

Value proposition on a Web based knowledge Portal

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Abstract. Our focus is on value proposition as a concept of comprehending integration on a Web-based Knowledge Portal for educational purposes. In this early stage of our Portal framework design we bring some discussion of the usefulness in another web tool for learning.

Introduction

This study was carried out for a discipline, Integration of Information Systems, of the Doctoral Program in Informatics and tries to give some answers to these questions: What is the difference of this Web Portal in relation to others similar? What forms of knowledge construction are involved? Why accessing information from multiple information systems and integrating them into a knowledge portal are key issues?

Some previous studies [1] took into account some technical aspects of building a Web-based Knowledge Portal for educational purposes, namely ontologies, concept maps and software agents to deal with semantic issues. Some aspects like syntactic and semantic interoperability were also considered.

On this short paper first we present some considerations about value propositions as a new concept of integration. Next we characterise the learning platform we are working in and which value we will bring to make this a competitive advantage idea. Finally the conclusions of this essay are presented.

The importance of value propositions

According to [2] one must use a progressive approach for building information systems by aligning technology closer to business in a way that reflects the business need to adapt to market opportunities as governed by a strategic vision.

In fact instead of a technology based solution one must identify the value-adding activities of the system and be able to measure and compare it with the different potential system behaviours. It's of major importance to identify and understand which system behaviours add value.

The determination of a value proposition is argued to be a process of defining the consumer and provider perspectives. In fact while the consumer is result oriented the provider is competency concern.

In [2] is shown a literature review for the value of behaviour to organization, to consumers and to costumers. For the organization Porter's (1985) value-chain provides a way for decomposing a business into value-adding activities. Since competences and value are connected one has different techniques to understand where value is added in the organization. For the consumer the add value can be the satisfaction usually expressed in the driving forces of costumers needs.

According to [2] Heskett (1997) argue that where a service is delivered, quality has an additional factor in how it is delivered as well as the quality of what is delivered. Also Linnen (2000) considers meeting customer expectations still remains the single most important factor in determining customer-perceived value.

Proposal of architecture for a Web Portal

A very high-level architecture is shortly presented here along with ideas to deal with its implementation. It aims are:

- * Building a distributed system for dynamic information search, organization and classification, integration of information from multiple information systems and interaction of different members (learners, tutors, teachers, content producers)
- * Orient learners, within the subject domain, to build up their own understanding and conceptual association with value-adding activities.
- * Achieve a new multidimensional of understanding.

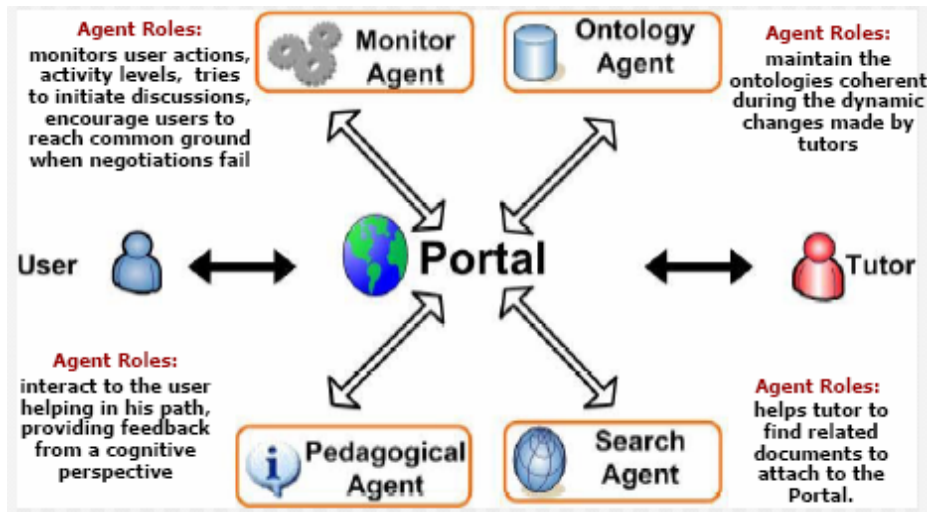


Figure 1. High level architecture

Despite the technological aspects, conceptual and pedagogical issues arise when we develop a framework for being used for learning. All the design and system architecture should be based on the social constructivist theory that sees learning as a participation in social processes of knowledge construction.

This knowledge portal, figure 1, is intended to be a reference place for students of an undergraduate or graduated course where all members (tutors, teachers, content producers) will have an active role in achieving good educational results. It is intended as a reinforcement in their study of a real subject, where they can revise subjects, understand their basics, other fields of interest some how related and even go deep in the subjects of their course.

The added value is, on a consumer perspective (Tutor, learner), the Portal as a reference place for both. The competitive advantage idea is to put the tutor and learner with precise roles and high levels of satisfaction. Today learning is more than just content knowledge. For the tutor point of view it should be more than just a repository of contents. He wants to be a working area where he can put his findings and related material, as well as knowing which material was best understood/preferred by the learners. The learners want to understand the topics but he should find out what is related to it and in what sense

is worth knowing that. He should navigate through the topics with some guidance but some levels of freedom.

On the other hand on a provider perspective all the subjects can be interconnected and interrelated in such a way this portal can be mapped to the curricula of a particular course of a particular school.

Conclusions

Our purpose in this essay was to bring out some answers related to issues of usability and functionality of this Web Portal we are trying to build. One of the major points is focus our task on the people involved rather than the system level requirements. This is what we consider to be the real added value. To achieve a portal with the right approach both in terms of technology and cognitive perspective, with interest for the users. By analysing the problem approach presented here it seems an interesting approach, up to some extent original. With this document we tried to diminish the possibility of not reaching critical mass and thus not be able to penetrate the user space wide enough by resulting in mass adoption.

There are still a lot of unanswered questions namely how to organize information in a user perspective and knowledge or matter perspective.

One thing is certain we must achieve a system with added value if we want to have success in our objectives.

References

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