An Open Source Calendaring System for Higher Education

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Outline

• The calendaring problem
• Our solution
• The project today
• How you can help
We are building an open source calendaring system for higher education

- It will support public, private and group calendars.
- It will use existing open standards.
- It will support access via the web and other forms of access.
- It will integrate with other systems, particularly uPortal.
The Problem

• Too many calendars
  – academic calendar
  – department calendar
  – (multiple) class calendars
  – research group calendar
  – personal calendar
  – calendar for every outside interest
  – other calendars you don't know about
Types of events

• Private: Doctor's appointment at 3:30

• Public: Michael Moore speaks at 3:30

• Group
  – ad hoc: People in this room meet for drinks at 3:30
  – well-known: Department's annual picnic at 3:30
  – resources: Need group laptop, slide projector, and conference room #102 for 3:30 presentation
The Solution

- We cannot predict what an institution will need
- An institution might already have a partial solution
- Therefore, we must build a modular system, with many components, including
  - Web applications for all users
  - other specialized user applications (*e.g.*, *Palm synch*)
  - Special applications for privileged users (*e.g.*, *batch import of events, or batch export to a web page*)
- We must also supply programmatic interfaces to allow
  - integration with *uPortal* and other existing systems
  - communication between servers in other institutions
  - construction of new tools by the resourceful
Major components

- Web applications
  - personal calendar
  - public events entry
  - public events display
  - group calendaring (probably combine with personal calendar)
- Aggregator
- Portal view
- small applications
  - create a web page
  - 'subscribe to this calendar'/add this event to my calendar'
  - Palm/Outlook/etc. synch
  - many more
System Architecture

Browser

Web applications

Personal/Group Calendar
Public events display
Public events entry
Misc. web tools and widgets

uPortal

uPortal channel
Misc. tools

Aggregator

Calendar server Calendar server

Calendar db Calendar db

... ...
Interfaces

- Web (for users)
- e-mail (via MIME)
- web services (HTTP)
- Java
- XML, iCalendar, and Java objects

IETF standards (see http://www.imc.org/ietf-calendar) for object encoding and communication protocols
The project

- Web site: http://www.washington.edu/ucal
  - project description
  - CVS
  - mailing lists
  - Bugzilla
  - quickstart release: all you need is Java
Current status

• current release
  – personal calendar web application (*in production at UW*)
  – an iCalendar server (*beta*)

• real soon
  – public events entry (*in production at UW, UW-centric*)
  – public events display (*beta, but in production at UW anyway*)
  – 'add this to my calendar' (*in production at UW*)

• two person development team, and one of us is on leave

• working with the Mellon Foundation (*http://www.mellon.org*) on a possible grant
Demo
You can help

- Tell us your institution is officially interested
  - "We would use this."
  - "We would use this, if it includes X."
  - "We would use this, and we'd love to help."
  - "We would use this, and we'll help do X."
- Subscribe to the mailing lists
- Download the quickstart release or CVS code
- try it out
- report bugs
- fix bugs
- add features