Chapter VIII

Indiana University’s Enterprise Portal as a Service Delivery Framework

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ABSTRACT

Indiana University has embarked on a journey to create an enterprise portal, a place to which faculty, staff, students, alumni, prospective students and others will travel to uncover a broad array of dynamic Web services. “OneStart” (http://onestart.iu.edu) provides a compelling place for faculty, staff and students to find services with the intent of developing life-long campus citizens of IU. Indiana University is a large and complex institution consisting of eight campuses, over 92,000 students and 445,000 alumni. Developing one enterprise portal for the entire institution presents tremendous challenges. IU’s portal strategy hinges on the ability to provide a “service delivery framework.” This framework provides single sign-on, customization, personalization and workflow. By making use of component based design methodologies, the framework also provides a flexible publishing environment allowing services to be created by different Web development teams across all IU campuses. This chapter describes the motivation and strategy behind the creation of OneStart, the enterprise portal service delivery framework at Indiana University.
INTRODUCTION

Indiana University has embarked on a journey to create the next generation Web portal, a place to which faculty, staff, students, alumni, prospective students and others will travel to uncover a broad array of dynamic Web services. Many of these services will be available at anytime and from anywhere. Indiana University’s enterprise portal, “OneStart” (http://onestart.iu.edu), provides a compelling place for faculty, staff and students to travel and explore with the intent of developing lifelong campus citizens of Indiana University.

Why build an enterprise portal? Today it seems that every institution in higher education either has an enterprise portal or is talking of building one. Many people are certain that their campus needs an enterprise portal. They may or may not be sure why. The reasons seem so obvious to everyone else that it doesn’t seem important to ask. All of the other universities are building enterprise portals, so many feel that they must get started right away on building one of their own.

Starting a portal project for these reasons alone is a mistake. Any successful portal project team begins by asking itself what are the business problems on campus that it is trying to solve? This may seem an obvious beginning, but it is frequently overlooked. Technology is a great problem solver. Enterprise portals are one of the latest technological innovations. What could possibly be wrong with having one? The fact is that there may be more fundamental problems at an institution that will only be further exposed by an enterprise portal project. While portals appear to be here to stay, it is critically important that the team have a comprehensive understanding of the problems that need solutions. For whom are they building the portal? How will it help the users? A successful portal project begins with the answers to these questions. For Indiana University, the answers led down the path to building an enterprise portal.

Indiana University is a large and complex institution consisting of eight campuses, each with its own objectives and culture. IU has over 92,000 students and 445,000 alumni worldwide. The number of online services available across the institution is enormous and continues to grow at a rapid pace. An attempt to develop one enterprise portal for the entire institution presents tremendous challenges. In order to make the best use of scarce technology resources, the approach IU took hinged on the ability to provide a “service delivery framework.” This framework needed to provide all of the features of a portal such as single sign-on, customization, personalization and workflow. However, the framework itself needed to be built using components with standardized interoperability features. This strategy allows the services themselves, the real content for the portal, to be created by different Web development teams across all campuses using a wide variety of Web development toolsets.
GlobalHUB: A Model for Sustainable Online Communities
www.igi-global.com/article/globalhub/123170?camid=4v1a