THE COLIS PROJECT: OVERVIEW AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

James Dalziel, Macquarie E-learning Centre of Excellence (MELCOE)
& WebMCQ Pty Ltd

Length of workshop: Half Day

Intended audience and degree of expertise required by workshop participants:

This workshop is open to all conference attendees. It will provide a simple, non-technical introduction to the COLIS project and recent developments, including a basic introduction to e-learning standards. Attendees should have general familiarity with current developments in e-learning and using a web browser, but are not required to have specialist technical or standards knowledge.

Clear statement of the objectives of the workshop:

- Provide an overview of the COLIS project - its history, goals and achievements
- Provide an overview of recent work on the COLIS project under the 2003 project titled "Interaction of IT Systems and Repositories"
- Provide a practical introduction to e-learning standards/specifications and their relevance to e-learning in general and the COLIS project in particular
- Provide advice on implementation of e-learning standards/specifications
- Provide advice on system integration of e-learning and information systems
- Provide real-life scenarios that illustrate the importance of e-learning standards/specifications and systems integration
- Allow participants to explore the COLIS Demonstrator environment during a guided walkthrough of COLIS systems and functionality
- Provide an overview of planned work for 2004
- Describe ways in which participants can become involved in COLIS in 2004

A detailed description of the workshop format including activities workshop participants will be expected to engage in:

This workshop will provide an introduction to the DEST-funded COLIS project, and the 2003 extension of this project, titled "Interaction of IT Systems and Repositories". It will outline the background to the project, particularly in terms of international developments in e-learning standards/specifications, and the need for "Demonstrator" projects to examine the relevance of standards/specification in practical scenarios.

It will review the COLIS "Service Chunks" model which incorporates a Learning Object Exchange, a Learning Object Management System, a Federated Search Gateway, a Learning Management System and a Portal/Single-sign-on/Directory system, and explain the purpose and relevance of each system to current developments in e-learning.

Using the outcomes of the project, the workshop will explore the requirements of e-learning standards/specifications and systems integration within typical educational institutions, and develop appropriate models for implementation based on discussion with participants about their local needs. This will be based on sample scenarios or "use cases" to assist in articulating the requirements for successful implementation of e-learning standards/specifications.

A key feature of the workshop will be the opportunity for participants to interact with a live version of the COLIS Demonstrator environment to gain hands-on experience with the nature of the Demonstrator, and its implications for their local contexts. A guided walkthrough will illustrate key features of the Demonstrator, followed by free-form exploration of the environment supported by the facilitator. The purpose of the live demonstration is to allow for a hands-on experience of system features and the role of standards/specification so as to inform participants about potential requirements for their local contexts.

The workshop will conclude with an overview of work planned for the next stage of the COLIS project in 2004, including discussion of new functional areas (eg, these may include reading lists, learning design, competencies and assessment), further development of access and identity management components, and further educational research projects. This section will include discussion of opportunities to be involved in the COLIS project in 2004.

A summary of the workshop presenter's qualifications:

James Dalziel, BA (Hons), PhD, Grad Cert Higher Education
Adjunct Professor and Director, Macquarie E-learning Centre of Excellence (MELCOE), & Executive Director, WebMCQ Pty Ltd

James has been closely involved in the COLIS project for the past two years, and is involved with international e-learning standards/specification development and implementation. He has worked in both academic and commercial e-learning settings, and has been involved in educational research, software development, and system integration for e-learning. James is regular speaker at e-learning conferences, and is able to translate difficult concepts (such as e-learning standards) into easily understood everyday language.

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