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Disseminating the Grid: An essential guide

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When it comes to dissemination, what works and what doesn't? During EGEE-III, NA2 has coordinated a rich programme of activities through an increasingly wide range of media –press releases, booths, blogs, Twitter and websites to name just a few. This session gathers together best practices based on the lessons learnt with input from collaborating dissemination project, GridTalk. Practical examples and case studies highlight how to deal with the media, make an impact on policy makers, get business leaders interested in the grid and bring new user communities on board.

Detailed analysis

EGEE's NA2 brings together 27 partners from 22 countries; this session examines the advantages and disadvantages of a geographically distributed team –how much effort is needed to execute an effective dissemination plan and how much does it all cost? Regardless of a project's size, collaborating with other projects and organisations can reach a wider range of audiences. The session explores ideas for building up working relationships and networks, including MoUs and media sponsorship deals.

Events are a highly effective means for engaging new and existing audiences in your work, but which should you attend? With booth fees sometimes running to thousands of Euros, it pays to target these carefully. The session reviews some of the highlights from the dissemination team's travels, including the must-attend events, how to build a better booth and most importantly, how to let everyone know that you are there.

Getting businesses excited about grid technologies is a particular challenge and this session also presents the lessons learnt from the EGEE business outreach activities –through the Business Forum, targeted business events and the successful Business Associates programme.

Conclusions and Future Work

Once the EGEE-III project closes, the future of grid dissemination, like the grid itself, will be highly distributed –dissemination will be shared by a host of communications teams, including the EGI.eu communications team, the Specialised Support Centre dissemination activities and the National Grid Initiatives. This session concludes by introducing some of the expected new players in the field of grid dissemination including EGI.eu and the National Grid Initiatives and outlines how the user community will continue to benefit from highly professional and dedicated dissemination teams.

Impact

The impact of dissemination activities is potentially very large, with some events attracting ten thousand or more delegates. Press releases are circulated to thousands of journalists across dozens of countries, triggering articles and interviews that can reach a whole range of audiences, from the specialist press to the general public. The LHC GridFest event in October 2008, which EGEE contributed to, generated 160 international press clippings from TV, radio and press and significantly raised the profile of grid computing in the minds of the general public and policy makers.

Policy makers and funders can also be targeted highly effectively by publishing articles in key high circulation journals and by sending booths to international policy events. By outlining the benefits that grids offer to

science and society, this kind of outreach can help to ensure essential funding for future e-Infrastructures. The grid only thrives through its active user communities –by reaching out to new and existing users through publications, events, social media and community-building websites, dissemination activities help to bring these communities together.

Keywords

dissemination, communications, outreach, business, media

URL for further information

<http://press.eu-egge.org/index.php?id=228>; <http://www.gridtalk.org>

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