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Executive Summary

As it reaches the end of its initial funding period by the European Union, the ELECT project partners, the Localisation Research Centre and Bowne Global Solutions (Germany), are planning future applications for the impressive infrastructure built up over the past two years.

This document details the exploitation plan for the major deliverables of the ELECT project.

This document will exploit results of the ELECT research project. It outlines the potential markets or profit for these deliverables.

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Introduction

The European Localisation Exchange Centre (ELECT) was established under the European Union eContent Programme on 1st February 2002 for a period of 24 months. It was co-ordinated by the Localisation Research Centre (LRC) at the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems (CSIS), University of Limerick, Ireland, with Bowne Global Solutions, Germany, as a partner. It is an accompanying measure under Action Line 2: Enhancing content production in a multi-lingual and multi-cultural environment, Sub-line 2.1.3: Fostering new partnerships and the adoption of multilingual and multicultural strategies – accompanying measures.

The aims of the ELECT project were to provide reliable information on best practice, facilitate easy access to know-how and technology, make guidelines on linguistic and cultural customisation available, and enhance the visibility and recognition of this industry in Europe and worldwide.

It acted and intend still acts as a platform to bring the localisation industry and eContent providers together, providing them with the technical, educational and infrastructural support to develop the European eLocalisation and eContent industries. As ELECT reaches the end of its initial funding period by the European Union, the project partners are planning future applications for the impressive infrastructure, which has been built up over the past two years.

The four central strands of activity were:

1. Events: Spreading of expertise and best practice
2. Access to know-how and technology: LOTS
3. Enhancing visibility and recognition: Awards
4. Dissemination: Surveys, guidelines and publications

From the outset of this project commercialisation has never been considered to be an objective. However, certain aspects of this project can be exploited and are probably financially viable. The following tables highlight the accomplishments achieved by the ELECT project and the possibility of the commercial exploitations of these achievements:

Events: Spreading of expertise and best practice

Achievements	Exploitation
Expert workshop	No
Executive briefing	No
Foundation course in web development for the global market and web localisation	Yes
Localisation Europe conferences	No
Additional delivery: Summer School	Yes

Access to know-how and technology: LOTS

Achievements	Exploitation
LOTS laboratory	Yes

Enhancing visibility and recognition: Awards

Achievements	Exploitation
ELECT Best Thesis Award	No
ELECT Best Localisation Scholar Award	No
Elect Best Global Website Award	No

Dissemination: Surveys, guidelines and publications

Achievements	Exploitation
ELECT Online web portal	Yes
eContent: the players (survey report)	No
The Localisation and eContent Directory – formerly the Yellow Pages	No
Localisation Europe Newsletter	No
Guide to eContent development (internationalisation)	Yes
Guides to eContent localisation	Yes
Localisation Focus	Yes

Even though the official funding period of this project has come to an end, there are many potential plans that can be derived from the ELECT project for further development. The aim of this exploitation plan is to illustrate how the results of this EU funded research project could best be employed to make the activities in the future.

Major Deliverables

D1 Events: Spreading of expertise and best practice

The objective of this workpackage is to spread expertise and best practice in the area of web internationalisation, eContent localisation, and cross-cultural information services. This has been achieved through various events organised by the LRC and its associated organisations.

Part of the ELECT project's success stems from the fact that it is hosted by the Localisation Research Centre. As a result ELECT has been able to build upon foundations laid by the LRC and enhance existing facilities, structures and events. The 2002 and the 2003 Localisation Conferences and Industry Showcases are perfect examples of events that have been enhanced through the participation of ELECT. These events evolved from the annual localisation conference that is traditionally organised by the LRC. Under the ELECT project these events were enlarged and developed to become Europe's largest and best-established annual localisation event.

A series of executive briefings and foundation courses in eContent Internationalisation and Localisation in four European locations. These events were provided free of charge and took place in Munich, Prague, Madrid and Athens. These courses can be commercialised into training courses for companies.

D2 Access to know-how and technology: The Localisation Tools Showcase (LOTS)

Currently, localisation professionals searching for suitable technology to localise their products often duplicate their efforts. They do not have easy access to a dedicated localisation laboratory and showcase. The LOTS laboratory will enable them to identify suitable technology faster and more efficiently – and localisation technology developers will find it easier to establish contacts with potential customers.

With this new facility, researchers and developers can experiment with different technologies and operating systems, as well as languages and locale settings. The laboratory provides access to state-of-the-art localisation technology. It even offers sample files, donated from various companies, to aid their research and evaluation. In short, LOTS encourages and facilitates high-end research in the localisation area.

The LOTS laboratory is established to facilitate access to tools and technologies to new entrants and to initiate their systematic evaluation and certification based on an agreed certification and classification system. A LOTS Online server was also set up which provides a remote access service that allows access to most of the tools available in the LOTS laboratory through Internet access.

This laboratory and online server can be used in co-operation with the courses, or on its own, to provide training/introductory to localisation tools to paying customers.

D3 Enhancing visibility and recognition: Awards

This workpackage is aimed at enhancing the visibility and recognition of eContent internationalisation and localisation within the Europe, especially amongst researchers, educators, developers, publishers and service providers.

Taking advantage of the foundations that had already been laid by the Localisation Research Centre's annual Best Thesis Award, ELECT provided the infrastructural and organisational

support for the expansion of this award and the creation of two brand new awards. The Best Thesis Award became the ELECT LRC Best Thesis Award while the two new awards that were created were; the ELECT LRC European Localisation Scholar Award, and the ELECT Best Global Website Award.

Although, commercialisation is not an option for these awards, these awards will set the benchmark for a high level of standard and encourage innovative approaches and ideas in the area of internationalisation and localisation.

D4 Dissemination: Surveys, guidelines and publications

The ELECT web portal

ELECT Online is a new way of finding localisation and internationalisation-related information on the Web. Launched in September 2003, ELECT Online is a web portal that provides links to the latest industry news, events, publications, software and jobs. The portal was developed to solve the problem of finding relevant, up-to-date information on localisation, and to provide a single point of access for localisation information.

ELECT Online is also intended to be an example of an internationalised site. Its look and design is intended to be culturally neutral. In addition, the site is available in six languages, Czech, English, French, German, Greek and Spanish. The language is selected by choosing the preferred language from a drop down box at the top of each page. Choosing another language instantly translates the current page into the target language.

The ELECT web portal covers all major areas of activity of the project including ELECT conference announcements and proceedings, LOTS, awards, publications, directories and course offerings etc.

In order for ELECT Online generate revenue, it needs to increase its web presence. Advertisement of ELECT Online can be placed using Google's inexpensive Adwords system. The pricing system is on a cost-per-click (CPC) basis. Therefore, no matter how many people see the advertisement, one only pay when someone actually clicks on it. There's no minimum monthly spending or time commitment. Simply set a daily budget anywhere from 5 cents per day and choose a maximum CPC from as low as 5 cents up to \$50. Then, run the advertisement s for as long as you want.

Emails can be sent out to every company and individual in our database and ask for a reciprocal link back to ELECT Online on their company web sites. Advertisements in magazines, such as Multilingual and advertising on localisation-related sites would also increase the publicity of ELECT web portal.

Once hits pick up to a significant degree, the web portal will begin selling advertising space. To begin with, we will host Google Adwords which will bring in some revenue. Once advertisers have been located, the Adwords will be replaced by banner ads provided by the advertisers.

We can charge a fee to make certain links stand out from others, such as bold company names.

There are certain areas of ELECT Online that could potentially be exclusive to paying users, such as Jobs, Events and Publications.

Guides to eContent development and localisation

The development and publication of two practical guides, an introduction to the localisation of eContent and an introduction to the internationalisation of eContent, are aimed to provide these basic concepts to audience that have no prior knowledge of neither internationalisation or localisation. Up until now, such guidelines do not exist. Thus, there will be a demand for such resources. Converting these guides into a book would be a profitable idea.

The published book could be used as academic or training materials for courses that are related to internationalisation or localisation.

Localisation Focus

Localisation Focus is the Localisation Research Centre's quarterly newsletter. It is distributed world-wide to 2,500 localisation professionals, including engineers, managers, trainers, linguists and researchers free of charge.

Localisation Focus has been used as a dissemination vehicle to enhance the visibility of ELECT in the duration of the project.

Conclusion

The Localisation Research Centre is currently exploring business opportunities and expects to know whether venture capital or another form of investment will commit to its concept in mid 2004.

Plans are already underway for LOTS and ELECT Online. We are currently using LOTS for teaching and research. We will also investigate the possibility of establishing LOTS Satellites in other European third-level colleges. One of the central research themes will be standards and interoperability.

We have already started development on an extension to the Tools and Technology section of ELECT Online, in cooperation with the Globalisation and Localisation Association (GALA).

This is only the beginning of a variety of initiatives building on the quite remarkable achievements of the ELECT project.