Appendix I

Online Survey Results

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In summer 2001, the editors of this book conducted an online survey to gather opinions about what a portal is perceived to be in the context of higher education. Survey participants are listed in the Acknowledgments section of this book. The survey results were presented in a poster session at the EDUCAUSE 2001 conference and are summarized in Table 1 of the Introduction to this book. This appendix presents a more detailed analysis of the survey, including several items that were not included in the summary in the Introduction.

The survey was made up of 18 statements to which respondents were asked to react, and six questions that respondents were asked to answer.

Analysis of the survey results must be tempered by the fact that survey respondents were self-selecting. Most presumably had some interest in portals, and therefore likely had some familiarity with them. While survey respondents were in no sense hand-picked, they were at the same time not entirely randomly selected.
Statement 1.

To be considered a portal, a website must give me the option to customize it to look exactly the way I want it to.

About 75% of respondents agree that a website needs to allow some customization by the user in order to be called a portal.

Statement 2.

To be considered a portal, a website must greet me by name when I access it (after my initial login).

About 55% of respondents agree that a portal needs to recognize its users by name once the users have set their accounts up. A significant number (20%) disagree, though few disagree strongly.
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