Memo

From: Greg Sandell
Date: April 25, 2005
Subject: IT Process for Updating Syllabi on www.IESAbroad.org

Contents

Purpose

 Each regular program in www.IESAbroad.org has an IES COURSES page which lists all the course offerings for that program. The listing of courses is maintained with a different process from the rest of the IES Abroad content. This document describes the part of the process that IT executes.

The process depends on work performed by the Production Assistants. This is described only in general terms; the specifics of their process is not in the scope of this document.

General Summary

The end goal of the IT process is the generation of a single XML file which is the source for content for all IES Courses pages. This XML file is generated by a Java program which uses a set of .txt files on a shared drive (see Figure 1) created and maintained by the IES Program Assistants. This Java program is then run and creates an XML file as output.

The PDF files corresponding to each IES course are sent individually by IES Program Assistants to IT staff through Jira tasks. There is a specific naming convention for these files which ties them to the course numbers of the .txt files. IES staff put these PDFs into a single directory in the kestrel project (see Figure 2) which then make them available to www.IESAbroad.org.

Notes

1) The temporary space for the .txt files is currently I:\shared\syllabi.
2) The .txt files are processed by a main class "SyllabiBuilder"; it takes those .txt files and converts it to a single courses.xml file.
3) Often, there are misspellings and incorrect capitalizations in the .txt files (both in naming and in the actual content) that require manual intervention. SyllabiBuilder has a bunch of code in it to fix the most common of these problems. Watch out for centers with more than 1 noun in its name (i.e. European Union)
4) It often works better if you separate the tasks into 2 categories it goes much faster:
   a. New or Updated Syllabi
   b. Removed Syllabi

Process for New or Updated Syllabi

1) Update your copiers of both the moped ($MOPED) and kestrel ($KESTRAL) SVN projects
2) Get to a point where you can edit SyllabiBuilder and run its main method
3) Open a listing of the $KESTRAL\res\pdf\syllabi folder
4) Open a listing of the $MOPED\res\xml\output\syllabi folder
5) Go into the Jira for updating a specific set of syllabi
   a. Place all the new or updated PDF's here: $KESTRAL\res\pdf\syllabi (replacing existing ones if applicable
   b. Place the .txt files here: I:\shared\syllabi (make sure to preserve the center naming (replacing existing ones if applicable). If the .txt file is for berlin, make sure to put it in I:\shared\syllabi\berlin.
   c. For BA, please make sure to set the name in the files to "buenosAires", and for EU, please set it to "europeanUnion"

6) Make changes to SyllabiBuilder
   a. Change the variable "META_LOCATION" to point here (where you just put the .txt files): I:\shared\syllabi
   b. Change the variable "XML_OUTPUT" to point here: $MOPED\res\xml\output\syllabi
   c. Compile it using the default "build" ant target
7) Run SyllabiBuilder's main method.
   a. You will see, in $MOPED\res\xml\output\syllabi, a new file "courses-NEW-.xml
   b. Do a visual check of the file to make sure it is valid, then manually replace the courses.xml file in that folder with the one you just created.
   c. Do a test deployment of Whydah. It is a good idea to do a general evaluation of 3-5 specific updates that I did to make sure it all catches.
8) Check in
   a. If everything is valid, check-in the new courses.xml
   b. Check-in the PDF's (make sure to add new ones).

Process for Removing Syllabi

1) Do steps #1-#4 from above
2) Remove the PDF from the above-mentioned location
3) Remove the .txt and (if you see one) the .doc file from the above-mentioned location
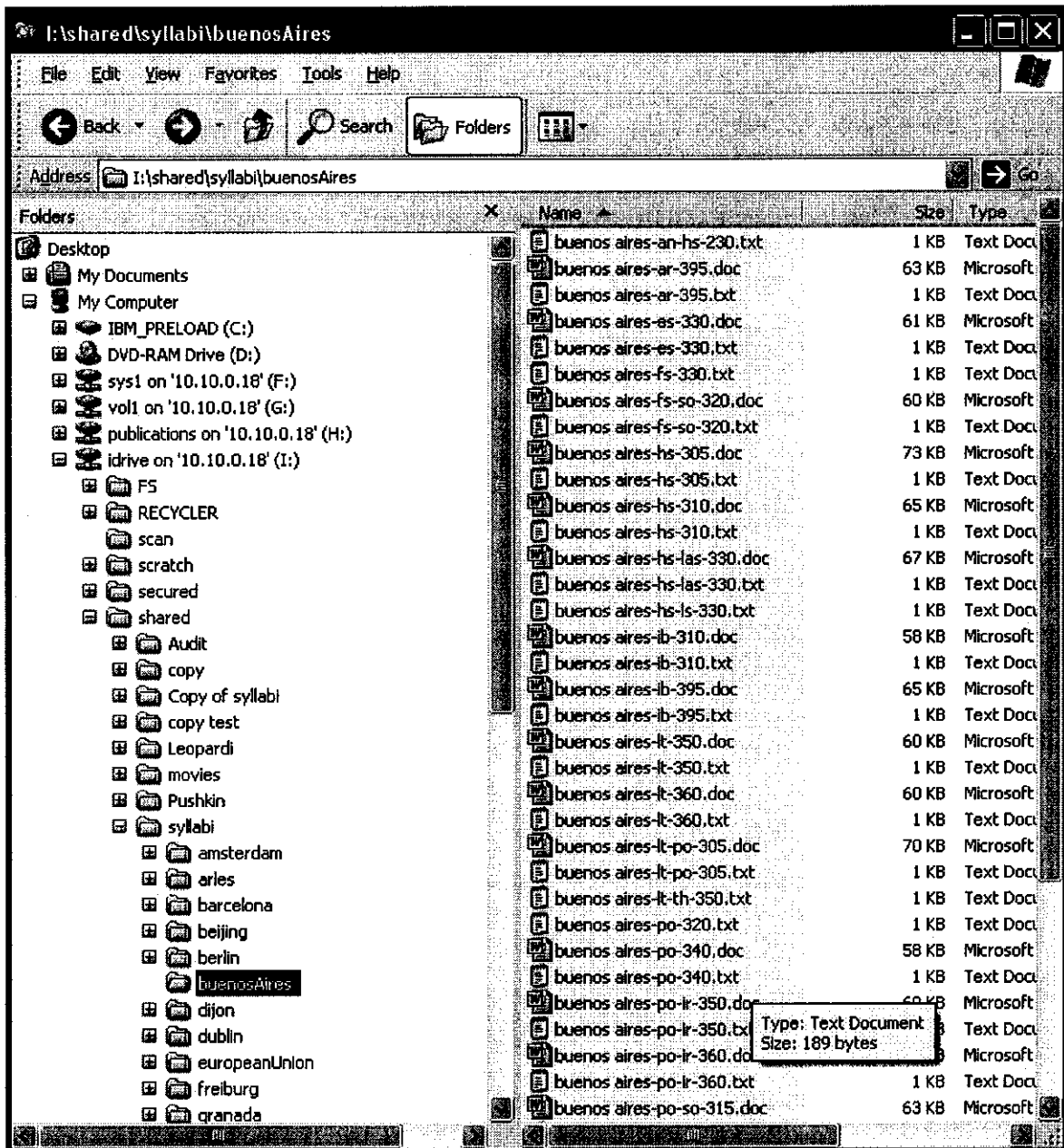4) Do steps #6-#8 from above.

Figures

Figure 1. A listing of the .txt files on the I-Drive. Note that the .txt files are organized into separate folders by center. The .doc files are used by the Program Assistants in constructing the PDF files, but are not used in the Syllabi
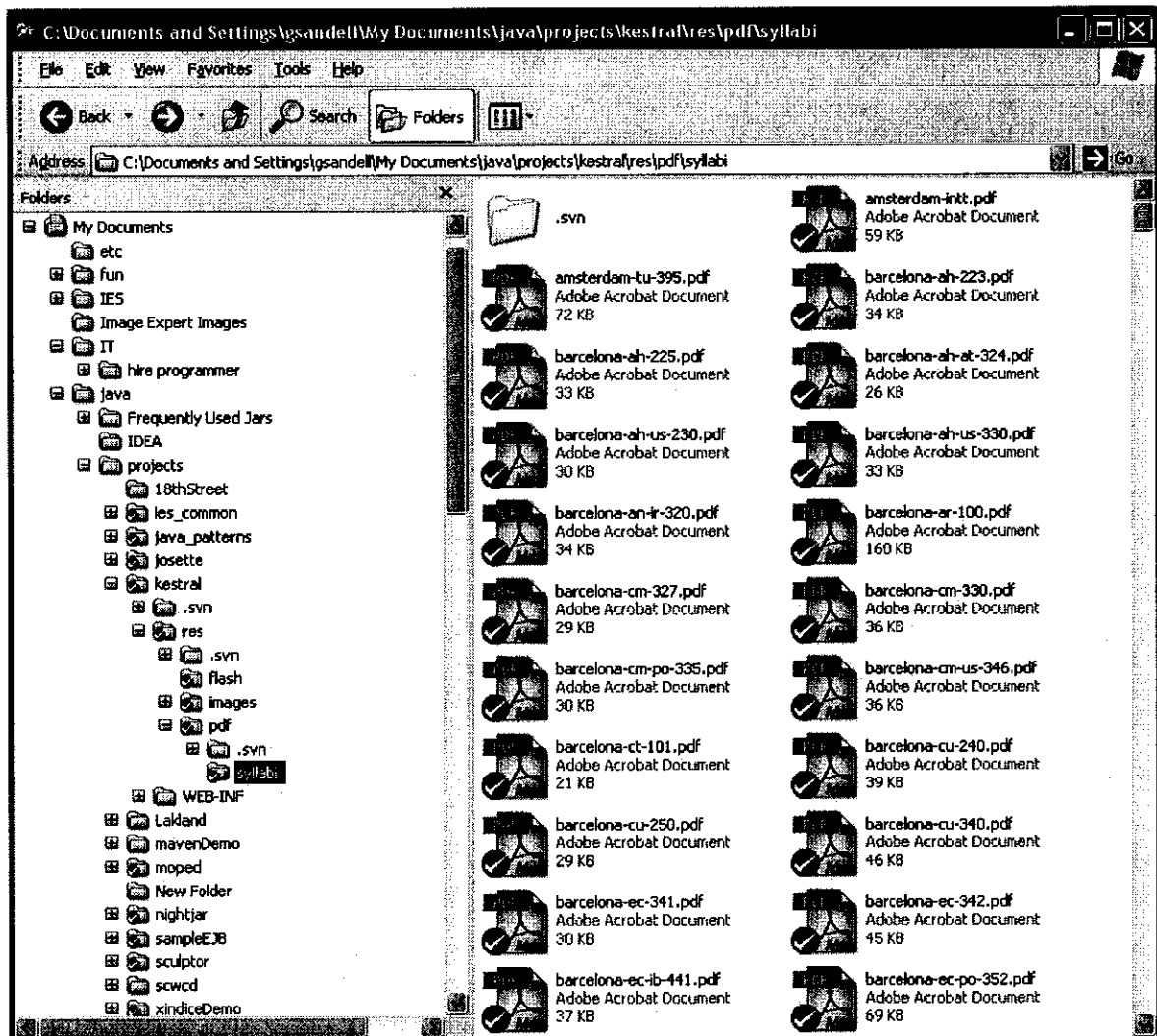
Figure 2. A listing of the PDF files in the kestrel project. Note that all the PDFs are in a single folder.