

**EH Office of Information Management
ES&H Information Portal and Push Project
February 1999**

Abstract

Project Overview

The development of the web over the past six-plus years held the promise of an internetworked environment where knowledge was shared, re-used, and made available to those who need it instantly. The web is growing fast to become the greatest repository of human knowledge ever assembled yet isolating the correct information on the web is still a daunting task. In addition to web-based information, there are many other corporate repositories such as relational databases, regular file systems, threaded collaboration tools (such as Lotus Notes), and many other important information sources.

We are seeking to create a way of viewing these disparate resources in a manner that crosscuts the formal storage parameters of an information object and instead focuses on its content. Such a view or views are driven by subject matter or keywords; the point of view held by most end users.

In order to achieve this, the Office of Information Management is developing a corporate portal. This portal will be a means of integrating information from various parts of the EH organization and of providing different tailored views of this information. In addition to the portal view, driven by the user, there is also a desire to implement a "push" view whereby the user can selectively specify which repositories (and sub-repositories) from which he or she wants new items pushed to him or her each day. We are calling this particular feature "My ES&H Net," familiar nomenclature for those who have configured their own Yahoo! search page as "My Yahoo."

The corporate portal will be enabled by the installation of a specific portal tool. We have selected Plumtree software to do this job. The Plumtree Server polls key data sources to automatically maintain references to documents, database reports, groupware discussions, Web pages, and other content. By organizing those references topically in a Web-based catalog, the system integrates access to information in different formats, putting everything important to users a click away. In addition to this cataloging and maintenance function, the Plumtree software also allows end-users to select from a pre-defined set of information categories and have new objects from those categories pushed to them at a configurable frequency (daily, weekly, etc.).

Project Plan

There are several simultaneous activities supporting this project. These tasks include, at the high level:

1. Structure and Content

This team of subject matter experts will assist in determining the most effective format (structure) and the most applicable content to offer several audiences (customers) through the ES&H Network

2. Site Deployment

This team will develop and implement plans for installing servers at DOE sites that will allow Need-to-Know access to ES&H information behind firewalls

3. ES&H Gateway Design, Development and Deployment

This team will perform the systems architecture, engineering and logistics work necessary to implement the ES&H portal technology software.

4. Integration

This team will ensure that the flow of ES&H information throughout the DOE Complex is adhering to the ES&H model

5. Outreach

This team will communicate and promote the ES&H Information Network concept throughout the DOE Complex

A full description of each task: its team, activities, progress, and schedule will be one of the main highlights of this presentation.

Conclusion

The analysis of an internal task force concluded recently that current access to information is data-driven instead of issue-driven. Since EH is seeking to work in a more issue-based environment, wherein work is done in an integrated manner, the end result of this Portal initiative will be to support an issue-driven method of retrieving information instead of a data-driven view. Overall, we believe that this project will result in better coordination of the ways in which EH delivers information to its consumers.