uPortal and UNICON – Educause Midwest Conference

uPortal and UNICON

“Using open-source uPortal technology to create a comprehensive online environment for your campus”
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Agenda

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• What is a Portal?
• Why do I Need a Portal?
• Comments on Portals
• What should be in my Portal?

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• Is Open-Source for Real?
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• Randolph-Macon College

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Introduction

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Corporate Information:
Founded in 1993, Unicon has a strong history of delivering educational and community technology for educational institutions and corporations world-wide.

• Specializing in Designing, implementing and supporting Enterprise Information Portals (EIP), Advanced Learning, and Content Technology.

• The leading commercial supporter of the uPortal open source initiative.
Chapter 1 – “Portals”
First Things First – What is a Portal?

**Enterprise Portal** – “An enterprise portal server is used by enterprises to build a gateway, providing access to and interaction with relevant information, applications and business processes for select targeted audiences, delivered in a highly personalized manner.”

*Gartner*, 2004
Why do I need a Portal?

IT Challenges:

• Increasing number of Services
• Increasing complexity of services requiring authorization
• Staff and budgets are being tightened to support these systems

Constituent Expectations:

• Users expect systems to be easier to use
• Users expect more services to be offered
• Users expect greater personalization
Comments about Portals

- Portals are a matured technology
- Content Aggregation
- Consistent User Experience
- Personalization
- An Interactive Application
- An Integration Platform
Unicon’s vision is user-centric:
To deliver content and applications to the end user in meaningful ways.
What Should be in My Portal?

- Personal Info/Mgmt: creates stickiness

- Registration and Grades: demanded by students
What Should be in My Portal?

Student Recruiting - differentiator

Student Elections - generates usage
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What Should be in My Portal?

General Information - casual usage

promotes stickiness

News/Classifieds/Ancmts...
Chapter 2 – “uPortal”
**uPortal Background**

- **uPortal** is an open-source portal developed by institutions of higher-education.

- JA-SIG organization manages the project (Java Architectures - Special Interest Group)

- Version 1 released July 2000. Fifth major release in February, 2004

- Over 250 uPortal implementations

- Currently over 25 contributors to the uPortal project
What is uPortal Technology?

- Enterprise Portal
  - Open-source
  - Flexible
  - Single Sign-On
  - Best practices
  - Customization/
    Personalization
  - Publish and Subscribe
    Channel Model
  - J2EE, SOAP
  - Integration Services
    - Email
    - LDAP
    - SIS
    - Library
    - Calendar
General Advantages of Open Source:

• Cost
• Adaptability / Community
• Availability

Potential Disadvantages with Open Source:

• Lack of Documentation
• Lack of Commercial Support
• Unstable Code Base
• Unknown Future

“uPortal complements the open-source advantages, while Unicon mitigates open-source disadvantages with its support services!”
Recent uPortal Advancements

- Internationalization
- Aggregated Layouts
- Enhanced Groups & Permissions
- JSR-168 adaptor support

Sample group structure – defined by each institution during deployment
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uPortal Contributions to Date

- Princeton 2.4%
- Rutgers 2.8%
- Cal Poly 2.9%
- Yale 3.0%
- Delaware 4.6%
- Cornell 4.7%
- im&m 6.1%
- UBC 10.5%
- Columbia 13.5%
- MUN 2.3%
- SCT 0.5%
- Other 0.4%

Legend:
- Unicon
- Columbia
- UBC
- im&m
- Cornell
- Delaware
- Yale
- Cal Poly
- Rutgers
- Princeton
- MUN
- SCT
- Other
http://www.sakaiproject.org

“The University of Michigan, Indiana University, MIT, Stanford, the uPortal Consortium, and the Open Knowledge Initiative (OKI) are joining forces to integrate and synchronize their considerable educational software into a modular, pre-integrated collection of open source tools.”

- Enterprise Services-based Portal (uPortal)
- Course Management System with sophisticated Assessment Tools
- Research Support Collaboration System
- Tool Portability Profile
- Content Management - HyperContent

$2.4 million grant from Mellon Foundation
$2.0 million committed by Sakai member institutions
JSR-168 support

uPortal 2.3:  
Channel adapter to provide portlet support  
* Released 4/09/2004

uPortal 3.0:  
• Native portlet support  
• Portlet adapter for legacy channels
Portlets and Standards: JSR-168 & WSRP

- Business logic (Java → XML)
- Presentation logic (XSLT)
- WSDL
- HTML
- SOAP

SOA

WSDL

WSRP Web Service

Portlet Container

Write once, Deploy anywhere
uPortal Advantages

- Open Source means reduced cost of ownership
- Developed by/for Higher Education
- Growing community of users / Broad adoption
- Standards Based
- Development Platform vs. Proprietary Solution – vast customization

- Database and Authentication System independent
- Platform / OS Independent
- Backed by commercial entities to ensure stability and continued future support
- UNICON provides all support services
  - Training, mentoring, customization, conversion, etc.
- Continued funding
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Illinois State University - iCampus
uPortal Support Services from UNICON

• Assessment
• Education Services
  – uPortal Fundamentals Training
  – uPortal Advanced Training
• Implementation Project Management
• Architecture and Design
• Capacity Planning
• Installation and Configuration
• Central Authentication Service (CAS)
• Mentoring

• Development and Test Environment Setup
• Integration
• Custom Channel Development
• Upgrade and Conversion
• Technical Support
Portal Consulting Services Customers

US Higher Education Customers
- University of Delaware
- Illinois St. University
- University of Minnesota
- University of Chicago
- Iowa St. University
- Syracuse University
- Texas Christian University
- University of New Mexico
- Cornell University
- Villanova University
- Rutgers University
- University of Kansas
- Northern Arizona University
- Santa Barbara City College
- Columbia University

International Customers
- University of Utah
- Salve Regina University
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Yale School of Management
- University of British Columbia
- Kwantlen University College
- University of Nottingham
- French Ministry
- Deakin University
- Umea Universitet
- Universite De Geneve
- University of Guelph

* Partial Listing of Customers
## uPortal Training Customers

### U.S.
- Georgia Tech University
- Dowling College
- Miami University
- Texas Tech University
- Heidelberg College
- Loyola University Chicago
- Roanoke College
- Ashland University
- Millersville College
- Cedarville University
- California Polytechnic State University
- California State University, Hayward
- Tufts University

### International
- University of Bristol
- University of Nottingham
- Stokholms Universitet
- University of Saskatchewan
- Chalmers University of Technology
- Selwyn College Cambridge
- DeMontford University
- John Moores University
- Lund University
Chapter 3 – “Academus”
Academus is an enterprise solution built on open source technology with integration services that easily pull together the mission-critical components for higher education institutions.
**Academus Full Suite**

is an online campus that integrates:

- Portal
- Group Collaboration
- 3rd Party Application integration
- Support/Maintenance
Unicon Academus vs. uPortal

- Functional Channels - Collaborative Tools/Information Services
- Enhanced Technology
  - CSCR
  - SuperChannel
  - Scalability

Academus Portal is a cost-effective Enterprise Information Portal built on the open-source uPortal Framework.

Academus Channels
- Starter Portal Channels
- Course Management Channels
- Custom Channels
- 3rd Party Channels

Academus Application Layer

uPortal Framework & Platform Services

INTEGRATION POINTS

Academus LCMS
Other LMS/ LCMS
Apps
ERP
Legacy

PROXY POINTS
Eighteen portlets or channels as part of its licensing costs.

- Three Calendar Channels
- Campus Announcements
- Notification Channel
- Bookmarks
- Briefcase
- Address Book
- My Notes
- Campus News
- Classifieds
- Discussion Forums
- Discussion Forums Administration
- Group Chat
- Group Chat Administration
- WebMail
- Survey
- Poll
- Survey Author
- User Admin
The Academus Group Collaboration Environment delivers a powerful “working environment” for campus/class groups, and can be utilized as a course management system fully integrated with the Academus Portal.

- Group/Course Administration
- Topic Administration
- User Administration
- Role Administration
- Batch Import Administration
- Group/Course Chat
- Group/Course Discussion Forum

- Group/Course Announcements
- Group/Course Calendar
- Group/Course Folders
- Course Gradebook
- Group/Course Roster
Academus supports integration with other online content systems, and applications. Examples include:

- Datatel WebAdvisor, Colleague
- Microsoft Outlook Web Access, GroupWise
- OpenLDAP, eDirectory, Active Directory, SunOne Directory
- Oracle Corporate Time, SunOne Calendar
- WebCT / Blackboard
Academus Solutions for Accessibility
Unicon is committed to providing solutions that improve accessibility for people with disabilities. The Academus product family offers a number of capabilities that increase the accessibility of both the software and the information.

Academus Section 508 compliance
The Academus product family helps higher education comply with U.S. government regulations as described in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, as well as internet standards as described in the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0.
ACADEMUS Customers

- Brooklyn College – Portal
- Champlain College - Portal
- El Camino Community College – Portal
- Grossmont - Cuyamaca Community College District - Portal
- Lambton College – Portal
- Lethbridge Community College – Portal
- Marietta College – Portal
- New Teacher Center @ UC Santa Cruz – Full Suite
- Otis College of Art and Design - Portal
- Randolph-Macon Woman’s College – Portal
- Roanoke College – Portal
- Saint Leo University – Portal
- San Diego Community College District - Portal
- San Joaquin Valley College – Full Suite
- San Juan College - Portal
- The Rockefeller University – Portal
- Trinity University – Portal
- University of California, Merced – Full Suite
- Western Kentucky University – Portal
- Yuba College – Portal
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Academus Demo

Unicon
Academus Portal
Chapter 4 – “Academus Success Stories”
No additional full time personnel

Integrated WebAdvisor, Blackboard, Webmail, Corporate Time, E-mail management, Print Quota Management

Utilized existing LDAP, IMAP mail, and SQLServer database servers

Recently ran entire registration process through the portal

• No additional full time personnel
• Integrated WebAdvisor, Blackboard, Webmail, Corporate Time, E-mail management, Print Quota Management
• Utilized existing LDAP, IMAP mail, and SQLServer database servers
• Recently ran entire registration process through the portal
• No additional personnel

• Integrated WebAdvisor, Blackboard, WebCT, Outlook WebAccess 2003, Searchable Directories

• Incorporated customized “quick-links” for each constituent group on campus

• Utilize several RSS feeds for content aggregation
El Camino Community College:

- Recently registered over 10,000 students through the Portal
- Deep links into a variety of legacy applications

Randolph-Macon Woman’s College:

“Academus is a genuinely well-designed collection of applications, and its implementation at Randolph-Macon Woman's College was quite painless. I'm looking forward to enhancing our current web offerings and creating new solutions for our students, faculty and staff.”

- Brian Hudson, Systems Administrator
Campus portals can be very complex. For their success many things must be considered:

- Do I want an open or a packaged system?
- What is the primary role of the portal?
- What systems do I want to integrate with and how?
- Do I plan to push users to the portal and how?
- Who will be the first user groups?
- What information do I want the users to access?
- How much user customization do I want to allow?
- How do I push new channels to the users?
- Are there certain channels I want immutable?
- What application server do I want to use?
- What portal database/OS server do I want to use?
- How will I handle older browsers?
- What will it cost to implement?
- What will be the ongoing cost?
Chapter 5 – “Q & A”