



Project Update

By Dan Zahlis

Active Agenda began with its source code release on <http://www.sourceforge.net> and the simultaneous publication of "A Solution (R)evolution" in the October 2006 issue of OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS. It has been approximately 6 months since the launch, and Active Agenda continues to inspire us as it evolves into a truly global project. *Fast Company* recently said of Active Agenda, "Eventually, someone was going to step up and actually start doing something about the state of the world," and their readers said we were one of the "FAST 50" companies.

In its first 3 months, Active Agenda went from the 30,000th most popular *sourceforge.net* project to the 160th. We since have learned the ranking can be a moving target, but we are encouraged by the project's early appeal. By the time this column prints, Active Agenda's source code will have been downloaded from *sourceforge.net* more than 1,000 times, on every continent around the globe.

As one would expect from a global project, the project's first contacts included people interested in translating Active Agenda to their local language. As of this month, we are aware of Active Agenda translations in French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Swedish and Turkish. One of our first offers for translation came from a small chain of islands off of Africa's western coast.

We received an e-mail from a fellow named Antão Miguel Chantre from the Cape Verde Islands. Antão offered to translate Active Agenda to his native Portuguese. With a little help from Eduardo in Brazil, Antão has translated the application, and with his organization, ADA Solution, plans to use the application to assess risk for companies throughout Cape Verde. What better place to launch Active Agenda than from the base of an active volcano?!

Not long after hearing from Antão, we heard from Robbie Wallis. Robbie is the assistant ICT manager for Boston College

in the United Kingdom. Robbie found Active Agenda on *sourceforge.net* and began exploring the project as an alternative to an existing system that lacks flexibility. Boston College (U.K.) plans to use Active Agenda's Incident Reporting and Situations modules proactively to capture risk assessments and work collaboratively to prevent incidents before they occur.

The college also plans to extend access to all managers so that risk data can be updated by a distributed network of stakeholders. Boston College's feedback has resulted in Active Agenda improvements that are available for everyone's benefit, and Robbie recently suggested getting other colleges in the United Kingdom on board.

Less than 1 month after Active Agenda was released, we noticed a new post to our wiki and discussion forums. Someone had voluntarily posted Active Agenda installation instructions on Windows using a tool called Xamp. The only thing we knew about the author was that he or she was from Australia. Several months later, we were contacted by the organization that employs our anonymous authors (Dion and Bernard) and we were invited to visit De Bortoli Wines Ltd. in Australia.

What we found at De Bortoli is quite impressive. De Bortoli's IT department is led by a fellow named Bill Robertson. Following Bill's leadership, De Bortoli had shown the vision to insist upon open standards and support open-source software for many years. Any IT managers interested in understanding the importance of open standards will benefit greatly from a short chat with Bill. Anyone wanting to understand the implications of open thinking on operations will benefit from a short chat with their operation manager, Rob Glastonbury.

Rob's environmental engineer, Lindsay Gullifer, found the Active Agenda on the Internet and shared his discovery with Rob. Rob quickly recognized the impor-

ance of Active Agenda's underlying concepts to his collaborative operation. This combination of integrated operations and "open IT" led to our participation in a 3-day planning session in Australia. The session included members of the operations group, IT, human resources, engineering, quality, logistics, finance and the company's managing director, Darren De Bortoli. Anyone wanting to explore innovative leadership will benefit from a trip to a small rural town in Griffith, Australia.

What Gets Measured

The Active Agenda project measures many things to gauge the interest and appeal of the project, but no measurement is as important as the size and engagement of the project community. In this regard, we remain a little bewildered by our U.S. participants. The project's Web site and demo visitors predominantly reflect mid-to-large (to ginormous) U.S. companies, municipalities, utilities and government entities. The Active Agenda project interest is dominated by U.S. entities, but the dialog and collaboration is dominated by non-U.S. participants (i.e., Australia, Brazil, Cape Verde, Germany, Hungary, India, the United Kingdom, etc.).

- Average "new visitors" per month: 1,500
- Project Web site registrants: 82
- Wiki participants: 60
- Forum participants: 30
- Source code downloads: 1,000
- Code improvements (since release): 750

What Gets Done

Ideas spread freely from one to another over the globe, moral and mutual instruction grows and conditions improve. Workplace risk gets reduced.

This Month's Links:

- Web site: <http://www.activeagenda.net>
- Demo: <http://demo.activeagenda.net>
- Wiki: <http://activeagenda.net/documentation>
- Forums: <http://activeagenda.net/discussions>

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