

ATTACHMENT 4

2.2 Implementation

To fully implement the Mobhaile Integration Framework has involved a huge re-think of traditionally Silo based Local Authority systems. To translate the traditional business focused information into a Function, Location and Time paradigm has required a radical redesign of individual business systems and also the development of an innovative object model based Geographic Information System and the adoption of a Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) approach to traditional systems. This radical development involved reorganization of staff and creating a mixed team environment and a partnership approach to service delivery.

The Mobhaile programme has been put together with a partnership approach with other organisations. The partnerships are complex and are formed at many levels in the project from the top level Steering group to the local community partnerships.

The overall Mobhaile Steering group is made up of Representatives of Department of Taoiseach, Department of Social and Family Affairs, Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht affairs, Local Government Computer Services Board, Department of Education, South Dublin County Council, Maynooth University and other government agencies depending on need. The Mobhaile Pilot sites, chosen by competitive tender of Local Authorities, are South Dublin County Council, Meath County Council, Westmeath County Council, Offaly County Council, South Tipperary County Council, North Tipperary County Council and Mayo County Council. The pilot sites offer a fantastic mix across the social, geographic and cultural divides and include a wide mix of communities. The operational partnership includes national partnerships with FAS (the Irish National Training and Employment authority), The Chambers of Commerce of Ireland, Oasis (Irish eGovernment information on the social and civil rights of everyone in Ireland) and a Number of Technical partners. The partnership approach to date has delivered effective decision making across government, agreement across all stakeholders and allowed the delivery a cross-government acceptable solution to the citizen end users.

The Mobhaile project, ongoing for the past year has involved a multifunctional team from the LGCSB, Local Authorities, Government Departments, Technical Partners, Universities and citizen end users. The Mobhaile team is made up of Government, Spatial, Engineering, Architecture, Marketing, Graphic and ICT experts with expertise from other agencies, departments and universities added as appropriate. The ICT skill sets range from technical architecture, DBA, networks specialists, personalisation experts, wireless experts to pure development. This mixed team approach has proved successful in a number of other projects and allows the rapid development, deployment and end user participation that a project such as Mobhaile demanded.

The project also involved significant hosting and storage requirements as the overall goal is to provide each citizen with email, blog and community integration areas.

The development approach adopted was to use component technology to allow communities to create their websites. The approach was to build (or wherever possible to source existing components) a series of open source components that the communities could add to their web sites when required and that each component would offer more interactivity with the communities as they were ready to adopt them. One of the popular components is the SMS text engine. Communities can add SMS to their sites when they are ready to adopt messaging with their members.

The reuse of existing components adapted solutions from other eGovernment applications that Ireland has already developed. The SMS text engine was

developed as part of the Irish EU presidency and was a part of the Presidency website. The ePayments engine was developed as part of the Irish MotorTax system, the security and personalisation engine was conceptualised as part of the Irish approach to the EU Benchmarking eForms engine. The Mobhaile Spatial engine is already a major component of the Gplan system that is used by a number of Local Authorities to display online Spatial Planning decisions and Applications.

The major effort in the Mobhaile project was to develop an Integration Framework that allows communities to create local content that can be aggregated up to a national context while allowing the national government informational services to disseminate national information down to a local context.

Each community has the ability to automatically create a web presence ranging from a simple Website right up to an Interactive web-presence.

A wide range of Training Programmes from technical training for the technical staff, Train the Trainer for the Community Champions and End User Training for the Community and Voluntary groups is ongoing as part of the project rollout. A crucial piece to the training programme was the inclusion of the Social Science Department of National University of Ireland, Maynooth in establishing the needs analysis of the citizens (as end users). A two stage ethnographic study was carried out with the citizens that fed into the overall design of the solution and the design of the training course. The university worked with the citizens as they received the prototypes and provided feedback to the design team. The study also fed into the development of the training material (suitability, pitch, technicality, duration, expectations) and subsequent training courses were held with the citizens based on the successes of the study. This two way communication between the end users, the universities, the Local Authority champions and the LGCSB technical teams was invaluable to the overall acceptability of the final development.

The support mechanism in the project was worked out carefully with the project participants. The Local Authority champions support the end users (citizens) the University personnel support the Local Authority with interaction techniques and suitable training documentation and methodologies and LGCSB support the technical requirements of the project. The Taoiseach's Office offer Political Support while the different Departmental sponsors ensure the support of the different strands of government.

In the 7 Pilot Counties events were held with Local Press, Media, etc and Elected Members. A number of High Profile Media events were held at the National Ministerial Launch of the Project at a High Profile Event and Conferences with Public Displays and interaction available for a number of days. To co-inside with the national event a Newspaper Supplement was created for the National Press and released for national publication. A more recent Television Programme on Inclusion featured Mobhaile and some of the Mobhaile working Groups.

ATTACHMENT 5

Introduction

Project goes back 2 years.

Began with shared discussions between LGCSB and DoEHLG including eInclusion and Universal Participation.

Proposal was out to the Dept of Taoiseach.

This Proposal bounced around every 6 months every time eInclusion came up.

Joe Horan was part of the eInclusion subcommittee

He needed a visual way to show what the Local Authority can do for the community

Needed to show to people what is in it for them

From this the proof of concept was developed

It was then shown to the eInclusion committee

A commitment was set to run with Pilot Sites.

Dept of Taoiseach looked for proposal from Local Authorities to pilot Mobhaile

14 were received

These were sifted through and criteria were set down

Then sat down with dept of taoiseach and 3 pilots were chosen

Another part of Mobhaile was to assist organisations in the Community And Voluntary to make use of technology

Members

Name	Local Authority	
Ray Kenny	Westmeath CoCo	Community And Voluntary
Kevin Monaghan	Westmeath Co Co	HIS
John Quinn	North Tipp	Community and Voluntary
Ger Lynch	North Tipp	HIS
Kevin Cummins	South Tipp	HIS
Joe Horan	South Dublin	County Manager
Paul Dunne	Meath	
Brendan McGrath	Meath	Community And Voluntary
Pat Carroll	Mayo	HIS
Joe Loftus	Mayo	Community And Voluntary
Brid Carter	LGCSB	Director
Tim Willoughby	LGCSB	Assistant Director
Ray Rochford	LGCSB	Director
Frank Weston	Offaly	Community and Voluntary

1. WestMeath

County Council in partnership with Community and Voluntary, chamber of Commerce, WestMeath.ie

Building Content Management Engine – C& V Form

Looking to add a Spatial Element – Possibly using GeoDirectory.

Database of information gathered : Athlone.ie information already gathered.

Tagged to a standard format used in Westmeath.

Good Development team already in place.

Need to look at combining the 2 projects, Westmeath's portal information and Mobhaile.

Westmeath are looking at a County Portal, starting at Village level moving to Town and finally to County.

Forum was established in 2001 with 180 members

2. South Dublin

Ideas for the proof of concept originated from South Dublin Co Co

Information displayed to the Citizen via Spatial and video information.

South Dublin are looking toward internal changes in the Local Authority where all information will be based around Function, Location and Time.

80% of data has a spatial element.

Citizen will be looking at "Finding their Nearest"

Local Authority currently manage the physical space, the built environment, public lights, vehicles moving through this space

Looking at Mobhaile to revolutionise how resources are used in South Dublin Co Co. from how the Front line staff deal with citizens to how litter wardens and clerical staff work.

South Dublin have moved from Static Documents to dynamic documents. One example is the use of storing questions asked during Council Meetings.

3. South Tipperary/North Tipperary County Council

These Local Authorities are heading in the same direction.

They currently have MyParish – Data relevant to the area. New residents can get access to the information.

What these Local Authorities see Mobhaile going is towards MoContae , My County. The ability to start at county level and drill down to villages.

Tipperary.com already exists with Community and Voluntary Organisations involved

4. Meath County Council

Looking at 4 project leaders

Staffing resources will be put into place

Expectations are to add spatial data to data which already exists.

So that queries like where can? And Price of can be included.

The spatial data is seen as the driver behind accessing Local Authority information.

Meath have links with Community and Voluntary groups.

TIS already have a lot of information e.g. from Video Fastmap

Meath County Council have commitment from external agencies

Community online will be going live on 6th December with 13 sites. The Plan is to skim information from these sites to update Meath.ie

Content management software is being used so that the Community Groups can administrate their own site.

5. Mayo

Mayo has the largest rural population. Two thirds of Mayo is Rural Area.
Mayo have a total commitment to Mobhaile

Castlebar.ie is a Portal already in exstance.

A lot of data has already been collected.

The best web developers and GIS section.

There are excellent links with the Community groups.

Mayo have been involved with Social Welfare and have set up their domain names.

6. Offaly

The Community Director of service is new to the job and is committed to Mobhaile

Ideas :

As part of Eu Presidentency the LGCSB will acquire 2 key areas

SMS Gateway - This could be used to inform members of sports clubs when the pitches are unplayable. For example in South Dublin County Council's functional area there are 150 playing pitches with 800 different contacts. The SMS gateway could be used to inform these contacts.

The Internet connectivity will be increased to 38 megabits

Issue:

Marginalized sections of community should not be excluded from access to the information.

As part of the eInclusion initiative need to look at issues with Citizens using ICT technology. This includes

- Training

- Setting up of resource centres including cybercafes

- Using the library service

- Installations of iceboxes at key points

Need to aid illiterate citizens with the use of images to overcome barriers in accessing information.

Need to investigate the use of interactive television

Tim then talked through the slides for Mobhaile, talking about the different areas of the Project plan.

Issue:

Another issue is to look at address matching. Should the Local Authorities develop their own address matching base using the electoral register or enter in discussions with the GeoDirectory to use their information

Data interoperability needs to be investigated to combine information across different departments.

Forum:

2004 will be the deadline for the project. During this year the business case for the project needs to be established.

The skills required for 1 individual in the Local Authority is a Business analyst.

ATTACHMENT 6

Mobhaile - Progress for 2003 / 2004

Executive Summary

Government Bodies gather and maintain vast quantities of data for their own use and the Mobhaile Infrastructure project aims to give these bodies the tools and opportunity to make their data available to citizens in a way that makes it useful. As the project involves initially Local Government Data, initial focus was placed on the datasets within Local Authorities, prototyping and developing toolsets for backend data preparation, etc. A huge emphasis has been put on the integration with the Reach Public Services broker, and the use of the PPSN as the backend authentication principle.

Areas where we have concentrated our efforts include, Open Standards, Architecture (Scalability, Robustness, Security and Single Sign on). The need for Open Standards has been identified especially in the GIS area due to the complexity of the toolsets, and to the nature and breadth of information owned by government that will have to be incorporated. A number of open standards will have to be agreed with different agencies around government in order to populate the Mobhaile Framework with the relevant data for the citizen. Meetings have been held with FAS (in relation to Locations and Services from the relevant FAS training Centers), RPA (in relation to a share of LUAS, Train, Street Furniture, Timetable data), Infrastructure.ie (in relation to agreeing a data share standard), a huge number of agencies and Departments are all agreeing to take part in the data exchange process and we have also been a key part of the Irish Spatial Data Infrastructure (ISDI) process to agree standards.

Architecture and Infrastructure

The Basic building block of Mobhaile is the server architecture on which it will reside. The architecture design has been ongoing for the past 6 months and is quite complex, yet, appears quite simple to the end user. There are 3 areas to this architecture, development, test and live. Once code is developed, it is deployed to the test area and is tested for robustness etc, this area is "Live" for the Local Authority champions and developers to test, prioritise and agree next steps. When the application has passed these tests it is then deployed to the live area. The Servers for the Testing and Live area were purchased. The licensing for the software required for these areas were also purchased. The servers for the Test area were put into place and are have been operating for some months. The architecture for the live area is currently being built for scalability, security and robustness.

Open Standards for GIS (Geographic Information System)

Spatial information is one of the fundamental principles in Mobhaile (Function Location and time). There is a need for a seamless database of spatial (GIS) information from Local Authorities, Communities and external agencies. (i.e. when you drive around the M50 you go from Dun Laoghaire Rathdown, through South Dublin, Dublin City Council and on to Fingal County), if each move from county to county required you to go to a different website and back (as it currently would) the overall objective of Mobhaile would fail, making the data seamless over County, Regional or National borders is a key

objective. Some datasets that we are talking about do not respect the Political, County or Manmade borders that we impose, (e.g. Accident Locations, Disease, Roads, Weather, etc) The problem, also, with this extensive information is that it may come in several different formats, and is currently being stored by all of governments in as many different formats as there are departments and agencies!. This information needs to be formatted into an Open Standard. The Industry standard is the Open GIS Consortium (OGC) standard (OpenGIS). Research into how OpenGIS will be used and how these standards will be applied in an Irish Situation was initiated and work is being carried out by a contracted company. The results of this work will be a major benefit to the GIS community as a whole and may lead to a radical rethink on how Irish Government stores and views GIS information.

GIS output to the Citizen

As part of the eInclusion of the Mobhaile project, the information from mobhaile must be available to all citizens taking into account the speed of access they may obtain. As part of the project research was undertaken to investigate how the mobhaile information, text, maps and pictures, may be presented to the citizen with as little download as possible. The Spatial Map which the citizen will be using carries the bulk of the download and research and development of components to create an interactive output map has been initiated, and a number of trial formats have been produced. We are currently talking with a number of usability companies in order to trial the outputs for end user experiences.

Spatial Framework

Another part of the project is to investigate how each layer of the spatial information will interact with each other. GIS data is currently stored in a very rudimentary way and has no inheritance – or hierarchy. If someone clicks on a planning application in South Dublin, a number of return journeys to and from the server are required to establish where the user clicked and what map they are on, etc. Major research into an Object framework for GIS has been ongoing to simplify GIS display and searches for the end user.

Community and Voluntary

As part of the overall Mobhaile project LGCSB was asked also to consider the Community and Voluntary Sector and to deliver an Offline Office and toolsets to enable the C&V sector to get online and manage their content.

For Community leaders, members and citizens to use the mobhaile to its fullest extent they must have the ability to register and profile themselves. Development of the component to register Community Leaders, Members and citizens was initiated and is currently in use by the Pilot Local Authorities with the Community and Voluntary groups in the different Counties

C&V Toolsets

Toolsets were identified to enable the C&V sector to carry out their business online. So far we have enabled, WebSite Development, User Registration, User Authentication, eMail, SMS, RSS – Blogs, Online – Offline data. All development has been carried out to open standards using WebServices and XML data standards.

End User Training

LCGSB developed and trained a number of students from Maynooth University in how to use Mobhaile and they will be going to the different counties to carry out training. Training of C&V people in Local Authority areas is ongoing

ATTACHMENT 7

Covering Period September 2005 to December 2005

Purpose:

The purpose of the Mobhaile programme is to facilitate and promote e-inclusion through Local Government.

There are several parts to the Mobhaile Program

1. Mobhaile for Community and Voluntary
2. Mobhaile for SME
3. Mobhaile for Government
4. Mobhaile Interactive framework

Objectives:

- Address the issue of e-inclusion.
- Provide the Community and Voluntary sector, through the Local Authority, with ICT tools to improve their business processes and communication.
- Provide technology to aid the SME's web presence and interact through the Internet Channel.
- Provide cross-government agencies, on request, with collaborative workspaces.
- Provide a Hosted infrastructure to support the web presence of C&V groups and SMEs created by the Local Authorities.
- Provide a hosted infrastructure to support the creation and maintenance of collaborative workspaces created for cross government agencies.
- Creation and maintenance of an Interactive framework which will provide Local Authority, Community, Business and Government information in an integrated and accessible portal.

Deliverables

Community based Content Management Application to provide ICT tools to allow Local Authorities create a web presence for Community and Voluntary groups.	Delivered
Community based Content Management Application to provide ICT tools to allow Local Authorities create a web presence for SME's	To Deliver on a Pilot Basis with selected Businesses
Basic Templates which will allow the Local Authorities provide customisation and appropriate functionality for C&V groups and SME's	Delivered for Community Groups. To deliver for SME
Training, Documentation, technical support and consultancy for the Local Authorities	To be Delivered

to aid in their interaction with C&V groups and SMEs	
A secure and robust hosted infrastructure to support the web presence of communities as created by the Local Authorities	Delivered. Needs to be reviewed
Collaborative workspace to allow cross government agencies interact.	Delivered on a Bespoke fashion e.g. LASAG.
Creation of Mobhaile Interactive framework for selected areas with a cross section of selected datasets.	To be Delivered

Scope:

- DotNetNuke Community Content Management
 - Gateway to allow web sites to be created
 - Stable and robust instances DotnetNuke used locally and nationally.
 - Appropriate Components through development or procurement for DotnetNuke as required by stakeholders.
 - Secure and robust hosted infrastructure to support Dotnetnuke.
 - Basic templates for C&V and SME Pilot
- Collaborative Workspace – Sharepoint Windows Server
 - Process to administer the request of workspace creation.
 - Sites to be built on completion of request procedures.
- Support and Training.
 - Procedures put into place to ensure timely and appropriate levels of support and training
- Mobhaile Interactive Framework
 - Portal Developed with functionality
 - Profile management of Citizen
 - eCard Facility – For limited Period
 - SMS Pilot Facility – For limited period
 - Store Favourites
 - Email Link
 - Interactive pilot mapping using Google maps as demonstration
 - Limited datasets to be displayed on map.

Out of Scope:

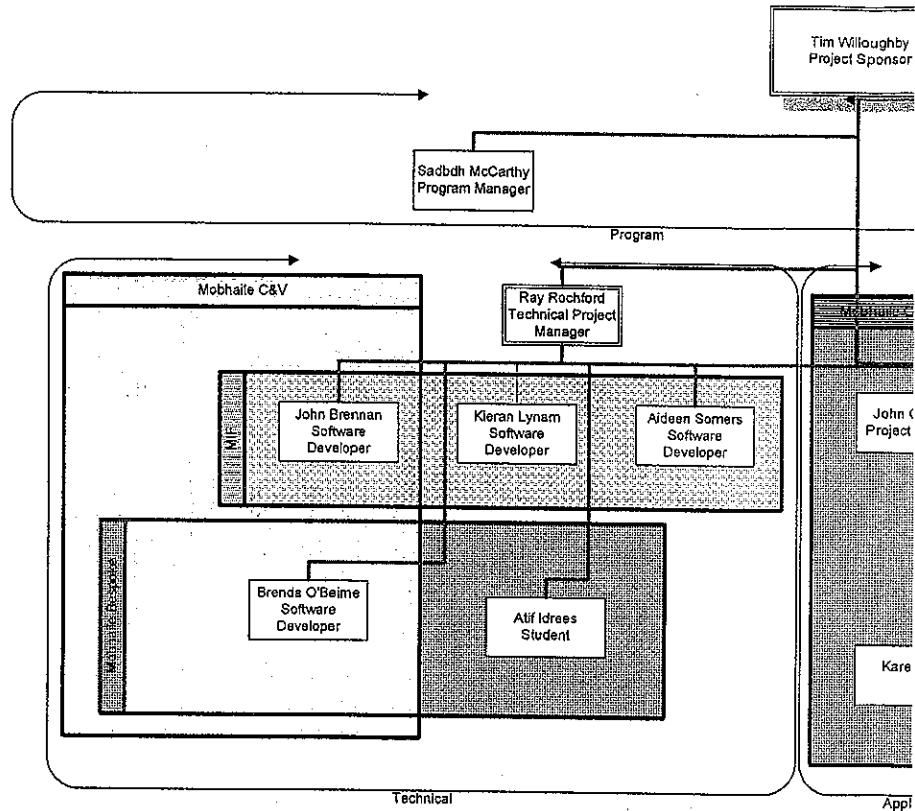
- National Rollout of Mobhaile C&V – 2006
- Extended rollout of Mobhaile SME – 2006
- Open Standards GIS Viewer with Supported infrastructure – 2006
- Extended use of datasets in viewer – 2006
- Mobhaile for schools extended pilot – 2006
- All Bespoke Mobhaile Projects which have not yet been identified.

Assumptions and Constraints

- Adequate levels of staffing with .NET expertise
- Adequate levels of resources employed by the Local Authority to implement.
- A roadmap set down by the Local Authority to implement Mobhaile.
- Adequate funding to support Mobhaile

Business Case

Project Organisation Structure



Responsibility and Tasks

Project Sponsor	Program Manager	Technical Manager	Application Manager	Marketing Manager
Oversee strategy	Monitoring of Budgets	Decision Making on Technology used	Support methods and process	Communications Strategy
International Opportunities	Monitoring Schedule and	Signoff on Change	Monitoring training required	

	key deliverables	request forms.		
	Funding 2005 - 2006	Managing Technical Team	Mobhaile Government Process and documentation.	
	Identify Resource gaps	Project Management	Monitoring Local Authority progress.	
	Cross functional conflict resolution	PESC		
		Managing Cross Functional Interlock		

Stakeholders

- Local Authorities
- Department of the Taoiseach
- Community and Voluntary Sector
- SME sector
- Citizen

Success Criteria

- Number of Sites set-up, and used by Community and Voluntary sector
- Number of community and voluntary sector groups trained.
- Number of SME Pilot sites set-up and used.
- Number of visits per site for C&V sites.
- Cost benefit to SMEs with Mobhaile Sites
- Number of hits, individual visits and return visits to Mobhaile Interactive Framework.

Approach and Controls

The approach used is that all parts of the program i.e. Mobhaile C&V, SME and MIF are hosted by the LGCSB in a robust secure infrastructure. This reduces the cost and expertise required by the Local Authority in the hosting of their own instance of Mobhaile. The infrastructure includes 2 firewalls, intrusion detection, SSL logins, failover, virus checking, load balancing etc. A management gateway has been developed which will allow the eChampion in the Local Authority access and maintain their section of Mobhaile.

Technologies used

- Mobhaile C&V
 - .NET Version 1.0
 - DotNetNuke OpenSource Community application
 - SQL server
 - Active Directory
 - ADAM
- Mobhaile SME
 - .NET Version 1.0
 - DotNetNuke OpenSource Community application
 - SQL server
 - Active Directory
 - ADAM
- Mobhaile Government
 - .NET Version 1.0
 - Sharepoint
 - SQL server
 - Active Directry
 - ADAM
- Mobhaile Interactive Framework
 - .NET 2.0
 - Provider Model Framework
 - SQL server
 - Active Directory
 - ADAM

The controls put on place are as follows

- Detailed Technical Project Plan
- Weekly Technical Team Status updates
- Weekly Technical Team Status Meetings
- Weekly Program Team Status updates
- Weekly Program Team Status meetings
- 2 monthly Stakeholder Operational Meetings

ATTACHMENT 8

"Mobhaile - delivering Community Services with Web Services"

"Local & Regional Government"

Abstract:

Introduction

"Many European governments are getting anxious about a growing sense of exclusion and lack of community participation among their citizens. This exclusion includes people from economically deprived areas as well as prosperous and hardworking but socially dead "dormitory" towns. The Irish government believes that greater participation by local citizens in local affairs will help to deliver democratic, social and economic benefits to the local community.

Mobhaile ("My home" in Irish), a partnership between Local Government and citizens through the provision of innovative web-based tools to provide for interaction between the citizens and local business, community groups and local schools was developed by the Irish Local Government Computer Services Board (LGCSB) with funding from the Irish Information Society Fund, and is currently deployed by 7 of the 34 Irish Local Authorities. Different modules of the project are being tested in a number of geographically different regions in Ireland. Mobhaile, build as technically agnostic as possible, uses the most advanced and fully scaleable technologies designed to encourage direct end-user involvement in designing and implementing their own systems and solutions.

The presentation will concentrate in approximately equal measure on the rationale behind the project, practical challenges, the technology and architecture, current status and future developments."

Objectives

The Mobhaile project is a low-cost facility to enable community and voluntary groups, schools and small to medium size enterprises to exploit the Mobhaile technologies allowing them to establish on-line 'communities' where

- there is a common approach and learning-curve,
- each group can reflect its own styles and preferences
- Shared Workspaces for similar groups
- Building extended communications networks in communities.
- Build a sense of community through shared learning, shared training, shared experiences and a shared syndicated content model.

- Shared Extranets
- Discussion Fora
- Business Trust Rings.
- Introduction of SMS text engines, Payments, email, blogs, etc
- Map the Location of Each Building and associated Information
- Establish a Network of eChampions to educate, encourage & enthuse
- Maximise the use of Broadband across the country
- Syndication of all information across all paradigms: Function, Location, Time.

Methodology Used

Needs Analysis

One of the deliverables of the Mobhaile project is a 'needs analysis' ethnographic study of the Community & Voluntary sector conducted by National University of Ireland, Maynooth. Their analysis included extensive consultation meetings with various community groups and local businesses and focused technology pilots to test aspects of the system in real situations. Before the analysis, 'needs' evidence was primarily anecdotal and didn't give a satisfactory basis on which to develop policy. The outcome of the analysis has shown that, once a website has been established and familiarisation with the web technologies is underway, groups are ready to explore more interactive and exciting ways of communicating with the rest of the world.

- From the pilot experience with schools and groups in the Mobhaile Project to date we have found feedback has been hugely positive. By their nature, such environments encourage creativity and willingness to take a practical role in the development of a working site(s). The Mobhaile templates incorporated all relevant suggestions and ideas for content areas, tools and functionality.
- Ownership of the implementation of the 'Mobhaile for schools' site has ranged from junior infants (who are scanning their artwork into an online library), to sixth class pupils who have administration rights to control general items of interest (e.g. sport's day results, community events). In addition to working on the site in their spare time updating content is incorporated into their structured ICT classes where appropriate.

That analysis has influenced the design, structure and scope of the technical support mechanisms put in place by the LGCSB. Evidence from the C&V Sector - representing a cross-section of society - can now inform public policy makers about the state of e-readiness of this sector, and can give an indication of the readiness and requirements of other sectors, including the education sector.

The importance of Content

The success of the Mobhaile project depends as much on the content created on the web as it does on access to the web. It is well proven that content drives the web and that access alone has only limited impact in terms of beneficial engagement. The Mobhaile project is a key enabler in facilitating the creation of content and its key differentiator is that all content is locally derived, allowing participants to include themselves by engaging with issues and activities of interest to them, all in the setting of their own local area - thus "bringing the Internet to their front door".

The C&V Sector

Up to now the market has not effectively provided for the needs of the C&V Sector to facilitate full participation in the Information Society and this is one of the reasons why there is a need for this intervention. The Mobhaile project has been ongoing for the past year and there are currently over 250 Community and Voluntary groups being served, with 10 more groups coming on-stream every week. The Mobhaile project has, in effect, become an Internet Service Provider (ISP) to the C&V community.

State Intervention

Similarly, while the ISP market may cater for the overall education sector and the larger institutions, it does not meet the individual needs of schools, teachers, etc. Here again, state intervention can ensure equality as evidenced by a recent Irish education broadband announcement on the provision of broadband to all schools. While a significant player in the creation content has been the C&V sector - where the Mobhaile project has already engaged a lot of people - given that education plays such an enormous part in the everyday lives of young people and their wider families, this sector could benefit greatly by participation in the project, making it possible for all those involved to embrace and to engage in the information age.

Technology Description

Mobhaile is a Web Services platform that helps communities form, communicate, and act around intersections of common interest. Organised around the core aspects of Function, Location and Time, the GIS based system allows community groups and local businesses to provide a wide range of services to citizens and to grow, develop and innovate together using all the electronic tools and services that are now available in the Information Age. Employing simple web based tools users can create and manage web sites (content publishing), email, chat room, blogging, ePayments, Catalogues and SMS messaging functionality all through Web Services. This eCommunity tool encourages active participation by all members and can syndicate, aggregate and disseminate to other interested bodies in the form of RSS (really simple syndication) feeds, facilitating an enriched and extended communication between groups.

Conclusion

The Mobhaile Project has been successful so far and has encouraged over 250 communities to become involved and is now providing a means for the communities to express their ambitions on a traditionally expensive forum for community and voluntary groups. The enthusiasm that the champions receive in training and information days is testament to the fact that this is a really worthwhile initiative and there is huge value in the Local Government sector becoming more involved in the community and voluntary areas. While the Pilots so far have been involved mainly in the community and voluntary sector, the work with the education and business sectors to date prove that there is a huge interest and commitment to the overall initiative.

ATTACHMENT 9

Mobhaile Review

Executive Summary

The Mobhaile Project was split into 2 themes, National and Local. The themes were underpinned by the infrastructure of GIS, Web2.0 and Government Data. The initial plan was to harvest the data that government has and mix and match it with community and voluntary information. Government Bodies gather and maintain vast quantities of data for their own use and the Mobhaile Infrastructure project aimed to give these bodies the tools and opportunity to make their data available to citizens in a way that makes it useful. As the project involved initially Local Government Data, initial focus was placed on the datasets within Local Authorities, prototyping and developing toolsets for backend data preparation, etc (See Appendix for details). There was a huge emphasis put on the integration with the Reach Public Services broker, and the use of the PPSN as the backend authentication principle, this however proved untenable and the Mobhaile project had to develop its own authentication and identity management solution.

Areas where we concentrated our efforts include, Open Standards, Architecture (Scalability, Robustness, Security and Single Sign on). The need for Open Standards has been identified especially in the GIS area due to the complexity of the toolsets, and to the nature and breadth of information owned by government that will have to be incorporated. A number of open standards will have to be agreed with different agencies around government in order to populate the Mobhaile Framework with the relevant data for the citizen. Meetings have been held with FAS (in relation to Locations and Services from the relevant FAS training Centers), RPA (in relation to a share of LUAS, Train, Street Furniture, Timetable data), Infrastructure.ie (in relation to agreeing a data share standard), a huge number of agencies and Departments are all agreeing to take part in the data exchange process and we have also been a key part of the Irish Spatial Data Infrastructure (ISDI) process to agree standards. The Inspire Directive is also a key part of the area of Spatial Data Integration. The funding from Government steered the project away from this area into understanding and dealing with the Community and Voluntary sector.

The Solution was originally aimed at 10 local authorities, Westmeath, Offaly, North and South Tipperary as Community and Voluntary Mobhaile sites and three larger Local Authorities were originally funded to carry out the Mobhaile GIS solution, South Dublin, Mayo and Meath County Councils.

These Pilot Authority sites were selected by a competitive tender of Local Authorities, where they put forward proposals as to what they would do for the funding and the resources they could commit to the project. The pilot sites, selected by the governance committee, offered a mix across the social, geographic and cultural divides and included a wide mix of communities.

Each Authority received funding for a Community Champion to co-ordinate the Community Sector locally; provide training, be a resource for the local community and to provide feedback to the National initiative.

The success of the rollout of Mobhaile across the Local Authority areas is particularly evident in regions where up to 70% of the Community and Voluntary sector took up the opportunity to create their own websites and content using Mobhaile.

Meath County and South Dublin County Council had already been investing in the C&V sector and had some Open Source solutions already in place and decided to base their Connect project on the original Mobhaile core code and evolved their solutions with ESRI ArcGIS to build an online community.

Change of Direction from GIS to C&V

The Community and Voluntary Sector came to the fore as research carried out by the Department of Taoiseach had shown that groups had found it very difficult to establish an online presence and to maintain the skill sets and costs for continuous updates and email, etc. Typically their (DOT) eInclusion fund and later the ASC fund was spent helping these groups establish their own content management system, online presence, website and training. The fund was spending over €3m annually on building individual Content Management systems for individual groups. The Mobhaile C&V Services was developed and evolved to meet this need and through the Local Authority champions aimed to meet the varying demands of the C&V Sector in establishing an online presence and also in giving them the ability to communicate with members, interested parties and citizens by means of websites, hosted intranets, and secure email and sms gateways.

In the Local training sessions the demand for a website for a group, usually turned into a need for web tuition, web understanding training and an Online Intranet where groups could have an Online presence to allow them the potential to share private files.

What did Mobhaile C&V offer

The Mobhaile project was a low-cost facility to enable community and voluntary groups, schools and small to medium size enterprises to exploit the Mobhaile Web2.0 technologies allowing them to establish on-line 'communities' where

- § there was a common approach and learning-curve,
- § each group, using unique templates, can reflect its own styles and preferences
- § Shared Workspaces for similar groups
- § Building extended communications networks in communities.
- § Build a sense of community through shared learning, shared training, shared experiences and a shared syndicated content model.
- § Shared Extranets
- § Discussion Fora
- § Business Trust Rings.
- § Establish a Network of eChampions to educate, encourage & enthuse

Methodology Used

Needs Analysis

One of the deliverables of the Mobhaile project was a 'needs analysis' ethnographic study of the Community & Voluntary sector conducted by National University of Ireland, Maynooth. Their analysis included extensive consultation meetings with various community groups and local businesses and focused technology pilots to test aspects of the system in real situations. Before this analysis, 'needs' evidence was primarily anecdotal and didn't give a satisfactory basis on which to develop policy. The outcome of the analysis has shown that, once a website has been established and familiarisation with the web technologies is underway, groups are ready to explore more interactive and exciting ways of communicating with the rest of the world.

From the pilot experience with schools and groups in the Mobhaile Project we found that feedback was hugely positive. By their nature, such environments encourage creativity and willingness to take a practical role in the development of a working site(s). The Mobhaile templates incorporated all relevant suggestions and ideas for content areas, tools and functionality.

Ownership of the implementation of the 'Mobhaile for schools' site has ranged from junior infants (who are scanning their artwork into an online library), to sixth class pupils who have administration rights to control general items of interest (e.g. sport's day results, community events). In addition to working on the site in their spare time updating content is incorporated into their structured ICT classes where appropriate.

The analysis influenced the design, structure and scope of the technical support mechanisms put in place by the LGCSB. Evidence from the C&V Sector - representing a cross-section of society - has also informed public policy makers about the state of e-readiness of this sector, and can give an indication of the readiness and requirements of other sectors, including the education sector.

The importance of Content

The success of the Mobhaile project depended as much on the content created on the web as it has on access to the web. It is well proven that content drives the web and that access alone has only limited impact in terms of beneficial engagement. The Mobhaile project was an enabler in facilitating the creation of content and its differentiator was that all content was locally derived, allowing participants to include themselves by engaging with issues and activities of interest to them, all in the setting of their own local area - thus "bringing the Internet to their front door".

The C&V Sector

For Community leaders, members and citizens to use Mobhaile to its fullest extent they needed to have the ability to register and profile themselves. Development of the component to register Community Leaders, Members and citizens was integral to the Pilot Local Authorities with the Community and Voluntary groups in the different Counties

Up to now the market has not effectively provided for the needs of the C&V Sector to facilitate full participation in the Information Society and this is one of the reasons why there is a need for this intervention. The Mobhaile project was ongoing for 4 years and there were over 600 Community and Voluntary groups being served in 7 Local Authority areas. The Mobhaile project had, in effect, become an Internet Service Provider (ISP) to the C&V community.

As a result of the analysis and ethnographic study, toolsets were identified to enable the C&V sector to carry out their business online, these were: WebSite Development, User Registration, User Authentication, eMail, SMS, RSS – Blogs, Online – Offline data. All development has been carried out to open standards using WebServices and XML data standards.

State Intervention

Similarly, while the ISP market may cater for the overall education sector and the larger institutions, it does not meet the individual needs of schools, teachers, etc. Here again, state intervention can ensure equality as evidenced by a recent Irish education broadband announcement on the provision of broadband to all schools. While a significant player in the creation content has been the C&V sector - where the Mobhaile project has already engaged a lot of people - given that education plays such an enormous part in the everyday lives of young people and their wider families, this sector could benefit greatly by participation in the project, making it possible for all those involved to embrace and to engage in the information age.

End User Training

The Mobhaile project developed training manuals and trained a number of students from Maynooth University in how to use Mobhaile and they went to the different counties to carry out training. Training of C&V people in Local Authority was carried out across the country, where County Council Community Champions used the training manuals to train C&V leaders.

Conclusion

In the event of coming to the end of a project it is natural to look at what worked well and what didn't, if there are lessons for the future, and if given the opportunity again, would this project go ahead as it was concluded.

If one looks at the OpenData initiatives that are happening across the world and different governments giving access to their data and services through user defined applications and technologies such as iPhone, it could be argued that the Mobhaile Framework and Provider model was at least of its time, potentially before its time, it was offering an Open API to services that were not rich enough to deliver quality data.

The need in the C&V sector was met by the Mobhaile platform with over 70% of C&V groups in the different areas building and maintaining online and offline (Intranet) presences. The need for Local Champions to facilitate, evangelise, co-ordinate and train was well documented and certainly the seven authorities that had these posts were able to deliver training, know-how and general Internet savvy to many people in the local communities.

The ability to access fast Broadband was (and potentially still is) an issue, with Communities coming in to County Hall for training, receiving Training, Websites and graphical expertise on the Local Authority fast networks, going home and using home Dial-up or 3g/ mobile broadband and not receiving anywhere near the same quality or richness of service. With the rollout of the National Broadband Scheme this issue of access may be solved now, but in rural areas of Ireland in 2003 - 2006 it certainly was a major success factor.

A major part of the whole Mobhaile programme was the Ethnographic study carried out by Maynooth University with a subset of C&V groups across the whole demographic group of pilot authorities. The findings of the Study fed into the design of the Online toolsets. At the beginning of the programme it was believed that the main issue was the need for a CMS, however the requirement changed slightly to an Online Office - or a CMS with an offline capability or a private area where the group or club could hold minutes and agendas of meetings private while broadcasting results and outcomes. Another interesting outcome of the study, which goes well outside the remit of the LGCSB and the Local Authorities, whereby there was a lot of fear in the use of computers and particularly the internet by, particularly, the older trainees, some of the fear could be attributed to a fear that their illiteracy or partial skills would be exposed, where the Internet relies heavily on reading and writing.

The Open GIS standards talked about at the time are still an aspiration, not just in the Irish Government context. The Inspire Directive has overtaken the initial desire and added legs to the requirements. Still to this day one can drive from Authority to Authority in a car, but cannot pan or zoom from one to another using the mouse. With the advent of cloud computing the costs of

achieving centralised map servers that know where different datasets are, quality and detail, etc..are greatly reduced in order from hundreds of thousands to hundreds of Euros.

Finally, would the Mobhaile project be initiated again, if funds permitted? Yes, but in a different fashion. The toolsets available now for Communities are far easier to source, understand and maintain than they were even 3 years ago. The evolution of Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and OpenID are three main areas of work that the Mobhaile team developed solutions for transitive Identity across all community sites and the idea of single sign on. In the current web2.0 environment where many of the toolsets provided by Mobhaile are now available for free (albeit with Advertising attached in some instances), I believe that there still is a role of co-ordination, training, understanding the different toolsets and harnessing the power of the internet for those who are less well off in the internet economy. The role (for someone) to help those less well off (in different terms) to learn, understand and harness the power of the internet – there still is a role to bring the disenfranchised in – or maybe to carry the franchise to them.

Appendix – Mobhaile Projects

The GIS Components of Mobhaile, the MapHandler and the Data set manipulation are all being used now by the ePlan GIS application. This is deployed in all major Planning Authority sites. The spatial system, seamlessly integrated with the Local Authority Planning system, ePlan. It allows citizens to carry out spatial searches and interrogate the relevant Planning Application details and documents.

The Online planning systems were specifically developed to take the back office information and deliver it to the Internet in a timely way so citizens can interact with Planning Applications, Decisions, Reports and through the Document Management system can interact with the complete planning file. This has resulted in fewer generic planning queries at the front desk and freed planners up to deal with more specific Planning and pre planning queries.

The Development, Data , Web and Identity standards developed as part of the Mobhaile platform are still evidenced across the sector in the development of new applications both inside and outside the firewall.

The infrastructure used as part of the Mobhaile platform is still in use and is still a critical part of the Local Government Hosting platform.