

MINORITY WEB-PLATFORM PROPOSITION

MINORITY INTERACTION & CREATIVITY FOR ALL:

THE STARLIGHT COMMUNITY

(MICAS)

INTELLIGENESIS.EU

TARGETS

Minority's new skills trainee and community project MICAS:

- is dedicated to help MICAS community members via assisting communication, interaction and new skills acquisition via online help and support
- acts as an additional tool to promote MICAS well-being and support
- provides an e-learning platform for new creativity and innovation skills acquisition
- is dedicated to MICAS quality as well as ease of maintenance and future sustainability

Ways MICAS reaches its targets

MICAS

- reaches every member of the community and of the certified interested non-MICAS public
- collaborates with all other institutions and communities;
- provides new skills for new jobs training
- designs, develops and supports a communication platform targeting social interaction and inclusion for all members of the MICAS community
- involves local authorities (think globally, act locally)

DESIGN

Design Targets

MICAS is responsible for the information on the website and owns the MICAS copyright. The Design needs to:

- Fulfil MICAS targets and needs
- Facilitate and automate current work
- Extend MICAS targets and activities and reach a wider audience using new technologies
- Use new and mobile technologies to modernise MICAS internet services
- Attract outside user who need help and support

- Promote interaction and collaboration between the MICAS staff and the community
- Present the time-rhythm on MICAS activities and members' life-habits, this is the hours of intensive required help and support, community events (e.g. during w/ds)
- Provide access to a shared on-line platform that,
 - promotes MICAS targets and visions
 - has a personal character (e.g. homepage starts with Directors' welcome note)
 - disseminates information on MICAS targets and activities
 - gives opportunities for interaction and collaboration
 - promotes the sense of belonging in the MICAS community
 - links with help and support with creativity and learning
 - provides information and on-line support for the members and possible to non-members who do not have access to Minority's programs

Overall Design Decisions

A structured (squared) design is usable and functional. The colours need not to disturb the existing members as users, provide a sense of community, familiarity and a sense of something new (insecurity and fear of the new).

Logo, Colours and Background: An effort to design a logo may be an idea, using both English and Greek characters. The background is white for legibility; however, quotes and headlines come in a light background to indicate their importance. The font is easily adjustable for older users with minimum eye sight, as they can use the text size facility on the browser. Some basic web pages (for example information about MICAS and contact details) may be in other languages.

Initial Homepage [Home]: This page is the initial homepage. This page needs to describe clearly MICAS purposes, the people and the activities involved. As such, the new members and potential members will decide quickly and positively on MICAS. A small sample of news and 3 or 4 important links may appear on the first page. It has a personal character which reflects trust and a sense of co-presence. The director's photo might be an additional advantage. It will give a sense of talking to the target audience directly (websites with photos have been proven to enhance empathy).

Menus

MICAS is not proposed to have an extensive menu of activities. As such, one menu may be considered adequate and easy-to-use to convey all needed information without extended sub-menus. The bottom menu has all information provided by MICAS as well as additional information.

Main Menu

1st Web Page [Home]:

Consists of:

- A welcome note from the Director.
- Important news

- Headlines for weekly activities
- Other (but not overloaded)

2nd Web Page [News]:

Consists of:

- Forthcoming events
- A calendar for each term will be helpful to have an overall view of the activities, as members can have it available in several ways (printing it out and attach it to plans, having it on a document etc).
- Other

3rd Web Page [Community]:

This is the first page to access the MICAS community:

- Overall contents
- Information about the community
- Some users that are currently online
- Bookmarked events
- Subscription to MICAS newsletter for the mailing list
- Access to forum (not in consideration at the moment)
- Other

4th Web Page [E-Learning]:

This is the first page to access the MICAS e-learning Moodle platform:

- Moodle integration
- Other

5th Web Page [Contact Us]:

Constitutes of:

- contact information
- maps
- form for feedback
 - information on the website
 - ideas and preferences
 - require information about how they found the website (there were two new people at the last lecture, one got the email by mistake, the other was invited by a friend)
- Other

Bottom Menu

Consists of:

- Link to Home for easy access to the starting page
- Disclaimer (as in the previous web site)
- Accessibility (as in the previous web site)
- Privacy (as in the previous web site)
- Help (as in the previous web site)
- How to use MICAS web-platform
- RSS feed for sending news to blogs, palm and mobile gadgets that are compatible to RSS syndicate) based on the new standard Resource Description Framework (RDF) for the new W3C Semantic Web Activity (<http://www.w3.org/RDF/>)
- Information about MICAS provider and contact details
- MICAS copyright information
- An encouraging phrase, quote or something else.

Website Evaluation

Evaluation will be conducted in 3 levels based on the number of members in evaluation procedures:

- (a) Initial design evaluation from MICAS staff. Initial opinions, suggestions, changes from the will change the initial design and outlook.
- (b) Initial implementation evaluation on members' suggestions; 5 members is an adequate number to track any difficulties and problems as well as ideas. Then the website will be finalised in a standard design and information structure.
- (c) Constant evaluation:
 - a. Feedback form
 - b. Frequent updates
 - c. Statistics

TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATION

Platform propositions

1. Facebook integration: <http://developers.facebook.com/>
 - a. Advantages:
 - the website can be promoted through Facebook social.
 - User can log in using Facebook log in details which eliminates the need for extra subscription to site.
 - b. Disadvantages:
 - it might not be the ideal solution as not everyone has a facebook account.
2. Ning: <http://www.ning.com/>
 - a. Advantages:
 - a versatile platform that can accommodate many users and mostly serves our current requirements.

- b. Disadvantages:
 - Paid-for solution.
3. Joomla: <http://www.joomla.org/>
 - a. Advantages:
 - Community plug-in
 - Future capability of massive expansion
 - Community support

In the initial platforms customisation is necessary to adjust them to MICAS needs, targets and visions for current and future use. This requires extensive and specialised programming:

1. Platform customisation
 - a. Interface
 - b. Logos
 - c. Plug-ins configuration and adjustment to MICAS needs
 - d. Additional tools to facilitate the creation of community
 - Participation graphs
 - Voting
 - Bonus points
 - Other

Access to Servers and Databases

Access to MICAS servers and databases may give more options in technical implementation and automate actions. These actions may be:

- Development and maintenance of a mailing list with subscribe/unsubscribe automated options for the potential and old members
- Evaluation, feedback and further suggestions from the members
- Development and maintenance of an archive
- Development and maintenance of the eLearning Moodle Learning Management System

Mailing list and Newsletters

A mailing list is preferable to start with instead of a forum. There are many ways to create, develop and maintain a mailing list. The suitable method depends on the access to servers and the technical support. There are several advantages on maintaining a coherent mailing list connected to members' database:

- Creation of members' database with information about the members and contact details
- Easy-to-use the above information and save valuable time
- Easy-to-post information and newsletters
- Total control of the members' list in comparison to the Internet-based community.

A newsletter may be sent to the members using the mailing list. The members may be able to subscribe/unsubscribe automatically. A basic design for the newsletter will act as a template and then MICAS can only change the text. Every new newsletter can be sent to the members automatically as html email via members' emails. Individual emails can be sent for any reason.

PROGRAMMING

- Basic HTML/PHP programming
- Three interacting CSS Style-sheets
 1. design for the <body>, <top banner>, <main text>, <left menu>, <footer> and <divider>.
 2. main requirements and printing options for a print.css
 3. definition of printing requirements
- RDF compatible RSS Syndicate updated every time it is needed
- One submission form (server configuration)
- Images elaborated for the web
- PHP and MySQL in case of building an online community using a discussion forum

INTELLIGENESIS WORK

- Design
- Development
- Direct contact with customer
- Initial evaluation
- Programming
- Consultancy (ideological, philosophical)
- Financial issues
- Project Management
- Initial evaluation
- Consultancy
- E-Learning
- Creation of creativity and innovation course for new skills- new jobs
- Community creation strategies
- Final evaluation and product delivery

CONSIDERATIONS

Considerations on the On-line Community

Building an On-line Community requires time, a specific process to follow and dedication.

A server to host the discussion forum is needed from the technical point of view. Due to the specific nature of MICAS activities and the limited control of the Community interaction functions and constraints, there may be disrupting messages and unwanted users aboard. Thus, a moderator is essential to keep an eye on the messages and the community. If for

any reason, offensive messages or individuals continue to bombard the forum, the only way to stop it is to terminate it.

Ethical Considerations

- Community members' conditions of use
- Copyright
- Other..

WORK PACKAGES

- Project Management
- Design & Development
- Programming
- Initial evaluation
- Consultancy
- E-Learning
- Creation of creativity and innovation course for new skills- new jobs
- Community creation strategies
- Final Evaluation

GANTT CHART

- According to occasion

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