Knowledge Web: Network of Excellence to realize the Semantic Web and support the transition of Ontology technology from Academia to Industry

Knowledge Web, a FP6 Network of Excellence that aims to support the transition of Ontology technology from Academia to Industry, has started on January 1st 2004, with a budget of around 7 million euro and 18 participants including leading partners in Semantic Web, Multimedia, Human Language Technology, Workflow and Agents.

The current World Wide Web (WWW) is, by its function, a syntactic Web where the structure of the content has been presented while the content itself is inaccessible to computers. Although the WWW has resulted in a revolution in information exchange among computer applications, it still cannot provide interoperation among various applications without some pre-existing, human-created agreements outside the Web. The next generation of the Web (the Semantic Web) aims to alleviate such problems and provide specific solutions targeting concrete problems. Web resources will be more readily accessible by both human and computers with the added semantic information in a machine-understandable and machine-processable fashion. The degree of formality employed in capturing these descriptions can be quite variable, ranging from natural language to logical formalisms, but increased formality and regularity clearly facilitate machine understanding.
The Semantic Web has the potential to significantly change our daily life due to the hidden intelligence provided for accessing services and large volumes of information. It will have a much higher impact on e-work and e-commerce than the current version of the Web. Nonetheless, there is a long way to go to transform the Semantic Web from an academic adventure into a technology provided by the software industry. Supporting this transition process of Ontology technology from Academia to Industry is the main and major goal of Knowledge Web.
In a nutshell, it is the mission of Knowledge Web to strengthen the European industry and service providers in one of the most important areas of current computer

technology: Semantic Web enabled e-work and e-commerce. The project efforts will be concentrated around the outreach of this technology to industry. This includes education and research efforts to ensure the durability of impact and support of industry.
Depending from which angle Knowledge Web is approached it will act as:,- An Ontology Outreach Authority, being the meeting place for interacting with interested industrial parties to take advantage of the latest research results, including tools. In the end, Knowledge Web will strive to set up an alliance with several industry bodies in order to set up an Ontology Outreach Authority, certifying, and serving validated ontologies.,- A Virtual Institute for Semantic Web Education (VISWE) where a specialized and adapted curriculum, which no single university can offer, is created for students coming from all over Europe.,- The Virtual Research Centre will coordinate the research carried out within Knowledge Web and take care that its results are shared and disseminated.
The current consortium will ensure that Knowledge Web is open for further academic members and research institutions that provide substantial contributions on any of the main goals of the network: outreach to industry, outreach to education, and research. Based on the importance of Knowledge Webs main research topics, the high number of participants in the OntoWeb thematic network (http://www.ontoweb.org 143 participants) and the exponential growth rates in the area of ontologies and the Semantic Web, Knowledge Web expects to count with many additional academic and research members.
Knowledge Web will be also open for further industrial members that provide substantial contributions to the network goals. Best-practice cases, interesting applications, training courses, deploying ontology-based applications, learned lessons in the application of ontologies and Semantic Web technology, etc., are good examples of the contributions expected from these industrial members. Industrial partners play also the role of a window to the standardization efforts
The Knowledge Web kick-off meeting was held on 3-4 February in Madrid, Spain. Further and up to date information about the project can be found at http://knowledgeweb.semanticweb.org.

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