Open Access to Grey Literature on e-Infrastructures: the BELIEF Project Digital Library

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Abstract

The BELIEF (Bringing Europe's eLectronic Infrastructures to Expanding Frontiers) Project is a Coordination Action funded by the European Commission in the context of the FP6 and FP7 Programmes. It aims to create a platform where e-Infrastructures providers and users can collaborate and exchange knowledge. This will help ensuring that e-Infrastructures are deployed and effectively used worldwide, filling the gap separating the Research Infrastructure providers from the users, and thus contribute to the emergence of a competitive knowledge-based economy.

To create this synergy among multi-disciplinary Research Infrastructure communities, BELIEF created a one-stop-shop for e-Infrastructures communities providing a Community Portal http://www.beliefproject.org/ and a Digital Library (DL) http://belief-dl.research-infrastructures.eu/ with a huge number of e-Infrastructures open access documents. Moreover, it has organised events including brainstorming, networking workshops and international conferences and publications, since BELIEF's values are firmly rooted in international cooperation with the emerging economies, particularly in Latin America, India and South Africa.

The BELIEF DL – implemented on top of the OpenDLib Software System – offers uniform access to multimedia documentation and especially to grey literature (e.g. presentations, videos, technical reports, manuals, on-line tutorials, etc.), providing continuously updated information on e-Infrastructures-related projects, initiatives and events. The contents are harvested from different sources, such as projects web sites, repositories and databases. The DL provides services to support the submission, description, searching, browsing, access, preservation and visualization of these multimedia documents. Although designed to meet the needs of a specific scientific community, the technology adopted by BELIEF can be easily adapted to meet the information and collaborative needs of other user communities.

The BELIEF e-Infrastructures Community ranges now on more than 80 projects, initiatives and organisations inside and outside Europe, and the DL offers nearly 15.000 documents harvested from their repositories and websites.

The BELIEF Consortium is composed by Brunel University (UK), CNR-ISTI (Italy), ERNET (India), Escola Politécnica da Universidade de Sao Paolo (Brasil), Meraka Institute (South Africa), Metaware SpA (Italy), and the National Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece).

1 Introduction

The BELIEF (Bringing Europe's eLectronic Infrastructures to Expanding Frontiers) Project aims to create an effective open workspace where e-Infrastructures providers and users can collaborate and exchange knowledge, ensuring the development and adoption of e-Infrastructures on a worldwide scale. The BELIEF DL play a key part in the project, bringing a range of benefits to e-Infrastructures stakeholders across the globe by facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experiences through a single and easily accessible tool. The BELIEF Project arose from the awareness that a gap existed between Research Infrastructure providers and users. In order to bridge this gap, a complete and common source of information on e-Infrastructures was needed, both for users demanding provision and resources and for providers intending to extend their user base and develop their systems. The BELIEF DL responds to this demand by providing users with documentation matching their search criteria accurately and according to their interests and professional profile. This paper focuses on the implementation of this key component.

General outcomes of the design phase are reported in [7]. In the following (Section 2) the main characteristics of the DL are described. General concepts regarding the implementation of the DL are outlined (Paragraph 2.1). These general concepts represent the logical link between basic requirements and the components of the implemented solution (Paragraph 2.2). Then (Paragraph 2.3) the organization of the User Interface is introduced.
Section 3 summarizes the most relevant usage data as per the statistics gathered during the whole projects lifetime, from 2006 onward.

This paper won't cover all of the relevant topics of the implementation work, for those please refer to [4]. Hereafter are summarized the ones covered in this paper (Section 4):

▪ Definition of the metadata structure implemented by the DL.