JASIG Candidate Proposal

This is the proposal for esup-helpdesk to become a JASIG incubated project (see JASIG Incubation Process). It has been posted as a JIRA issue on March 2nd, 2009.

A proposed name for the project

Formerly known as *ifsic-helpdesk* (1999-2003, developed and used by IFSIC, the computer science department of the University of Rennes 1), the project is now know as **esup-helpdesk** (2004-2008, *esup* stands for ESUP-Portail).

A proposed Project Lead

Pascal Aubry

He leads the project since1999:

- *ifsic-helpdesk* project in 1999 (no serious helpdesk application at this time, first version written in PHP)
- rewrote the code to a Java uPortal channel in 2004 for the ESUP-Portail consortium
- adapted it in 2008 to fit to JSR-168

The short preface for the mailing lists

The project already has three active mailing lists, hosted by the Sympa mailing list manager:

- helpdesk-utilisateurs@esup-portail.org: 120 subscribed users, 700 messages since 2004 Sep. (the most active list), it is used by the deployers to share their experience and discuss new features.
- helpdesk-support@esup-portail.org: 620 messages since 2004 Sep., used by the deployers to get support on the installation and the configuration.
- helpdesk-bugs@esup-portail.org: a list used to archive the exceptions thrown by the application (this feature can be turned off).
- helpdesk-devel@esup-portail.org: used by the developers only.

All these lists are French-spoken, helpdesk-users@esup-portail.org has never be used (no community yet).

Even if the incubating portlets normally use the portlet mailing lists, experience shows that the traffic concerning esup-helpdesk grows very fast and pollutes general lists (esup-utilisateurs@esup-portail.org was used at the very beginning but helpdesk-xxx have been requested one month only after the application was distributed to the ESUP-Portail community due to traffic).

helpdesk would be a logical preface.

The proposed initial commiters

- Pascal Aubry, University of Rennes 1
- Alexandre Boisseau, Université de Bretagne Occidentale

Most of the v2 commiters have left the project.

An overview of the aims of the project

The initial goal of the esup-helpdesk project is to provide to the French Universities a single application to deal with the user support at establishment-level.

See: helpdesk-eunis2006-article.pdf (written in 2006, no v3 feature presented).

A technological overview of the project

esup-commons is the development framework adopted by the ESUP-Portail community in 2007.

Since esup-helpdesk is based on esup-commons, it uses:

- **JSF** (Apache MyFaces) for the MVC and the rendering
- **Spring** for the bean management
- **Hibernate** for the database access
- **Lucene** for the data indexing
- **CAS** is natively integrated for the authentication

It is distributed as:

- a **portlet** (most deployers use esup-helpdesk in their portal)
- a **servlet**, for people with no portal but a simple servlet container)
- a **quick-start** (in fact a servlet with an embedded Tomcat), for people who do not have any J2EE competence or just want a stand-alone application.

Thanks to esup-commons, the same code is used by the three deployment modes.

Note: Pascal Aubry is also the maintainer of the esup-commons project.

See also: esup-commons - Framework de développement (in French, sorry)

An overview of any current user base or user community

esup-helpdesk is approx. used in production by 25 institutions (mostly universities, but also high schools and research labs).

6 universities have already migrated to version 3 (available since 2008 Aug.).

The map below shows the deployers on 2006 Aug.:
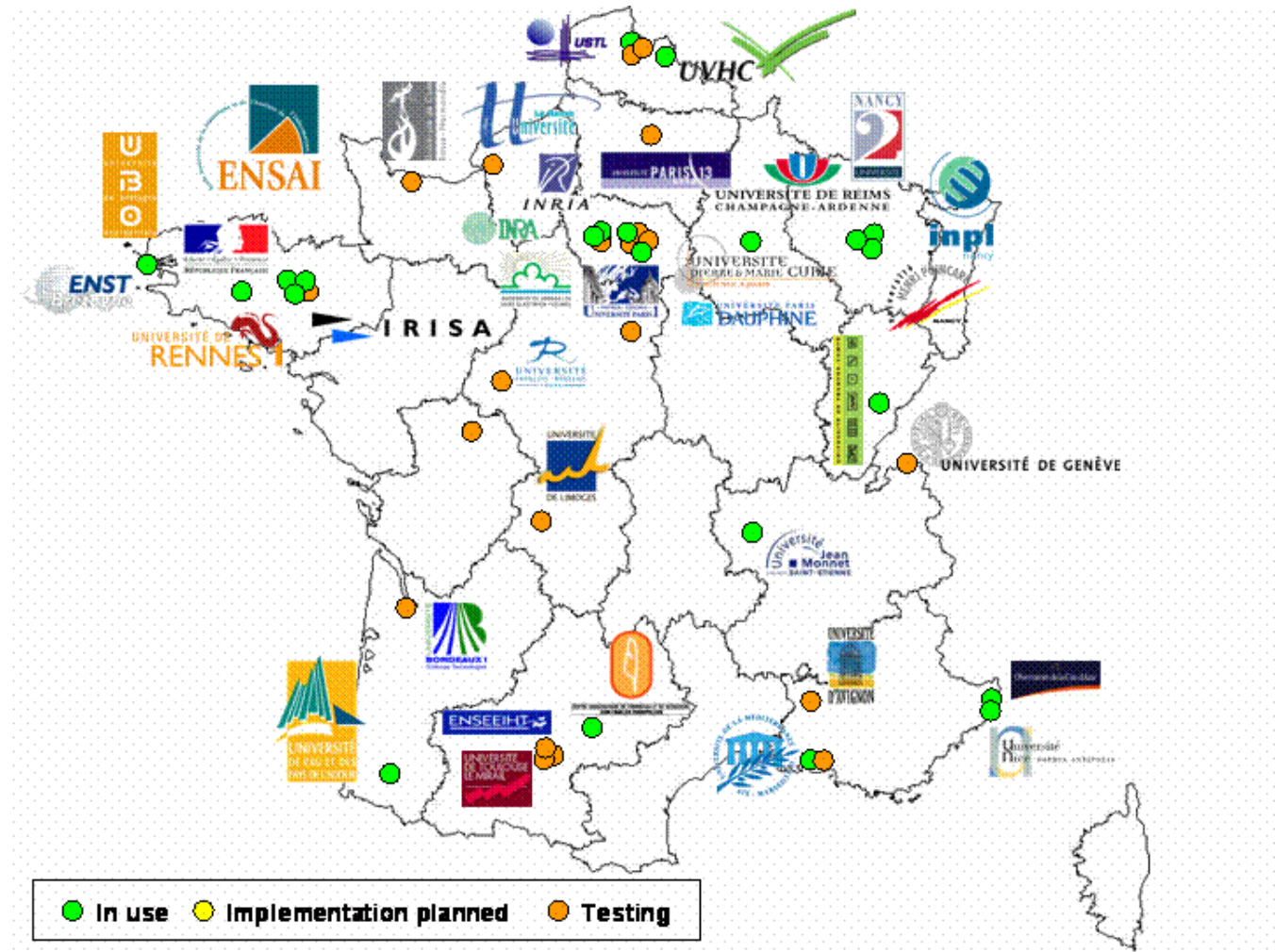
An overview of how the project relates to other parts of JASIG

esup-helpdesk does not conflict with any other part of the JASIG sponsored softwares.

Even if sometimes deployed as a servlet, it is motly deployed as a portlet into uPortal (the ESUP-Portail community is uPortal-based).

esup-helpdesk relies on CAS for the authentication and can use the uPortal groups and user attributes to define user profiles (thanks to esup-portal-ws).

A summary of why the project would enhance and benefit higher education

Main benefits are:

- the organization of the suport teams
- the quality of the support
- the richness of the knowledge database
- making the work visible to the users, within suport teams and to the hierarchy

Sponsor

Alain Mayeur (Board Member)

A pointer to any current information for the project

The main page of the esup-helpdesk project: esup-helpdesk - user support at establishment-level