

VOTECH

Design Study Area 2 Review

Keith Noddle, Technical Manager



Purpose

- To provide Technical Project Management for the VOTECH project

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- Simple yet important

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- To provide Technical Project Management for the VOTECH project
- Simple yet important
- Team:
 - Project Manager: Tony Linde
 - Project Scientist: Nicholas Walton
 - Technical Manager: Keith Noddle.

Challenge

- To provide the mechanisms and guidance that allow the Partners maximum flexibility whilst ensuring a coherent deliverable in line with the VOTECH Contract

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- To provide the mechanisms and guidance that allow the Partners maximum flexibility whilst ensuring a coherent deliverable in line with the VOTECH Contract.
- ...which is a bit like trying to herd cats!
- But successfully achieved nonetheless.

Deliverables

- DS2-01 Project Plan
- DS2-02 Revised Project Plan
- DS2-03 Science Framework Document
- DS2-04a Baseline software release-1
- DS2-04b Baseline software release 2
- DS2-04c Baseline software release 3
- DS2-04d Baseline software release 4
- DS2-05 Euro-VO Reference Architecture

DS2-01 Project Plan

- Delivered March 2005
- Provides the guidelines and structures against which the VOTECH project has been run
- Available [here](#)

DS2-02 Revised Project Plan

- Plan revised in December 2006
- Minor revisions
- Ensure plan accurately reflects the realities of VOTECH in operation

DS2-03 Science Framework Document

- Details will be covered by Project Scientist
- Provides the science goals and framework that informs the planning and deliverables of VOTECH

DS2-04a First Baseline software release

- Delivered March 2006
- Combined deliverables from the Partners organisations, referenced from VOTECH Wiki on the [software download](#) page

DS2-04b Second Baseline software release

- Delivered March 2007
- Combined deliverables from the Partners organisations, referenced from VOTECH Wiki on the [software download](#) page

Remaining Deliverables

- DS2-04c Baseline software release 3
(March 2008)
- DS2-04d Baseline software release 4
(September 2008)
- DS2-05 Euro-VO Reference Architecture
(December 2008)

Approach

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- Simultaneous Top Down and Bottom Up

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- Provide communications mechanisms

Approach

- Light and simple
- Simultaneous Top Down and Bottom Up
- Provide communications mechanisms
- Commissioned Studies.

Top Down

- Regular, face to face meetings (twice yearly)
 - DSRP
 - TAP
 - Board

Top Down

- DSRP
 - Design Study Review and Planning meetings
 - Each DS Area reports progress over last stage
 - Tasks are discussed and demonstrations given
 - Partners propose task list for next stage
 - Plans accommodate tasks that last more than a single stage
 - DS Leads consolidate task lists into a Stage Plan

Top Down

- TAP
 - Technical Advisory Panel
 - Reviews each DS Area Stage Plan
 - Plans for interoperability and cooperation between partners for appropriate tasks
 - Recommends tasks to Board for approval and inclusion in final Stage Plans

Top Down

- Board
 - As well as usual governance duties, Board meets to consider TAP proposals
 - Acts as final arbiter when tasks compete for resource or need re-prioritising
 - Approves final Stage Plans

Bottom Up

- Hackathon
 - Each DSRP includes a one-day Hackathon
 - Opportunity for engineers to talk and share code and ideas
 - Ensures collaboration and cooperation across all levels of VOTECH
- Driven by engineers

Communications

- Wiki
 - Excellent collaboration tool
 - Widely used
- Forum
 - Good at start but gradually replaced by other mechanisms
- Mailing Lists

Wiki

- A few details:
 - 95 registered users
 - Nov 2004: 1954 views, 230 topics saved or updated, 96 files uploaded
 - Sep 2007: 27087 pages viewed, 46 topics saved or changed, 31 files uploaded
 - Jul 2007 there were 44570 page views

Studies

- Source management
 - SourceForge
 - Very useful for certain project types (e.g. PLASTIC)
 - Gforge
 - Not cost effective for a project the size of VOTECH
 - Interesting open source project
 - Seems they sell the documentation...
 - Very complex to install and administer

Studies

- Source management
 - VOTECH deliverables
 - Reports, Standards, Prototypes, Services, Studies
 - Focusing on code:
 - Much prototyping and development based upon existing components produced by partner VO projects (e.g. AstroGrid, CDS ESO etc)
 - VOTECH has significantly improved those components in line with EuroVO needs
 - VOTECH CVS
 - Conclusion: Not appropriate
 - Better to let partners handle SCM and reference them from VOTECH Wiki

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- Light but positive approach.