Challenges in the Redesign of Content Management: A Case of FCP

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Finnish Centre for Pensions (FCP) is a government organization acting as the central body for private pension institutions in Finland. One of its central tasks is to produce and publish guideline documents for ensuring that the pension institutions carry out pension provisioning in a unified way. Due to problems in the maintenance of the documents and requests for faster information delivery by the Internet, FCP carried out a content management development initiative during 2002-2004. The case follows the changes in components of the content management environment: in the activities of work processes, actor roles, systems, and content items. The case shows that in content management redesign, the work processes, roles of people in the processes, content items, and systems are deeply intertwined. Changes in one component often cause changes in others, and thereby iterative development efforts are needed. The case highlights the challenges encountered and describes the tools utilized for redesign activities.

Keywords: case study; content management; governmental IS; digital asset management; intranet-based services; redesign; socio-technical design; XML

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

The Finnish Centre for Pensions (FCP) acts as the central body of the private sector pension institutions in Finland. It is overseen by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and supervised by the Insurance Supervision Authority. In 2002, there were 380 employees working at FCP, primarily lawyers, pension schema experts, and pension register systems experts. Its costs of operation for 2002 were 40 million euros (Eläketurvakeskus - Finnish Centre for Pensions, 2003). FCP is an expert organization carrying out multiple types of tasks (FCP, 2003). For legislative bodies, FCP provides expertise needed during the design of new pension-related laws and norms, and produces estimates on the pension use and coverage. For private persons and especially for pension institutions carrying out numerous pension-related tasks in a decentralized way,
it provides information and guidance via telephone, e-mail, paper-print documents, and on the Internet.

Finland joined the European Union (EU) in 1995, and therefore statutes and regulations in Finland are currently dependent on the EU legislation. The material developed by government organizations like FCP to guideline private sector companies and citizens has to reflect the changes both in the national legislation and in the EU legislation. In each EU country, free movement of labor inside the EU also requires knowledge about other states’ regulations and norms, and about mutual agreements. In 2004, the EU expanded with 10 new member states. Thus people working in government organizations developing regulations for pensions both in the old and new EU countries face major challenges in maintaining the national and local regulations. At the same time, there is an increasing demand to speed up acquisition and deployment of new technologies.

The case of FCP represents an interesting opportunity for investigating content management problems and solutions in the area of public administration. Possibilities to utilize current and future information technologies effectively in public administration are actively being investigated under the term e-government. The case description provides an example and accounts of experiences both for practitioners and researchers of e-government. Outside public administration, FCP represents a case where documents are essential sources of knowledge and act as boundary objects (Brown & Gray, 1995; Murphy, 2001) between organizations. It is likely that in several government organizations, both in the EU and outside it, similar needs for content redesign to those of FCP will evolve. A case study (Halverson & Ackerman, 2003) on document redesign in air traffic control shows that content redesign of documents critical for carrying out work in organizations is a challenging task in the private sector, too.

Data for the case description was gathered between June 2002 and March 2004 from various sources, and consisted of the following:

- brochures, newsletters, and the Internet site of FCP (e.g., Eläketurvakeskus - Finnish Centre for Pensions, 2003; FCP, 2003);
- the reports of the content management initiative (e.g., Ahovaara, 2002, 2003; Peltola, 2003);
- several discussions and five semi-structured or structured interviews with active development project group participants from various departments at FCP;
- observing a workshop session at FCP; and
- a content management consultant who carried out the content items redesign at FCP was one of the authors of this article.

**SETTING THE STAGE**

This section introduces the content management model to be utilized throughout the rest of the article. From the case organization, content management concerning two major document types prior to the development initiative will be described. The last subsection discusses the reasons for initiating the content management initiative.