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D 2.1- Website

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Executive Summary

This document provides the detailed status of implementation of activities conducted so far within the WP2 - Conference Dissemination of the project, specifically in what concerns the Task 2.1, and more specifically the development and delivery of the conferences website.

Although the commitment was to deliver the website by the 3rd project month, this delivery was anticipated and the website is up and running since November 2013.

Nevertheless, the first and immediate steps were the definition of the conferences graphical identity and the launch of the website, focusing on the Bologna edition of conference planned for June 2014.

Thus, the main activities conducted to define the conferences' graphical identity and deliver the website were:

1. Design and graphic conception
2. Information architecture
3. Website construction and delivery
4. Contents management
5. Website operation and maintenance

The website is the main deliverable of this task (T2.1), but one should also consider the approved graphic identity for the conferences as a supporting deliverable.

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1 Introduction

WP2 is focused on the key aspects of organising a conference, such as its advertisement and dissemination, and the first and immediate steps were the definition of the conferences graphical identity and the launch of the website, focusing on the Bologna conference planned for June 2014.

The aim of the website is to support general communication to the public and research stakeholders trying the reach an audience as large as possible. This is considered a preferred tool to projects in the various European R&D programmes, via the project and scientific officers, in order to increase the reach to the targeted audience, from both the paper submission and the attendance viewpoints.

NOVA prepared and constructed the project's website for the first edition of the conference within the first 3 months of the project. The website has been on-line from November 2013 focusing on the Bologna edition of the conference: http://eucnc.eu

Within the preparation phase, NOVA proposed the graphic design and identity for the project, including the webdesign, logos for the conferences and identity code. The website was then structured, designed and constructed. Basically, the website follows best practices, namely the structure of websites for this type of conferences, taking IEEE ICC or GLOBECOM as examples.

The contents were initially defined and supplied by EuConNeCts partners, and specific contents on Bologna were provided by the Italian partner. The website contains a friendly back-office, in order to enable smooth and effective maintenance and operation.

In the following chapter, a detailed description of the current status of the activities plan concerning Task 2.1 of WP2 - Conference Coordination and Dissemination is depicted, identifying each activity conducted to deliver the proposed results: the conferences' graphical identity and the website. A final chapter presents the conclusions.

2 Activities plan

The main activities conducted to define the conferences' graphical identity and to deliver the website can be summarised as follows:

1. Design and graphic conception
2. Information architecture
3. Website construction and delivery
4. Contents management
5. Website operation and maintenance

In the following sub-sections, each of these activities are described.

2.1 Design and graphic conception

This phase was decomposed into two sequential macro activities. The first one was the design of the logo that would support the graphical identity to be applied in promotional materials and the website.

Figure 1 depicts the graphic identity approved with full details and colour codes. The selection of blue as main colour proposes a connection with the European identity specifically, and in particular with European Commission websites. The basic idea was to share a common identity.

Furthermore, to complement the lettering that should be the main component of the logo, an icon was added in a way that links our visual perception with the world of networks and Information and Communication Technologies.

Concerning the study of the logo, three models were considered and evaluated and the final variations of the logo are presented in Figure 2.

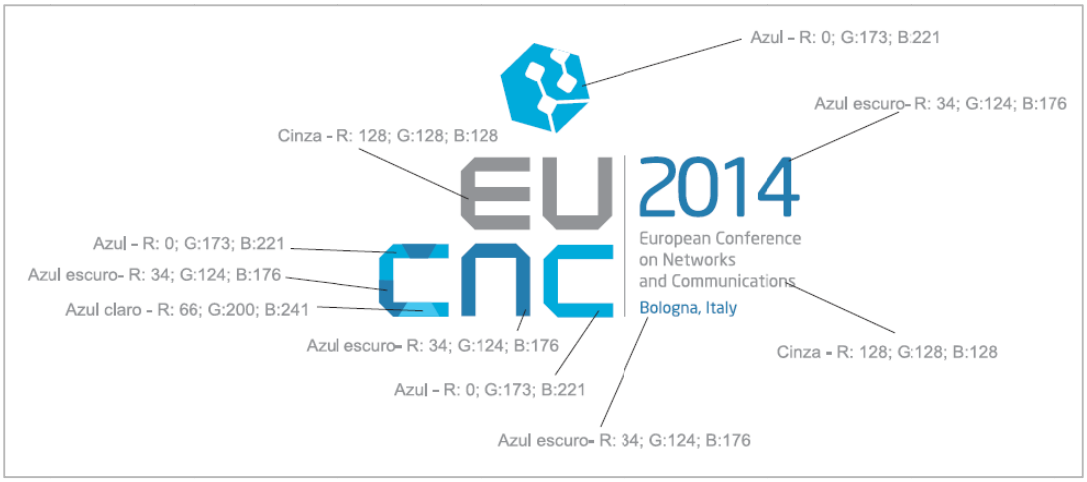

Figure 1. Graphic identity.

Figure 2. Logos for the Bologna conference identity.

The second activity consisted of the definition of the layout for the website, combining the previously defined colours and lettering. The main layout is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Main layout of the website.

2.2 Information architecture

Information architecture represents a hierarchical structure of the contents that will be available on the website. To achieve that, two main activities were fundamental:

- Benchmark of similar websites:
  - http://www.ieee-icc.org
  - http://www.ieee-globecom.org
  - http://www.ieeevtc.org/vtc2013spring
  - http://www.eucap2013.org
- Workshops joining INOV team, designers, developers.

The final information architecture that supported the website was structured in several dimensions, as presented in Figure 5.

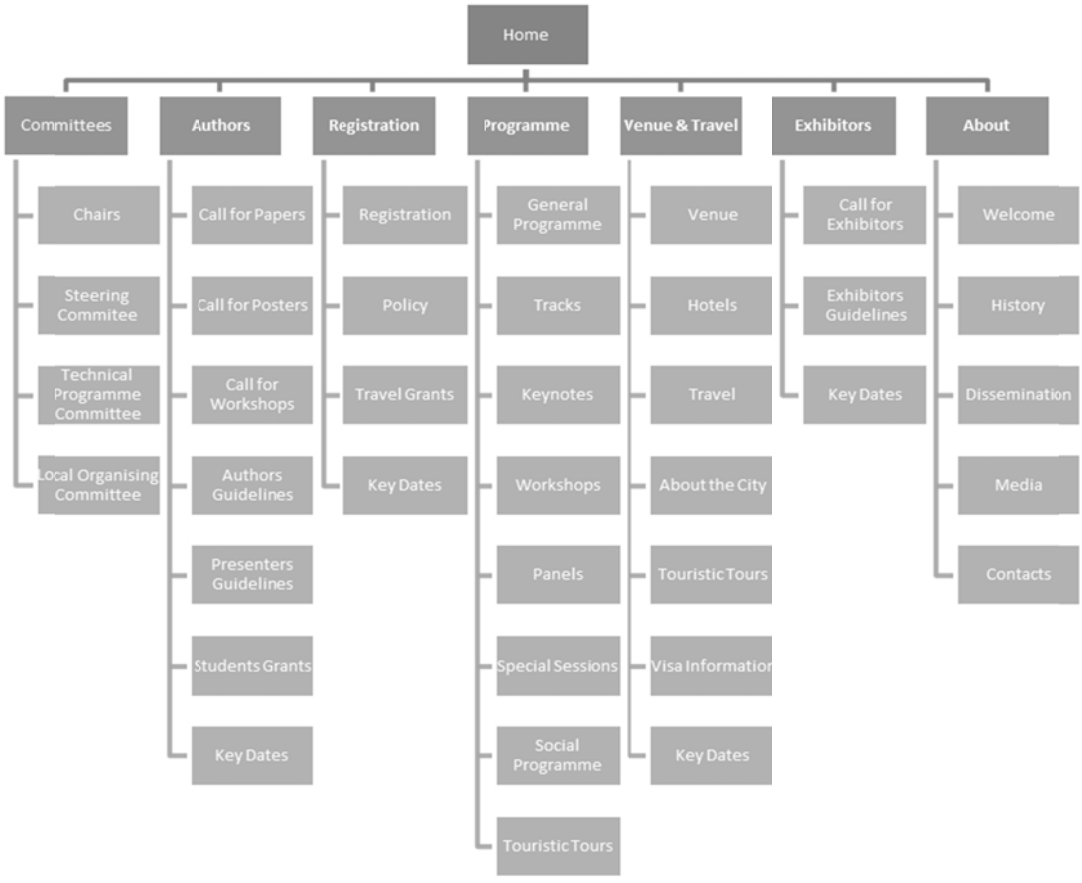

Figure 4. Information architecture of the website.

2.3 Website construction and delivery

The website is entirely supported and has been developed using open source technology, namely:

Drupal as Web Content Management platform

[APAC14] Apache – HTTP Server Project, http://httpd.apache.org/

- [DRUP14]:

  "Drupal is open source software maintained and developed by a community of 630,000+ users and developers. It's distributed under the terms of the GNU General Public License (or "GPL"), which means anyone is free to download it and share it with others. This open development model means that people are constantly working to make sure Drupal is a cutting-edge platform that supports the latest technologies that the Web has to offer. The Drupal project's principles encourage modularity, standards, collaboration, ease-of-use, and more."

Apache as web server

- [APAC14]:

  "The Apache HTTP Server Project is an effort to develop and maintain an open-source HTTP server for modern operating systems including UNIX and Windows NT. The goal of this project is to provide a secure, efficient and extensible server that provides HTTP services in sync with the current HTTP standards."

- MySQL as database system [MYSQ14]:

  "MySQL is the world's most popular open source database software, with over 100 million copies of its software downloaded or distributed throughout its history. With its superior speed, reliability, and ease of use, MySQL has become the preferred choice for Web, Web 2.0, SaaS, ISV, Telecom companies and forward-thinking corporate IT Managers because it eliminates the major problems associated with downtime, maintenance and administration for modern, online applications. MySQL is a key part of LAMP (Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP / Perl / Python), the fast-growing open source enterprise software stack. More and more companies are using LAMP as an alternative to expensive proprietary software stacks because of its lower cost and freedom from platform lock-in."

- PHP – the programming language [PHP14]:

  "PHP (recursive acronym for PHP: Hypertext Preprocessor*) is a widely-used open source general-purpose scripting language that is especially suited for web development and can be embedded into HTML.*

  What distinguishes PHP from something like client-side JavaScript is that the code is executed on the server, generating HTML which is then sent to the client. The client would receive the results of running that script, but would not know what the underlying code was. You can even configure your web server to process all your HTML files with PHP, and then there's really no way that users can tell what you have up your sleeve."

Two similar infrastructures were used: one for the development team and another for the production environment. Each one operated by different teams.

In terms of development tasks, a typical methodology was followed to guarantee a fast and effective result. This methodology included a sequence of complementary steps that are summarised in Table 1.

The website has been online from November 2013 focusing on the Bologna conference and can be reached at http://eucnc.eu.

Table 1. List of steps performed.

#	Step	Environment	Who
1	Install a DAMP stack. Apply additional modules to fulfil requirements. Inhibits modules that were not used.	Development	Development Team
2	Creation of Cascade Style Sheet files to apply the desired graphics. Adaptation of layouts/templates.	Development	Development Team
3	Using Drupal backoffice, creation and mapping of Information architecture as defined by the design team.	Development	Development Team
4	Upload and creation of pages exposing different types of contents to validate if the system was well implemented.	Development	Development Team
5	Export SiteMap and graphic files as source to production environment.	Development	Development Team
6	Performs step 1. Upload CSS and graphic files exported previously. Additionally implemented security measures to minimise risks.	Production	Production Team
7	Import site map to automatically create the content structure.	Production	Development team
8	Content creation.	Production	Production team
9	Minor layout adjustments to resolve additional requirements related to contents.	Production	Development Team

2.4 Contents management

The website offers a wide variety of content supported by a set of pre-defined templates to facilitate content management. Some of these templates are shown in Figure 5.

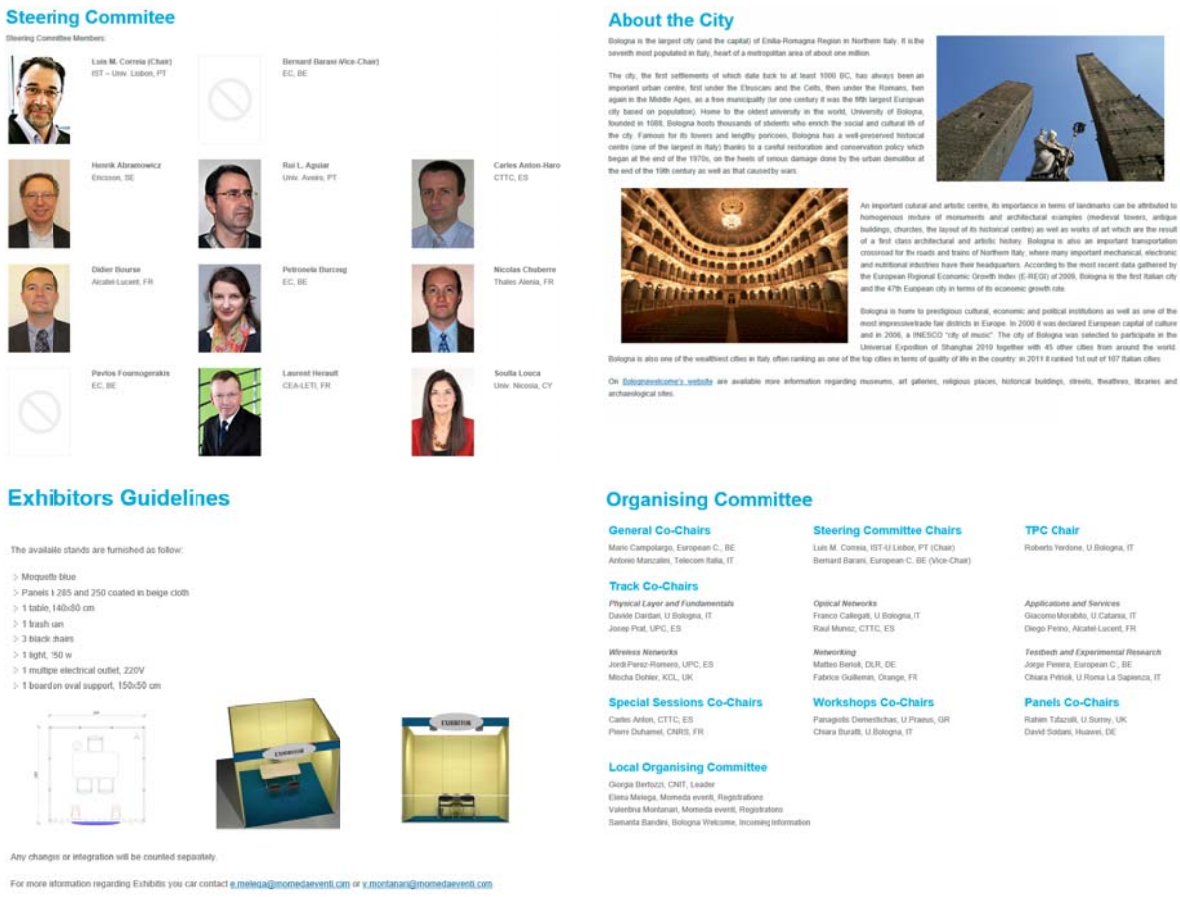

Figure 5. Page Templates.

To maintain this content, a backoffice that simplifies the tasks of updating information was configured. This tool can be accessed from any location, therefore allowing a decentralised management based on anytime-anywhere.

In Figure 6, two examples of the backoffice are displayed.

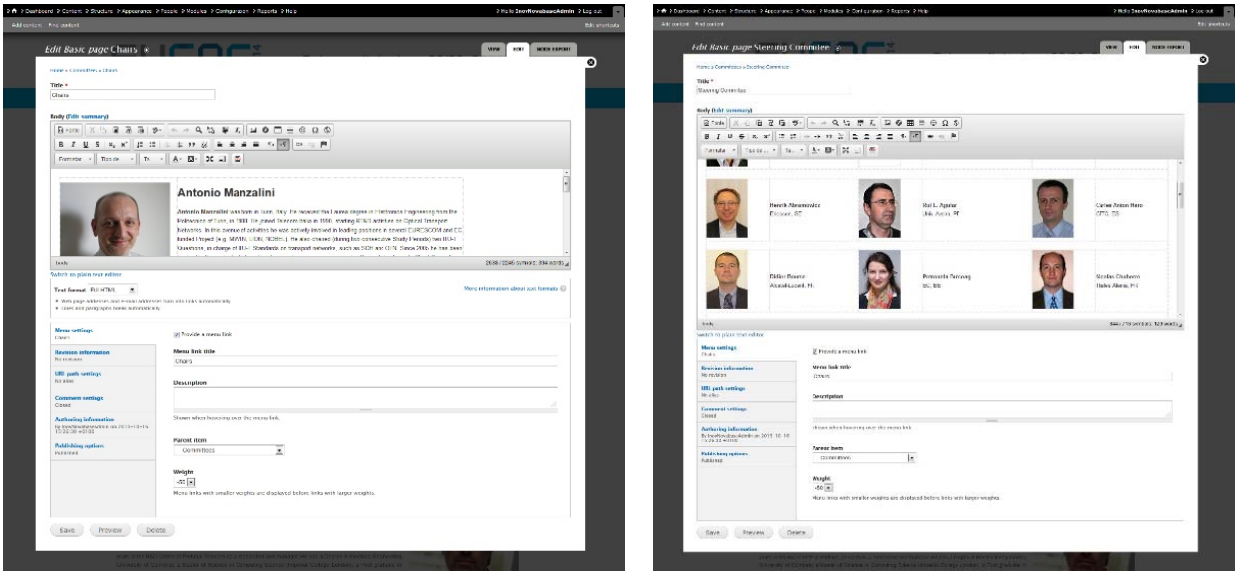

Figure 6. BackOffice Content Management.

2.5 Website operation and maintenance

The website requires continuous activities, throughout the duration of the project, related to:

- Content management (in simplified form)
- Supervisory / technical assistance (occasionally)
- Monitoring the communication / interaction between the website and visitors.

The team's capacity includes the following roles and skills:

a. Content Manager

Responsible for creating, editing and validate content. Familiar with the concepts of visual design, content design, search engine optimisation, and web analytics. Hold basic skills on HTML.

b. BackOffice Manager

Responsible for receiving and responding to requests for information and for the registration of attendees, exhibitors, workshops and papers.

c. System Manager

Responsible for ensuring the technical operation of the platform. Understands the risks and know how to proceed with regard to security, performance, and troubleshooting in case of technical problems.

3 Conclusions

WP2 is in charge of one of the key aspects of organising a conference, which is its advertisement and dissemination. As planned, the usual means were used, including the role of a website, in order to reach an audience as large as possible. In fact, the conferences website is typically considered a preferred tool to projects in the various European R&D programmes to increase the reach to the targeted audience, from both the paper submission and the attendance viewpoints. The delivery of a supportive and effective website is central in this strategy.

The immediate action conducted within the project was to develop and launch the conference website, focused on the first edition taking place in Bologna in June 2014. For that purpose, several activities were performed so far, starting with the definition and approval of the graphical identity of the conferences, the information architecture for the website, website development, content management and the establishment of a governance structure for the operation and maintenance needs.

The website was thus prepared and developed for the Bologna edition of the conference within the first 3 months of the project. In fact, the website has been online before the planned milestone (from November 2013) at http://eucnc.eu.

During the duration of the project the website will be maintained and operated according to regular needs, both technically and in terms of new and updated content. After the Bologna conference, the website will then adapted and updated to the context of the next edition of the conference that follows.

References

[APAC14] Apache – HTTP Server Project, http://httpd.apache.org/

[DRUP14] Drupal – Open Source CMS, https://drupal.org/

[MYSQ14] MySQL Database, http://www.mysql.com/

[PHP14] PHP - Hypertext Preprocessor, http://php.net/