

NEDLIB Progress Report - March 1999



Introduction

Project NEDLIB - Networked European Deposit Library - started in January 1998 with funding from the European Commission's Telematics for Libraries Programme. There are 12 partners, deposit libraries, archives and IT-developers, working together. Three main publishers contribute to the project and will supply electronic publications for demonstration purposes. The project aims to construct the basic infrastructure upon which a networked European deposit library can be built. You will find all necessary information about the project, its participants, goals, work programme and areas of investigation on the NEDLIB web-site:
URL: <<http://www.konbib.nl/nedlib/>>

NEDLIB progress

Laying the foundation

The identification of deposit library requirements for a deposit system for electronic publications (DSEP) started with an inventory of local situations at the different deposit libraries participating in NEDLIB. Details about the different national legal frameworks, the electronic deposit collections, the initiatives to set up an electronic deposit system, the infrastructures, the workflow and practices, all have been collected and recorded in a background report.

This report reflects the complex composition of the project consortium, representing eight different deposit organisations with greatly varying traditional and cultural backgrounds and each operating within specific legal frameworks. From the analysis of local situations a prototype, consisting of a roughly structured workflow model, was identified and presented. Further work attempted to attain consensus on the generic requirements within the consortium and to analyse them. This consolidation work led to the report entitled: *Functional Specifications for the DSEP, second version*. The final step was to formalise the outcome of the requirements' analysis into a high level design. The high level design is supposed to reflect a top-down perspective, common to all deposit organisations. For a complete design and real implementations, it was proposed that the process be complemented with bottom-up perspectives, focused at the local level. The inter-relationship between generic and local levels, during a re-iterative design process, is described in the report entitled: *High Level Design*.

Verifying progress with CENL

The specification of requirements and the high-level design for a DSEP were presented at a workshop held on the 30th of September 1998, in conjunction with the CENL conference, in order to verify the requirements with the member libraries and to ensure their commitment to the generic architecture. The outcome of this workshop confirmed the mixed feelings of the consortium: the results did not live up to the expectations of the target group.

In addition, it was increasingly unclear to the project co-ordination, how a re-iterative design process could be monitored in NEDLIB. There was a real danger that bottom-up approaches would over-rule the generic approach, jeopardising the project goals to provide useful models, standards and tools for a wider community of archives and deposit libraries.

The Reference Model for an OAIS

A major step forward with the conceptual design of a DSEP was made in December 1998. The Paris proposal, named after the meeting place where an outline agreement was reached, recommended the adoption of the Open Archival Information System (OAIS)-model as a Reference Model for further work on a DSEP. The model is also being used by similar other projects such as CEDARS in the UK and PANDORA in Australia.

The OAIS-document, drafted by the NASA, is an ISO technical recommendation for use in developing a consensus on what is required for an archive to provide permanent preservation of digital information:

Referencing Model for an Open Archive Information System (OAIS), White Book, Issue 4, Don Sawyer / NASA and Lou Reich / CSC

DSEP Functional design and data model

Since the Paris proposal, the design of a DSEP-model that is conformant to the OAIS reference-model is progressing. Work is being carried out on the functional design, the data-model, the revision of the glossary and on standards to be used in view of their usefulness for long-term preservation functions. All these efforts should lead to an overall functional and technical DSEP-design that is general enough to be applicable for all deposit libraries, yet detailed enough for enabling consistent implementation design and development work.

NEDLIB planning

The overall NEDLIB project planning has been revised. Instead of the original, work package based planning, the new planning is more focussed on synchronising the work package activities in consecutive project stages of design, development and testing. In this way, all work packages proceed together, each stage of the project at a time. It is hoped that in this way the coherence of the overall work can be achieved more effectively.

Activity / Period	Jan - Sep 1999	Oct - Dec 1999	Jan - Dec 2000
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Design: Functional & Technical			
Design: Implementation			
Development & Testing			

TvdW, 16/03/99