One-Stop University Administration

Graz University of Technology, Austria
11 June 2014

www.tugraz.at
Overview

Point of Departure

Goals and Results

Approach and Methodology

Experiences
Graz University of Technology

Basic Facts:
- Located in the South-East of Austria
- Founded 1811
- Research university with a focus on science and engineering degrees such as mechanical engineering, architecture, computer science, …
Graz University of Technology

Facts and Figures:

- 7 faculties with 105 departments
- 3 campus areas in the city
- Approx. 13,000 students
- Approx. 1,500 academic staff and 900 non-academic staff
- Approx. 140 M€ federal budget and 60 M€ third-party funds (research grants)
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Many Service Units
The university has about 30 service units for staff and students:

- HR, Finance, Controlling, Research & Technology, ICT Services, …
- Student Administration, International Relations, Lifelong Learning, Dean’s Offices, …
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Many Administrative Processes
There are more than 500 administrative processes – only for staff!

The processes contain forms that are implemented using various technologies – from SAP workflows to Excel sheets
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Many Web-Sites
Every service unit has had a web-site since mid-1990s

The web-sites contain the units’ forms and in many cases information on how to use them

Every service unit has at least one web-site editor
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Drawbacks of this approach:

- Information design, design of forms, and process modelling is done autonomously by service units
- No centralised “management” of these efforts
- Information is not homogeneous in granularity and style
- Explanations make use of technical, subject-specific terms that are hard to understand for end-users
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Consequences:

- Information is not end-user-oriented, not clearly structured
- Users often do not find the information they need
- Users often do not know the support services they could use
- Processes are often not transparent or are hard to understand
Goals

Overall Goal
Plan and implement a new, modern information architecture for the university
Goals

Goal 1: User-Orientation

- Clear distinction between staff, students, and external users
  - Intranet and service portal for students and staff
  - Public web-site for external users

- Two separate entry points – one for staff, one for students
Goals

Goal 2: One-Stop University Administration

- Find all required information for daily work in one place
- Initiate all administrative processes from this single point

1 Existing systems such as SAP or the campus management system are not replaced, but seamless integration through single sign-on is achieved
Goals

Goal 3: Topic-Orientation

- All information in the intranet and service portal should be structured by topics – *not by organisational units!*

- I.e., service units should not have web-sites, there is only one single source of information for students and staff – *the intranet and service portal!*
Goals

Goal 4: Lean Structures

- No more than 12 top-level topics
- Information should only be max. four clicks away, i.e., hierarchy is max. four levels deep
Goals

Goal 5: Users’ Language

- Use the users’ language – not the service units’ technical, legal, subject-specific terms
Results: TU4U

Intranet and service portal “TU4U”, launched in October 2013
Results: TU4U

Live Demo

▶ [https://tu4u.tugraz.at/](https://tu4u.tugraz.at/)
Approach and Methodology

Implemented as "strategic project", led by ICT Services

However, this is *not an IT project* – it is much closer related to organisational development!
Approach and Methodology

Step 1: Analysis

- Analyse the existing web-sites, forms and handbooks of all service units
- Analyse and document administrative processes
  - First, only document the main characteristics of the processes (name, owner, purpose/aims, target group)
  - Later, document them using BPMN 2.0
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Step 2: Macro-Structure

- The macro-structure is the top-level structure for grouping all processes and information into max. 12 topics
- Document it using Mindmaps
- Discuss and refined it with the service units

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Step 3: Micro-Structure

- Find a structure that is valid for all articles in the intranet and service portal – what does a service provide, who can use it, when can it be used, …
- Use common headings in all articles
- Use consistent references to forms, laws, official guidelines, …
- Use consistent contact information in all articles
Step 4: Functionality

- Plan functionality together with users and service units:
  - fulltext search, most recent and most frequently used articles, staff directory, information on public transportation, lunch menus of restaurants, …
  - user feedback for all articles
  - “did you know that …” for promoting scarcely known, mainly optional services and limited offers
  - single sign-on (Shibboleth)
Step 5: Integrate Internal Communication

- Integrate existing, central communication channels:
  - staff magazine (four times a year)
  - rectorate’s newsletter (monthly)

- Integrate service units’ communications:
  - research newsletter (fortnightly), research magazine (twice a year)
  - announcements for courses

- all integrated into the topic-oriented structure
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Step 6: Shut down Service Units’ Web-Sites

- First describe the processes and information of a service unit are in the new intranet and service portal
- Then permanently redirect the service unit’s web-pages to the intranet and service portal
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Organisation
Editorial board (two professional editors) for the intranet and service portal

At least one contact person per service unit

Close alignment with the PR & Communication Department
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Future Changes

Most changes are linked to the rectorate, where university guidelines might be changed.

The intranet and service portal is integrated as the last step in the rectorate’s decision making process: send the information to be published to the TU4U editors.
Experiences

Facts & Figures from TU4U:
- 120,000 visits by 3,000 users in three months
- 90+ percent positive or very positive feedback from end-users
- Mostly positive feedback from service units
- TU4U is widely accepted as the source of information about services and processes
Experiences

Content:

- Most frequently used articles: staff benefits, information on salaries
- Least used articles: research in general, general management tasks
Experiences

Functionality:

- Frequently used features: feedback, search, staff directory, lunch menu
- Scarcely used features: bookmarks, alphabetic index, sitemap, weather forecast
Experiences

Feedback Mechanism for Articles:

- All feedback is processed and answered by editors
- High level of collaboration between editors and end-users in order to make the information “perfect”
- People want to get involved through this functionality
Your Feedback, Your Questions

Questions?

▷ tu4u@tugraz.at
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