

TF-Netcast

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. A Task Force is established under the auspices of the TERENA Technical Programme (www.terena.nl/tech/ToR.html) to prepare the creation of a portal for live-streaming announcements and to investigate the possible extension of the portal to an academic channel for live-streams and video-on-demand. It will be known as TF-Netcast (Academic Netcasting).

The Task Force is the result of the work of a discussion group called the Academic Netcasting Working Group; that group predates the Task Force and may continue after the end of the mandate of the Task Force.

2. The aims of the Task Force will be:

- a. to conduct a survey of the state of national efforts in producing and delivering streaming-media content in academia in European countries, and of the (users') needs for an international effort in this area;
- b. to create an announcements portal, by developing metadata, portal software, policies etc. into a working prototype of an announcements portal;
- c. to promote the production of high-quality content;
- d. to study the feasibility of a project for setting up a live-streaming infrastructure;
- e. to develop a common metadata model and to study the feasibility of setting up a video-on-demand portal;
- f. to propose a model for an academic netcasting channel.

The objectives will be achieved by means of the deliverables listed below.

3. The Task Force will be open to any individual or representative of an organisation that can offer appropriate expertise, manpower, equipment or services. Participation will be on a voluntary basis.

4. The chair of the Task Force will be Dan Mønster. He will be responsible for preparing the agenda of each meeting, and for co-ordinating the work of the task Force. He will also be responsible for ensuring that any agreed deliverables are produced.

5. The secretary of the task force will be appointed by TERENA. The secretary will be responsible for taking the minutes at each meeting and for making logistical arrangements as necessary.

6. The Task Force will operate with a one-year mandate, starting 1 March 2003. The mandate of the Task Force may be renewed by the TERENA Technical Committee (TTC). If the mandate is not renewed, the Task Force will be dissolved. The Task Force may also be dissolved if the TTC considers that it is making insufficient progress or that its activities are no longer useful or relevant, or if the Task Force chair resigns and no replacement can be found.

7. The Task Force will have meetings at approximately monthly intervals, mainly through the use of videoconferencing. Physical meetings will be held at the TERENA Secretariat in Amsterdam or at other locations agreed by the members of the Task Force, taking care to reduce overall costs to participants.

8. Any reports that are produced and any software and documentation produced will be placed in the public domain.

9. The Task Force will have a mailing list <tf-netcast@terena.nl> for communication and technical discussion between the participants. The earlier created mailing list <streaming@terena.nl> will be used for public announcements.

Work items, deliverables, time scales:

- A. Project schedule and design document. Leader: Dan Mønster, UNI-C. Delivery date: 7 March 2003.
- B. Report on survey. Leader: Andres Steijaert, SURFnet. Delivery date: 2 June 2003.
- C. Metadata model. Leader: Egon Verharen, SURFnet. Delivery date: 30 June 2003.
- D. Prototype of announcements portal. Leader: Michal Krsek, CESNET. Delivery date: 31 October 2003.
- E. Information about resources for content production. Leader: Apostolos Karakoussis, GRNET. Delivery date: 30 April 2003.
- F. Report on live-streaming infrastructure. Leader: Alessandro Falaschi. Delivery date: 15 December 2003.
- G. Report on video-on-demand metadata and portal. Leader: Harri Salminen, CSC. Delivery date: 30 November 2003.
- H. Report on model for an academic netcasting channel. Leader: Wojtek Sylwestrzak, ICM. Delivery date: 31 January 2004.
- I. Final report. Leader: Dan Mønster, UNI-C. Delivery date: 16 March 2004.

Glossary:

Streaming

Real-time delivery of audio, video or multimedia content over a network from a server to a client, enabling the client to play the streamed content without any intermediate storage taking place

Netcasting

The use of streaming to deliver multimedia content to users either live or on-demand

Live-streaming announcements portal

A Web-based system that allows users to find information about live-streaming events, based either on input from the content providers or on automatic collection (e.g., of SAP announcements)

Live-streaming infrastructure

A collection of servers, stream splitters, multicast-enabled networks, unicast-to-multicast gateways and other underlying transport mechanisms for live streaming, along with a system for using one or more of these transport mechanisms to deliver live streaming in an efficient way to end-users

Live-streaming channel

A live-streaming announcements portal with content that has been editorially approved. It MAY also include a live-streaming infrastructure.

Metadata model

A collection of terms used to describe multimedia content, along with definitions of syntax and semantics governing the use of these terms. It MAY also include recommendations on how to store and exchange these metadata.

Video-on-demand portal

A Web-based system that allows users to search for multimedia content available as on-demand content in archives

Academic netcasting channel

A combination of a live-streaming channel and a video-on-demand portal with content that has been editorially approved. It MAY also include a live-streaming infrastructure and it MAY include central or distributed facilities for video-on-demand.