Croatian Portal of Schools



http://skole.hinet.hr

A proposal of collaboration and cooperation model among teachers and pupils, using currently available web technologies

Summary

- 1. The Virtual Team who we are.
- 2. The Environment, where we work.
- What we see as a necessity.
- What we propose as a possible solution.
- How we think it should be done.
- What have we accomplished so far.
- How it works.
- Lessons learned.
- What do we intend to do in the future.
- Join us! 🙂

Main facts about our work presented here:

- Collaboration-based development project
- Voluntary effort of teachers from geographically dispersed schools, covering all of Croatia.
- Focused on end user's needs, not on technology.
- Participants are not only IT teachers, team is composed also of:
 - Teacher of Croatian language and literature
 - Psychologist
 - Teacher of Mathematics
 - Principal (all of them using ICT in their everyday job).
- The service is (and should be for end users) free of charge!
- Also an excellent learning experience for the team members as well.

Virtual team members

Edin Kadić, Medicinska škola Ante Kuzmanića, Zadar Fredi Glavan, O.Š. Rikard Katalinić Jeretov, Opatija, Ivo Žanetić, Gimnazija Požega Tomo Krajina, O.Š. Poreč Marica Puh, Gimnazija Pula Saida Deljac, Tehnička škola Šibenik Snježana Barabaš-Seršić, III Gimnazija Osijek Vlado Lendvaj, Srednja škola Ivan Švear, Ivanić Grad

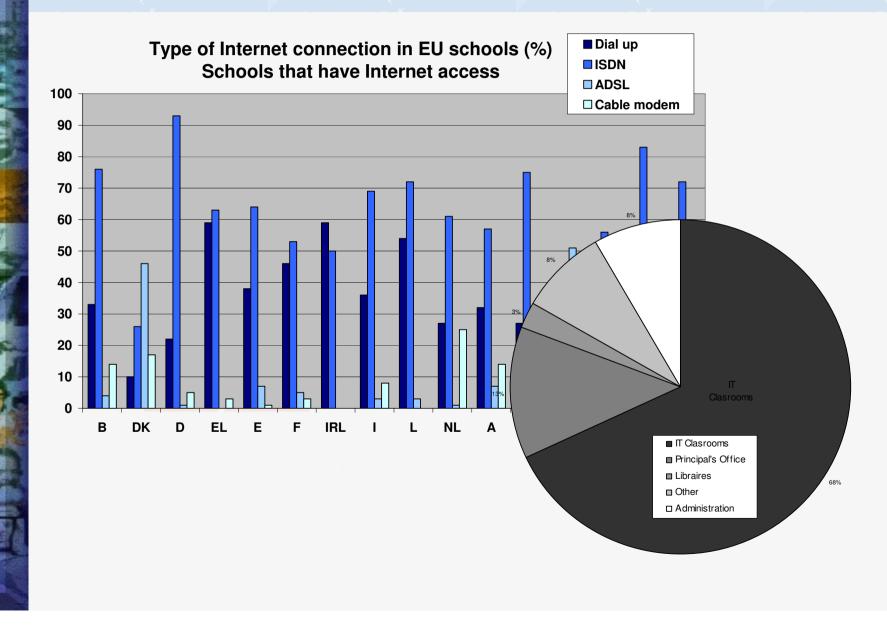
Basics about the school system in Croatia

- Almost 1900 educational institutions in Croatia of which
 - Approximately 900 primary, 450 secondary schools
 - Approximately 850.000 pupils, students and small children and 62.500 public servants (teachers and other staff in schools).
- Croatia has approximately 4.500.000 inhabitants 20% of the population is directly involved in the educational activities, while 50% of the population is directly interested in the improvement of the school system
- Officially recognized as a strategic asset for the future.
- Formally divided into higher education (Ministry of science) and primary and secondary education (Ministry of Education and Sports).

ICT environment in schools

- Basic ICT infrastructure exists in schools, but, it is not used enough
- It is necessary to enable teachers and pupils
 - To use new technologies in curricular activities
 - To communicate and collaborate among themselves.

Internet connectivity in Croatian Schools is almost 100 %!



Web as a learning tool

- Initial stage:
 - Mere Publishing
- Focus shifting:
 - Communication
 - Cooperation
 - Collaboration

Necessity

Croatian school system needs an Internet service on which one could search and find information about:

- the school system in Croatia,

 all events connected with the education, as well as collaborate with others on development and improvement of the school system.

Setting goals: We want the service:

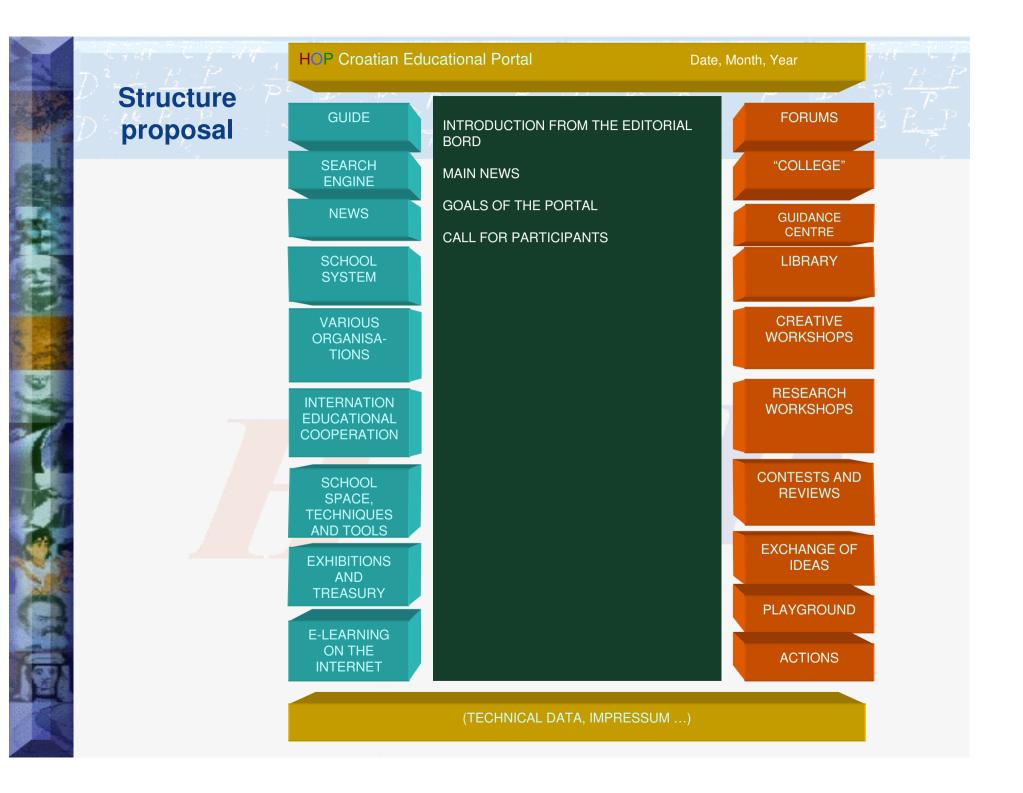
- To gather all Internet-based information about the school system in Croatia.
- To inform about all major events in the school system in Croatia.
- To improve communication among all subjects in the school system.
- To stimulate open public discussion about all the relevant issues in the school system.
- To stimulate new forms of creativity, learning and teaching.
- To offer different forms of help and expertise in the educational field.
- To recognize the Tacit Knowledge hidden in the schools an intangible but very valuable asset!

Potential users

- Teachers
- Pupils
- Parents
- Schools
- Ministry of Education and Sports
- Institute for development of the School system
- Organisations of teachers and pupils
- The whole public.

Project approach – what is needed:

- To accelerate development, a firm project structure and organisation are needed.
- Official support of relevant institutions, especially the Institute.
- To gain public interest for the project.
- To increase the number of participants.



State of the Art

- Basic functionality already established on http://skole.hinet.hr (sponsored by HThinet)
- PostNuke open source system is used for Portal management (written in PHP) with mySQL as database system.
- Registered users are enabled to publish news, participate in discussions on various topics, add interesting links, download educational software.
- 120 registered users, approximately 800 visits per day (starting from May 2002).

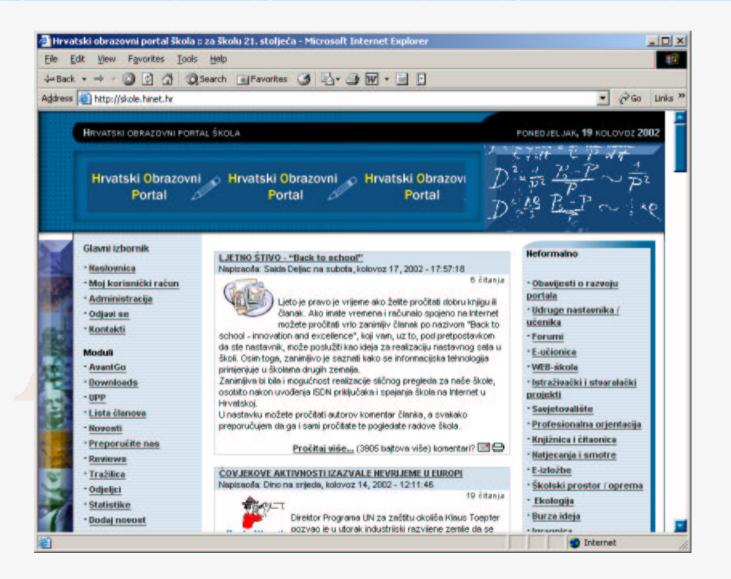
What's currently going on

- Project Team is being reorganised
- Experts (teachers, students, pupils) from various organisations and areas of expertise are being involved (HULK for example).
- Redesign of the site is being discussed.
- Planning new services: Forums, Mailing lists.

Upcoming tasks

- To establish Forums.
- To establish Mailing Lists service.
- To create a searchable index of all educational institutions in Croatia.
- To completely redesign the Portal, simplifying its appearance and usage as much as possible.

An example

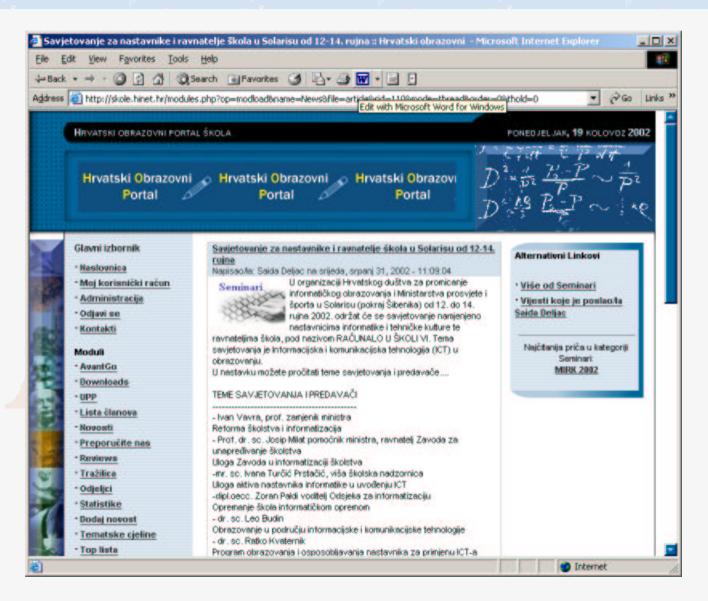


Conclusion

- We do not offer a "complete solution" (actually, we do not believe that "complete solution" for the needs of the school system can exist at all), but propose and practice cooperative development of a new, multilaterally useful service.
- We see this service as an urgent necessity, that may speed up ICT usage as well as facilitate and stimulate collaboration and cooperation among schools, as well as among pupils and teachers in various schools.
- We believe that services like this can and should be developed mainly through cooperation of teachers and pupils themselves (with some help from experts outside the school system, of course).
- Finally, in spite of the decline of free services on the Internet, we strongly believe that such services should be free of charge for end users (teachers, pupils, schools).

<u>Contact addresses:</u> portal.urednistvo@list.hinet.hr

http://skole.hinet.hr



<u>Contact addresses:</u> portal.urednistvo@list.hinet.hr

http://skole.hinet.hr

Thank you for your attention!

If you happen to share our beliefs and dreams, do not hesitate - join us!