

MIT PORTAL PROJECT STATUS REPORT

March 30, 2005

15.568 Practical IT Management
Spring 2005

Tiffany Kosolcharoen, Susie Lee, Adam Powell, and Armando Valdes

Sponsored by: MIT Information Systems & Technology

Provide a dashboard light of the overall prospects for achieving the project as laid out in the original project plan: green, yellow, or red

Green Task completed or able to be completed on deadline
Yellow Task has missed the deadline by two weeks or less
Red Task has missed the deadline by more than two weeks

Objectives Status

1. Determine necessary costs and resources – Green
2. Identify portal implementation issues – Green
3. Identify portal operational issues – Green
4. Document best practices – Green
5. Create reliable documentation – Green

I. Accomplishments

1. **Contacts:** Wayne has made preliminary contact with the following schools/organizations:
 - a. Duke – Deb Johnson, Assistant Vice Provost and Director, Student Administrative Services
 - b. Baylor – Bill Bevil, CSE, Senior Project Manager
 - c. *University of Cincinnati – Jim Lewis, Associate Director
 - d. Central Michigan – Renae Eckland, Director of Information Technology
 - e. Sloanspace*starred organizations are those with SAP portals

We are still waiting for responses from several other schools, including specifically schools with SAP portals. However, considering we had only initially expected to interview three portal administrators, this response is very good.

2. **Interview Template:** We have created an interview template (please see attached). Once this is approved by Wayne, we will begin our external interviews with the above schools.
3. **MIT Case Study:** We have created a draft of the MIT case study. Obviously there is no portal implementation yet at MIT, but we have filled in as much information as

possible. Ideally, those schools that already have portals will be able to provide more information for their case studies.

4. **Portal Scope and Definition:** We created the following definitions for our project:

MIT Portal Scope: “To provide customized one-stop-shopping for all administrative and self service applications and services. The primary audience for the Administrative Portal is MIT employees, but some applications, such as Student Group Reports, are specifically for students, and others, such as Training, are used by both employees and students.”

Transactions include: Benefits, Directory Information, Training resources; transactions for administrators of a DLC who work with their organization’s data - includes Financial, Master Data, and many other transactions.

Portal Definition: A hub or gateway to locate commonly used content. A portal gives approved users access to web-based information, tools, and services from one location, with single sign-on¹ and user-specific views. Roles-based profiles allow for dynamic, customized, personalized data. Use of portals allows for broadcast of messages or notifications, or narrower, targeted messages.

II. Issues

There have been no barriers yet. Wayne was able to get a good response through his preliminary contact. The fact that these people have responded so quickly and positively is a good sign for the rest of our interview process. Ideally, we would like a few more schools with SAP implementations to respond (in particular, NC State would be ideal).

Fortunately, the way we have built our timeline, we still have plenty of time to wait for their responses. The only possible issue with the interviews at this point is the accuracy and completeness of the information that we receive. We can ensure completeness by double checking our interview guide with Wayne before conducting the interviews. And hopefully any inaccuracies in data will be mitigated by the number of interviews that we are planning to conduct.

The only slowdown in our project has been Spring Break. However, we still managed to get some work done. Additionally, because we foresaw that little would get done over the vacation, we built that into the timeline, so we are still up to date.

III. Actions to be taken

All the preparation for the interviews (creation of interview template and MIT case study) has been completed. The next main step will be to conduct the external interviews. Several organizations have responded, so we will assign each team member with one or two to contact. These people will then also be responsible for putting the information

¹ Because MIT uses certificates, it is more appropriate to think in terms of single session rather than single sign-on.

into the corresponding case studies. With Spring Break behind us, our group expects to really kick into high gear with research.

In addition, we will incorporate some of the questions and suggestions from class on Tuesday, 3/29. Specifically, we will be mindful of the possible future integration with student portals. Although our champion specifically wanted us to stay away from the student portal, the point that the option should be open is valid.

To summarize, the following are our action items:

1. Get Interview guide checked off
2. Assign organizations to team members
3. Conduct external interviews

IV. Reflections and Learning

One of the main lessons from this project thus far is that depending on people and interviews for outside research can be quite time consuming. MIT students usually depend on textbooks and problems that are always readily available. Collecting information from outside sources involves quite a bit of planning and preparation.

Another lesson has been the extent to which people cling to legacy systems. Our group really has to be the unbiased perspective given that IS&T personnel assume that the new portal will be an SAP portal. There are also economic reasons for this, but the pervasiveness of legacy systems is a new experience.

Finally, our group has worked very well together through informal assignment of tasks. We trust each person to do his or her part. This trust is crucial in carrying this project forward.