
Edukalibre: a tool for collaborative creation of educational material

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Basics of libre software developing models

- Libre: free, open source
- Collaboration by groups of people
- Sporadic contributions (bugs, patches) by anybody
- Heavily dependent on software (CVS, SourceForge, bug tracking systems, mail lists, etc.)
- Asynchronous, geographically distributed
- Frequent releases, feedback quickly considered
- Many actors in the distribution chain

Differences when translating to education

- Materials are usually the product of few authors working together
- Not many contributions from people other than authors
- Basic software usage (and experience): word processor
- Infrequent releases, feedback only seldom considered
- Distribution dependent on publishers

However...

- Education is a cooperative process by nature
- Students and other teachers have similar needs
- Curricula is similar for the same studies (even in different countries)
- Education is more and more supported by web-based systems
- Use in many places is rewarding enough (in some cases)
- Some seminal experiences (such as MIT OpenCourseWare)

Main barriers

- Philosophical:
 - shared authorship vs “my toy”
 - others (even students) can contribute
- Legal:
 - New licences (GNU FDL, Creative Commons, Open Documentation License, etc.)
- Practical:
 - Software support with smooth learning curve is needed

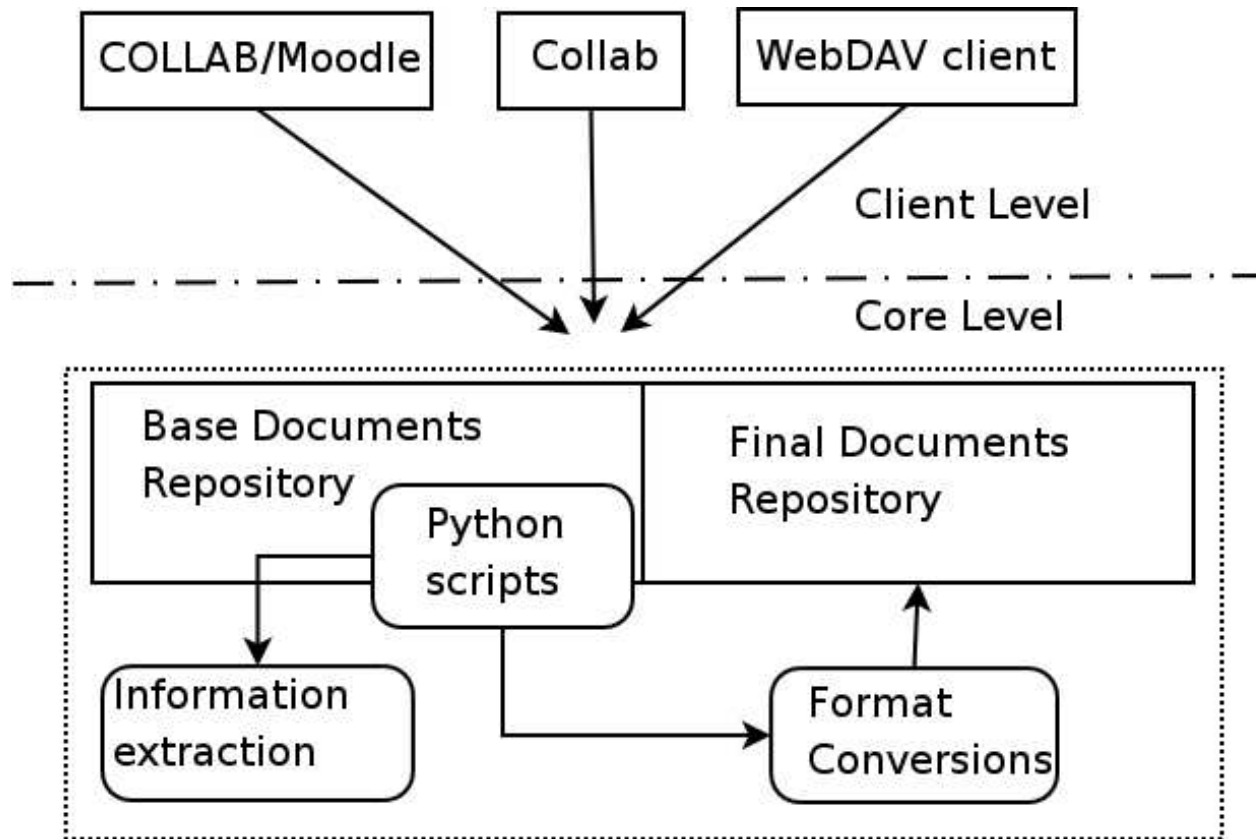
Edukalibre project

- Building and testing a software system for collaborative production of educational materials (books, manuals, tutorials, etc.)
- Simple to use, environment common to educators
- Built with free software (mainly by glue-scripting)
- In one sentence: “combine the good of wiki, cvs and structured markup with common word processors and groupware tools”

Edukalibre System: features

- Repository based on Subversion (version control system)
- Access:
 - Direct, via WebDAV
 - Web based (standalone PHP application)
 - Moodle based (from a Moodle module)
- Automatic format conversion
- Main supported format: DocBook/XML
 - Edited using: DocBook editors, OpenOffice
 - Generated formats: PDF, HTML, OpenOffice, text (others in the work)
- Other formats: LaTeX, OpenOffice

Edukalibre System: Architecture



COLLAB: standalone web interface

- Focused in interfacing to all the capabilities of the repository
- Several views for documents (in different formats)
- Access to all versions of the documents
- Automated conversion of documents to all formats
- Easy interface to edit documents

<http://edukalibre.org/software/collab-0.8.tgz>

Repository Manager

- Based on Subversion
- Integrates automatic format conversions
- Provides version control
- Provides concurrency control
- Provides basic authentication (by now)

<http://edukalibre.org/software/repository-manager-0.8.tgz>

Conversion Tools

- Based in various free applications
- Used by the Repository Manager
- Can be used out of the Edukalibre System
- Formats
 - Base formats, editable like OpenOffice, Docbook and LaTeX
 - Printable like PDF and Postscript
 - Versatile like HTML

<http://edukalibre.org/software/conversion-tools-0.8.2.tgz>

Edukalibre: usual way of working

- Create a document (or select an existing one) in a repository
- Access it through one or several interfaces (Moodle, PHP app, editor)
- Upload new versions, all formats are generated
- Access to the history of versions
- Casual readers can also send modified versions to the authors
- Anyone can install a repository
- Interfaces can access documents in any repository

Current developments (testing branch)

- Better support of OpenOffice DocBook style
- Support for more base formats
- Tree-like structure of versions (using svn branches)
- Improvements in the access control methods
- Conversions to/from wiki formats
- More usability
- More simple to install

Conclusions

Come and give Edukalibre a try!

We have public releases available!
And we have available space in our stable repository for you

References

- Main site:
<http://edukalibre.org>
- Mailing list:
edukalibre-dev@edukalibre.org
- Source code:
<http://edukalibre.org:8080/edukalibre-dev>
- Packed software:
<http://edukalibre.org/software>