Case study | The virtual campus of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC)

ATENEA, the virtual campus of the **Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC),** is one of the largest Moodle installations in Spain. It serves more than 35,000 students, 3,500 professors and 10,000 classrooms each academic year and is growing at an annual rate of over 20%.

Background

As a result of the technological obsolescence of the UPC's previous virtual campus, in 2004 the Governing Council of the University set up a committee to overhaul the system. It was time to take a step forward to adapt the virtual campus to new teaching and management requirements and make it more usable, with greater capacity for integration with the UPC's other information systems – all using free software. It was also very important to adapt the campus to the European Higher Education Area and new undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

IThink UPC | moodle

Project

The UPC tasked IThinkUPC with installing, developing and maintaining its new Moodle-based virtual campus, known as ATENEA, because we have a thorough understanding of how the University works thanks to our ties to the institution. While IThinkUPC led the technological development of the new ATENEA campus, the UPC's Institute of Education Sciences (ICE) was responsible for the organisational, functional and educational aspects of the project and for the learning and teaching methods to be used on the platform. UPC academic staff and students were also actively involved in the project.

A steering committee, a monitoring committee and a work team were formed to organise the project, and IThinkUPC actively participated in all of these bodies. A network of facilitators and a network of managers were also set up to resolve project-related incidents.

The ATENEA campus manages 10,000 classrooms each academic year and serves over 80 million pages a month.

Results

ATENEA is the UPC's current virtual learning environment and aims to support face-to-face teaching.

The functional design of the virtual campus was based on input from academic staff and UPC units. The system itself was based on the Moodle free software environment and had a successful initial deployment. In the academic year 2005-2006, the new virtual campus was used by 35,000 students and 3,500 professors. Since then, ATENEA has grown steadily at an annual rate of 20%.

The ATENEA campus manages 10,000 classrooms each academic year and serves over 80 million pages a month. It was one of the first 24x7 services offered by the UPC and has delivered excellent performance.

In recognition of the good work done and the success of the UPC's ATENEA project, we received an Honourable Mention for Educational Integration Capacity in ICT at the 2012 ITWorldEdu event. ITWorldEdu is an annual conference on technological innovation in education that brings together key actors in the sector.

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