

## ISC11D005

**Title:** UEA Website Migration  
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### Issue

The Marketing and Communication Group, supported by the new Chair of the Web Steering Board have requested that ISSC reconsider its position on the migration plan for the UEA web services and prioritise migration of the main UEA web site. In order to ensure that the website is fully supported additional funding will be required to purchase the Enterprise version of LifeRay.

### Recommendation

ISSC is invited to consider the attached report and to support the proposal to change the priority order for the migration UEA web services.

### Resource Implications

Switching the order of the previously agreed migration will require the following additional investment in web services and will be subject to agreement of additional funding being made available by ET:

2011/12 - £120,000  
2012/13 - £18,000  
2013/14 - £12,000

### Risk Implications

If approved then this will be managed using formal project management part of which will be an in depth evaluation of risk

### Equality and Diversity

All new services are subject to Equality Impact Assessments as they are implemented.

### Timing of decisions

Not applicable

## **Further Information**

Enquiries about the content of the paper should be addressed to Jonathan Richardson ([jonathan.richardson@uea.ac.uk](mailto:jonathan.richardson@uea.ac.uk) – ext 1029)

## **Background**

In June 2011, ISSC approved plan for migration of the UEA web services to LifeRay. This plan involved first migration of existing research websites from CPanel, followed by migration of the Portal (Blackboard Content System) and finally a migration of the UEA website from Polopoly.

## **Discussion**

## UEA Website Migration

During 2010/11 ISD undertook a range of investigative work and preliminary pilots in order to develop a web strategy. Specifically this was focused on rationalising existing systems and replacing Polopoly (the system which runs our main web site). Following a presentation of the strategy to the Web Steering Board, ICT Forum and ISSC it was agreed to progress with a migration to a new web hosting systems called Liferay.

Following the previous experience of migrating from our previous system to Polopoly, and in recognition of the criticality of the system to the reputation of the University, a critical part of the plan to migrate was to take a staged approach over several years. This would enable the University to have time to structure its data appropriately for the new system, enable training of users and minimise impact on the live service. A specific area of concern related to the re-skilling of support staff in ISD to enable them to support this new service. With this in mind the staged approach was planned to enable ISD staff to start with discreet website migrations, develop migration tools and up skill to a point where we felt confident in the stability, resilience and skill set required to migrate the main website and de-commission Polopoly.

After successful trials of sites for some research groups with existing CPanel hosted sites the next stage was to deliver some pilot school based sites. NBS and UEA London are now using the live service – but are still in a pilot mode with work still ongoing to ensure full reliability and resilience of the service.

### Requested change

Following the successful launch of NBS and UEA London the value of the Liferay model in improving the layout and presentation of content has caused the Marketing and Communications team, with the support of the new chair of the Web Steering Group to press for a faster rollout of the system – aiming for the website migration in summer 2012 – around 18 months ahead of the original schedule.

The Digital Marketing Team have provided the following in support of the request change:

*An earlier roll out will not just allow the Digital Marketing Team to press ahead with a refreshed design, but more importantly, to amend the architecture of the site to plan more consistent and logical navigation through content.*

*It is clear from market research that our target audiences are increasingly experiencing consistent multi channel marketing when they engage with brands outside of the HEI sector. A number of our key competitors are moving to a position where they are refining their on line and off line marketing activity and as a result are able to deliver increasingly strong marketing messages. The implementation of Liferay will enable the team to make some essential changes to the site such as improving the admissions CMS display of all course information, better management and presentation of visual and interactive content and to press ahead with essential work on specific projects such as the presentation of our research presence across the site. Liferay also enables the development of microsites (such as research*

centers and campaign webpages) which is becoming increasingly relevant leading up to REF and with the management of campaigns to target particular user groups (eg AAB and WP students). Liferay also has operational benefits, and has been found to be a simpler platform to use.

The move will therefore enable UEA to provide a more consistent visual identity and design architecture and ultimately, a better user experience. The university is facing some grand challenges in the new HE environment as it competes to attract research income and more highly qualified students and staff, with an aim to be amongst the top 20 higher education institutions in the UK. Our web presence is a key element in achieving this goal and we need to ensure we have the flexibility of design and content management to appeal to our target audiences over and above that of our key competitors, nationally and internationally.

Changing the order of migrations to rollout our more critical systems to Liferay earlier, and increasing the range of users on the system have very specific effects on the risk profile of this project. With the previous plan ISD has mitigated risks by building time and developer support in to the plan. Without time to fully test or time for developers to up skill a change in the resourcing model is required. As with any project there are three variables, scope, time and resource – by altering the scope and time frame of the project the impact on the resource requirement is significant.

#### Previous Model as agreed by ISSC June 2011

The agreed plan for Liferay was to utilise the Open Source version of the software, developing UEA extensions to support items such as People Pages, Course Catalogue and Research Output Integration over time as the developers gained skills in the programming environment.

Technical skills required to run and support the infrastructure to support Liferay, and experience on managing incidents and disaster recovery could be gained over time, as the team worked with test servers.

Initial migrations of the Blackboard Community System which hosts the Portal (not VLE) and later decommissioning of Polopoly will make savings in year 2 and 3 of the project – enabling a migration from the Open Source version of the product to the Enterprise Edition as we move to full web hosting on Liferay.

The costs associated with the original approach are detailed below, with savings on the cost of the Blackboard Community system offsetting the costs of server licensing for LifeRay.

Description	Support	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Polopoly+Consultancy	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00			<b>£30,000.00</b>
Blackboard Community	£35,000.00	£35,000.00					<b>£35,000.00</b>
Live Web Servers	£20,350.00		£40,700.00	£40,700.00	£40,700.00	£40,700.00	<b>£162,800.00</b>
Development Server	£20,350.00			£5,087.50	£5,087.50	£5,087.50	<b>£15,262.50</b>
<b>Annual Cost ( exc VAT)</b>		<b>£45,000.00</b>	<b>£50,700.00</b>	<b>£55,787.50</b>	<b>£45,787.50</b>	<b>£45,787.50</b>	<b>£243,062.50</b>

## New Model

By placing more dependence on early delivery of complex components and by rolling out mission critical components of the site there is a significant risk that the support team will not have the skill set to support the system. To mitigate this risk a change in the resource model is required, bringing forward investment in the Enterprise Edition of Liferay. Additionally the delay in decommissioning of the Blackboard Community System will mean that these savings are not realised until later in the migration process. Additional training will be required to fast track up skilling the ISD development team.

Inevitably support will have to focus on the migration of the web site to LifeRay and there is some concern that this may delay the work to migrate the Portal (Blackboard Content) and we may require long cross running of Polopoly and LifeRay.

Description	Support	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Polopoly+Consultancy	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00			<b>£20,000.00</b>
Blackboard Community	£35,000.00	£35,000.00	£35,000.00	£35,000.00			<b>£70,000.00</b>
Live Web Servers	£8,450.00	£84,900.00	£16,900.00	£16,900.00	£16,900.00	£16,900.00	<b>£152,500.00</b>
Development Server	£8,450.00	£10,612.50	£2,112.50	£2,112.50	£2,112.50	£2,112.50	<b>£19,062.50</b>
<b>Annual Cost ( exc VAT)</b>		<b>£140,512.50</b>	<b>£64,012.50</b>	<b>£64,012.50</b>	<b>£19,012.50</b>	<b>£19,012.50</b>	<b>£306,562.50</b>

### Summary:

In order to provide additional support and training and reduce risks the added cost of bringing forward the plan to replace Polopoly requires additional capital of £100,000 this year and additional revenue for the subsequent two years of around £15,000, reducing to £10,000. This money is not currently allocated in ISD budgets.

Note: all figures quoted exclude VAT.

**Jonathan Richardson**

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04 October 2011