaal of RayCom will start moderating the board.

Alexandra said she needed help for the forums and for Plone itself, either a manual or help files.

Raymond encouraged people to add content to their homepage in the Ossite.

Dai proposed using metadata to help with searching.

13. Product directory

Alexandra introduced work on the Product Directory and circulated a draft questionnaire.

She explained the focus is on LMS (Learning Management Systems). The questionnaire is addressed to ask users ('does this system works for you?') and developers and researchers about the systems they investigate by means of interviews on telephone and questionnaires (separate one for developers and separate one for users).

There was some discussion of the criteria for inclusion in the survey as an LMS and a lengthy discussion of the wording of the different questions.

It was agreed to establish an online forum on these issues.

14. Conference

Alexandra reported on the organization of the joint conference with JOIN which is scheduled for the autumn in Cologne.

The provisional date for the conference is 13th and 14th of September of 2004 but participants asked her to try to put it back to 22th and 23th of November of 2004,

The meeting ended with a limerick composed by Søren:

*It's over, it's time to go home
Remember you won't be alone
SIGOSSEE is there, we're ready to share
Your thoughts and mindset in Plone*