



Sakai Newsletter

July 10, 2008

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1. From the Executive Director

We just completed a fantastic 9th Sakai Conference in Paris. Despite some logistical challenges (the hotel was too far away from the University) and unwelcome heat & humidity (and insufficient air conditioning in some rooms), it was a very successful week. Overall, over 50% of the participants were from outside North America, so the goal of having more European and African participants was achieved. It was all made possible by our colleagues at Université Pierre et Marie Curie who really can't be thanked too much for all the work they did.

Everyone has a different experience of the conference, of course, and mine is probably one of the most unusual. Still, I thought it was worth noting a few highlights from my week at the conference:

The teaching and learning community emerged. Wednesday was emblematic of this. The morning opened with the presentation of the first Sakai Teaching and Learning Innovation Awards, followed by Diana Laurillard's excellent keynote address, presentations from both of the Sakai T&L Award winners and, finally, an excellent panel

discussion with Diana, Josh Baron, Chuck Severance and Maggie Lynch. You can see these presentations (and others!) on the page UPMC used for webcasting the conference:

http://www.cpm.jussieu.fr/CPM/activites/visioconf/sakai_conf.htm

-- The "Better, Faster, Lighter Sakai UX " presentation from the folks at CARET and Nathan Pearson's UX Improvement presentation. CARET has been working on a new way of developing Sakai tools using JavaScript "gadgets" that consume JSON formatted data provided by the underlying Java services. All this work is clearly an important development for Sakai and that should produce a number of significant benefits for the community. CARET has a (slightly out-of-date) page on the Sakai wiki:

<http://confluence.sakaiproject.org/confluence/x/IABMAQ>

You can see both Nathan's UX presentation and the CARET presentation on the archived webcasts.

-- The focus on building a "content/page authoring" capability for Sakai. A number of folks are working on this and have tool prototypes available. These range from structured (OpenSyllabus by University of Montreal and HEC Montreal) to semi-structured (the Subject Research Guides from Sakaibrary) to unstructured (free form editing in OSP and some interesting widget-based work from Cambridge). We all agreed that there is an underlying set of capabilities that are shared and that we should be able to combine efforts in some way. Stay tuned.

The next "Sakai Community Conference" will be in June 2009 in the Eastern half of the United States (we're hoping for Boston). In the meantime, a number of regional events are cropping up:

- A mid-November meeting at Virginia Tech
- A European regional meeting early next year, perhaps in February
- An Australian regional meeting, perhaps in November
- A South African meeting, perhaps in May
- A development-focused working session in Berkeley in November or December

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2. 2008 International Eportfolio Conference

Dear (OSP) Portfolio colleagues,

Who is intending to join the yearly international Eportfolio conference? This year the conference is in Maastricht (22-24 October) in the Netherlands. See for more information: <http://events.eife-l.org/ep2008/overview> It would be great if we could have some meetings around OSP/Sakai during this conference. The call for contributions is already closed. Please contact me if you are too late but still intend to do a proposal. I'm a member of the conference organization group. See for more information: <http://events.eife-l.org/ep2008/call>

About ePortfolio & Digital Identity 2008 -- ePortfolio & Digital Identity 2008 is the 6th edition of the key international event for the growing community of professionals interested in, and working with, ePortfolios and digital identities. It brings together policymakers, researchers, teachers, trainers, human resource managers and technologists. As a thematic event devoted to one domain, it allows an in-depth and broad exploration of the issues -- and results in real outcomes. Past events have resulted in the creation of national and international networks, contribution to ePortfolio policy, the launch of the ePortfolio for All campaign, progress in ePortfolio interoperability through the Plugfest and contribution to standardisation bodies, establishing partnerships with other communities in the field of digital identity and human resource standards, transnational projects and numerous publications.

Marij Veugelers
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3. New Sakai Membership Options Available

Greetings,

I'd like to announce two new Sakai Foundation membership options designed to make it easier for the community to support the Sakai Foundation. As you may know, current membership levels are \$10,000 annually for larger schools and all commercial affiliates and \$5000 for smaller schools (<3,000 in enrollment).

The first new option applies to Sakai Commercial Affiliate (SCA) members. As of July 1, commercial affiliate membership fees will be based on a sliding scale. Membership will be \$2,000 per \$1,000,000 in revenues. The minimum fee will be \$2,000 and the maximum will be \$10,000 as before. For existing SCAs, this pricing will apply at the time of their renewal.

The second option introduces a three-year membership at a 20% discount. Current membership dues for larger schools are \$10,000 annually and the 3-year membership would be \$24,000. For schools at the \$5,000 membership level, dues for a three-year membership would be \$12,000. This 3-year membership discount is also available to Sakai Commercial Affiliates (although a minimum of \$2,000 annually would still apply).

Please contact Michael Korcuska (mkorcuska@sakaifoundation.org) or Mary Miles (mmiles@sakaifoundation.org) for details.

Best regards,

Michael Korcuska

4. Announcing Mneme 1.1.8!

Mneme 1.1.8 is available for Sakai 2.3.x, Sakai 2.4.x, or Sakai 2.5.

If you are running an earlier version of Mneme, please upgrade to 1.1.8; we will not be supporting earlier versions. As Mneme is still a young muse, we need you to keep up with us. Upgrading to Mneme 1.1.8 is simple. You'll need to take Mneme, Ambrosia, and TinyMCE. No conversion is required. There was a bad bug in TinyMCE 3.0.8, so please be sure to get TinyMCE 3.0.9 (link on our download page).

Mneme 1.1.8 has been run in production in Etudes since mid-June.

WHAT'S NEW IN MNEME 1.1.8

Outside of bug fixes since the 1.1.4 public release, the key highlight of this release is an import utility that allows instructors to port their assignments from the Assignments and onto Mneme in a few clicks.

Steps to import assignments to Mneme:

<http://etudes.org/mneme/releases/tc-import-assignments.htm>

Comparison Chart of Mneme vs. Assignments:

http://etudes.org/mneme/releases/tc_assignments_compare.htm

DOWNLOAD AND INSTALL MNEME 1.1.8

<http://etudes.org/mneme/download.html>

Documentation for Sakai Administrators:

http://etudes.org/mneme/admin_sakai.html

Overview of Functionality & Modules:

<http://etudes.org/mneme/index.html> (see all links at the top)

User Tutorials & Documentation:

<http://etudes.org/mneme/download.html> tutorials

BUGS, KNOWN ISSUES, AND FUTURE ROADMAP:

For bugs & known issues, future feature requests, etc, see:

<http://etudes.org/mneme/other.html>

OTHER NOTES:

In addition to English, Mneme is available in Portuguese. Unfortunately, the final bundles didn't make it in the release. However, if you need to run Mneme in Portuguese, please contact me (sinou@etudes.org) or Nuno Fernandes (nuno@ufp.pt), Universidade Fernando Pessoa.

QUESTIONS:

For technical or user support questions or to report issues, contact sakai-dev@collab.sakaiproject.org or sakai-user@collab.sakaiproject.org. Feel free to contact me or Glenn Golden (ggolden@umich.edu) directly, too.

ABOUT:

Mneme is a comprehensive assessment engine for Sakai that consists of an authoring module for creating questions and managing pools; a module for publishing assignments, tasks, tests and surveys; a grading module for evaluating assessments, optionally integrated with the Gradebook; and a delivery module for administering assessments to students. Additionally, a test-drive component allows instructors to take assessments as students.

CREDITS:

Project Lead: Vivie Sinou, Etudes Technical Lead: Glenn Golden, University of Michigan

LICENSE:

Mneme is licensed under the Apache License, Version 2.0

Vivie Sinou

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Dean, Learning Technology

ETUDES Project

Foothill College

5. Melete 2.5 Now Available!

Melete 2.5 is now available for Sakai 2.3.x, Sakai 2.4.x, or Sakai 2.5.

WHAT'S NEW IN MELETE 2.5

For a quick overview (with screen shots) of the key new features, see:
<http://etudes.org/release/melete/downloads/melete-upgrade2.5.htm>

Highlights include the following:

- ME-90 Implement ability to 'move' sections from one module to another
- ME-257 Duplicate modules
- ME-44 Ability to select and export one or more modules - not just all
- ME-702 Add preference to auto-number modules and sections.
- ME-265 Upload Files Helper - under Manage
- ME-441 Add ability to remove uploads, embedded, and links from MeleteDocs
- ME-526 Expanded / Collapsed preference of modules for students
- ME-493 Option to have uploads OR URL's open in new window or in Melete iframe
- ME-525 Lift restrictions on titles to aid foreign language teaching
- ME-39 Convert all sections of a module into a web page for easy printing
- ME-554 Preferences to enable module printing
- ME-28 Delete Melete content fully upon module or section deletion
- ME-694 Swedish translation for Melete 2.5
- ME-521 Implement support for Sakai's Site Archive

For a complete list of features and fixes, see: <http://etudes.org/release/melete/index.htm>

DOWNLOAD AND INSTALL MELETE 2.5

<http://etudes.org/release/melete/install-guide.htm>

User Tutorials & Documentation:

<http://etudes.org/release/melete/index.htm>

BUGS & KNOWN ISSUES, AND FUTURE ROADMAP:

For bugs & known issues, future features, etc, see:

http://etudes.org/melete_features.htm

OTHER NOTES:

In addition to Swedish translation that was added in Melete 2.5, Melete is also (almost) available in Portuguese. Please contact Nuno Fernandes (nuno@ufp.pt), Universidade Fernando Pessoa, for the messages bundle (in final stages).

QUESTIONS:

For technical or user support questions or to report issues, please write to etudes-dev@foothill.edu or sakai-dev@collab.sakaiproject.org.

ABOUT:

Melete, a lesson builder tool (a.k.a. Modules), is integrated with Etudes and Sakai. Melete allows instructors to publish learning sequences that can be created by uploading learning objects, pointing to URL resources, and composing online.

CREDITS:

Many thanks go to the following individuals for their contributions:

- Rashmi Maheshwari, Melete developer, Etudes Project.
- Mallika Thoppay, Melete developer, Etudes Project.
- Raul Mengod, Universidad Politécnica de Valencia (auto-numbering feature).
- Kathy Fransham, Etudes Project, QA and User Documentation
- All of our QA testers and particularly Sarah Phinney, Norah Glover, Margie White, Kathleen O'Brien, and Kyong Kim.

Many thanks also go to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office for generous funding support for new Melete development.

LICENSE:

Melete is licensed under the Apache License, Version 2.0

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6. Visit rSmart's New Portfolio Showcase

Get hands-on practice and files to keep and use as you like!

If you're interested in learning more about ePortfolios, please visit rSmart's new Portfolio Showcase (<http://www.rsmart.com/portfolios>). This website offers everything you need to understand, create, and implement a model portfolio for each of three common use cases.

Each page of the showcase contains links that take you deeper and deeper into one of the three exemplars. We provide a zip file for each exemplar too, so you can download the files needed and actually build the portfolio you've been exploring. These files are yours to use and change as you like.

In addition to creating the Portfolio Showcase website, we've used the Web Content tool to add the showcase as a tool in the rSmart Sandbox. Anyone can get a Sandbox account, so if you don't have one, you can sign up here: <http://www.sakaisandbox.com/xsl-portal>. Next, use the Site Setup tool in My Workspace to create a portfolio site. Be sure to check Portfolio Showcase in the tools list displayed during site creation. When you access your new site, you'll see Portfolio Showcase in the list of tools on the left. Click on the tool name and start exploring.

The three showcased portfolios are available to you thanks to the generosity of Kapiolani Community College, Rider University, and the Rhode Island Network for Technology. Over the next several months and more, we hope to post additional examples to help everyone understand the flexibility and power of ePortfolios and -- just as importantly -- understand what's involved in creating them. If your institution is willing to share detailed information about the use and creation of ePortfolios, please use the contact us link on the site to let us know. And, as always, we welcome and rely on any feedback you care to give to help us make the Portfolio Showcase tool as useful as possible.

Best,

Jonny Brown
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Sr. Information Architect, rSmart

7. Recent Email Group Discussions

Here are some topics that have been discussed in the last couple of weeks in Sakai email groups. Most of these discussions can be found at these Nabble URLs:

- Sakai-dev - <http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---Development-f18040.html> (DEV)
- Sakai Portfolio - <http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---Portfolio-f18155.html> (PORT)
- Sakai Pedagogy - <http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---Pedagogy-f24248.html> (PED)
- Sakai UI - <http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---User-Interaction-f25634.html> (UI)
- Sakai Migration - <http://www.nabble.com/Sakai-Migration-Group-f27621.html> (MIG)
- Sakai Announcements - <http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---Announce-f28489.html> (ANN)

To join an email group, go to <http://www.collab.sakaiproject.org>. While you are in your workspace, click the "Membership" link in the left-hand menu and then click the "Joinable Sites" link. Click "Join" next to any of the groups.

Discussions:

2.5 install blog DEV, USER
Blackboard ProjectNG redefines "Open" to mean "Encompassing" PED, USER, UI, UX
Bug in Schedule When Adding attachment no Path shown PORT
CalDAV integration demo DEV
Crash while deleting the reportDefinition file on Report Tool PORT
final (at least for Rutgers) implementation of default image directory and unlistable folders DEV, PORT
Firefox 3 iframes stop resizing USER
Gradebook Excitement UI
How do i get the current user and current course to use on a tool? PED
iframe question DEV
Kernel 1 maintenance (was Re: Maven 2 cleanup) DEV
Mailtool vs. Messages -- Which one and why? USER
Maven 2 cleanup DEV
Melete 2.5 Now Available! DEV
mindmap tool for sakai DEV
Portfolio export with links including spaces PORT
Possible new UX for Portfolios tool PORT
problem running maven with sakai 2.4.1 DEV
Problems after converting content hosting DEV
proposed implementation on direct forms in wizard, SAK-13799 UI
Report conversion may not be sufficient to make existing reports work UI
report definition issue DEV
ReportsManagerImpl.java -- saveReportDef always gets NULL reportDef when trying to import a report (2-5-x) UI
Resources helper 404 error USER
SAK-13146 Branch (Alternative Add Forms and Attachments to Wizard PORTMain Page)
Sakai Help Tool Modifications USER
sakai jar downloads DEV
Sakai Queries / Reporting Metrics DEV
Sakai T&L > New Call Time Proposal PORT
Schedule Event Types. Where are they defined? DEV
test-harness changes in Sakai trunk DEV
Testing of the Mail Archive FIXes - SAK-13584 DEV
webservice to add members to a group DEV
wysiwyg wiki? PED

8. Events

2008 International Eportfolio Conference
Maastricht, the Netherlands
22-24 October, 2008 i
<http://events.eife-l.org/ep2008/overview>

ONLINE EDUCA BERLIN 2008
14th International Conference on Technology Supported Learning and Training
December 3 - 5 , 2008
Hotel InterContinental Berlin
Berlin, Germany
www.online-educa.com

Here are email addresses to contact if you encounter problems with
various Sakai Community systems:

Collab -- collab-admins@umich.edu
Confluence -- confluence-admins@collab.sakaiproject.org
Jira -- jira-admins@collab.sakaiproject.org