Testbed implementation of the ECUP framework

Obiettivo

During the ECUP project and ECUP+ concerted action structured specifications of user rights in the electronic age were drafted and discussed with authors, publishers, collecting societies, subscription agencies and also their corresponding umbrella associations. The intention was to discuss and reach consensus on a licensing framework for the use of electronic material. However, during these discussions it became clear that the specifications at this stage would be only agreeable in part and that further elaboration would be needed.

The intention of TECUP is to analyse, define and evaluate a wide range of practical mechanisms for access to electronic information based on the uses as identified in the ECUP framework discussion which takes account of the needs of users, providers and rights owners. By evaluating these different business models in different contexts it is hoped to gain a better understanding of the practical requirements of licensing for electronic material.

Such an understanding is essential if we are to progress from the limited technical experiments of current projects to widespread adaptation of these services throughout the library community. TECUP is therefore a cluster project which brings together results and data from several projects in the field of electronic library services to the users.

In particular the following models will be analysed:
- retrospective digitisation of printed documents by libraries and their distribution;
- access to digital materials and their distribution;
- management of copyrights and licensing requirements

Technical approach

Several business models (pay-per-use, flat fee, direct licensing, corporate licensing, etc.) will be tested in related projects, covering a number of European states, representing all categories of libraries (public, academic, national and corporate) and involving many different kinds of user. Based on existing technologies derived from other projects, the demonstrator will show the applicability of the scheme outlined in the ECUP recommendations.

The methodology will be defined by TECUP, the adaptation and the implementation will be carried out in close co-operation between TECUP and the related projects. The results and the evaluation will feed back by the projects to TECUP. TECUP will analyse the result and produce reports for an individual project as well as an overall analysis.

The work will be monitored by three international advisory boards, consisting of representatives of publishing houses, publisher trade associations, authors’ organisations, collecting societies, subscription agents, libraries umbrella association, lawyers, other EU projects and technicians. The evaluation plans will be specified and monitored in close collaboration with three Advisory Boards that will discuss the results with the project team periodically.

Key issues
Development and application of new business models, in an environment where the user can get access to electronic documents independent of location and time.
Creating balanced contractual models for an optimised application of the new technologies without infringing copyright.
Bringing a maximum of information to the end-user in a fast and cost-efficient way at the same time enhancing certainty in the day-to-day handling of electronic material by the library staff.

Impact and expected results

It is anticipated that the project will work closely with EFILA to ensure broad compatibility with developing standards and profiles in this area. It will also maintain close contact with the EDITEUR initiative for information on EDI/EDIFACT standards within the publishing and related industries. The project itself will endeavour to play a full part in bringing questions on licensing and marketing standards to a wider public, and it is expected that EFILA will again be the appropriate forum for this work.

It is expected that the project will bring the different players together and enhance realistic collaboration between them and workable solutions. The resulting practicable economic models should be exploited by European electronic library services. And that this will lead to a better understanding of the practical requirements of licensing for electronic material.

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