

# **Report concerning TC.13 web site and communication issues**

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## **Web site progress**

The TC.13 web site is now officially launched in that the domain name, ifip-hci.org is relinked to the csmobile server. This is still only a temporary solution, that will be changed as soon as we have moved the site to a more permanent server solution. The site is to be hosted either at the IFIP server or (more likely) a German server, as offered by Achim Eberts. The crucial problem here is that the server needs to accommodate Plone, which is not evident for the IFIP servers.

The web site was cleansed of irrelevances and empty pages by Gitte and Lars, and is now in a working state.

The members area is available for the TC representatives and for the working group officers. There are now procedures worked out for the management of most parts of the site. A representatives guide has been created and is available as a pdf from the TC site. There is ongoing work on a maintenance guide for coming web site administrators, but it is not yet ready for uploading.

## **Web site issues**

At the Florence meeting it was proposed to use a wiki type of software attached to the system. There is a wiki type of Plone plugin that would enable the use of wiki type of web site building. However, the Csmobile did not manage to install this module. Hopefully this will be possible as soon as the new server has been installed (see above). The Action regarding this has therefore not been performed.

It is strongly recommended that the representatives make themselves familiar with the uploading of documents. Uploading documents that are sent in by email constitute a large work overhead. If material is sent for uploading, the documents MUST be saved as pdf-files. Microsoft word files are not suitable (other than for ongoing work between representatives) due to the risk for viruses. If you have problems mounting documents on the site then you may email the document as a pdf, and in the letter include the following information:

- Title of the document
- A short description of the content of the document (that is, the information that is displayed with the document).
- An indication of WHERE on the site you want the document to appear, e.g. on the form:  
*home -> [Members area] -> Representatives CV*

## **Events**

Currently TC.13 is seemingly active only in two events on the site, the INTERACT conference, and the HCIEd Conference. There must be more events planned within the group. This is an important advertising area. About 20% of the references to the INTERACT 2009 conference web site were from the the TC.13 home page.

Representatives who know about or run conferences and workshops with a connection to the TC, should add these to the Event list.

## **TC Communication issues**

There are a couple of communication issues that have surfaced since the last meeting.

### **Online Participation**

Prior to the Athens meeting there was a discussion about how to manage the participation of representatives who are not able to participate at the meeting in person. The reasons for investigating this type of communication is the structure of the TC, with many participants from the whole world, including developing countries. Also the large number of long distance travellers does add to this situation. For economical (and environmental?) reasons we might need to add possibilities for virtual presence during (part of) the meetings.

### **Previous attempts**

In 199X the TC made an attempt to have an electronically managed meeting, using web postings and email discussions. As might be expected this attempt was not too successful for several reasons. The meeting was carried through to its full extent, but the response rate was low, and there was a large management overhead in the meeting. Part of this problem can be traced to the lack of proper tools, such as conference handling systems.

That the attempt was not completely successful is not a reason to discard electronic meetings or virtual presence at meetings. Rather, we should learn from the experiences and try to develop the means for electronic meetings into a form that would work for the requirements from perspectives of the TC.13.

### **Recent discussions**

Prior to the Athens meeting there were a relatively large number of apologies received, mentioning things as heavy work loads and similar reasons for not being able to participate. It is a common situation for academic employees that work loads vary with time. Sometimes it is difficult to predict a year in advance as well.

In the correspondence prior to the meeting there were suggestions to have electronic communication facilities during the meeting. There were many proposals and views posted in the informal inquiry that I did two weeks before the meeting. Most of the representatives are positive to the idea that some kind of conference participation via Internet would be interesting to pursue.

The issue was voiced too late in order to work out a final solution in time for the meeting, but there are several possibilities to enhance the possibilities for distance attendance. Among the suggested communication media are MSN messenger (and clones) and Skype. For several reasons Skype seems to be a preferred means of communication. Some issues were also recognized:

- The meeting venue needs to have a capable Internet connection.
- A continuous online meeting attendance was not desirable, but rather the possibility to participate in crucial discussions and/or votings.
- The technology used must allow people from less connected countries to attend. Bandwidth issues are important.
- Although most representatives support the use of Skype, there were also an indication of the use of more potent virtual conferencing systems.

All in all, the discussion and survey prior to this meeting does suggest that the possibilities for distance participation should be investigated, and some alternative solutions should be presented.

## **Summary**

All in all, there is a lot going on regarding the website. Using the web for communication will be an increasingly important part of the TC work. Online, realtime connections during meetings will be further investigated. The TC should appoint a task force to discuss this after this meeting. Suggestions for members: Philippe Palanque, Achim Eberts, Lars Oestreicher and Younis. The purpose of the task force is to find out some solutions that can be evaluated.