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SDI-EDU for regional and urban planning

SDI-EDU

Implementation of tools for on line response about training technologies and content

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Implementation of tools for on line response about training technologies and content



Abstract

This document reports the implementation of tools for online response about the training technologies and content. Implemented tools now support social validation of educational content, but also give possibilities for asynchronous communication among teachers and users.



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Web 2.0

The concept of "Web 2.0" began with a conference brainstorming session between O'Reilly and MediaLive International [O'Reilly, 2005]. There are many definitions of what Web 2.0 is. For the purpose of this report we have selected the following one:

“Web 2.0 is the network as platform, spanning all connected devices; Web 2.0 applications are those that make the most of the intrinsic advantages of that platform: delivering software as a continually-updated service that gets better the more people use it, consuming and remixing data from multiple sources, including individual users, while providing their own data and services in a form that allows remixing by others, creating network effects through an "architecture of participation," and going beyond the page metaphor of Web 1.0 to deliver rich user experiences.” [O'Reilly, 2005]

Web 2.0 can be described according to the report by [Osimo, 2008] and research of O'Reilly and Forrester. Web 2.0 is composed of a set of:

- **Technologies** - building blocks of web 2.0, e.g. Ajax, XML, Open API, Microformats, Flash/Flex and other techniques for creation of web applications.
- **Applications** - allow easy publishing, information sharing and collaboration. They include blogs, wikis, podcasts, RSS feeds, tagging, social network sites (e.g. Facebook, MySpace), search engines, Massive Multiplayer Online and others.
- **Values** - they build on the knowledge and skills of the user –
 - user as a content producer/provider,
 - user providing feedback, comments, reviews of the existing content,
 - users who access, read and watch the existing content,
 - user who does not benefit from web 2.0 applications and values.

Implementation of tools for online response

The SDI-EDU portal can be accessed at <http://portal.sdi-edu.zcu.cz/>. It is based on Web 2.0 principles. The portal provides single point for raising discussion and getting feedback on the projects issues. It uses social network sites for that. It is supported by CMS (Content Management System) Editor.

SimpleCMS Editor

Generally, an essential part of the geoportal solution is the Content Management System (CMS) editor. Our solution – SimpleCMS, is focused on usability and simplicity for end users and its mind. Main advantage in comparison with other CMS systems is simple approach for solving complex tasks. Clarity and security of the implementation is the main target.

SimpleCMS editor was implemented initially in Czech, English and Latvian interface. Currently is translated into all remaining partner languages including Bulgarian, Greece, Italian and Lithuanian.

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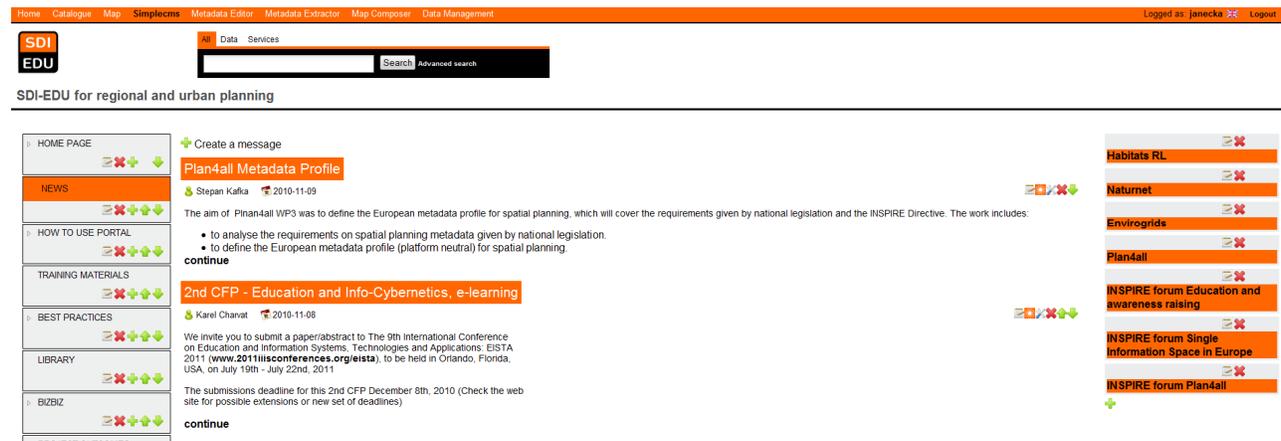


Fig. 1: SimpleCMS Editor – editing of News

SimpleCMS provides access to the following features and/or provides access to the following options. The user must have sufficient privileges to be able access the below described functionality.

Menu

User can define its own menu and submenus. Any menu or submenu can be an external link (link pointing to any place on the Internet and not into the SimpleCMS itself), where the redirector functionality is implemented and users can return back to the SimpleCMS using visible controls.

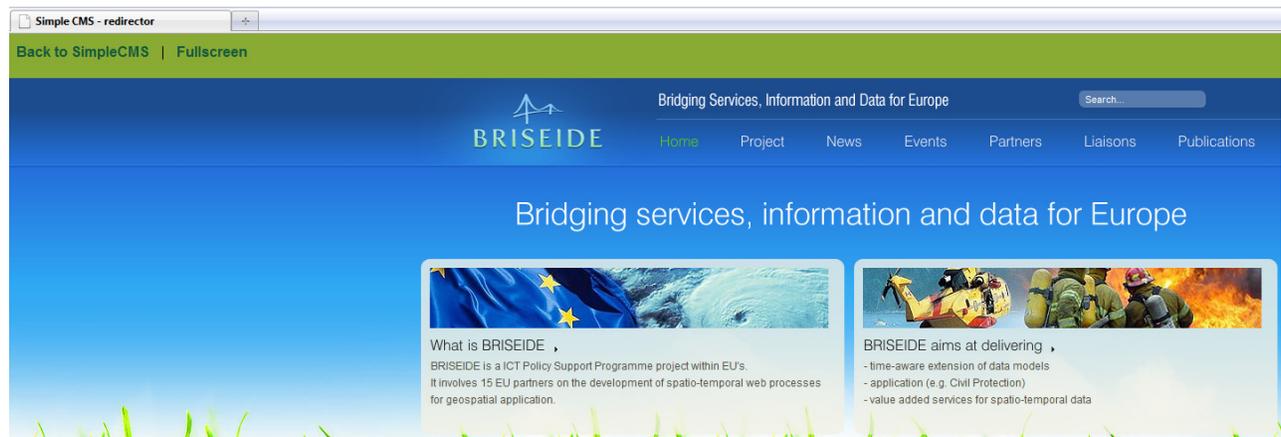


Fig. 2: For returning back to the geoportal homepage it is possible to use the SimpleCMS “redirector”

Any menu can be set as homepage. Only one homepage per SimpleCMS instance is possible. Menu ranking can be reordered in any way to best fit any updates that might be required during the usage.

Article

Articles are composed from the perex and the content. Using WYSIWYG editor is comfortable for authors-beginners and support full inline html. Next, the editor allows inserting of various multimedia content that user can think of like videos, photos, etc. **There is a special support for inserting dynamic maps.** Each article can be enhanced by adding various file attachments.

Message

Each menu can be accompanied by the message item. This is simplified article that contains just one view on short text that does not implement detailed view so it could be described only as a “perex”. Since the messages are always on top over the articles they can be best used as the menu description. Also the WISIWIG editor with rich functionality is used.

RSS

The SimpleCMS supports RSS feeds including any RSS feeds from remote sites. It allows a nice and handy way of promotion of our services that we want our user to know about.

Translations

The controls of the SimpleCMS can be translated into various languages. The *gettext* localisation system provides easy translations to the selected languages and possibility to use already created vocabularies from any other open-source project. It makes translating work really simple.

Remote articles promotion

Each menu in the SimpleCMS setup is automatically generating RSS feed for grabs to others. Also optional connectivity to Posterous¹ is possible, so the web presentation can be presented on all various social networking sites (for example Facebook).

User response using SimpleCMS

SimpleCMS also supports social validation of presented content using standard forum tools. Every registered user can comment selected article and to attend the discussion. These methods are currently used by most web based portals. We suppose these two possibilities for using of the implemented tools:

1. User feedback to the lectures
2. User clarification of problems related to the specific theme

¹ <https://posterous.com/>

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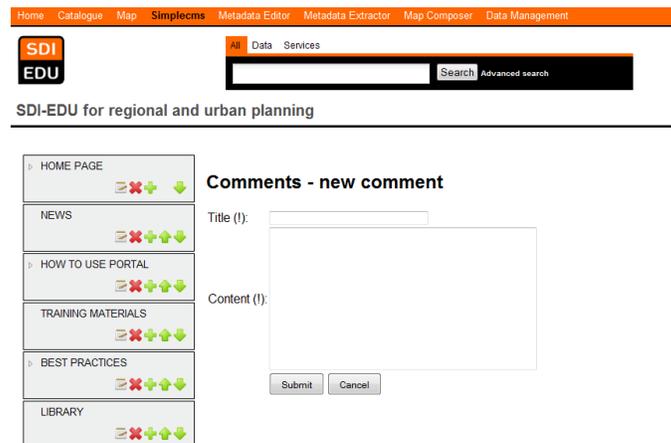


Fig. 3: Posting of the new comment using SimpleCMS

SDI-EDU on Social Network Sites

The SDI-EDU educational geoportal is designed and implemented as a virtual database. It uses principles of web services, Uniform Resource Management (URM), social network sites, Geoportal4everybody and semantic web. It integrates different technologies like GIS, e-learning, multimedia, and virtual reality. Important part is an integration of social networking tools. These services are not implemented on the SDI-EDU geoportal directly but they are implemented as virtual services on different places in Europe. The access is guaranteed through single access point <http://portal.sdi-edu.zcu.cz/>.

The focus of the SDI-EDU project is among others on the social network sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Linked-In) as one of the main dissemination and communication tool. The main aim of this activity is to communicate (to give information and to retrieve some feedback) about the SDI-EDU developments through the SDI-EDU geoportal. This will enable to induce discussion about certain topics. The retrieved feedback should serve as input information for further developments.

The SDI-EDU geoportal is an entry point for any news (new developments, problematic topics, progress in the project, etc.). News is posted by the project partners and is automatically distributed to a number of selected communities – social network sites. Feedback from these social network sites is retrieving by using of RSS and answered again from the central point – the SDI-EDU geoportal.

This approach allows involving of other communities from one place without necessity to enter each community. Users of various social network sites can read entries and comment through their respective communities and don't have to register elsewhere.

Social network sites used as an online response tool

The SDI-EDU project is promoted through the selected existing social networks. In particular the SDI-EDU project is using a feedback from Facebook, LinkedIn and INSPIRE forum.

