



▶ new millennium, new media

Managing Complex International Projects
Lessons from the EU project NM2

The Importance of Training

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anecdote

- the importance of training ...

training: why?

- scope:
 - this presentation targets IP projects that aim to:
 - create a paradigm/approach/concept
 - create tools that facilitate work in the created paradigm
 - address a community of potential users
- training – why?
 - Brownie points for the proposal ... but, there is more than that:
 - aim: **to introduce the developed paradigm/approach/concept and the accompanying tools to a *representative* part of the community of users**

but still ... why?

- the answer may appear as being dependent on the intended purpose regarding the outcome of the project
 - disseminate freely to the large community
 - attract investors for commercial development of prototype (sell the IP)
 - spin off company and start to exploit commercially
 - ...
- but it isn't
 - whatever the perspective upon the above issue, the purpose for training is the same

main aim for training

- build a community of representative users
 - through whom the paradigm and product become known
 - who will further disseminate them and possibly train others
 - who will stretch them and provide input for further developments
 - and, hopefully, who eventually will make them common practice and demand further developments
- these are all nice, but can they be achieved?

training: prerequisite

- the outcome of the project, or parts of it, must be sufficiently new, attractive and robust, to stimulate the interest of the potential trainees and their willingness to invest their time
- if the training is also on an artefact, then the trainees normally expect to be able to obtain that artefact for subsequent use

training: how?

- there are many aspects to organising the training activity; a few, inspired from NM2, will be outlined in the remainder of the presentation
 - internal training
 - external training
 - trainers
 - training methods
 - manuals
 - short courses and tutorials (target audience, events)
 - web resource

internal training

- relevant if the consortium includes partners whose role is to exploit the paradigm and associated tools in order to demonstrate their viability
 - it may be argued that all the partners contribute continuously to the development of the paradigm and the product, therefore no internal training is required; yet, this is not the case; however involved a partner is, training is still beneficial for the complete understanding
 - example: NM2
- trainers
 - may be the developers themselves; this takes them away from development!
 - may be specially assigned trainers: this pushes expenditure up!
 - train the external trainers during the internal training
- harvest material for external training during the internal training



external training: deadlock

- the project aims to produce “something” by its end date
- training is supposed to be carried out in that “something” during the lifetime of the project
- solution:
 - have an intermediate version for training
 - recall the main prerequisite for training!

external training: requisites

- reasonably robust product
- reasonably usable product
- reasonably static tool-interfaces
 - for manuals
- licensing methods
 - client server architecture
 - give out the tools free of charge, keep the middleware secure
 - reduced functionality system (greyed out features)
 - commercial licence for more sophisticated tools (dynamic plug-ins)
 - lock functionality to specific machine
- advertisement & recruitment

external training: trainers

- how does the new knowledge produced in the project reach the trainers?
 - forming/training the trainers takes time
 - normally, there is a large amount of documentation (deliverables) that has to be ingested by trainers
 - there may be significant details that are not documented; in this case, the information has to be obtained from developers
 - ideally: overlap the training of trainers with major stages in the development of the paradigm and product
 - trainers should be near experts
 - the paradigm is new; the product is new; a good understanding, required for training, requires expertise
 - example from NM2



external training: manuals

- caution
 - if manuals are to be used for external training, then their development introduces a further time delay
 - write manuals on the basis of designs
 - caveat: many aspects can change during implementation

external training: courses and tutorials

- target audiences
 - practitioners in the field
 - academic course leaders
 - they may introduce the new paradigm and product in their teaching
- events
 - aim to run tutorials in at events (such as conferences) that bring experts together
- structure
 - demonstration, hands on work, independent work, evaluation
- licence the product for further use
 - methods of licensing to protect IP

external training: web community

- manuals
- software download
- FAQs
- “gallery” of individual results
- discussion fora
- news
- bug reporting
- ...

interdependencies

- dissemination
- exploitation

conclusion

- training is an essential activity in an IP project