NEARCTIS website

Confidentiality level: <public - Restricted>
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<table>
<thead>
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Amendments

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<th>Date of Issue</th>
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<tr>
<td>25/08/2009</td>
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<th>Name, institute, date of the review</th>
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<td>Nick Hounsell, Uof Southampton, 24/08/2009</td>
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Applicable Documents

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1. Executive summary

This document provides the motivations, purposes and about the new version of NEARCTIS' website that can be found under the temporary URL http://NEARCTIS\text{\textregistered}test.inrets.fr/ which will migrate sooner under the permanent NEARCTIS’s URL www.nearctis.org


2. NEARCTIS Presentation

NEARCTIS (A Network of Excellence for Advanced Road Cooperative Traffic management in the Information Society) is an Academic Network gathering the main teams in Europe working on the field of traffic management and optimisation, with a particular focus on cooperative systems for road traffic optimisation.

The aim is to support the development of systems able to cope with what are the main problems at stake: safety, energy consumption, environmental impacts and congestion. The main elements of NEARCTIS are: building a consistent research program, defining a set of shared resources (data, experimental means, bibliographical databases) and organising the spreading of the knowledge and research results.

The project is designed as a first step towards constituting a permanent virtual institute ensuring consistency between research programs and good mutualisation of resources. Tight relationships with the international scientific community, but also with the main stakeholders of the field (traffic operators, local authorities, consultants or manufacturers) are ensured thought a network of associated partners who are involved in all the main activities of the project. (More information on NEARCTIS Network in the "Project Description" section...
3. NEARCTIS Website

3.1. Website structure

In order to provide an ergonomic access to information and tools the NEARCTIS’ Website is divided in two main sections: Public site and partners’ website.

The NEARCTIS’ public website is dedicated to providing in-depth information and downloadable resources about:

- **The project**: work program, managerial structure, partners;
- **Involvement**: Partnership how-to, newsletter subscription, contact, network’s opportunity;
- **Media published**: Leaflets, newsletters archives;
- **Available resources**: Deliverable, FAQ, glossary;
- **Network’s Activities**;
- **News & events**.

The NEARCTIS partners’ website is designed to provide information, downloadable resources and collaborative tools to the project’s partners.

The keyword for NEARCTIS partner’s website is **interactivity**: Partners can edit and update their data and profile, upload documents, participate in the Wiki area, get in touch with others and much more.

The NEARCTIS partners’ website is divided in 5 main sections:

- **Documents Desk**: Provides access to reference documents, deliverables list and reporting documents. It also provides a “working-documents desk” tool allowing partners to download, upload and share data.
- **Member’s Portal**: Offers an embedded mailing list tool, a staff and partners list tool, a calendar tool, a “Call for Contribution” news-like module and information on partnerships.
- **Education & Mobility**: Provides information about PhD.
- **Meetings Gateway**: Provides all information and downloadable documents relative to the past workshops and steering committees: Presentations, agenda, minutes, scientific reports and photo gallery.
- **Tool Box**: Contains useful resources for partners such as dissemination lists, logos, template, application forms for grants and collaborative tools offered, such as a Wiki area and links to survey and VoIP applications.
3.2. Evaluation and selection of Content Management Systems (CMS)

To meet the specifications required for the NEARCTIS website, we conducted a quick evaluation of existing CMS tools which are popular, stable, mature, and which have a wide user base, development support, and hosting services. Based on the above requirements, we selected SPIP, Typo3, and Plone for evaluation.

As the result of this evaluation we recommend the use of an integrated solution using TYPO3. TYPO3 is a free, open source web based content management system written in PHP and based on the MySQL database. Typo3 offers one of the most flexible and extensible frameworks among all tested CMS, presenting an advanced yet highly usable set of ready-made user interfaces.

3.3. Contributors Interface (Back end)

NEARCTIS website design, based on the powerful Content Management System (CMS) TYPO3, allows registered contributors to participate in the content of both public and partners' website.

- **Ease of use**: The highly configurable backend interface allows a very user-friendly interface.
- **Right Management**: TYPO3 provides extremely precise right management. Then it is possible to assign a specific area or task to each user.
- **Versioning**: The system includes a versioning feature that allows users to comeback to an earlier version of any page or content.
- **Rich text editor**: The rich text editor allows contributors to format contents and to insert images, tables, external or internal link, file download easily.
- **Respect of site design**: All contributions are automatically formatted to respect website's design.
- **Security**: It is a main concern for NEARCTIS to ensure security of private data and confidential documents of the partners' website: TYPO3 is known as one of the best Content Management System in respect of security issues.
4. NEARCTIS Website

4.1. Website design and functionalities

NEARCTIS' website is designed to provide a highly ergonomic and intuitive access to information. The development of this website is based on a collaborative website “toolbox” called “INTERACTION”.

The original design of this collaborative website tool was developed by Arnaud BONNARD, Laurent BONNIER and Celine GOUPIL from INRETS (LESCOT) in order to offer a versatile tool to create websites for FP-7 research project.

The original design follows the actual web standards to enhance navigation and data access, with a main navigation drop-down menu and a sub-parts navigation menu on the left. A breadcrumb under the main navigation drop-down menu allows users to identify easily where they are. Everything is made so no content are further than a few clicks from the start-page.

A multi-layout system allows contributors to choose between 5 layouts to enhance contents and stress critical information.

The original design offers useful functionalities such as multi-news modules, documents sharing, user-editable staff list, Wiki area, FTP-like...

Many further developments have been made for NEARCTIS, such as users interface optimisation, content formatting, permissions management and much more. Others tools such as newsletter, calendar, and mailing list are still under development.

Graphical design, developed by Farida IDIR from ERT aims to offer website content in a modern and soft environment. Specific graphical items' design has been made to clearly distinguish the Partners' website from the Public Website.

4.2. Website structure

The website structure aims to optimise access to information and documents in both the public and the partners' website. The content is structured to follow “the 3 clicks rule”. Any information is available with no more than three mouse clicks.

This is made possible by a totality independent website structure for the Public and the Partners' website. Thus each type of user will get access to the relevant information, documents and tools, depending on whether he/she is logged-in as a partner or not.

A special attention is given to internal links in contents in order to enhance website navigability and optimize bounce rate.
**NEARCTIS' Website structure: Levels 1 & 2 of 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUBLIC WEBSITE STRUCTURE</th>
<th>PARTNERS WEBSITE STRUCTURE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home public website</strong></td>
<td><strong>Home partners' website</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Project</td>
<td>• Documents Desk</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Network Overview</td>
<td>• Reference Documents</td>
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<td>• Work Program</td>
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<td>• Managerial Structure</td>
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<td>• NEARCTIS Partners</td>
<td>• Reporting Documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Getting Involved!</td>
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<td>• Deliverable</td>
<td>• Education &amp; Mobility</td>
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<td>• FAQ</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Glossary</td>
<td>• PhD Circulation</td>
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<td>• Network’s Activities</td>
<td>• Meeting's Gateway</td>
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<td>• News &amp; Events</td>
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<td>• Collaborative writing</td>
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<td>• Collaborative tools</td>
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### 4.3. Website contents

#### 4.3.1. Public website

As stressed before, all the contents and documents are organised to enhance ease of access for visitors.

##### 4.3.1.1. Home page

The home page uses easy-to-identify multiple-field layouts in order enhance content access. Visitors will find there:

- NEARCTIS' presentation,
- Direct access to the 1st and 2nd structure levels with the drop-down menu,
- Breadcrumb
• Latest news and access to the news module pages,
• Login box and access to Partners' website,
• Acknowledgement
• Footer with links to site-map, disclaimer, credits and contact pages.

In order to ensure consistency between website pages, the drop-down menu, the breadcrumb, the Partners Area access button and the footer are presents on every page.
4.3.1.2. “Project” section

The project section offers detailed information on NEARCTIS research fields, activities, work program, managerial structure and partners.

The layout offers one main content area and a sub-menu area, in addition to the drop-down menu, the breadcrumb, the Partners Area access button and the footer.
4.3.1.3. “Getting Involved!” section

This section provides information about the partnership and offers to get, or keep, in touch with NEARCTIS by means of a contact page and a multiple-newsletter subscription page (feature in development). The layout is identical to the one used for “Project” section.

4.3.1.4. “Media Desk” section

The “Media Desk” offers the possibility to read or download leaflets and newsletter archives. The layout is identical to the one used for the “Project” section.

4.3.1.5. “Resources Desk” section

The “Resources Desk” section contains a list of downloadable deliverables, a FAQ and a glossary about NEARCTIS research fields. The layout is identical to the one used for the “Project” section.
4.3.1.6. “Network’s Activities” section

The “Network’s Activities” section provides a news-like module in order to offer a convenient overview of network’s opportunities: call for papers, job announcements, etc.
4.3.1.7. “News & Events” section

The “News & Events” section offers latest NEARCTIS and related news. It is divided into 3 sub-sections offering highlighted news and events, NEARCTIS’ news and related events.

4.3.2. Partners’ Website

The Partners’ website is designed to offer access to all contents and documents specifically dedicated to (full and associated) partners. It also provides collaborative tools to enhance work and cooperation between members of the NEARCTIS project.

To ensure confidentiality of information and documents of the Partners’ website, access is protected by an individual login/password provided by NEARCTIS to partners. Downloads are served by a secured push-file to ensure data privacy.

4.3.2.1. Home page

The home page uses the same easy-to-identify multiple-field layout as the public website in order to enhance content access and consistency with it. The header, present on every page, clearly identifies the partners’ website.
Partners will find on the home page:

- NEARCTIS partners' website presentation, collaborative tools description and direct links to every tool.
- Direct access to the 1st and 2nd structure levels with the drop-down menu,
- Breadcrumb
- Access to public website button,
- Acknowledgement
- Footer with links to site-map, disclaimer, credits and contact pages.

In order to ensure consistency between website pages, the drop-down menu, the breadcrumb, the Partners Area access button and the footer are presents on every pages of the partners website.
4.3.2.2. Documents Desk

The Documents Desk provides an access to reference documents, deliverable list and reporting documents.

The layout offers a main content area in the middle of the page and an additional right column allowing important information to be stressed or to present highlights, help or links.

In the sub-section Working Documents partners can find a “working-documents desk” allowing them to download, upload and share data. It provides a FTP-like document management area with a fine user-editable rights management. This feature, originally developed for INTERACTION has been extended for NEARCTIS with a breadcrumb allowing better navigation through folders.
Root of the FTP like Documents Desk:

Documents Desk: File upload:
Visitors will also find there:

- **Member’s Portal**: Offers an embedded mailing list tool, a staff and partner’s list tool, a calendar tool, a “Call for Contribution” news-like module and information on partnerships.

- **Education & Mobility**: Provides information about the PhD network, grants and related information.

- **Meetings Gateway**: Provides all information and downloadable documents relative to the past workshops and steering committees: Presentations, agenda, minutes, scientific reports and photo gallery.

- **Tool Box**: Contains useful resources for partners such as dissemination lists, logos, template, application forms for grants and offers of collaborative tools, such as a Wiki area and links to survey and VoIP applications. The home page uses an easy-to-identify multiple-field layout in order to enhance content access.

### 4.3.2.3. Member’s Portal

The Member’s Portal offers tools to enhance communication and cooperation between partners. The layout follows the same principles than for “Documents Desk” section.
• The mailing list allows members to contact with a few clicks a full group of partners or researchers. This feature in not implemented yet and is still under development.

• The staff and partners list presents every organisation and member taking part in the NEARCTIS project. This module offers different types of sorting to find easily any NEARCTIS partners. It also allows contacting directly by mail registered NEARCTIS partners. Each logged user has the possibility to create and edit his/her own profile. (feature in development)

• The “Building partnerships” section provides information on partnership and a news-like module used to present in an effective and attractive way calls/offers for partnerships within any kind of collaborative projects (FP7 and others). Its contents are still under development.

• The Calendar: This tool can be seen as a means to offer to users to share with other partners their work-schedule. It will allow members to contact each other, keep in touch, and meet easier (feature in development).

4.3.2.4. Education & Mobility

The “Education & Mobility” section provides information dedicated to PhD: dedicated conferences, application guidelines, downloadable application forms and a list of host institutes. The layout follows the same principles as for the “Documents Desk” section.

4.3.2.5. Meetings Gateway

The “Meetings Gateway” provides an overview of NEARCTIS past and future events. Partners will find there all the information and downloadable documents relative to NEARCTIS Website - V2/ <26/08/2009 >
workshops and steering committees: Presentations, agenda, minutes, scientific reports and photo gallery. The layout follows the same principles as for the “Documents Desk” section.

4.3.2.6. Tool Box

The Tool Box provides downloadable working-resources dedicated to help NEARCTIS’ partners. They will find here dissemination lists, logos and template.

This section also provides a collaborative writing area. The integrated Wiki area allows Partners to create and modify their own pages, articles and links. This feature is under development.

Useful links have been added: Doodle, a free, simple and efficient survey online application, and Skype, the well known free VoIP application.

4.3.2.7. Contributors Interface (Back-end)

NEARCTIS' website is based on a Content Management System, TYPO3. This technology allows as many contributors as needed to participate in the life of the website, contents production, news update and user management.

A highly customisable right management system allows locking contributors on specific task or area of the public and/or Partners website. Thus contributors can connect to the back-end through a user friendly and minimalist interface, displaying only what is needed.
A full access, reserved for website administrators, allows control of the system and management of users, documents, layouts and system update.

4.3.2.8. Present status and future planning

The Nearctis public website is already fully online at http://nearctistest.inrets.fr. This new website will be replacing sooner the old version developed under SPIP and can be then reached through the official NEARCTIS address: www.nearctis.org. The priority has been to provide, through the public website, as much quality information as possible on the NEARCTIS project, activities and partnerships in a design mirroring the standing of the project.

Some features of the private website are still in development and should be realised soon.
5. Conclusion

More than a website, www.nearctis.org is designed to be a powerful tool to inform, communicate, and facilitate work and cooperation between all the people concerned in NEARCTIS activities and related research fields.

The use of the “INTERACTION” template and the many developments made for NEARCTIS enforce the quality of this open source toolbox dedicate to backup FP-7 research project to communicate, promote collaborative work through the web.