VALUE-IT

Adding Value to RTD: Accelerating Take-up of Semantic Technologies for the Enterprise (STE)

http://www.VALUE-IT.eu/

"Establishing dynamic links between research and business environments"

Annual Report 2010

VALUE-IT has been a 26 month FP7 Support Action, finished on April 2010. The project focused on the domain of Intelligent Content and Semantic. Project works were aimed at promoting market-driven alignment of EU RTD, fostering innovation and accelerating adoption of Semantic Technologies for the Enterprise (STE).

VALUE-IT main objectives were: to provide a vision of the market potential for intelligent STE-based-solutions and of the requirements, means and channels for transforming research results into successful tools and services; to raise awareness on the demand-side about the STE potential and to promote dialogue between STE suppliers and potential users.

Summary of Activities

In its final year VALUE-IT consolidated the market assessment research performed during the project and produced the STE VALUE-IT Roadmap, which integrates the suppliers' vision of STE development with the business demand for innovation, providing a guide for future alignment of RTD to business needs.

Objectives of the VALUE-IT Project have been attained and outputs publicised in the project website (www.VALUE-IT.eu) through the following reports:

- The VALUE-IT STE Roadmap oriented to both Demand and Supply players, and the 2015 STE RTD Agenda providing to the research community potentially relevant fields for further market driven RTD projects.

- The VALUE-IT Final Demand driven mapping report

- The VALUE-IT Supply driven report (Technovision report)

- A collection of 27 Use Cases in STE Application Scenarios.

- The final VALUE-IT report publication oriented to business decision makers, portraying potential benefits derived from up-taking STE based tools, which comprises the VALUE-IT roadmap.

Important work areas

VALUE-IT achieved its stated objectives by performing a market assessment that produced an STE market analysis and "branding" effort, identifying sectors, organisations and applications with high-

value potential, the tasks and processes within which the market is emerging, and the conditions under which target organisations would use STE. This has delineated the market and provided a user-driven Roadmap for future research, experimentation and deployment activities.

The Project was rolled out in a three-phase sequence: Project Set-up, Implementation, and Project Closure. Within this scheme, the following five activities were carried out:

Supply Side Vision: from the Lab to the Market. Analysis of the STE supply-side, focusing on projects and companies producing innovative business solutions through STE development and consolidation. Enhancing the definition of STE, and characterising STE offerings according to levels of maturity, paths-to-market, and applications.

Demand Driven Mapping: identifying and characterising demand-side needs and expectations in a set of key industry sectors and business application areas. Based on in-depth interviews and a large-scale enterprise survey of IT decision makers, resulting in the Interim Demand Mapping Report. Conditions under which business will be willing to implement STE are outlined in the report and helped define the VALUE-IT Roadmap.

The demand-side market research included a number of face-to-face interviews with IT buyers and decision-makers, and a large-scale pan-European CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) based telephone survey (625 respondents) over six industry sectors. The survey measured the level of Enterprise need for the following Enterprise functions for which STE can be deployed: Managing the ever-increasing volume of information – "Big Data", Searching and linking information, Data integration and interoperability, Collaborating, both within and beyond the Enterprise, Assisting in decision making – "Decision Support", Managing Enterprise information assets – "Knowledge Management", Gathering and analysing Business Intelligence and Providing support to Enterprise Research & Development (R&D) functions.

It also assessed which approaches to data integration and interoperability are currently active in European companies:

- Interoperability for Databases
- Policies for specific departments
- Mapping business processes
- SOA (Service Oriented Architecture)
- Rules Engines
- Tagging

And it measured the gap between the need for a particular function, and the level of maturity of existing solutions already deployed for that purpose.

Matchmaking: The matchmaking model used in the Roadmap – where requirements can be matched to STE features and capabilities – is a simple but highly functional technique for narrowing the scope of a vast range of possible applications. Suppliers with experience of and technology for applications oriented to high-concept solutions will look for customers with those needs (e.g. in business intelligence or decision support), and/or will look for partners in the channels that already address those needs. Conversely, suppliers whose skill-set is more focused on data interoperability will direct themselves to requirements on that end of the "capabilities curve", finding completely different channels to market, if not always different customers. Identifying which business needs fall where on the Roadmap may seem obvious, but drilling down into the business processes that support different business functions reveals more subtle, less obvious opportunities.

STE Roadmap: linking the market perspective to technology offerings. The Roadmap integrated the suppliers' vision of STE development with the business demand for innovation, providing a guide for future alignment of RTD to business needs. Developing the Roadmap involved classifying and prioritising STE opportunities and gaps, indicating timescales for likely deployment, and establishing a methodology for mapping STE capabilities to enterprise needs – i.e. "matchmaking". The business cases collected during the project provide concrete examples of actual deployments, and likely scenarios, that illustrated the benefits and capabilities of STE, for the industry sectors and enterprise application areas defined in the demand-side research.

Dissemination and Awareness Raising Activities: taking the message to a wider audience. Dissemination activities included publishing the results of VALUE-IT research, bringing the findings to specific constituencies for validation through workshops, presentation of findings and the matchmaking methodology at conferences, and incorporating project outputs in more general publications (articles, reports published by Ovum on their Knowledge Base website).

User Involvement, Promotion and Awareness

The immediate impact of VALUE-IT was felt through direct face-to-face interview/discussions with dozens of European IT professionals and STE suppliers, and at dedicated workshops that brought buyers and suppliers together. VALUE-IT project participated in many events, but main efforts were given to two types of dedicated presentations with target groups:

- Events and conferences targeting STE applied research players, aiming at transferring the information analysed from demand side. Main events were: eMatch Norway 2009, 3rd European Semantic Technology Conference (ESTC), the IKS Early Adopters Workshop.

- Events, summits and conferences geared towards the industry players aiming at paving the way for future collaborations and industrial take-up. Main international events were: the 2009 Online Conference, IEEEdb Round Table and the 2010 European Banking Forum (EBF). Also, VALUE-IT organized five demand-side workshops with IT executives from top EU enterprises in the energy and utilities, manufacturing, telecommunications, banking and pharmaceutical and biotech sectors.

Future Work or Exploitation Prospects, as appropriate

The lasting impact of the VALUE-IT project will be in educating new players in STE about the scope and depth of the challenges they face, and offering them thoughtful methods for carving out their territory on the STE capabilities map.

Thus consortium partners will be presenting the VALUE-IT results and roadmap at the Fourth International Conference on Metadata and Semantics Research 2010 and 2 executive meetings from top EU500 enterprises. Also, they will be using the acquired knowledge as part of the internal knowledge for the definition of their strategic participation in standardization activities, alignment of ongoing projects to actual roadmap and development of new projects. As a closing project activity, some 350 stakeholders who asked for outputs will be duly informed about the availability of the VALUE-IT publication collection.

Further Information

- Project web site: http://www.VALUE-IT.eu
- A collection of articles and reports, including the OVUM publication collection on STE related themes, have been generated, uploaded to the VALUE-IT website (http://www.VALUE-IT.eu/web/guest/13).