

Chapter 2.25

Accommodating End–Users’ Online Activities with a Campus Portal

Tharitpong Fuangvut

Dhurakij Pundit University, Thailand

Helen Hasan

University of Wollongong, Australia

INTRODUCTION

A major objective of this article is to propose a framework for development of a campus portal accommodating the end-users’ online activities, especially students who are normally considered as a major group of users for the campus portal. By summarising between the literature review in the domain of traditional information systems development methodology and Web-based information systems development methodology and the findings of the research, an appropriate model can finally be concluded and recommended, and is presented in this article. Although this article can be considered as a standalone article, it is recommended that the reader read the article

entitled “The Need for a Comprehensive Methodology for Campus Portal Development.” Additionally, the complete version of this research can also be obtained from the digital thesis section of the University of Wollongong Library (<http://www.library.uow.edu.au>).

BACKGROUND ON THE FINDINGS

The results substantiated the claim made in the literature review of the portal technologies that the design and implementation of the personalisation and customisation functionalities could be a substantial factor that determines the appropriate approach to the development of the campus portal.

Based on the case study, the usage pattern of student's online activities presents a clear picture of the design, development, and implementation issues of the personalisation and customisation functionality of a campus portal. On the other hand, some conflicts between the vision of the development team and the usage pattern of the students were detected which, may lead to the misunderstandings on the major concepts of the campus portal development.

In the design of the empirical study, there are three confounding variables (gender, student category, and educational level) that could influence the usage pattern of the student's online activities when using the survey questionnaire as an instrument.

A SELECTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY FOR A CAMPUS PORTAL

This research places its emphasis on the methodology for in-house development of a campus portal. The research approach will start by analysing the available information systems and Web development methodologies to find those existing development methodologies that are appropriate to the development of the campus portal. The traditional development methodologies which were studied in this research are system development life cycle (SDLC), structured systems analysis and design method (SSADM), Jackson system development (JSD), soft system methodology (SSM), effective technical and human implementation of computer-based systems (ETHICS), and multiview. Additionally, many studied Web-based information systems development methodologies are relationship management methodology (RMM), object-oriented hypertext design method (OOHDM), Web information systems development methodology (WISDM), Web site design method (WSDM), Internet commerce development methodology (ICDM), Lowe-Hall's

hypermedia and Web engineering approach, Takahashi-Liang's Web-based information systems analysis and design, Howcroft-Carroll's methodology for Web development, and intranet design methodology (IDM).

Criteria for the Selection

Adapting the criteria of Murugesan, Deshpande, Hansen, and Ginige (1999) to the campus portal development, the selection of the development methodology should match the following criteria, taking into account the special characteristics of campus portals.

Multidimensionality

Previous research shows that factors influential in major failures of development projects are lack of commitment in top management and inadequate user involvement (Keil, Cule, Lyytinen, & Schmidt, 1998; Wallace & Keil, 2004). To satisfy user needs, a system must be developed accordingly and fulfil the requirement of the users (Standing, 2002). Campus portal users are composed of many groups of stakeholders that require different needs and may have a direct or indirect relationship to each other (Pressman, 2005). Each group also performs different activities to facilitate and achieve their objectives. The development methodology, therefore, should consider the development of a campus portal with a user focus from the multiple views of stakeholders.

Flexibility

Inflexibility in the development methodology inevitably leads to problems (Avison & Fitzgerald, 2002, 2003a). A campus portal is a complex project, integrated with many Web-based information systems and other online services. Consequently, the development methodology should be flexible enough to allow the developers to adjust methods,

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