



Lecture 9 – Groupware (Lotus Notes)

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Objectives

- To understand the purpose of groupware
- To examine the facilities offered by Lotus Notes
- To consider the future of Office Suites and Groupware
- Assignment & Test Arrangements
- Today's practical
 - Advanced use of spreadsheets. Make sure you really understand the task, not just recognise the words!



Review

- **We have looked at –**
 - Operating Systems, File Systems, Printers
 - E-mail, Internet
 - Word Processing
 - Document Management
 - Presentation Packages
 - Spreadsheets
- **Next Term we will look at**
 - Other Packages
 - The software selection process
 - Databases
 - Package Customisation / VBA programming



Why Groupware?

- Most organisations (of any kind) require people to work *collaboratively*
- The COTS software that we have looked at so far (except e-mail) is about *individual use*
- It is possible to share information
 - E-mail to colleagues
 - E-mail attachments
 - Shared file store on servers
 - Information published on web servers
- But what is really required is Managed sharing



Typical Groupware Facilities

- **Shared calendars / scheduling**
 - For people and resources (e.g. conference rooms)
- **Communication**
 - Managed E-mail (more on this later...)
 - Discussion Forums
 - Instant messaging
 - Broadcast events
- **Shared information**
 - Reference (standards, price lists etc.)
 - Databases (customers, sales etc.)



Advanced Groupware Facilities

- **Online meetings**
 - Interactive, shared workspaces (new)
- **Workflow / Project Management**
 - Routed, tracked, e-mail
 - Managed tasks / activities
- **Global access**
 - Web access
 - Remote access



Example Groupware – Lotus Notes

- **Very long history (for a COTS product)**
 - Originally a mainframe application for bug tracking in 1973
- **Developed by Lotus Notes, starting 1984**
- **First release 1989, aimed at large corporates**
 - Expectation was large no. of small workgroups
- **1993 PCs, networks increased capability**
 - new features added (full text search, Mac version)
 - scalability improved, 200 users per server (v3)
- **1996 Client & Server separated (v4.5)**
 - Domino document server
 - Web I/F or Notes client access
- **2003 Currently version 6**



Notes E-mail

- All typical e-mail program facilities
 - Attachments
 - Folders
 - Signatures etc.
- Additional features (if recipients use Notes)
 - Digital signatures
 - Links to documents in Notes databases
 - Encryption
 - Priorities, read receipts etc. that work
 - Uncopyable mail
 - Outlining



Notes Calendar

- **Usual calendar facilities**
 - Show availability / free time
 - Double booking
 - Repeated meetings
 - Anniversaries etc.
- **Advanced features**
 - Group calendars
 - Selective visibility
 - Automation (accepting meetings automatically)



Notes Databases

- The foundation of notes (everything is a database)
- Not a Relational Database (see next term!)
 - Views (forms) allow users to create documents
 - Documents contain fields
 - Fields can be rich text, images etc.
 - Fields can be embedded objects (e.g. MS Office docs)
- Databases can be shared (7 levels of access)
- Can be developed by users, stored locally
- Developed & stored centrally
- Object orientated, programmable through “Lotuscript” & other languages



Replication

- **The key to collaboration**
- **Replication between servers**
 - Geographical separation
 - Scalability (to 10's of 1000's of users)
 - Largely invisible to users
 - Flexible scheduling
- **Replication to mobile users**
 - Over internet / modem
 - Just mail or entire databases



Inappropriate Applications

- **Access to real-time information**
 - The replication process is NOT instantaneous
 - May be “overnight”
- **Heavy “number crunching” / data processing**
 - Lotuscript is interpreted (slow)
 - The OO interface also slow (comparatively)
- **Query or Report based services**
 - No SQL support (not relational)
 - No report writer (flexible database structures)



Other Groupware Applications

- **Microsoft Exchange Server / Outlook**
 - Similar features for e-mail and calendaring
- **Microsoft Sharepoint Server**
 - Windows Server 2003 Add-on
 - Managed sharing of documents
 - Integrates with the MS Office “Save” dialog
- **Wide range of web based collaboration tools**
 - Expect much consolidation



Your Assignment

- You will be given a briefing document (also available on Blackboard)
- Your role is to act as a consultant
- You will need to make recommendations
 - Either specific suggestions
 - Or a process to determine an answer
- I require a written report
- And a presentation summarising the key points



Assignment Arrangements

- The report and presentation slides & notes are to be handed during Week 10 of the Spring Term
 - Precise date and time to be advised
- The assignment will constitute 40% of your overall course mark
- A sample of students will be asked to give their presentations during the summer term
- Questions to K.R.Wilcox@reading.ac.uk please, answers will be posted on Blackboard



Test Organisation

- **Tests will be given next week (week 10)**
- **They will be at the same time as the lecture 10:00AM**
- **It will be here (Nike LT) – Spread Out!**
- **You will have 30 minutes to complete the test**
- **LET ME KNOW IF YOU ARE ALLOWED EXTRA TIME**
 - This test will be held in the Sullivan Room in CS
- **There will be no lecture or practicals next week**



The Test

- **This will be a written test**
- **There are 15-20 short questions, 1 longer one**
- **The test covers material from the practicals**
 - Plus a small element from the lectures
- **The test will count for up to 5% of your total coursemark**
- **There will be a further test at the end of the Spring Term, worth another 5%**
 - Plus an assessment in the Spring Term
 - And an examination in the Summer Term



Today's Practical

- Advanced Excel Spreadsheets
- There is a lot of material to cover – you may NOT be familiar with all of it
- We will use some of the example spreadsheets downloaded from Blackboard last week
- **REMEMBER TO SIGN OFF ON THE REGISTRATION SHEET!**