Carbon Neutra Management of Sport Marinas International Master Modules Programme

INCAMP

Intellectual Outputs 3.0

IO3A3: TEST RELEASE AND PLATFORM IMPROVEMENT

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Intellectual Output 3 consisted in the creation of a learning Platform. Release testing refers to coding practices and test strategies that give teams confidence that a software release candidate is ready for users. Release testing aims to find and eliminate errors and bugs from a software release so that it can be released to users.

A testing release will be available for the partners in order to perform the internal testing. Then, following a testing cycle, improvements and corrections will be initiated for the preparation and delivery of the modules online by each partner responsible.

Later, when the platform has been tested, each partner, will translate the on-line informative part of the platform, which have previously been designed in English, into all consortium languages. UMA will be responsible for the proper execution of this activity. Although the more technical weight of this activity lies with EVM, BNU will help re-design the conceptual architecture and the functionalism for the online training platform.

2 CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE PLATFORM

The consortium decided to use MOODLE for the completion of the project. The specifications of the platform matched all the project needs and has other interesting features that facilitated the work of partners and students:

- Open Educational Resource
- Modern interface
- Intuitive
- Know by the partners and future users
- Personalized dashboard, feature to track the progress
- Collaborative platform
- Multilingual capability
- Manage use roles and permissions
- Create learning paths
- Group management
- Peer and self-assessment

Moodle is widely known among open-source LMS solutions. It features detailed guides on how to set up your own Learning Management System, tips on how to create online training courses and teach with Moodle, as well as a large community of Moodle users who interact on various topics. Most importantly, it is entirely free of any charge and comes with a mobile application as well.

As technology's role in society continues to evolve, a flexible Learning Management System is critical to meeting the needs of today's modern learner. Moodle provides a central learning hub to connect eLearning tools and simplify the teaching and learning process.

With its functionality and plugin capabilities, Moodle offers an engaging and effective eLearning experience for students of all ages. Moodle allows for unique learning methods such as gamification, competency-based education, mobile learning, accessible gradebooks, interactive online classrooms, and much more.

Additionally, due to its inherent flexibility and easy-to-use interface, Moodle can be used to reach a wide range of needs. In fact, many learners that are introduced to Moodle in primary, secondary, and further education find themselves using Moodle again later in life when they enter the workforce, which we will explore in the next section. That said,

Moodle has the added benefit of providing easy adaption for both faculty and learners who may have experienced the platform elsewhere previously.

2.1 Systems compatibility of MOODLE

While Moodle presents certain common features in almost all similar e-learning tools, it also provides certain plug-in options. As an e-learning platform, Moodle features:

- blogs
- chats
- database activities
- glossaries
- support systems enabling the functioning in multiple languages
- content management
- regular examination and assessment

The current infrastructure facilities adopted by Moodle enable it to support a plethora of plug-in options like graphical themes and content filters, enrolment, and authentication processes as well as resource and question patterns.

Any operating system that supports the usage of PHP allows the usage of an e-learning platform like Moodle and some of the systems where Moodle can perform without any alterations include Mac OS X, Windows, Linux, Unix, NetWare etc.

2.2 Advantage and Disadvantages

There are many perceived advantages of open-source software tools, like MOODLE. The ability to customize open-source software to local requirements and then return these customizations to the source if desired is a recognized advantage of open software tools.

There are also several other recognised advantages, which make open software tools an attractive option for end users. These include:

- Lower software costs
- Simplified licence agreements
- Potential for scaling/consolidation

- No vendor ‘lock-in”
- High quality software

While the advantages of open-source software can be seen as attractive there are also well recognised disadvantages of open source tools. These include:

- ‘Hidden’ costs such as training, implementation, etc
- Limited service and support
- Difficulties identifying the latest version of the software
- ‘A work in progress’
- Lack of access to training

3 TEST RELEASE

Testing is intended to show that a program does what it is intended to do and to discover defects in the program before use. When software is tested, the program is run using dummy data. The test results are checked for errors, anomalies, or information about non-functional attributes of the program.

MOODLE is a very intuitive tool and the staff involved in the development of INCAMP had no problems developing and creating content on the platform.

4 PLATAFORM IMPROVEMENT

While INCAMP has a standard ‘look and feel’ for its website, this was overlooked in the adoption of Moodle. It is important to have a standard theme or template for all courses enabling staff to add materials as required languages.

It is important to provide support for students. Although just another LMS, there are noticeable differences from the other LMSs students are more familiar with. The provision of a “get started guide” on the front page of the website would overcome most student problems with Moodle. Students also need advice on minimum system configurations, for example, Adobe, as some had very old versions, which caused incompatibilities.

Ongoing communication between staff on course teams is essential to ensure staff agree on what is loaded and when it is made available, etc. To help address this issue, a staff only general site has been created in Moodle to encourage discussion between staff.

5 CONCLUSIONS

It is apparent that Moodle will successfully support collaborative teaching and learning across the partners. Based on the success of the trial, INCAMP formally adopted Moodle as its LMS.