Learning Networks for Professional Development & Lifelong Learning

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Overview

- Use Cases for Lifelong learning
- Learning Networks for Lifelong Learning
- Design for Learning Networks
Use Case 1

James is a chemical engineer working for an SME. He wants to pursue a career as a water manager with the local water board. He therefore needs to update and upgrade his skills.
Use Case 2

A lawyer working for Sandex finds out he needs to expand his knowledge in order to get a more thorough understanding of the science part of the company, in particular about manufacturing pharmaca.
Use Case 3

A vintage motorcycle enthusiast who wants to buy a Moto Guzzi V7 from 1972 and restore it in its original grandeur. For this, she needs to learn motorcycle specific skills, which she hopes to do through a network of fellow-enthusiasts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>formal learning</th>
<th>non-formal learning</th>
<th>informal learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>initial education</strong></td>
<td>‘ordinary’ education</td>
<td>rare occasion</td>
<td>out of scope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>post-initial education</strong></td>
<td>continuous education</td>
<td>lifelong learning</td>
<td>out of scope</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Thesis 1

• Continuous education builds on the formal mode of learning
• It is ineffective for post-initial education as it cannot meet the demands for logistic, pedagogical and subject-matter flexibility
[Thesis 2]

• Initial education should smoothly transition into post-initial education for lifelong learning to have any chance

• This sets demands to initial education mostly
Thesis 3

- Post-initial education is best practiced in the context of Learning Networks
- A Learning Network is an online, social network designed to support and facilitate lifelong learning (a learning ‘ecosystem’)

Thursday, September 3, 2009
Design: Competences

- Competence maps allow one to chart out achievements and ambitions in terms of competences
- Competence link learning activities to learning opportunities
Design: self-organisation

- In the context of a Learning Network, through ad hoc transient communities a patchwork of partially overlapping communities should emerge.

- Both nearby friends in the same community and distant acquaintances (friends of friends of ..) in remote communities (Granovetter’s strength of weak ties).
Design: peer recommendations

- on knowledgeable experts
- on content suited to learning goals
- on collaboration opportunities
- on study progress (coaching)
- (through the use of ad-hoc transient communities)
Design: architecture

• plan 1 (short term): start with existing community and let it acquire learning network characteristics

• use dedicated, ‘closed’ infrastructure, use flexible CMS like Drupal or Moodle (must be Open Source)
Design: architecture

• plan 2 (long term): start with an existing network and foster the growth of communities with a learning focus in it

• use existing social networking sites, provide services through their APIs (open social!)
Questions?
now or later

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