Subject: RE: Notes from Wednesday
From: "Udas, Ken" <Ken.Udas@suny.edu>
Date: Wed, 02 Nov 2005 09:13:53 -0500
To: Jim Farmer <jxf@immagic.com>
CC: "Feldstein, Michael" <Michael.Feldstein@suny.edu>, "Masson, Patrick" <Patrick.Masson@suny.edu>

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Jim,

Hello.  Patrick, Michael, and I have reviewed your notes.  As usual, they are a wonderful
tool for reflection.  Thank you.  We do have a few suggestions.

- It would be good to emphasize the "Long-Tail" problem that we are trying to address.
We are interested in having flexibility around moving tools in and out of the LMS, so
while we might be starting with Academus to provide base-line functionality, we have a
framework/application optimized for transitioning to an entirely open source stack if
desired or a constellation of open and proprietary products.  This strikes at our desire
to minimize the potential negative impact of vendor lock in.

- We think that identifying Unicon Inc.'s Academus Suite as part of our candidate
solution is perhaps a bit of an over statement.  I know that we have to do a better job
refining our message about the role of Academus.  We are currently looking at Academus as
an illustration of the Portal/LMS model.  Given our time frames, it might very well make
sense to have some of Academus' tools included in our first deployments, but it is not a
forgone conclusion.  We are more comfortable identifying uPortal and LAMS as integral
components.  That is, the solution candidate for public discussion focuses on uPortal and
the LAMS learning system, yet acknowledges the need for enhanced functionality through
both commercial and open source tools.

- Although "Unicon¹s Academus 1.5 learning system and Sakai 2.0 were eliminated because
they did not have ³85% of the functionality of SLN 1.0.", they also lacked the facility
to easily create courses through a work flow model, instead opting for a "functionality"
oriented model of constructing and organizing courses.  This is also true of the versions
of Blackboard and WebCT that we reviewed.

- It might also be worth mentioning uPortal and its role as an integration engine for
ERP.



On another related issue.  I do appreciate the heads-up you gave me about David's
communication and his description of a Sakai + uPortal + LAMS solution.  I can very much
see the confusion that this might have caused among Sakai leadership.  Internally we
always discuss SAMIGO and Grade Book as Sakai products that we would like to integrate
into SLN2, but we have not seriously discussed adopting Sakai "enterprise Bundle" since
our gap analysis around 4 months ago.  Unfortunately I had not read the e-mails from
David and Joe before you, Justin and I talked on Monday.  Pat, Michael, and I all agree
that representing our candidate solution as "Sakai + uPortal + LAMS" is confusing and
misleading.  In addition, it makes us look a bit foolish.  So, to clarify, we are
potentially interested in SAMIGO and Grade Book.


Cheers & Thanks Again from all of us!


Ken





-----Original Message-----
From: Jim Farmer [mailto:jxf@immagic.com]
Sent: Sunday, October 30, 2005 6:52 PM
To: Udas, Ken
Subject: Notes from Wednesday
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Enclosed is a copy of the notes I provided to Joseph Hardin. He elected not to share these with others.

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