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1. Executive Summary

Euromuse.net is an independent, non-profit information provider on European museums and their exhibitions to promote and raise interest in Europe’s professional cultural offer.

The service receives reasonable contributions by its participants, which edit, maintain and update information on their museums directly on euromuse.net. To integrate participants and to support them, the euromuse.net project consortium has developed a training strategy, which will be discussed in this deliverable.

The stakeholder support strategy follows a combined approach consisting of several complementing elements. Each of the elements will be discussed one by one. At the end of the document an overall conclusion will be given.

The training, which was aligned to serve the stakeholders with all the information they need to join and to participate the service, consists of the following elements:

a) User manuals (multilingual)

b) Training events

c) Individual support actions

Each of these elements’ impact will be described in the following.
2. Approach in Stakeholder Support

From the viewpoint of its users, a service such as euromuse.net is an intermediator. All the stakeholder groups considerably contribute to the success of euromuse.net and benefit by euromuse.net. That is why euromuse.net can not be aligned only to the needs of the service operators, but to the needs of its users as well as to the needs of its stakeholders.

This means, beside the set-up and the maintenance of the service, it is essential to keep the continuous workload for everyone involved as small (and easy) as possible. It must be an important objective to define the activities necessary for supporting the professional users (i.e. the museums and tourism industries accepting to pay for the service), designing and delivering training packages to attract new stakeholders and users of euromuse.net, and developing the documents supporting the installation, maintenance and use of the service.

Work package 5 reflects this demand and develops actions to fulfil it: Firstly, by holding training workshops to qualify the museums and tourism services to successfully use the backend or the Harmonise interface. Secondly, to ease the daily work with the euromuse.net system, to produce well prepared supporting material like user manuals and handbooks, easy to understand and directly addressing the user’s questions. Thirdly, by providing support on the individual level, like on the phone, via mailings or by answering special questions of its users.
3. Training manuals for the euromuse.net service

The training manuals, available for download on the project website aim to support the participating museums in the data maintenance. The manuals have been produced in three languages used in the euromuse.net project, which are currently English, German and Italian. Besides minor changes integrated from time to time, the manuals have been updated in a general way three times to reflect changes in the use of the euromuse.net backend or to integrate extensions of the data schema. Besides three multilingual euromuse.net backend manuals, one additional Harmonise manual which is directed to technical staff only has been produced. This manual provides background information to perform a mapping and about the euromuse.net data schema.

The manuals explain in a very illustrative and intuitive way how and where to enter which information to euromuse.net. To consider the fact, that most museum editors can only maintain euromuse.net additionally to their normal and main tasks, the euromuse.net project consortium tried to keep the effort of information maintenance as low as possible. That is why the project tried to provide information understandable intuitively and easily.

These manuals are available at the euromuse.net website at:
http://www.euromuse.net/en/information_for_participating_museums/:

- euromuse.net training manual – English edition
  The euromuse.net training manual describes the use of the euromuse.net TYPO3 backend in English language.

- euromuse.net training manual – German edition
  The euromuse.net training manual describes the use of the euromuse.net TYPO3 backend in German language.

- euromuse.net training manual – Italian edition
  The euromuse.net training manual describes the use of the euromuse.net TYPO3 backend in Italian language.

- Harmonise training manual
  The Harmonise training manual describes the use of the euromuse.net Harmonise system, available in English and – until the End of June – also in Italian language.

The acceptance of the manuals is very high. According to the web statistics of the euromuse.net server the manuals are used quite often and in a high frequency. While the English and the German version of the manuals are downloaded approximately three times a day, the Italian version is downloaded around six times a day. (Count of downloads from February to May 2010).

It seems, as if the editors at the museums do not print the file, but download it in the moment when they enter the data to the euromuse.net portal. For this reason, it might be helpful to add further online support material to the portal.

Summarising, the overall acceptance and use of the manuals is very satisfying. Despite of the good acceptance of the manuals, the project consortium sees some potential for improvements by offering the manuals on a basis of FAQs and real online tutorials with one of the next updates.
4. Training workshops

Several international training workshops have taken place within the project. The intention of offering training workshops is to support each group of stakeholders, to inform about the service and the different ways to use it. At the same time, the objective of this action is to find out about the acceptance of the service and to generate feedback how to improve it or to identify needs for activities necessary for supporting the professional users and to attract new stakeholders and users of the service. At the same time, the training workshops offer a platform to introduce users into the active use of the service.

With the ongoing experience in offering training actions, the project experienced positive feedback as well as suggestions for improvements.

Challenges and potential for improvements:

- **Difficulties to bring together the external target groups in one place**

  From the perspective of a single museum or a tourism service, the effort to visit a workshop is comparably high, especially, if the workshop takes place in another place. For this reason, the acceptance to follow the project consortium’s invitations to the euromuse.net training workshops was relatively small in comparison to the expectations at the project start. Especially the employees of the public relation departments often are not allowed to travel to events as they are embedded in their daily work, which does not offer time to visit events like euromuse.net offers.

  That is why the acceptance of the training workshops was not as high as expected. The project compensated this by

  a) connecting the training workshops with other events which take place in the museum sector and which are visited by the target persons anyway. For instance, this was done at the MAI-Tagung workshop in May 2009 in Xanten.

  b) extending other forms to get in contact, e.g. intensifying the individual support.

  This has already been reflected with the 2nd Amendment of the Grant Agreement where the training approach has been refined to reflect the experiences made.

- **More than one contact point in one institution necessary**

  While the general interest to participate in euromuse.net has to be aroused at the directorate and in the public relation department, it is in most cases the IT-department which implements the partnership. Seminars to raise attraction of the euromuse.net portal have to follow a promotion approach, while the implementation requires technical courses. The combined approach – to raise the interest in the service and to explain the service at the same time – turned out to be difficult to realise.

Positive effects through trainings:

- The workshops are an effective tool to receive user feedback. Beside a general presentation of the euromuse.net project, the portal and the Harmonise interface, the participant’s questions and the discussion on those workshops are used to improve the manuals and the next workshops. The project directly experienced user behaviour and potential difficulties the museum editors had to edit their information and could deduct solution strategies in the following.
• Partner trainings showed to be an effective tool to intensify the knowledge about the service within the project consortium and to develop the necessary background knowledge on the technique used and the way and requirements to perform mappings.

• The administrator trainings created a platform to analyse improvement areas and find solutions for remaining problems within the technical staff. Bringing together the technical staff in the administrator trainings showed to be much more effective than discussing technical issues within the consortium and delegating it to technical staff afterwards.

That is why the project consortium intends to refine the approach of embedding new users to euromuse.net and to communicate the necessary knowledge to the user groups by

1) **Aligning public events on promotion more than on training in future**

   Though events in the museum and tourism sector are mostly visited by non-technical staff, the presentation of the euromuse.net service must focus more on promoting the service than introducing the handling of the service. While the external events shall be used to raise the general attraction of the service, the trainings have to follow in the second step.

2) **Extension of direct support for the users**

   As described on the next pages, the editorial team will focus more on individual support actions on the phone, online tutorials and via mailings with the existing users to introduce the service to its users and to offer support.

**Conferences and event presentations to raise attention to the euromuse.net service**

The project consortium sees a clear benefit by presenting the service, the project and the advantages for museums and tourism services on events in the museum and tourism sector. The direct presentation of the platform on conferences, events etc. is useful to establish contact to potential new participants and users of the euromuse.net service. As described above, it is difficult to bring together people on special euromuse.net events to inform about the service, but there are many symposia which offer good opportunities to get in contact with the target groups.
5. **Individual support actions**

Individual support actions offered by the euromuse.net editorial team turned out to be the most effective way to embed new and existing partners to euromuse.net. Not only by offering the possibilities and channels to directly answer the questions of the participating museums, but also building up contact between persons strengthens the connections between museums and euromuse.net.

That is why it is helpful if the euromuse.net editor and the responsible editor at the museum have spoken with each other or are in contact. The strategy to give the service a face – or a voice – leads to a stronger involvement of the participating museums.

For that reason, the euromuse.net project intensified the contact between its participants and the editors.

5.1 **Mailings**

An effective tool to keep in contact with many participating museums at the same time and to regularly remind them to keep their information updated, the project has tested reminder emails successfully.

The tests have taken place with very good results within the group of participating museums from Germany. While general reminder mailings in English language have not been successful, a reminder written in German lead to logins of around three quarters of the contacted museums within one week after the mailing and updated content for several museums.

That is why the project will translate the reminder mail texts also to further languages to address the museums directly in future.

5.2 **Telephone support**

Also contact by phone – which is much more direct than via email – has shown positive effects. For that reason individual contact by phone will be extended.
6. Conclusions

From an overall viewpoint the general progress is very good. The training approach considerably contributed to the general extension of the partnerships in euromuse.net. Euromuse.net has extended the amount of museums participating and increased the number of exhibitions presented at the same time.

Specific results:

- Individualised support actions have turned out to be a very effective tool to serve the participants needs.

- Public trainings have turned out to be more successful in bringing attention to the service than in training in the use of the service.

- To connect a partner via Harmonise normally requires input by more than one person of the partner. Each of those partners has a very specific need for information, which is difficult to communicate at one training session.

- Partner and administrator trainings offer good platforms for the technical staff to discuss improvements and develop solutions independent of the consortium meetings.

- Euromuse.net manuals are accepted by the partners and used frequently.