

EMA IT Team

Proposed working agenda for the period up to 2008

Overview

Collaborating with the other EMA teams, IT will be providing the front-end platform for the members, as well as the required electronic infrastructure for the services to be offered by the other teams, with the EMA website being its focal attention. Since EMA is an association with its members residing and relocating with vast geographical distribution, we consider the EMA website as the association's office, hence giving it special priority.

It has been our utmost effort to bring together all possible technical services and features for the association. To that end, a list has been compiled to act as the agenda for the IT team for the period up to 2008. The agenda is divided into three sections; 'General' section mainly includes issues pertaining to policy and organization. 'Short-term goals' comprises of the agenda of the tasks to be implemented by February 2007 (when the current service provider contract will finish); and 'Long-term goals' which encompasses all the tasks to be done for the period from March 2007 up to the end of 2008, all subject to further revision and minor changes through the EMA GB regular meetings.

1- General

a. Defining an "IT Policy" for the Association, this will essentially act as the guideline for internal procedures pertaining to access permissions, security issues, electronic membership procedures, in general the interactions between EMA teams, GB members, the IT team and coordinator, the commission and the service provider, as well as externally to all other members, prospective students and other parties involved.

b. IT budget, to be decided and proposed together with the commission and Launch/Steering Committee.

c. The "IT Policy" and the IT budget will be approved by the GB/Launch Committee, in accordance with the EMA constitution.

d. IT will make the utmost effort and commitment to properly maintain and technically manage the website(s) as well as member profiles, to ensure a high standard of service, accessibility and uptime.

e. For all new members to the association, a profile will automatically be created, and a username and password and an EMA email address generated. As such, all EM students will be automatically registered on the website. The electronic registration information will possibly be sent to the new members by post along with their EM welcome pack. Details will be included in the 'IT Policy'.

f. It was decided to continue with the current model for the support and development of the EMA website, conducted based on the requirements of the association, managed through the IT.

g. At least one member of the IT team should be elected from the previous term of office, to ensure a smooth coherent transition, having the crucial role of the website in mind.

h. The ownership (technically, the Administrative Contact) of all the domain names belonging to the association are to be assigned/changed to the commission's name for legality issues.

i. The service provider will keep an up-to-date detailed technical documentation of the IT infrastructure, a copy of which will always be available to the IT team.

2- Short-term goals

a. RSS Feeds

To be added for the website and the message board.

b. Member profile

- SSL/Security: Profile updates should be made over a secure connection, to protect members' privacy and provide security.
- Current place of residence (e.g. for the alumni) to be added.
- Member photos to be included in profiles.
- Periodic automatic reminders to members to change their profile details based on the study year details/mobility scheme entered. This will further help members keep their profile up-to-date.
- Profile Search options and results to be expanded.
- Addition of required data fields to the profile for volunteer activities.
- Ability to subscribe/unsubscribe to the available mailing lists, newsletters, etc.

d. Newsletters

- To be also made available online
- Also as archive of the previous issues will be made available online.
- An HTML template is to be designed in coherence with the new website design.
- Permanent links to main sections of the website to be included in the newsletter.
- Unsubscribing information to be included as the footnote.

e. Magazines

- To be also made available online, in PDF format, after postal distribution.
- Also as online archive of the previous issues.
- All magazine articles to be included on the website (as part of the magazine section, with search feature).

f. Mailing Lists

To be created to facilitate circulating emails to all/groups of members. For privacy and security reasons, all internal and external mass-mailing correspondence will be conducted only by using mailing-lists, rather than explicit email addresses of the members.

g. Calendar of Events

To provide a central easy-access overview of the forthcoming association events.

h. Website sections for all teams

Individual teams will have their own sections dedicated to their ongoing activities, content of which is entirely managed by the team coordinator.

i. Website redesign

Current website was proposed to undergo a redesign, to match the chosen logo, and to rebrand the look accordingly, and also to have several technical changes, to accommodate the new website sections, and other additions described in this document and to be outlined later in details. Help of a professional graphic/website designer is strongly recommended.

j. The domain name for the website

It is strongly suggested to have the main domain name of the association changed to 'erasmusmundus.eu'. Meanwhile the current domain should remain active. This is specifically important for the forwarding email address, to make it shorter, hence more memorable.

The afore-mentioned domain name is suggested to be registered as soon as possible.

k. Student emails

- Forwarding email addresses will need to be created, preferably under the domain name: 'erasmusmundus.eu' for current registered members. The format of such addresses is suggested to be ✉ ['firstname.surname\(at\)erasmusmundus.eu'](mailto:firstname.surname(at)erasmusmundus.eu).
- New members' email addresses will be auto-generated in a predefined format with the possibility to change the ID by the user if the default is inappropriate.
- All correspondence with members will be done through their designated association email address, since it can be forwarded to the email address of their choice.
- Each team will be assigned a dedicated email account, with forwarding facility to all members of the team. To be further detailed in 'IT Policy'.
- URGENT: A few email addresses on the current domain, including one for the Jobs team, are to be created as soon as possible by ACA.

3- Long-term goals

a. Search engine optimization.

- To employ professional expertise to target certain keywords and demographics within the popular online search engines, so as to bring the "Erasmus Mundus" ranking in general and EMA in specific, to the top (first few hits) among the well-known search engines.
- Ensure that prospective students are effectively directed to the website, targeting those in search of scholarship.
- Creating targeted web advertisements.

b. Online Survey

To be redesigned: Currently too general; fixed selective form of feedback required for easier/automated statistical analysis.

c. Sub-sections for branches and chapters

Domain registration for future associations of all EM programs (chapters) It is suggested that the committee will act upon standardising on naming and registering domain names under the .eu TLD for all EM programs' associations (if decided as such). Also possibility of developing spin-off websites (or providing sub-sections under the EMA website) for specific EM courses should be taken into consideration.

d. Content Management

A comprehensive, professional Content Management system is required to enable individual committee representatives to modify their online contents on a regular basis. This will essentially require a modular, dynamic design to also include access level permissions/authorisation. Individual RSS feeds are also to be provided for each team's subsection.

e. Mailing label generation

We will require this feature to automate generation of address labels for magazine/letter distribution.

f. Voting

For internal elections of the GB, as well as general elections/surveys, for instance EMA course representative elections.

g. Careers Section

- Including among other things, CV management or the ability to also add a CV file to member's profile.
- Jobs database.

h. Online Courses

- Offered to members, either web-based, or in webcast /podcast format. This could at a later stage be planned to be turned into a "Continuing Education" section with support from some industry partner programs, towards a professional certificate.
- With cooperation of universities already providing such eLearning content.

IT Team