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## **Notes from the SIGOSSEE meeting in Stockholm September 15-16 2005**

### **September 15 2005**

#### **1. Public Seminar**

The conference was called: **Content for Education in Europe. Processes, Platforms and Standards for Shared Content** and was jointly organised by SIGOSSEE, SIGOSSEE partner The Interactive Institute, the Swedish Government Strategy Group on IT Policy and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions. Peter Becker welcomed everybody present and introduced the speakers Graham Attwell and Dai Griffiths who gave longer presentations with insight on SIGOSSEE, opening frontiers in e-learning and standards in OSS. After this a number of speakers presented very diverse case studies of use of OSS and production of open content in schools, universities or museums, like the Skolelinux project. 200 Developers contribute to this. The lacking of interactivity between user and developer and the feedback issue came up regularly during these presentations. After the lunch the platforms Microsoft, MySQL, SUN and Apple were presented. From there we moved to licenses with a clear presentation about the creative commons initiative. Copyright is always a problem e.g. a lot of art pictures can not be used for websites, textbooks are copied. Creative Commons can be a solution. After a coffee break a very interesting open environment Squeak was presented: [www.squeak.se](http://www.squeak.se), with a special environment for kids they made: eToys: <http://www.squeakland.org> and a Swedish platform, Lektion.se, where teachers can find, use and share lessons. The seminar brought a lot of people from different perspectives together. The seminar was attended by ± 45 people.

### **September 16 2005**

#### **1. Attendance**

Søren Johansen (NewMediaLab); Graham Attwell (the Knownet); Sara Zondergeld, Raymond Elferink (RayCom B.V.); Dirk Stieglitz (ITB); George Bekiaridis (ERGON k.e.k.); Peter Becker (Interactive Institute); Dai Griffiths (Universität Pompeu Fabra); Alexandra Tödt, Carsten Koziánka (University of Köln, partner JOIN).

#### **2. Introduction to the workshop in Stockholm**

Graham Attwell walked through the draft agenda for the meeting day. Since Dai had to leave early the agenda was changed. The upcoming conference, which was not on the draft agenda, became the first point.

#### **3. Conference on Open Source for education in Europe. Research and practice**

Since Raymond Elferink and Graham Attwell were more involved in the preparation process of the conference than other partners, Raymond reported about that process and explained the format of the conference. The software which is used for the conference is OSS and is very easy to use, only minor things

(euro's, timetables etc) had to be changed. The administrative part is a manageable amount of work. It is a sustainable model for future conferences. Over 40 propositions came in for the call of papers, which amounted to 48-50 with the ones which came in late for the deadline but seemed interesting. When the conference program was set up, the idea was to have not only the traditional papers with sometimes boring slides, but also different kind of activities, like practice cases, demonstrations and Hands-on Labs. A big variety of propositions were sent in, ordinary paper proposals, other propositions, and formed the final program. Raymond stressed that important about the conference day itself is the organisation of it. Every partner has tasks in the program: chairing sessions for instance but also logistic tasks as clearing the room of chairs and putting them back in. The room is one huge room which can be made into three separate rooms. The first session will be a plenary session made out of two of these rooms together. These have to split up for the midday session and chairs have to be put up in stacks along the wall. On the second day, the concluding plenary session will use up two rooms again and than we have to put back the chairs. **Everybody is needed for this!** Apart from this logistic issue The Open University will take care of everything (registration, coffee, food etcetera). There is some talk about when to arrive (the Sunday evening before) and close to venue hotels( a castle, a hostel) and logical travel plans (flying to Amsterdam, Düsseldorf + train, Maastricht). This information is on the website: [www.openconference.net](http://www.openconference.net). The conference proceedings will be published (thanks to the extra sponsor-money we got from ISN, Zürich) with ISBN numbers. Graham remarked that it was difficult to decide what to accept and what not, that there was a quality issue, it was a bit overstrong on the technical site and overweak on the social site. Fred de Vries, Alexandra Tödt, Graham Attwell and Raymond Elferink held several meetings to decide on these and other issues with regard to the conference. They didn't get all the clarifications of the propositions yet. Raymond showed all the five strands online. Hoped is that people will walk through the program, read what is put up yet and comment. Every participant can put up an abstract of their paper. Raymond showed how for instance Fiona Concannon already put up her abstract of her paper: *Lessons on Usability in Open Source Software in Education From The Cultural Historical Tradition of Irish Music*. We don't know if people will read things beforehand and if they will comment or not. Maybe it will happen, maybe not. Although there are three conferences clashing with ours (e.g. Dutch SURF conference), the conference is going to have several interesting participants as Stephen Downes of the National Research Council from Canada, who will be speaker in the plenary session and contributor to the round table on the second day, Riina Vuorikari (European Schoolnet) and Josef Stiegeman of Novell. Graham: Why we got this impressive agenda for the conference is that it reflects the growth of OSS and it is also due to how it is organised and how the call was published (in a non-academic way). It is noted that it would be interesting to have people from Squeak, which was presented on the seminar yesterday, on the program in one of the Hands-on Labs. We will try to get in touch with the Dutch partners of Squeak. It is asked if there will be people present from the EU commission. It is not sure yet. We will try to get some people invited e.g. from econtent program and Peter Bauer. To conclude: all the partners should see of all the workgroups are present well

enough, and to mention it if something is missing in the program. Everybody has to register. Go for registration to *Registration* in the menu (bottom of the page).

### **3. Flyer conference**

Special A4 flyers were made for the conference, these were also handed out yesterday to everyone present on the seminar. They can be obtained at the website.

### **4. Future conferences**

The plan is to make this conference an annual thing, if it is successful and if we can get funding. In the proposition for the BAZAAR project is a conference written in for instance, to be organised with the Open University in the Netherlands. JISC is being talked to too. Maybe we should also talk about sponsorship with MySQL, since they asked yesterday on the seminar: what could we do to help? Proposed is to meet up, share ideas about new conferences like this at least twice a year.

### **5. SIGOSSEE Working Groups**

Each working group should look through the conference material and see what represents, refers to and is relevant to the working group. This, combined with own research and papers and provided with an introduction and summary that fits with the issues raised, will be the way to present the working groups in the report. Graham will send out a mailing for it.

### **6. Final Report**

Some questions were asked (Dai, Dirk) about the final report and how long it should be. For the final report we have a lot of content already: all the papers which were sent and are going to be sent in for the conference can be divided over all the four working groups. Furthermore we have our own papers and presentations we gave or sent in to other conferences. Each research area should come up with five pieces and one or two of the working group itself, including a review or summary of one page which outlines the issues raised. In total it has to be around 15-20 pages including written papers. The problem of fitting the Key Issues in the report was raised. Maybe sending a short html file with links tot EU? Although they demand a written report, we are also reporting a lot of multimedia. We started with SIGOSSEE with written formats and moved towards multimedia formats. We discuss about putting SIGOSSEE as an entry in the Wikipedia, but because it is editable by the world, it is maybe not such a good idea. Raymond proposed to put up a three page website about our project on sigossee.org because we have that domain name as well as ossite.org. This would comprise a short summary of the research issues with links. George mentioned this could be the "portfolio" of SIGOSSEE.

### **7. Case Studies and Players**

The subject of the case studies was touched briefly. These should be snapshots. Graham referred to the case study which was made and showed in the meeting at Århus of Søren's company (see notes SIGOSSEE meeting Århus) and what he did yesterday during the seminar. Søren is busy editing the stuff from Århus and said it will be up latest end of the week. He showed one of the eight interviews (with the Mysql people) he filmed yesterday and footage looked good. This has to be edited too and will be streamed from the communication server. In this way it will be available for every platform and every browser. There was some discussion about which players to use for this sort of thing. Summarised it will play through a flash player (open standard, code is free) and the files will be available as divX. As copyright we will use cc (non commercial attribute license). Graham showed a way to show a presentation by means of using a mp3 file which is streamed with audio and gifs. Raymond and Graham showed the player which Raymond made for presentations, to make them available on the internet quickly and easy. In default it is a flash player. Timing of slides is done very easily. If you want to use this, you can contact Raymond! Graham presented the audio file recordings he made yesterday. The sound is clear. Alexandra pointed out that it is good to use a bluetooth clip on microphone in future when we do this.

## **8. Evaluation issue**

One issue which is still there is that of the evaluation. A straightforward 'this is what we did' - evaluation is not really suitable here. We need a different form of evaluation, looking more at the impact of the work of the project in a wider scope, merely recommendations for us of the SIGOSSEE project and in general. The commission would learn more from an evaluation like this. Out of this recommendations for future things, fun suggestions as golf weekends hosted by OS initiatives came up.

*Lunch Break*

## **9. Feedback Seminar**

Peter asked us all what our impression of the seminar was. We all complimented Peter with the variety in sessions, the idea of the short sessions and the different kind of people presenting. There was a discussion about the best format for such seminars and the outcomes. Graham suggested a short booklet with 10 pages and dvd with audio and/or video. Raymond added to this that if we plan to do the "portfolio" SIGOSSEE website (see point 6) we can do dvd access. Dvd or cd options and/ or only web options or a combination of all possibilities (portfolio on web and offline version on disk in web format too) were discussed.

## **10. The Key Issues on the SIGOSSEE:Community Portal**

The SIGOSSEE:Community Portal (URL: [wiki.ossite.org](http://wiki.ossite.org)) where the Key Issues were supposed to be put up was not used too much. There are some Key Issues on there and some were modified by others too, but it didn't grow into a lively portal. The portal is a good example of how difficult it can be when you

introduce a new way of working collaboratively. Online development of content is still very new for people. People are used to deliver finished instead of half finished text. Everybody present is asked and invited again to look at the 'blue things' and change them if you think it is necessary, see for instance the Key Issue: [Key Issues: What is SourceForge and what does it do?](#). Everybody is also asked to look at the 'red ones' and to write them and put them up!

## **11. Look at EVAL.act**

Raymond showed and explained about the EVAL.act evaluation software, with the example of Alexandra's use of EVAL.act: how each session is an evaluation, how to invite people to a certain session, that the session can be exported, that there is no limit to the amount of questionnaires et cetera. See for demo: <http://demo.evalact.com/>. Raymond said he is going to tidy up the code and try get the software out in an OS way, so people can contribute to the software.

## **12. The heritage of SIGOSSEE and OSS in the future**

The heritage of SIGOSSEE was discussed. We have to find a way to get end-users more involved to 'give the power back to the people'. Even in conferences and discussions it is still difficult to get users involved. An idea for a 'road show' through Europe is launched and an idea for a call center with trained people helping online and in different languages. Funding is not always possible, sustainability is an issue. Webinars were also mentioned. They are rising in the United States. A lot of people can attend these seminars without going to them and this saves money. It can be taped too. 'Ask the expert' sessions are also a good and efficient thing to do. Peter gave an example of using SMS in a conference, which was a success: sending 10 questions out and getting 400 answers back. The quality was high too. Concluded is that we should be deploying our content in different ways and should continue this discussion about what to do online. There are a lot of new ideas to take this further, most are not appropriate to all partners of SIGOSSEE but only to some. We have different interests. The different seminars we organised in the different countries already reflected the different stages we are in. Apart from the international level of OSS initiatives there is an absolute need for it on a regional and national level in Europe too. Peter remarked that having a 'SIGOSSEE box' behind regional and national initiatives is necessary and needed. Graham responded that a big well funded european project which can provide such a box can't be led by small companies but must be led by larger institutes, like the Interactive Institute! Maybe it is time to have an association, a network of excellence. The plan is to start a wikipage on future ideas and discussions around these issues.

## **13. Swedish premiere of Grahams movie**

As last point on the agenda Graham showed his short movie which had it's world premiere on the ECER conference, September 16 2005, in Dublin . It is about life long learning: we are all sentenced to it.