

SISECO Meeting, Frankfurt February 24 and 25, 2004

Chairman: Johannes Krauth, SDZ

Attendants:

Karri Honkoila, VTT
Jose Emilio Jimenez, IAI Madrid
Tal Vagman, Tecnomatix
Paolo Timoni, GTEC
Yuri Merkuriev, RTU
Roger Mallinson, DRD
Gerhard Schreck, FhG-IPK
Rüdiger Nadolski, SDZ
Bernd Noche, Uni Duisburg
Gert Zülch, Ifab (Feb 25 only)

1. Status Report of Sim-Serv

The chairman reported on recent progress in Sim-Serv, the number of members and of test cases, of web site visitors, publications and other achievements.

2. Report on Service Delivery: Test Cases, Experience, and Models under discussion

The chairman gave an overview of Sim-Serv test cases, the feedback received from members and customers, and improvements to the procedures that resulted from this feedback.

3. Discussion on Service Delivery

No major recommendations regarding the process of service delivery were made. The internal bidding mechanism used so far, as well as the pre-selection by “Expressions of Interest” were considered adequate and fair. The test case formalities however were still considered a major burden: Often this was the reason for not applying for a test case.

Five business models were presented and discussed.

1. suppliers pay finder's fees,
2. customer pay for Sim-Serv's consulting services,
3. suppliers pay for access to invitations to tender,
4. Sim-Serv as main contractor subcontracting suppliers,
5. customer pays only in case of success, VI takes the risk.

Models 1, 3, and 4 were seen as applicable under certain circumstances. Model 4 (Sim-Serv subcontracts suppliers) would imply the need to have precise contracts which define very clearly the liabilities. In model 2 (Sim-Serv does work for customer, e.g. management) the precise content of the Sim-Serv's work would need more clarification (especially after the funded period).

Model 5 was considered interesting, but needs to be handled very carefully, and more understanding of the conditions for its applicability was considered necessary. A combination of models 1 and 3 was considered the best options to start with.

It was emphasised that Sim-Serv should focus on activities that suppliers cannot or do not want to do themselves.

6. Brainstorming: Which additional services should Sim-Serv offer?

A brainstorming exercise was done where members generated ideas for additional services Sim-Serv should offer to users and suppliers. The result was a very long list of ideas with a clear focus on dissemination and PR related issues. Besides, also technical ideas regarding the re-use of models or the development of standard contracts came up. Clustering these ideas led to 15 thematic groups.

7. Discussion:

The discussion had its focus on dissemination. The need for more visibility was emphasised by all attendants.

Members want information about PR activities; they want to know all papers that have been published by Sim-Serv so that they can also use them in their contacts to customers.

It was considered useful to have an organisation such as Sim-Serv. Some partners emphasised that they believe their customers may give them more credit if they can say they belong to a well established powerful organisation. This might be seen as something like a quality stamp.

Sim-Serv must be widely known in industry as a trustworthy organisation ensuring high quality services for improved productivity and higher profits. This might help simplify the process of acquisition and negotiation with customers which is currently often more time consuming than the project itself.

A newsletter should be emailed on a regular basis: very short with links to relevant sources of additional information. Maybe two versions: one for users, one for members.

8. Presentation and discussion of additional Sim-Serv services

The chairman presented some new services and web site features which were recently developed by the Sim-Serv Core Team, especially the new self evaluation tool and the network of local contact points.

Some comments were made on the presentation, and questions were raised:

- It was proposed to approach industry associations and ask them if they want to be involved and take the role of local contact points.
- It was proposed to apply for an extension of the project without any additional funding. Members confirmed that according to their experience there should not be a problem with such a proposal.



- The foreseen growth of the network was not considered a problem. Members were not afraid of increased competition among the suppliers of Sim-Serv. The general feeling was that we should concentrate on expanding the market

8. Closing the meeting

As a possible date for a second meeting, May 26 was fixed. A full meeting of the whole consortium near the end of the project was proposed by the members.

The results of the discussions will be checked against the presented plans of the Core Team, and where necessary, modifications to our plans will be made.