Sakai Newsletter

July 9, 2009

1. From the Executive Director

As part of the Sakai 3 project and the overall UX initiative, the Sakai Foundation, University of Cambridge and Georgia Tech recently engaged a User Experience Design Consultancy in the UK to create a visual design. The process and initial results can be found here:

http://confluence.sakaiproject.org/confluence/x/eI1DAw/

I'm personally very pleased with the direction this is heading and it is an important step on the path towards delivering Sakai 3. Please take a look and let us know what you think. I will be demonstrating this "in action" at the 10th Sakai Conference in Boston.

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2. Follow Along with What's Happening at the Conference

Not attending the Conference in Boston? There are several ways you can follow along:

Yahoo Pipes -- Go to http://pipes.yahoo.com and search for Sakai09

Facebook – Go to http://www.facebook.com/login.php   Tag: Sakai09

Slideshare – Go to http://www.slideshare.net/event/10th-sakai-conference-boston-ma

UStream.tv Channel -- We will be piloting live streaming from some select presentations at the conference. Visit http://www.ustream.tv/channel/sakai09 to follow the live stream during the event and access recorded. If you would like to participate in this pilot, please contact Mathieu Plourde (just call him Matt), mathieu@udel.edu. Matt will mostly broadcast from the Using Sakai track.

Watch for information about other sources of information about the Conference at the following site:

http://confluence.sakaiproject.org/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=38862858

and on the Conference website:

https://educonference.com/sakai/boston/index.php

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3. Call for Volunteers: Citizen Journalists for Sakai Boston Conference

We are looking for volunteers to serve as "Citizen Journalists" during the Sakai Conference in Boston. Your role would be to interview presenters whose sessions you find interesting and to produce a short video summary. Interviews of conference attendees, such as brief demos of Sakai capabilities, overviews of an organization's migration or integration strategy, or a survey of opinions about a topic, would also be very welcome. Our goal is to gather such videos as quickly as possible, balanced against

allowing some time to edit them for content and presentation quality, and post them for viewing during (or very shortly after) the conference.

If you are interested in helping out, but don't have your own video equipment, the Sakai Foundation will be providing a few Flip camera (or similar) setups for use during the conference. If you would like to help with interviewing, but don't know much about cameras and editing, or, if you are a videophile, but don't know much about interviewing, please still consider volunteering, and we will try to pair you up with someone who has a complimentary set of skills.

If you would like to volunteer to help with this effort, please get in touch with me.

Thanks.

Knoop, Peter
knoop@umich.edu

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4. Come Join the Sakai Community Gathering on Reinventing the Requirements Process

Greetings Sakai Community,

I just wanted to take a moment to draw folk's attention to a session that we're hoping to get a diverse cross section of the community to attend.

As many of you may know, throughout the history of Sakai there have been attempts to collect, prioritize and address functionality requirements (e.g., new tools, enhancements to tools, etc.). To date, no one ideal process has emerged, and as a result we currently lack a comprehensive "requirements" strategy. With the launch of several new initiatives (e.g., product development process, Product Council, 3akai, etc.) this past year, several of us in the community felt that this was a good time to visit this issue and work together to reinvent a new community-based requirements gathering process.

If you are interested, please consider attending the session titled "Community Gathering: Re-Inventing the Requirements Process" scheduled for Wednesday at 1:15 PM (with a BOF to follow at the same time on Thursday). The session will be a forum for the community to gather and discuss inventing a new requirements process.

Thanks!

Josh Baron
Director, Academic Technology and eLearning
Marist College
Josh.Baron@marist.edu

5. New Sakai Foundation Staff Members

As a result of a strategic review of its goals and activities, the Sakai Foundation has recently introduced some important changes to the Sakai Development Process (see http://confluence.sakaiproject.org/x/kIGTAQ for more information). The introduction of this process and an examination of the role the Sakai Foundation should play in supporting the community resulted in the creation of two new staff positions: Sakai Product Manager and Sakai Communications Manager. I'm pleased to announce that we have completed the interview process for both of those positions and will have two excellent new additions to the Sakai Foundation staff.

Clay Fenlason has been selected for the Sakai Product Manager position. If you've followed Sakai at all you'll know the contributions Clay has made as a community member, a staff member of two Sakai adopters (Boston University and Georgia Tech), and as a member of the Sakai Foundation Board of Directors. His skills and experience, coupled with his passion for and dedication to Sakai, will contribute a great deal to supporting the community and making the new Product Development Process successful.

As Sakai Product Manager, Clay will lead the new development process for Sakai and will drive both greater engagement from users and contributors as well as greater roadmap predictability for adopting institutions. He will also serve as the liaison between the community and the Sakai Product Council. This will be a challenging and invigorating role since the Product Manager will, in a very real sense, "own" the Sakai roadmap. The Sakai Foundation and Georgia Tech are still in the process of finalizing the formal arrangements for the appointment, but we are working to ensure that he can assume these duties as quickly as possible while still assuring a suitable transition at Georgia Tech. I know that everyone in the community who has worked with Clay understands how much he will be able to contribute in this role.

I'd also like to welcome Pieter Hartsook, the new Sakai Communications Manager. Pieter is an experienced marketing and communications specialist with a history in higher education and open source. Most significantly, Pieter spent nearly six years as marketing and communications specialist at the Open Source Applications Foundation (OSAF), the non-profit foundation behind the open source Chandler project founded by Mitch Kapor. He also previously worked as Vice President of Marketing Analysis & Research at Apple Computer and published "The Harstook Letter," an independent newsletter focused on market analysis of the Macintosh. We're very excited to have Pieter on board to bring his extensive communications, high tech and open source experience to the Sakai Foundation.

Pieter will be responsible for both internal and external communications for the Sakai Foundation. He will own the content for the Sakai website and the overall organization of our wiki and other communication vehicles for Sakai. This will be a role with a wide set

of responsibilities, involving everything from developing a communications strategy to writing lots of content.

Please join in offering congratulations to Clay and Pieter! Both will be at the 10th Sakai Conference so those of you attending the conference will have a chance to do that in person.

Best regards,

Michael Korcuska

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6. Oxford Going Live with Sakai

As of 30th June, Oxford University is running Sakai in production (v2.5.x).

We're using most of the core tools plus Mneme, Evaluations, Tutorial Sign-up, Search and Site Stats. We've also integrated tightly with our LDAP, developed a hierarchy service to allow us to arrange sites in a tree structure and using this, introduced devolved administration via the concept of Administrations Sites (admin site members are able to create new sites within any site where they are a maintainer), we've also made it easy to assign the .anon and .auth roles to any site to encourage Open Content. We've also developed a hierarchy of Guidance sites with lots of documentation and exemplars, visit weblearn.ox.ac.uk/info (no login required).

(As a side note, there's a hierarchy BOF provisionally on the Friday of the Boston conference at 9.30 AM if anybody would like to know more. This has been organised by Robin Hill.)

We ran a very successful pilot last year and attracted a large number of early adopters from over 60 separate departments. These early adopters have created over 700 separate sites which have been accessed by over 4500 users. The pilot has generated very positive feedback and we're looking forward to all our users (30,000) moving their focus from the old Bodington-based service into nice shiny new Sakai!

Adam Marshall
adam.marshall@oucs.ox.ac.uk

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7. Sakai Book Found in the Wild

After ten months of effort and with the help of forty active participants, the book the "Sakai Courseware Management: The Official Guide" is a physical reality (http://www.packtpub.com/sakai-courseware-management-the-official-guide). Despite

the author X's consistent attempts to secretly add Google AdWords to links hidden in the book, all royalties are going to the Sakai Foundation.

Lots of people deserve thanks. Michael Korcuska's blog entry names and shames:
http://sakaiblog.korcuska.net/2009/06/12/sakai-book-now-shipping

Alan Berg
Informatiseringscentrum
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8. The Jasig Fall 2009 Unconference is Coming!

Dates:
September 28-30 -- Unconference sessions
October 1-2 -- Developer meetings

Place:
University of Illinois - Urbana Champaign I Hotel and Conference Center

Registration/Fees:
Jasig Members: $225
Non-members: $275

Accommodations:
I Hotel and Conference Center: $119/night
Deadline for guaranteed rate is August 27, 2009.
Front Desk: 217-819-5000
Make sure you ask for the Jasig room block and rate!

WHAT'S AN UNCONFERENCE?
"An unconference is a conference where the content of the sessions is driven and created by the participants, generally day-by-day during the course of the event, rather than by a single organizer, or small group of organizers, in advance."   -- Wikipedia

Jasig has always been about people coming together to share and learn in an open environment, and this is what an "unconference" is all about.

This fall event will provide both spontaneous and planned opportunities to collaborate on all Jasig community initiatives, as well as initiatives from other community open source projects. This year we plan to continue discussions begun at the June Internet2/EDUCAUSE/Jasig Identity and Access Management ACAMP, as well.

Mark your calendar and make plans to join us! More information about the Unconference will be available soon.

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?!
It's up to you. Ideas people are talking about so far include the following:

--- Lightning Talks - Volunteers talk for up to 8 minutes. Any topic goes.
--- Code Clinics - Bring your uPortal, portlet, CAS, Bedework, or IdM code or problem and work on it with core developers.
--- Birds of a Feather Sessions - Discuss common interests, issues, problems with colleagues.
-- Strategic Planning - What should Jasig be focused on next year? In three years? Join the conversation. Newbie? Meet the experts and get individualized help.
--- How-tos. How-not-tos.
--- Tips and techniques.

The final schedule will be determined in real-time, interactively with the attendees. More information will be available soon. See you at the Unconference!

- The Fall 2009 Jasig Unconference Organizers

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9. rSmart Welcomes College of the Redwoods to the Sakai Community

College of the Redwoods (CR) is excited to be implementing a pilot of the rSmart Sakai CLE for the fall 2009 term. A public community college, CR is located on the coast of northern California. It serves nearly 280,000 residents, spread across a huge region of almost 10,000 square miles.

Although CR has three different campuses and several other instructional sites, the majority of the region's residents do not have easy access to these facilities. In response, CR plans to expand its online courses and ultimately offer degrees entirely online. The school hopes to increase development of online courses threefold over the next several years.

To meet budget constraints, CR knew it had to move to an open source environment for online delivery -- and it chose Sakai, already used by more than 25 community colleges in the state. CR also recognized the need for a strong strategic partner, with extensive knowledge of Sakai, to ensure a successful pilot and provide ongoing support if the platform is adopted. The school chose rSmart largely because of its long-standing involvement with the Sakai community and its solid business reputation.

"We have a need to move very quickly and yet not jeopardize the quality of our student and faculty experience," says Maggie McVay Lynch, Dean of Distance Education at CR. "From configuration discussions and ultimate implementation to the training of our CLE administrators, rSmart's expertise in Sakai and care for the customer was evident. Their ability to help us proactively make important decisions for the future has been invaluable to getting our pilot going in record time."

Mike Zackrison
http://www.rsmart.com

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10. rSmart Sakai Workshop: Join Us for Summer Sakai Institute

During this half-day workshop, attendees will create a pilot course in a live, hosted instance of Sakai. Participants will learn to build content, assessments, and encourage collaboration with Sakai tools. They will learn how to configure Sakai tools and course permissions and add students into the course. At the end of the workshop, each participant will have a course built that they can run for an entire semester.

Attendees need a computer with internet connection for the workshop. It is recommended that attendees have a syllabus on hand, as well.

Workshop August 31, 2009
9:30 - 11:00 AM PDT, 12:00 - 2:00 PM PDT

To register: https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/580074513

Megan Perrone
megan.perrone@rsmart.com

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11. Job Opening at Virginia Tech

Virginia Tech has an immediate opening for a Learning Systems Architect. This position plays a critical role in designing and maintaining highly scalable systems to meet the needs of Learning Technologies in cooperation with a wide variety of Information Technology support groups. To learn more about this position or to apply, please visit http://www.jobs.vt.edu and search for posting number 090379. Individuals desiring assistance or accommodation in the application process should call 540-231-9331 or 540-231-6258 TDD. Virginia Tech is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution.

Dr. John F. Moore
Senior Director, Strategy and Planning Learning
jmoore1@vt.edu

12. Recent Email Group Discussions

[Building Sakai] FCK Editor limit in samigo
http://n2.nabble.com/-Building-Sakai--FCK-Editor-limit-in-samigo-td3220133.html#a3220133

[Building Sakai] rest all 'My Workspaces'
http://n2.nabble.com/-Building-Sakai--rest-all-%27My-Workspaces%27-td3213717.html#a3213717

[Building Sakai] TinyURL Service Impl Issue
http://n2.nabble.com/-Building-Sakai--TinyURL-Service-Impl-Issue-td3214022.html#a3214022

[Building Sakai] Urgent help : Problem Uploading file in Scorm Player
http://n2.nabble.com/-Building-Sakai--Urgent-help-%3A-Problem-Uploading-file-in-Scorm-Player-td3212539.html#a3212693

[Building Sakai] sakai2.5 skin appearance problem
http://n2.nabble.com/-Building-Sakai--sakai2.5-skin-appearance-problem-td3212199.html#a3212452

[Building Sakai] Sakai and OPENSSO
http://n2.nabble.com/-Building-Sakai--Sakai-and-OPENSSO-td3211867.html#a3211867

[Building Sakai] Show Sakai tool iframe in full window mode
http://n2.nabble.com/-Building-Sakai--Show-Sakai-tool-iframe-in-full-window-mode-td3192457.html#a3192457

[Portfolio] WYSIWYG limit
http://n2.nabble.com/-Portfolio--WYSIWYG-limit-td3218876.html#a3218876

[Portfolio] SAK-16536 freeform madness
http://n2.nabble.com/-Portfolio--SAK-16536-freeform-madness-td3183775.html#a3183775

[Portfolio] Replyable emails from portfolio tools
http://n2.nabble.com/-Portfolio--Replyable-emails-from-portfolio-tools-td3177049.html#a3177049

[DG: User Experience] Sakai 3 UX [Fwd: [sakai-kernel] Re: My Preferences, Account Details, Regional Settings: Language]

http://n2.nabble.com/-DG%3A-User-Experience--Sakai-3-UX--Fwd%3A--sakai-kernel--Re%3A-My-Preferences%2C-Account-Details%2C-Regional-Settings%3A-Language--td3220232.html#a3220232

[DG: User Experience] Visual Designs for 3akai
http://n2.nabble.com/-DG%3A-User-Experience--Visual-Designs-for-3akai-td3154191.html#a3154643

[Building Sakai] UStream Pilot
http://n2.nabble.com/-Using-Sakai--UStream-Pilot-td3196488.html#a3196488

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13. Events

AuSakai '09
September 17-18, 2009
Charles Sturt University Bathurst Campus
Bathurst NSW, Australia
http://www.csu.edu.au/division/landt/ausakai09/ausakai09.htm

1st Workshop: Learning Management Systems meet Adaptive Learning Environments
 (LMS-ALE'09)
September 29 - October 2, 2009
EC-TEL
Nice, France
http://wwwis.win.tue.nl/lms-ale-09

The Jasig Fall 2009 Unconference
September 28 - 30 Unconference sessions; October 1-2 Developer meetings
Urbana Champaign I Hotel and Conference Center
University of Illinois
Urbana - Champaign, Illinois

Assessment Institute in Indianapolis
October 25-27, 2009
The Westin Indianapolis
Indianapolis, Indiana
http://www.planning.iupui.edu/institute

Online Educa Berlin 2009
December 2-4, 2009
Hotel InterContinental Berlin
Berlin, Germany
http://www.online-educa.com/the-conference