

Sustainability of open access teaching programs

Mario Peñas

Habber Tec, Madrid

Abstract: The paper reviews and describes possible sustainability approaches to Open Access programs and describes several business models. We exemplify our discussion based on the VRTUOSI program.

Keywords: e-learning, Decision Sciences and Technologies, Open Access, Sustainability

1 Motivation

A few years ago, we proposed the EU our VRTUOSI project, <http://www.vrtuosi.com>, within the Virtual Campus methodological framework of the EU Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) http://ec.europa.eu/education/index_en.htm. The program lasted for two years and a half with funding from the EU. It included an exchange of virtual courses among five participating universities, based on the Virtual Campus of URJC, together with a section of Open Access materials. Despite its success, we wondered about how to sustain the project once the EU fund finishes. In this talk, we shall present several possible business models in relation with such type of projects. This may be relevant to many of the EU LLP initiatives launched, which, too frequently, come to an end once they EU fund is finished.

2 Sustainable models for open access e-learning sites

We shall describe the following sustainable ways for a project like VRTUOSI. Simialr ideas apply for similar projects:

1. As an open source site with materials in decision sciences.
 - i. Different funding models include:
 1. Endowment.

2. Membership.
 3. Donations.
 4. Conversion.
 5. Contributor-Pay.
 6. Sponsorship.
 7. Institutional.
 8. Governmental.
 9. Partnerships and Exchanges.
2. As a closed site with materials/courses for decision sciences, in three possible ways:
 - i. As an independent standard commercial company like statistics.com (requirements, etc...).
 - ii. Within one the participating universities.
 - iii. Within another university.
 3. Evolve as an online master program.
 - i. Single or joint degree.

We shall describe the pros and cons of all these modes.

Acknowledgments

This work was supported by VRTUOSI project, www.vrtuosi.org, within the Virtual Campus methodological framework of the EU Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP, code 502869-LLP-1-2009-ES-ERASMUS-EVC)