E-Services and Development

Bringing Information Technology to the Development Community
Overview

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- Technology Platform
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Background

• The Palestinian Development Gateway (PDG) is a country-level institution of the Development Gateway Foundation.

• The Development Gateway Foundation (DGF) is an independent non-profit organisation dedicated to bridging the digital divide by promoting development related ICT initiatives.

• The PDG is a not-for-profit institution with governance representation from Government, Civil Society, Donor Community, and the Private Sector.

• It has been funded by the UNDP and the World Bank since inception (July 2000) and is currently in the first year of operation.
PDG’s Mission

… to establish a high quality Internet portal that will serve the information services needs of the Palestinian development community …

… to play a leading and catalyst role in the development and expansion of information technology …
Programs (1)

• The Development Portal Program: (www.psgateway.org) is a “… portal website on development issues, from which users can access information, resources, and tools, and into which they can contribute their own knowledge and experience.“ www.developmentgateway.org

• The ASP Portal Program: is a B2B-type portal to give development related projects and institutions the ability to rent and/or host web-based applications selected and/or crafted for their special needs.
Programs (2)

• **E-solutions and E-services:** Providing technology solutions for the development community with a range of tailor made web solutions (content management systems, webmail, forums, calendars, etc.).

• **Research and Development:** Research alternative and cutting edge technologies and, if necessary develop a spectrum of cost effective technology solutions to the development community.
Technology (1)

• Based on ArsDigita (www.arsdigita.com) open-source platform

  • AOL server: “AOLserver is a multithreaded, Tcl-enabled, massively-scalable and extensible web server tuned for large scale, dynamic Web sites …” [http://www.aolserver.com/]

  • TCL scripting language: “Tcl is a simple scripting language for controlling and extending applications … provides generic programming facilities … is embedable. Its interpreter is a library of C procedures that can easily be incorporated into applications …” [http://www.aolserver.com/docs/devel/tcl/tcl-overview.html]

  • Linux Operating System: “… Linux is a kernel, the core part of an operating system that handles networking, hardware management, and basically makes the whole thing run…. Linux is distributed under the GNU General Public License, a "free" license giving anyone the right to modify its source code and redistribute it as they see fit.” [http://linux.com/learn/faqs.phtml#sec.1.1]
Technology (1)

- Oracle Database:

- XML:

- “ACS Core Platform provides a modular platform of generic services that are essential to build sophisticated, next generation web applications. These generic services form the common requirements of almost all Web applications, and they include: 1) Representing people and relationships, 2) Controlling access to functionality and data, 3) Managing content, 3) Managing processes.” They include Content Management Systems (CMS) and Enterprise Collaboration Management. [http://www.arsdigita.com/products/core](http://www.arsdigita.com/products/core)

- PDG in-house Applications: Webmail, Address Books, Calendars, polls, email alerts, news publishing, bookmarks, and photo albums…Discussion Forums; Portals, CMSs, etc.
Content Management Systems (CMS) (1)

Background

“A content management system automates the web publishing process, providing tools to organize the site, maintain consistent design and keep content current and accurate. The system enables contributors with not technical expertise to create, review, approve and post content, using templates that adhere to design and content guidelines. In essence, the system creates a decentralized process for contributing to the web, with key points of review and control.”

University of California San Francisco Web site
http://www.ucsf.edu/itgovernance/subcommittees/websub/content-mgt.pdf
Content Management Systems (CMS) (2)

Key benefits

• Shorten cycle time for content creation since much of the process is automated.

• Establish workflow management – provide authorized access to the content management system, institute approval processes, maintain versions of the site, etc.

• Automate posting of content and deletion of outdated content, such as calendar items, time-sensitive announcements, etc.

• Create templates for design and content.

• Create a central repository or archive of content that can be drawn upon for other purposes.

• Deliver personalized or customized content – in web pages, email, etc. – to specific audiences.
Enterprise Collaboration Management (1)

ArsDigita Enterprise Collaboration Management (ECM) is a web application that enables collaboration and knowledge-sharing for people who are:

- separated by time, distance, and/or function (that is, departments or divisions within an organization, e.g., sales, marketing, product development, customer service, HR, finance, and regional or overseas offices)
- within one organization or across multiple organizations but still need to work as a team, toward a common goal.

http://www.arsdigita.com/products/collaboration
Enterprise Collaboration Management (2)

• Through day-to-day use, ECM seamlessly captures large amounts of information that, as it is categorized, ranked, commented upon and linked to other information, becomes valuable organizational knowledge.

• Examples of the functionality that simplifies re-use of knowledge, across the organization, are user comments, user ratings, user profiles, expertise location, custom knowledge types, content linking and incentives.

http://www.arsdigita.com/products/collaboration
IT Utilization by Non-profits and Community Groups (1)

1. Focus on helping community groups and non-profit organizations use technology in their day-to-day operations – not just on the role of these organizations in providing access to the technology.

2. Identify, assess and coordinate existing initiatives, at all levels and within and across all sectors, that direct funding, people and community-based and/or -focused knowledge assets towards key social and institutional deficiencies, in order to eliminate duplication and encourage replication.

http://www.athenaalliance.org/
3. Support innovation in technology and related means through non-traditional and/or non-commercial players, while fostering an environment of innovation which can target challenges specific to the sector.

4. Actively engage organizations and those served by their activities through both traditional and nontraditional means, including technologically, to address issues of reluctance and unfamiliarity, and to encourage interest and adoption of tools to facilitate public and social participation, especially where need is greatest.

http://www.athenaalliance.org/
Sample Cases

- IT Special Interest Group
- Across Borders
- Aid Coordination Committees
- Distance Learning
- E-Procurement
Across Borders Project

www.acrossborders.org

• Launched in 1999 with the aim of bringing Internet technologies into Palestinian refugee camps in WBGS, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria.

• To achieve this aim, the ABP works on a) setting up computer and internet centers in refugee camps, b) training center staff in the operation of computer labs, c) overseeing the creation of bilingual camp websites, and d) providing support, assistance, and supervision for each center for a period of one year until the center becomes self-sustainable.

• PDG Role: ABP’s main website is currently running webmail applications, forums discussion groups, and other applications using the PDG’s tailor-made modules for Internet based communication. Future cooperation includes building a complete portal for the ABP.
Why Connect Palestinian refugee camps on the Internet?

The Palestinian refugee population remains the most marginalized and impoverished segment of Palestinian society and the most in need of having their voice heard. Despite the internationally recognized right of return, the right of refugees to speak for themselves has often been neglected.

The Across Borders Project will offer a virtual space for refugees to communicate with one another without the restriction of borders and checkpoints. The Internet centers based in the camps will be the "permit" for this virtual reunification. The websites will offer more than just text, utilizing video and audio technology while the online photo-galleries will enable a visual sight of relatives separated by distance and time but connected by technology. E-mail will permit daily communication between people who previously
Across Borders E-mail

Login: [ ] [ ]@acrossborders.org
Password: [ ]

- Don't have Across Borders Mail!
  - Sign Me UP
- About Across Borders Mail

☑ Remember my ID on this computer help
The Palestinian Information Technology Special Interest Group was formed with the following objectives:

- To develop an atmosphere of coordination and cooperation between the various bodies and individuals involved in the development of IT in Palestine.
- To create an advisory body for IT projects.
- To influence policy makers in IT related issues and developments.
- To formulate a view on policy and strategy.
- To coordinate efforts and activities between international and donor agencies in IT.
- To raise the awareness of the Palestinian community in relation to IT.
- PDG to provide forums capability through its own portal; a complete system at a later stage.
Towards A developed Palestine in the New Era.

ITSIG

Information Technology Special Interest Group.

Designed by:
Mustafa N. Deeb
Aid Coordination
www.donor-coordination.org

• At the present, this is “A web site providing current information on the development partnership of the international community with the Palestinian Authority, including details of the Aid Coordination Structure, access to PA, donor, UN and NGO contacts lists, and linking to over 100 related web sites.

• PDG proposal to design, implement, and host a complete content management system with enterprise collaboration management.
A web site providing current information on the development partnership of the international community with the Palestinian Authority, including details of the Aid Coordination Structure, access to PA, donor, UN and NGO contacts lists, and linking to over 100 related web sites.

The Impact on the Palestinian Economy of Confrontations,
Mobility Restrictions and Border Closures.

Distance Learning
Palestinian Micro- and Small Enterprise Development (PMSED) Project

• An initiative to provide diploma programs through continuing education to the private sector.
• PDG Role: build a new distance learning component for the project.
E-Procurement