Chapter V

Identifying Key Factors of Motivation to Share and Re-Use Pedagogical Documents

Emmanuel Fernandes
HEC/Inforge, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Fabrice Holzer
Centef, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Maia Wentland Forte
HEC/Inforge, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Bahram Zaerpour
Centef, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

ABSTRACT
Lots of efforts (ARIADNE, Dublin Core, IMS, eBioMED.ch, IEEE-LTSC, CEN-CENELEC, Medline Mesh tree, SCORM, etc.) have been invested in defining a proper indexation schema, resulting in an appropriate descriptor or header for describing pedagogical documents. The difficulty stems from the following paradox: the header should be as detailed as possible to get, when querying the knowledge pool, an adequate set of documents, and as light as possible to make sure that indexation will be performed. So whatever the international
standard might be, it will achieve its aim of fostering share-and-reuse only if the majority of the involved persons accept to use it! The question therefore is: “How do you convince an author to index a document?” To try and answer this question, we are investigating the key factors of motivation for an author.

INTRODUCTION

Computer-based training (CBT) and computer aided learning (CAL) applications have been around for more than 30 years. Conceived as rigid, integrated, stand-alone pieces of software, they never turned out a real success although they cost a huge amount of human and financial effort. Thanks to the dazzling deployment of information and communication technologies (ICTs) coupled with the tenfold increase of computer power, new and promising opportunities for open and distance education opened up. New paradigms were born, among which those of knowledge pool, modularized pedagogical component, learning citizen and share-and-reuse are worth mentioning. If properly taken into consideration, these concepts will influence greatly the way online teaching and training could be handled, in turn modifying the way the production of electronic documents for education and training will be dealt with.

In this chapter, because we firmly believe it to be one of the main issues, we will concentrate on the notion of share-and-reuse that in our mind is to prosper if: (i) a critical mass of pedagogical material is made available and (ii) efficient search mechanisms allow for retrieving at least the most relevant candidate resources according to the context of actual use. Lots of international joint efforts have already been invested in order to achieve this goal. An international standard for a proper metadata, providing for an adequate indexation scheme that in turn allows for a clear and interoperable description of pedagogical documents (the header), was approved on June 13, 2002.

The difficulty stems from the following paradox: the header should be: (i) as detailed as possible to facilitate getting, when querying a pedagogical repository (the so-called knowledge pool), an appropriate set of documents, and (ii) as light as possible to ensure that the indexation itself will be performed. Therefore, whatever the standard, it will achieve its aim of fostering share-and-reuse if, and only if, the majority of the involved persons accept to use it! The question therefore is: “What do you do to ensure document indexation?” To try and answer this question, we are investigating the key factors of motivation.

The work in progress, detailed hereafter, intends to detect: (i) what could motivate or impede authors from sharing and/or re-using educational documents, and (ii) what could be proposed to increase their willingness to do so. A hopefully representative panel of authors, belonging to the academic world, will be requested