Sustainability of e-Learning Projects - the GITTA Approach

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www.gitta.info

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ISPRS 2008 Beijing: GITTA

Content

1. Short overview of GITTA
2. GITTA content
3. GITTA open content strategy
4. GITTA technical concept (eML)
5. GITTA Association
6. Conclusion

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Overview: general

• Geographic Information Technology Training Alliance
• GITTA is a modular online course system for GIScience and -Technology (GIST)
• Consortium of 10 Swiss partners originally contributed to development of the content
• Realized between 2001 and 2004, Maintenance between 2005 and 2008!
• Right now almost 50 lessons and case studies online

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Who contributed?

The four pillars of GITTA

• Continuance and sustainability as a result of the interaction between 4 elements

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GITTA content: Thematic Scope

Joel Fisler, University of Zurich
**GITTA content**

- **Languages**: English, German, French
- **Pedagogical approach**: ECLASS concept (GERSON 2000) with additional elements
  
  -> For providing authors a framework for developing high-quality, well structured e-Lessons

**GITTA open content strategy**

- GITTA content was released in February 2005 under the Creative Commons License, which means that usage, dissemination and modification is possible under the following conditions:
  - Attribution (by)
  - Non-commercial (nc)
  - Share Alike (sa)

Which are the consequences of using this license model?

- Allows distributing the contents without having great efforts to be undertaken in terms of legal rights or copyrights etc.
- Open Content strategy shall help us to address a big community of GITTA users

**Overview: frequency of usage**

- GITTA page requests before and after open content:

**GITTA technical concept I**

- eLML (eLesson Markup Language) developed by Joel Fisler and (ID University of Zurich) and Susanne Bleisch (FHNW Muttenz)
- maps ECLASS concept into an XML based dialect

**GITTA technical concept II**

- Structure of an eLML lesson
Advantages of using eLML
• Content has to be developed independently from the design
• Flexibility
  – Can be transformed into several file types (HTML, PDF, IMS, SCORM) by using XSLT
• Consistency
  – Authors have to develop content in a didactical optimized way
  → eLML is an essential element towards ensuring sustainability

Furthermore:
• Content Versioning System (CVS) helps providing the latest versions to teachers and avoiding redundant information
• Web-based Version Rating System (VRS) helps controlling which versions are in use and why they are in use (authors state which versions they use in their curricula)

Association
• Association is seen as an important strategic element for ensuring further existence of the project beyond financing period
  – Function 1: to continue business of project
  – Function 2: to acquire new partners
• Association consists of active individual/collective, as well as passive individual/collective members
• In principle everyone is allowed to become member (very modest fees)

Why is GITTA appropriate for being used as a learning resource in high educational teaching?
1. Content:
   – Wide range of topics throughout the scope of GIST
   – High level of quality of contents due to the expertise of different Swiss institutions
2. Open content strategy:
   – Allows use of GITTA lesson in universities worldwide
3. Technical concept:
   – eLML helps create consistence lessons and ensures the flexible usage of the GITTA lesson
4. Association: Adheres business for project and acquires new members that can contribute to the project

Important links
General:
www.gitta.info (GITTA mainpage)
www.elml.ch (eLML mainpage)

Content:
GITTA main → GITTA Access → Module Overview

To become a member:
GITTA main → GITTA Association → Membership Application

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Thank you very much!