



BABYLON & ONTOLOGY

The European Educational Social Network

Babylon & ONtology: Multilingual and cognitive e-Learning Management System via PDA phone.
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Deliverable 7.1

Task 7.1: SWOT analysis and user analysis.

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Executive Summary

This document is a preliminary analysis for the Exploitation plan. The report is divided into two different parts. The objective of the first part is to have a photograph of the project situation during the first period of the project life cycle. This part of the report describes: the attributes of BONy consortium that are helpful to achieving the objective (internal point of view), the attributes of BONy consortium that are harmful to achieving the objective (internal point of view), and also the *external* conditions that are helpful to achieving the objective and the *external* conditions which could do damage to the business's performance. The second part analyses the users of BONy platform (end-users, users providers and decision makers) and how to reach to the user's needs.



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1. Introduction

This deliverable has a double objective. The first one is to get to know the strong points, the weakness, the opportunities and the threats regarding the partnership of the BONy project. The second objective is to analysis the users of the project and the resulting product. BONy partnership is to know their needs in order to reach to their requirements in a appropriate way.

This deliverable has been done in a collaborative way amongst all partners. INK began the process by opening a page in the BONy wiki space, after that all partners included their thoughts and opinions in the different chapters. The questions asked were as follows:

1. How will your Organisation exploit Bony results?
 - Give a general explanation because we are in the 1st stage of the project
2. SWOT analysis. A SWOT analysis of the situation at the beginning of the project.
 - Bony Strong points (internal point of view, in our project and consortium) (evaluation report from the commission)
 - Bony Weaknesses, (internal point of view)
 - Opportunities (external point of view, in our Sector, society, etc.),
 - Threats (external point of view, in our Sector, society, etc.),
 - Please, write your point of view concerning these 4 points
3. Users analysis

One of the first important analyses that BONy consortium is to do, is to analyse our end-user needs in order to reach to their requirements in an appropriate way.

Users: who they are?

- a) Product users: End-user:
 - a) Product providers
 - b) Decision-makers
- How are we going to know their need?
- Do you know any good methodology for this?

This deliverable summarises the responses made by project partners, and discusses a number of pertinent issues regarding exploitation.



2. Strategic planning

2.1 Project objective definition

The aim of the project is to develop a new generation of Learning Management System, able to create multilingual formative schemes designed on specific users' needs. BONy Consortium will test the new technology developed during the lifetime of the project, by creating an e-course on Project Cycle Management. This e-course is addressed to project managers who wants to learn more on specific subjects and to beginners in European project management.

The core technology proposed by the BONy's project is based on the most recent advancements from the Artificial Intelligence, Social Networks and ICT technologies:

- Adapted to users level, behaviour and language - BONy system allows users to find and to learn the units strictly requested and necessary to achieve their training experience. BONy supplies a multilingual access to information: English, Italian, Greek, French, Spanish, Catalan, Polish, German, Hungarian, Slovakian, Czech.
- A Collaborative system - BONy project aims at motivating users to create the educational content in a collaborative way, but first BONy consortium is creating the e-course in European Project Management.
- Semantic web - BONy involves an ontological approach to knowledge and an interconnection among formative contents and interactive multimedia thanks to the semantic web methodology.
- PCs, PDAs or other Mobile devices - BONy e-learners' community will interact using a PDA phone or (other devices such a PC or a laptop).
- Social network - BONy is a social network where users can play a double role (students and/or teachers) according to theirs skills and requirements. BONy intends to provide a social network of experts fully dedicated to the European cooperation in the domains of research and project management

2.2 SWOT analysis

This is an analysis of the situation at the beginning of the project and during the first period of the project life cycle. BONy consortium has chosen the SWOT analysis to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats related to the BONy project. We are to identify internal and external factors favourable and unfavourable to achieving our project objectives.

- *Strengths*: attributes of the organization helpful to achieve planned objectives. This is an analysis from the internal point of view.
- *Weaknesses*: attributes of the organization jeopardising attainment of objectives. This is analysis from the internal point of view.
- *Opportunities*: external conditions favouring the realisation of objectives.
- *Threats*: external conditions which could damage the business performance.



a. Bony Strengths

- Transnational partnership
- Access to the partners capacity which are key to the project
- Well organized communication process and cooperation among partners
- Innovative character of the project
- **Ontological of venture**
- State of the Art scientific approach
- High quality administrative and technological management
- Well balance partnership.
- Good opportunities amongst partners to disseminate our project (exhibitions, web sites, etc)
- Quality of the methodology and the work program
- European Added Value
- The project addresses different European languages (Catalan, Polish, Hungarian, Czech, English, French, German, etc...)

b. Bony Weaknesses

- Huge distance among partner's headquarters - aggravation in business trips
- Possibility of low interaction among test-groups
- Possibility of low collaborative attitude of social network users/members
- To reach ASAP a social network user critical mass
- Danger that the BONy system will not be as good as it promises. In that case, all we will have will be a simple e-course with no innovation at all
- The system is based in the creation of a social network of users. This needs a big effort from the partners in dissemination and promotion activities otherwise the BONy system will not work effectively
- Danger of insufficient dissemination and promotion of project

c. Opportunities

- Creation of multilingual educational platform
- Gaining the totally new kind of end-users
- Extension of m-learning market
- Facilitation of knowledge transfer on European level
- Changing of end-users attitude to the distance learning
- Creation of transnational experts society regarding project and its ideas
- Nowadays, the number of professionals in Management European Project is increasing
- Distance learning is extending its market
- Professional's Social networks are having a boom between all kinds of professionals

d. Threats

- Scientific and technological investigation advances very quickly
- Increasing the competitiveness in European Project Management courses offered by private companies or by university. See Deliverable 2.1



- Courses on European Project Management offered for free by local authorities. (See Deliverable 2.1)
- High percentage of competitors offering similar services and courses; high percentage of courses offered within professional and specialized sector events like meetings and fairs; people taking part in the bigger event then enroll for one/two-days courses also.
- Rising number of in-session courses on PCM offered by companies and institutions to meet market demand in this domain; many people thus benefit of internal training schemes and do not look for external opportunities for up-skilling.
- Some professionals, especially older ones, still prefer one-to-one, traditional kind of learning, in order to fulfill the emotional/psychological gap within the learning process.
- Scarce openness related to distant learning.
- Social and educational challenges such as IT accessibility and cost barriers (digital divide), accurate and reliable technology foreseeing all kinds of criticalities of content provision, assessment, consistency, recommending, etc.

| | Helpful to achieving the objective | Harmful to achieving the objective |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Internal origin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovation project - High quality scientific approach - High quality management - Well balance partnership <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; color: green;">S</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possibility of low collaboration of the test group and social network - Bony system could be not as good as promises <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; color: orange;">W</p> |
| External origin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of professional in Project Management is increasing. - Change of end-user attitude to distance learning <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; color: blue;">O</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Scientific and technological investigation proceed very quickly - PMC courses offered for free <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; color: purple;">T</p> |

Table 1: Summery of SWOT analysis

After this analysis the BONy Consortium has to be conscious of the opportunities and strengths it can benefit from because of the boom of the social networks and the increasing number of professional working in European projects. One of the most relevant points arising after this analysis is the importance of the social network, so the whole BONy Consortium is to do a big effort to create a strong, collaborative and 'inviting' environment. All partners should be responsible for this action in their own country.



3. User analysis

3.1 User analysis

This chapter will answer the following questions: Who are the users of BONy e-learning platform? Who will potentially benefit from the project results? Who will use BONy e-learning platform?

There are three categories of foreseen users:

- a) End-users: people who will use the e-learning platform for their learning experience.
 - b) Product providers: organisations which provide the e-learning platform to end-users.
 - c) Decision-makers: territorial or institutional government which could facilitate the use of BONy e-learning platform.
-
- b) End-users:
 - People in mobility thanks to Leonardo da Vinci (Vocational education) and Grundtvig (Adult Education) programmes
 - University students interested in European collaboration
 - University Researchers
 - All project managers involved in one of the European cooperation programmes: LLP, 7FP, CIP, Catrene, ITEA, EuropeAid, etc...
 - All kind of professionals in mobility
 - Unemployed
 - Professionals trying to change their career

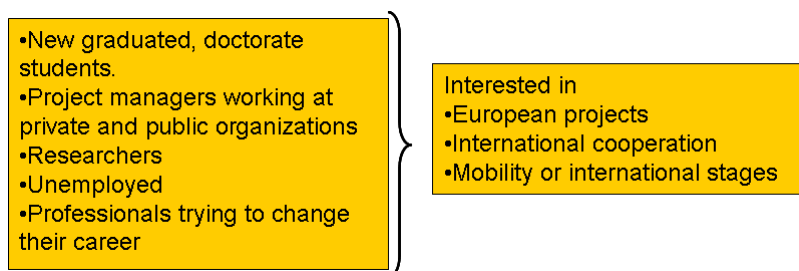


Table 2: BONy e-learning platform end-users

- c) Product providers
 - Training institutions
 - Companies involved in European projects
 - Consultancy companies (EU, informatics, strategy)
 - Organisations involved in European projects
 - Language Training schools
 - ICT companies
 - Content providers (e-learning companies)



- d) Decision-makers
- Local government
 - Regional government
 - National government
 - European institutions
 - Industrial associations
 - Commerce chambers

3.2. End-User needs

Once we have identified the general users of BONY platform, we should identify the end-users needs, in order to develop our product. One of the first important analyses that BONY Consortium is to do, is to analyse our end-user needs in order to reach to their requirements in an appropriate way. We should develop BONY cognitive e-Learning system (eLMS) having in mind the users' needs, because if not, the system will not be useful for our users.

BONY Consortium should do a deeper analysis on user needs, that is not only for Exploitation, but it is also related to the technological and content development (WP2, WP3 and WP4). Deeper analysis is very important, the frequent problem is to imprecise the subject of attendance of new users. BONY partners have to be sure that the market will actively response to their offer. By studying attentively the target groups, and therefore by creating a specific profile highlighting needs, requirements and expectations of users, it will be easier to model BONY' services on what is offered and what needs to be further developed. Users know the market and the existing products, so they are the best reference for greater improvements and creation of specialised tools and content.

There are different ways to know our users needs. BONY Consortium will proceed in various steps:

- 1- Once the platform is developed and the Project Management Cycle written, BONY consortium could invite potential users to test our prototype and give us their feedback in a structured way. The pilot test will begin in December 2008 and will be done according to the evaluation plan (WP5)
- 2- BONY Consortium has to specify the users profile very precisely: what age they are, what ethnic group they are from, how to reach them, what they can expect from the project. We have to show that users are exactly the ones that we're looking for.
- 3- Users can act as testing group and indicate voluntarily (through feedback and response to our course) their impressions on the content and tools provided, then by analysing this feedback in the light of variables such as the abovementioned ones (age, profession, sector, needs, reaction to IT-based course versus traditional learning), we can draw a comprehensive profile of users and their needs, resulting in clear 'indications' for BONY development.
- 4- The PCM course and the BONY system do not intend to cover the needs of only a specific level of students but instead it is built in a way to meet the needs of all different levels of students in terms of experience and knowledge.
- 5- The experts that develop the PCM course are able to know what specific knowledge a European Project Manager needs to have. As a second level, pilot testing courses will take place in several countries in order to find the weaknesses of the course and of the BONY



system. The system eventually will choose the correct course for each student because it will automatically be able to understand the level of the student. This is the innovation of the BONy project. It automatically identifies the needs of the users.

In order to reach the users needs, BONy Consortium is to:

1. build database about our potential users, send them information by e-mail, post, etc so that they can give us their opinions about our project;
2. make BONy project more popular and renowned (send brochures to local institutions, governments and ask them for help, advertising campaign);
3. built forum on the website where people can leave any opinions and share the knowledge (it will additionally give us information about popularity of our project)
4. profile users and 'database' them in order to store details of testing group, then their contributions must be classified too in relation to what group they come from (i.e.: *this age group says this...; this professional group needs such expertise...; this nationality has such attitude towards learning, etc.*). This will lead to a comparative perspective on users and needs on which to develop BONy as an educational/professional networking service and as an up-skilling tool, while creating the appropriate approach for each learners' group;
5. monitor users according to specific requirements and practices, because they can't be regrouped as a wide 'IT-connected community';
6. create an online questionnaire where people can express their opinions and evaluate the project in terms of innovation, usability, usefulness, etc.;
7. involve people of high expertise in the pilot testing in order to gain better feedback;
8. make the project known by using all the means available in order to create the social network of users which will allow the BONy system to work effectively.