

23 October 2001: CMSAG Summary

In attendance: John Bevis, Joe Burley, Gautam Das, Randy Graff, Doug Johnson, Terry Morrow, Chris Sessums, Ron Thomas, Marvel Townsend, Stephen Ulmer, Martin Vala, Mike Wright, Fedro Zazueta.

Purpose: This meeting had two purposes: 1) to "ratify" the list of questions for vendors as well as the list of critical features/capabilities that vendors would be asked to demonstrate and or discuss in their presentations; and, 2) to participate in a video conference with Janet Poley, President of the American Distance Education Consortium to discuss the experience of ADEC members with the CMSs currently under consideration for UF.

Questions List:

The final questions list to be sent to vendors:

1. How long has your company been serving higher education?
2. Can you give examples of ways that your company proactively works to make CMS implementation and use successful? How much input would our institution have into current and future development of your product?
3. To what extent will your product and its implementation align with UF strategic planning efforts? [Vendors will be directed to appropriate strategic planning documents]
4. Can you give examples of how your company has developed or modified your product in response to customer feedback?
5. What is your company's structure and model for technical support of customers?
6. How many higher education institutions are using your CMS? How many institutions demographically similar to UF are using your CMS?
7. Can the company provide reference customers similar in size to UF who have implemented your CMS?
8. Can the company provide reference customers who have migrated from competing CMSs to your CMS?
9. To what extent does your product integrate with other products, e.g. third-party programs, portal systems, etc.? To what extent does your product integrate with PeopleSoft specifically?
10. With what educational groups, organizations, and initiatives are you involved? To what extent are you involved with industry standards such as IMS, SCORM, IEEE?
11. With which browsers and operating systems is your CMS compatible?
12. What is your company's policy regarding the intellectual property rights to content developed in courses running on your CMS? Is this policy formal and written or informal?
13. What is your company's policy toward the privacy of user data recorded in the system? Is this policy formal and written or informal?
14. What kind of training will be provided for local support staff (administrator's, system administrators, instructional designers, etc.) and for faculty and student users?
15. Should we decide not to continue with your CMS after an initial adoption, how well does your system support an exit strategy including portability of materials, compatibility of features and functions with other systems, etc.?
16. To what extent does your product comply with ADA and Section 508 accessibility requirements for student, faculty, and administrative users? Provide examples using the 16 checkpoints provided by the W3 Web Accessibility initiative [<http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG10/>].
17. What support will your company provide to move our existing course offerings from our current CMSs to your CMS?
18. Can you model Total Cost of Ownership for UF?
19. Will your company provide a financial statement and supporting data so that we might assess the financial stability of your company?

20. Describe the hardware and software configurations necessary to support growing programs: 20,000 users, 30,000 users, 50,000 users, etc. Include concurrent user considerations.
21. What model do you recommend for disaster planning and recovery? What support will your company provide for disaster planning and recovery?

Critical features List:

The specific features and functions vendors will be asked to demonstrate and/or discuss in their presentations will be:

- Accessibility Features/Compatibility (students, faculty, CMS admin)
- Server level and course level archive/backup function
- Bookmark capability
- Bulletin Board / Discussion Tool
 - Ability to define forums/topic areas
 - Ability to limit topics/forums to individuals and groups
- Calendar
 - PDA synchronization
- Chat
 - Multiple chat room capability
 - Chat session logging
 - Integration of chat with other synchronous capabilities such as whiteboard, audio, and video
- E-Pac Support
- E-mail
- File Management Ease and Flexibility
 - File uploads (both faculty and student)
- Graded Assessment
 - Partial credit capability
 - Control of number of attempts, time allowed
 - Variable feedback capability
 - Control # questions display
 - Allow change answer capability
 - Randomize questions, order of appearance, order of answers
 - Create mixed-mode assessments (mixed question types)
 - Variable point value/grading scale
 - Item analysis data
 - Automated scoring
- HTML Links
- Import/Export Capabilities (e.g. gradebook, Excel data, etc.)
- Instructor Customization
- Integration/interoperation with other Campus Systems and Third-Party Software:
 - LDAP/GatorLink
 - SIS
 - HSC Eval CGI [<http://medinfo.ufl.edu/cgi-about/evalcgi.html>]
 - PeopleSoft
- Lesson Development
 - Selective release by date, mastery criteria, etc.
- Local Student and Faculty HelpDesk Support
- Login Security
- Multimedia Support
 - Which media file formats are supported ?
 - How are these files implemented in a course?
- Multiple User Types

- Online grading
- Online help for instructors and students
- Online student note-taking
- Progress Tracking
- Self Assessment
- Single sign-on to multiple courses
- Student Groups
- Student roster
 - Control add, drop, block access
 - Integration with registration system
- Survey capability
- Whiteboard
- Reliable Access
- Security
- Training and Tech Support
- Does upgrading wipe out earlier customization?
- Price and Structure of licensing: Cost of implementation, Cost of upgrades, Basis for Calculation of present and future license costs.

Video Conference

Janet Poley identified a number of issues that we should consider:

1. total cost of ownership
2. stability of the organization particularly in terms of support staff turn-over/longevity
3. problem-solving and customer support
4. negotiation of Service Level Agreements
5. local control considerations
6. the real cost of a CMS is not in the license but in support, instructional design, etc.

Janet also discussed some issues related to running more than one CMS. She noted that while faculty like the choice, support costs are multiplied. She also mentioned in passing that some institutions like to use Blackboard to get faculty engaged in online education and then provide WebCT for it's more powerful feature set.

Janet also asserted that research is indicating that the "growing edge" and "payoff" for distance education was adding audio and video, but that the tools were not yet developed to implement these effectively.

Terry Morrow recommended that a similar video conference be arranged with representatives from UPenn who recently adopted Angel and are migrating from WebCT. Doug will contact John Harwood at UPenn to arrange this.

Homework:

1. Doug will contact vendors to begin scheduling presentations.
2. Four locations were suggested for vendor demonstrations: Reitz Union (Internet bandwidth capability was questioned), CSE507, McCarty G001, and Stuzin 103. Each of these facilities will be investigated.
3. Members were asked to begin thinking about how to best address the technical needs of CMS vendor presentations.
4. Members were asked to begin thinking of ways to effectively advertise the work of the CMSAG. A note is being prepared that will go out to the DDD list shortly.

Next meeting: 13 November. 1012 Turlington Hall. 9:30 AM.