

Review of Offline SW Documentation

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Atlas Offline Software Review

Review Charge

- The review will cover most of the documentation:
 - The new Atlas Offline SW webpages
 - <http://atlas-computing.web.cern.ch/atlas-computing/computing.php>
 - The Atlas Workbook
 - <https://uimon.cern.ch/twiki/bin/view/Atlas/WorkBook>
 - The Atlas Computing Twiki
 - <https://uimon.cern.ch/twiki/bin/view/Atlas/AtlasComputing>
 - The use of Doxygen by Atlas
 - <https://uimon.cern.ch/twiki/bin/view/Atlas/DoxygenDocumentation>
 - The possible use of HyperNews by Atlas
 - <https://hypernews.cern.ch/HyperNews/Atlas/top.pl>
- There are other miscellaneous bits of documentation such as ViewCVS, LXR, and documents in CVS.

Review Charge (Continued)

- The review is intended to be high-level and light-weight with the final report nearly ready at its end.
 - Since the review is short (two days long), it will concentrate on the high level picture and in particular how suitable the documentation is for non-expert users.
 - The goal is to provide feedback on whether the Atlas offline software documentation strategy is in on the correct course.
- I would like the outcome of the review be a statement of whether the Atlas documentation is on a reasonable course and whether number of people involved in documentation is sufficient.
 - It would be helpful for the committee to point out areas where the documentation effort needs strengthening.

Questions to be Considered

- Is the documentation suitable for use by the Atlas collaboration (which is distributed all over the world) and users of all types (users, developers, beginners, experts, etc.)?
- Is the documentation suitable for related activities such as training and user support?
- Does the documentation have any gaps or inconsistencies?
- Is there sufficient control of the documentation (e.g. the Twiki)?
- Will the documentation be ready in time for commissioning?
- Does it seem reasonable to transfer some or all mailing lists to the HyperNews System?
- Are there any overlooked areas of documentation?
- What should be the long-term plan for maintaining the documentation?
- Are there enough people involved?

People Working on Documentation

- The main offline webpages have been done by Traudl Kozeneki.
 - Traudl has worked 3/4 time for about 10 months on this.
 - Traudl can continue this work but for a lower fraction of her time.
 - She is expecting the responsables to maintain the content of their sections of the web.
- The workbook has been been done by Steve Lloyd.
 - This works has been about quarter time for last 10 months.
 - The work is essentially volunteer without dedicated funding.
 - Steve appears ready to continue for the foreseeable future.

Documentation People (continued)

- The Atlas Twiki was setup by volunteers: Ed Moyse with help from Fredrik Akesson and Christian Arnault.
 - The Twiki infrastructure is supported CERN IT.
 - Fredrik has left physics.
 - Christian and Ed have moved onto new job responsibilities.
- Doxygen was setup by Christian Arnault with help from Ed Moyse and Fredrik Akesson.
 - Same comments about Fredrik, Ed, and Christian apply.
- HyperNews has been mainly setup by Peter Elmer (CMS) with considerable help from Traudl Kozenecki and Charlie Young (SLAC).
 - Charlie listed SLAC HyperNews as on SLAC's application to join Atlas.

Documentation People (continued)

- The long vacant post of Software Training Coordinator has been taken over by James Catmore. Traudl Kozeneki has collected most of the documentation from recent tutorials.
 - This is one area with an improved outlook.
- Various other documentation has been done by many volunteers over the years.
 - How-To guides
 - ViewCVS
 - LXR

Summing Up

- The Atlas Offline Software Documentation has no permanent, full-time people working on it and the work is effort limited.
 - Much of the work has been done by volunteers who have a limited time to spend on documentation.
 - There could easily be at least one more person working full time on the documentation. We are very short of people to work on documentation through the commissioning period.
 - We need more engagement with the commissioning team.
- The SIT works on its own documentation but there is limited long-term planning and little coordination of documentation written outside the SIT (even other documentation within the Atlas core software).
- All of the user support area needs more people.

Summing Up (Continued)

- Globally Atlas' documentation improved greatly spurred by the series of reviews last year.
 - Many Twiki pages created then now need revision.
 - The DB group had a documentation stand-down - should we try this again with more groups?
- However this increased documentation came mainly as lightly maintained or unmaintained Twiki pages.
 - There is the issue of how to maintain sufficient structure that the Twiki pages are useful. One model of doing this is the workbook where Steve carefully looks at all changes but this takes a lot of effort.
 - There is also the question of balancing using HyperNews and the Twiki.

A Final Thought

- No one has ever won the Nobel prize for writing good documentation.