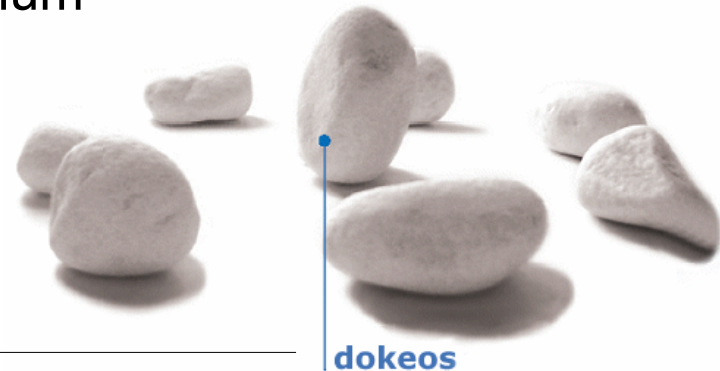


From Blackboard to Dokeos

pro's & cons of an Open Source VLE

Jean-Marie Maes – Bart Mollet
University College Ghent
Ghent, Flanders, Belgium

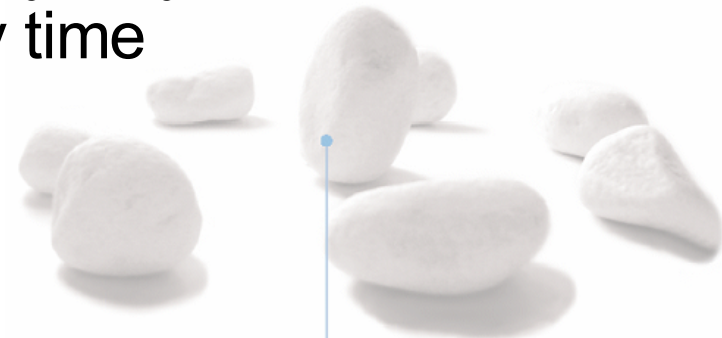


University College Ghent: e-learning history

- 2001 Kick off: merger with Mercator Hogeschool where Blackboard had just been introduced
- 2002 - 2003 Start Digitaal Leren (e-learning)
- 2004 – 2005 Introduction of Open Source VLE Dokeos
- Oct. 2005 Completion of migration from Blackboard to Dokeos
- Jan. 2006 4000+ 'courses', 14000+ active users

Open Source Advantages

- **Quality**
 - The cooperative *peer-review* model of OS development has positive effects on quality of code
- **The user at the steering wheel**
 - With traditional software the user has little or no impact on future developments
 - OS software is more user driven:
If you contribute to developments you are able to help steer the future of the software
- **Independent**
 - You do not depend on a third party as you have access to the source code at any time



Open Source Advantages

- **Standards**
 - In general OS software adheres more strictly to standards than proprietary software
- **Cost efficient**
 - Software is free, but development comes at a price
- **Different business model**
 - Selling support & tailor-made development, not software
- **No danger of vendor lock-in**



Open Source Disadvantages

- Small projects are usually easy enough to manage
- But as they grow organization can be a problem
 - Decision making
 - Reaching a consensus can be hazardous
 - Need for a structured decision making process
 - Real danger of splits
 - Potential lack of continuity

Main Contributions

- Rapid debugging
- Extended group tools
 - Including subgroups
- Flexible course copy and recycle tools
- Integration of other tools
 - Wiki
 - RSS
 - Skype
- Extensive integration with administrative back office
- Dokeos from LMS to LCMS
 - based on repository



Why extending the user base?

- Course metaphor is (too) restrictive
- Different users = different needs
Different usage = different feedback
→ Better platform
- From a university platform to a general tool
 - Dokeos for schools
 - Hosting & Support
 - Dokeos for SME's
 - Further integration of social software with a user based repository as the basis for different applications (cf. LCMS)

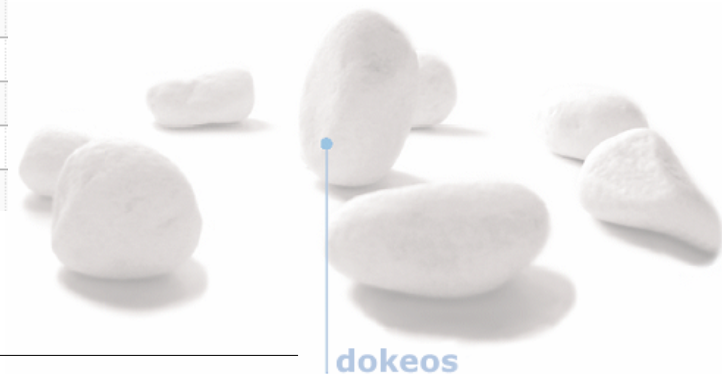


Schools

- Much more activity *in* lessons
≠ colleges especially outside lectures
- Much more *guided* activities
≠ less self study
- Specific needs
 - extented csv import possibilities:
 - adding users to courses, to 'classes'
 - reservation tool



Schools

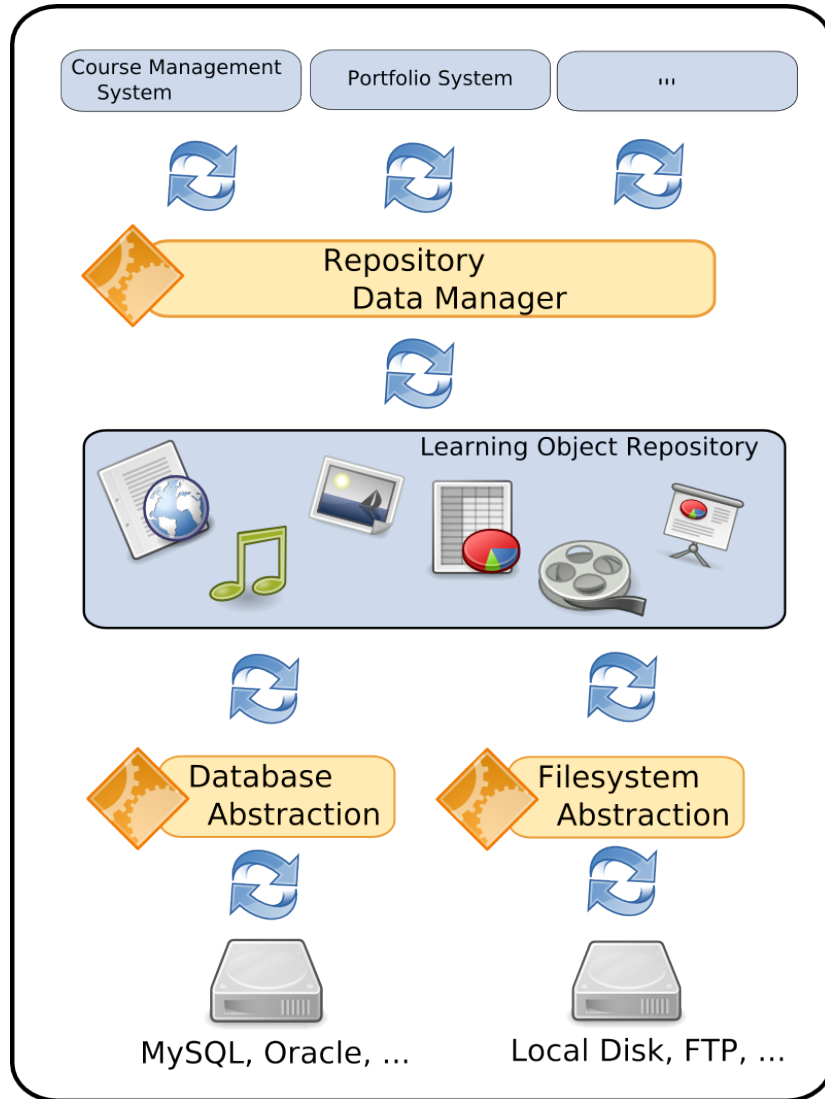


SME's: More than e-learning

- Communication is very important:
 - Alternative to intranet
 - Alternative to a website
- Collaboration tool
- E-learning platform

➔ Dokeos will become a more general platform

Dokeos LCMS: New structure

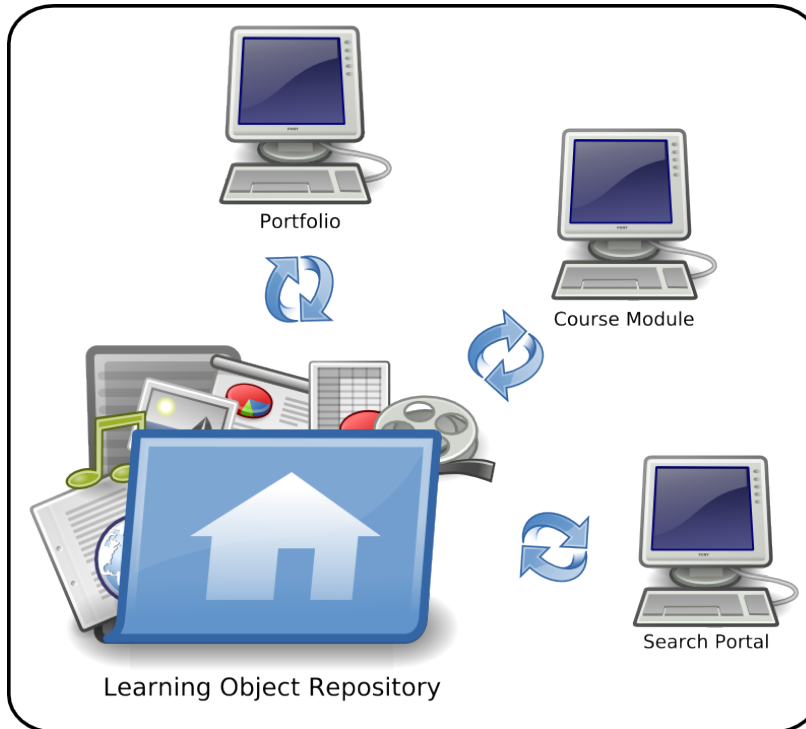


- LCMS
 - Content management
 - Learning Objects
- Learning object
 - Owned by user, not course
 - Published in one or more courses, portfolios, ...
- Competitors taking similar approach



Dokeos LCMS: Advantages

- Runs with different databases (abstraction layers)
- Basis for a wide range of applications



- Courses
- Communities
- Search portal
- Portfolio
- Collaboration environment
- etc.

- Opens up the community of all Dokeos users and beyond

Questions?

- Questions?
- Contact information
 - jeanmarie.maes@hogent.be
 - bart.mollet@hogent.be
 - <http://digitaal-leren.hogent.be>
- Dokeos software
 - <http://www.dokeos.com>
 - LCMS-project:
http://www.dokeos.com/wiki/index.php/Dokeos_LCMS_design

