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Educational Technology Expertise Centre OTEC
Open University of the Netherlands

Annual report WP 4 2002

**Dissemination and standardisation of learning
technologies**

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Annual report work package 4

Dissemination and standardisation of learning technologies

OTEC report series

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Table of contents

1.	Introduction	7
2.	Objectives	8
3.	Project Members	9
4.	Activities	10
4.1	Introduction	10
4.2	IMS	10
4.3	CEN/ISSS-ws-LT	11
4.4	Prometeus	11
4.5	NEN and Surf/Six	12
4.6	Learning Technologies website.....	12
4.7	Articles and presentations.....	13

1. Introduction

This report describes the results and activities of work package 4 of the research and development programme on learning technologies. Work package 4 dealt with the dissemination and standardisation of learning technologies.

This project ran from May to the end of December, 2002.

It is not feasible to add all the products and results of work package 4 in the present report. All accompanying products and results are stored on R-drive/OTEC/Development/WP4, though. Several products and results are also bound as separate OTEC-reports. In the text of this report we refer to several of them. The present report, then, provides a description of all the activities carried out under its aegis.

2. Objectives

It was the overall goal of work package 4 to acquire national and international recognition for the LT-specifications designed by the development programme.

The OUNL aims to become a frontrunner in educational innovation in e-learning. The present work package adhered to this strategic course by setting itself the following objectives:

- to disseminate the results/products of the development programme, by submitting them to standards and specification bodies
- to channel the discussions on new learning technologies that are conducted in standardisation and specification bodies back into the development programme
- to create and organise a forum (website) as well as conferences on learning technologies as an alternative means to disseminate the results and products of the development programme.

The work package had to deliver the following products:

- IMS Learning Design Specification
- documents related to the specification
- documents connected to commitments to Prometheus, Surf and NEN
- report on the EML-survey project carried out for CEN/ISSS
- redesigned and maintained website
- news service
- publications (one in a scientific and two in professional journals)
- evaluation report.

3. Project Members

The project members of work package 4 consisted of the following people at the start of the project (May 1st, 2002):

Name	FTE	Role
Jocelyn Manderveld	0,6 FTE	Project Manager (until August)
Peter Sloep	0,5 FTE	Project Manager (from August onwards)
Hans Hummel	0,2 FTE	Project Member
Fred de Vries	0,2 FTE	Project Member
Francis Brouns	0,3 FTE	Project Member
Harrie Martens	0,2 FTE	Project Member
Jeroen Berkhout	0,1 FTE	Project Member
Adrian Rawlings	0,2 FTE	Project Member/externally funded

The time actually allocated to the project members did not add up to the number of FTEs in the work package's description. During the year we hired two several new colleagues (1 FTE funded by the Board of Governors): Peter van Rosmalen 0,4 FTE, started June 1st, 2002 (externally funded) and Colin Tattersall 1 FTE started November 1st.

During the year there has also been a reallocating of the resources in the development programme. First, in order to get the IMS Learning Design specification finished additional capacity and expertise was needed. Project members of work package 2 were brought in (Hubert Vogten & Marc Verhooren).

Finally, the project was managed by two project managers. Jocelyn Manderveld managed the project till August 1st, subsequently to go on maternity leave. Peter Sloep took over the project management for the rest of the year. There was no replacement for Jocelyn, so 0,6 FTE's were not filled in during 5 months.

4. Activities

4.1 Introduction

The work package's activities focused on participation in IMS, CEN/ISSS-ws-LT, Prometheus, NEN and Surf Six. Another major activity was the development and maintenance of the new learning technologies website and the new service. Finally, writing articles and giving presentations were also activities of the work package.

4.2 IMS

Within IMS we participated in the Learning Design working group and the technical committee. Work for the technical committee consisted in voting on other IMS specifications in development. This meant that several documents had to be studied in order to decide what to vote (yes/no/no vote).

However, the majority of work for IMS within this work package concerned the development of the IMS Learning Design Specification. This specification uses EML as a basis. The first deadline which had to be met was the delivery of the IMS LD base document by the end of March 2002 (annex 1) This document gives a first impression of what the final specification should look like. In the beginning of April the document came up for voting.

The votes carried the base document. In May 2002 we attended the IMS Learning Design meeting Boston. In this meeting the remarks made on the base document and the way to proceed were discussed.

In the period May through August we worked very hard on the public draft of the IMS Learning Design Specification (annex 2a, 2b, 2c). This public draft consisted of three documents:

1. IMS Learning Design Information Model
2. IMS Learning Design XML Binding
3. IMS Learning Design Best Practice and Implementation Guide.

To develop the Information model we decided to develop UML models of Learning Design. This resulted in a report 'IMS Learning Design UML models' (OTEC 2002/29, annex 3, see also annual report work package 2). We also spent considerable time writing the texts for the Information model.

To produce the IMS Learning Design Binding we developed IMS Data tables and learning Design schemas (see also annual report work package 2).

The implementation guide provided use cases written by several organisations. Each describes a learning Design implemented in IMS LD.

The public draft documents came up for voting in September 2002. At that time there also was an IMS meeting scheduled, in Sheffield. We attended this meeting and spent our time in lobbying for the public draft (annex 4).

The beginning of October the public draft of the specification was approved. This meant that the IMS Learning Design Specification was made available for the public (download from IMS website).

The last step to be taken in this process was the delivery of the final specification in December 2002. There were some comments on the public draft which needed to be addressed. In the best practice and implementation guide a chapter on implementation was missing, this had to be written. Also extra use cases had to be modelled and the schemas needed revision. This work resulted in the Final IMS Learning Design Specification. Due to IMS policy, the specification was only published in February 2003.

4.3 CEN/ISSS-ws-LT

In 2002 we spent less effort on CEN/ISSS-WS-LT than the year before, partly because IMS consumed the majority of our resources, partly because – during the year - it was felt that CEN was of little use to the programme's objectives. Nevertheless we did attend three meetings, in Brussels, Paris and Copenhagen (see annex 5 and 6). During the year, together with The Open Universities of the UK and Spain we completed a project on Educational Modelling Languages (started in 2001). During the Brussels meeting we gave a presentation (see annex 7) on the progress of the project and in September the final version of the report 'Survey of Educational Modelling Languages' was released. (see annex 8). The report did not receive the status of an official Workshop Agreement, although in the project plan this had been considered an option. The reason for not pushing for this status was the reluctance of the workshop's chair to accept the report in its present status and the project members' reluctance to alter the report's conclusions. The conclusion that the OUNL's EML was the only modelling language worth serious consideration, turned out to be the source of disagreement. As a way out of this dead lock, the project participants agreed not to strive for a workshop agreement.

4.4 Prometheus

There were two Prometheus events in 2002. One event took place in Lisbon in May, the other in Paris in September. Particularly the latter event was significant for the development programme.

Lisbon

The 7th Prometheus Event was combined with the 3rd WEM (World Education Market). Although, the programme participated only as part of a large OUNL delegation, the event's focus on standardisation of learning technologies gave the programme a prominent place.

At the WEM the OUNL had a stand providing information on EML and Edubox. Visitors could talk to people, collect leaflets or witness a demonstration course in Edubox. As a direct consequence of the OUNL's presence, an article on EML was written on behalf of the OUNL's board of governors, which was published in 'the Parliamant', journal for the European Commission.

During the WEM, Prometheus organised a 'MOLM' (meeting of like minds) on 'Technology and the Evolution of Private and Public Approaches to Education and

Training'. We chaired the roundtable discussion on standardisation. The announcement of the MOLM was on the WEM-website and the Prometheus site (See newsletter #18,p.5):http://www.prometeus.org/news/PROMETEUS_Newsletter18.pdf.

The results of the MOLM were presented during the Prometheus event, Lisbon, see Prometheus site: http://www.prometeus.org/PromDocs/MOLM_25_presentation.ppt and in the Prometheus newsletter #19 (June 2002, p.1, 6-7, 8-9) http://www.prometeus.org/news/PROMETEUS_Newsletter19.pdf (see annex 9)

All this helped to put standardisation on the Prometheus agenda. We furthermore participated in the Special Interest Group on Pedagogies. Finally, during the Lisbon meeting a start was made in preparing the Paris conference.

Paris

The programme put many efforts in helping to organise the first Prometheus Conference in Paris (29-30 September) 'Improving learning through technology: opportunities for all'. This conference was visited by 400 people. Rob Koper (chair of the conference) and Hans Hummel were members of the organising committee. The complete conference programme was drafted in June and July, organising the conference was accomplished in August and September. The complete conference programme is available at http://www.prometeus.org/PromDocs/hb_arttic_be_05-08-02_13-15-03.pdf.

The October Prometheus Newsletter #22 (October 2002) discussed the conference at great length. http://www.prometeus.org/news/PROMETEUS_Newsletter22.pdf.

All Paris presentations can be found at:

<http://www.prometeus.org/index.cfm?PID=364> including

- the opening address by Rob Koper
- the plenary speech Fred Mulder.

During the conference there was also an EML stand and several courses in EML delivered through Edubox were demonstrated.

During this conference we generated a lot of interests and prospects.

4.5 NEN and Surf/Six

In 2002, 4 meetings were organised. In all meetings the progress of the Dutch translation of the IEEE LOM was discussed. Furthermore, the question to what kinds of projects the committee should devote its time, was discussed. It was concluded that the committee should not develop specifications itself, but rather seek to disseminate existing specification and act as a discussion platform for specification implementation projects. Over the year the interest in the LOM has been growing. Finally, the committee reviewed and voted on a number of documents that came out of the ISO JTC2 SC36 workgroups.

4.6 Learning Technologies website

The start of 2002 marked the migration of the www.eml.ou website to the learningnetworks.org site. With the start of a new, 5 year lasting development programme, a website had to be developed that would reflect this change. The new

site was developed within the V-bulletin application, which not only is less labour intensive to maintain, but, quite importantly, also allows the emergence of a sense of community within the group of visitors. This was deemed important as a means of reaching out to the group of established and expected users of the Learning Design and EML specifications.

4.7 Articles and presentations

To disseminate the learning technologies developed by the development programme several articles and papers were written and sent in to journals. Besides the articles and papers, several presentations on various conference were given on learning technologies. The titles of these are listed below, but all papers, articles and presentations are stored on the R-drive.

Papers and publications

- Hummel, H. G. K., Manderveld, J. M., Koper, E. J. R. (2002). Leertechnologie, de lego van innovatief onderwijs? *Onderwijsinnovatie*, 2, 8-12.
- Hummel, H. G. K., Manderveld, J. M., & Weistra, H. (2002). EML van techniek naar didactiek. *Opleiding & Ontwikkeling*, 9, 30-31.
- Koper, E. J. R., & Manderveld, J. M. (2002). Educational modelling language: modelling reusable, interoperable, rich and personalised units of learning. *British Journal of Educational Technology*.
- Manderveld, J. M., Hummel, H. G. K., & Koper, E. J. R. (2002). Educational Modelling Language: new challenges for instructional re-usability and personalized learning. *Educational Technology & Society Journal*.