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CONSTRUCTION 21 - An European Green Building Exchange

C21

Intelligent Energy – Europe (IEE)

Key action: Create a trans-European platform for green building professionals consolidating data in EU BuildUp website.

15th month Internal Report

Period covered: from 4/05/11 to 31/07/12

Start date of the action: 4/05/11

Duration: 24 months

End date of the action: 4/05/13

Project coordinator : Cédric BOREL / IFPEB

cedric.borel@ifpeb.fr / +33 (0)6 42 80 02 32

Project website: www.construction21.eu

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Introduction

After 15 months, Construction21 project has achieved successfully the first steps of its development. The 7 platforms are on line from March 2012 and a first circle of early adopters have joined the platform, contributing daily to enrich the contents. At the end of July, 1 700 members had joined the platform, 132 case studies were on line and 102 communities had been created. Construction21 case studies are now automatically integrated in BuildUP database and news feeds are set between the 2 platforms. In July, the network has received more than 13 000 visits by almost 10 000 unique visitors, generating 50 000 page views. The European platform, essentially fed with contents coming from the national ones, represents 20% of the global traffic.

A first level of qualitative contents is now visible on the Construction platforms, people begin to join communities and disseminate within their personal network. Construction21 is becoming a significant stakeholder of each national green building eco-system. As an example, the French, Spanish and Italian Green Building Councils are now strong partners of Construction21 in their countries (so 5 out the 6 national Construction21 platforms are today driven or closely associated to national GBCs).

The traffic is nevertheless still far under the trend leading to the objective of 30 000 active users in April 2013. The interest towards the platform is clearly confirmed by the markets. But using a social network doesn't belong to building practitioners' habits. Construction21 partners have consequently to develop direct contact strategies and close assistance to help users to handle the tool and to integrate it in their professional practices. This education to social networks is quite time consuming, but is an essential step to achieve our goals.

The international development has been initiated, earlier than planned, and the tool officially presented at Consense, Stuttgart, in June 2012. The project has received strong marks of interest, especially from European GBCs and a detailed integration offer has been elaborated. The question of the integration costs is nevertheless raised, linked to the lack of resources of many GBCs. Additional approaches towards potential international sponsors are consequently on tracks.

The project advancement is on line with the forecasts: 60,5% of the budget has been spent at the end of July , as 62,5% of the time is gone. So the project team is ready to face the two main challenges for the last months of the project. First, we have to consolidate the content and audience growth, by the recruitment and training of content providers and the intensification of the communication activities. For that, the main targets will be partnerships with building organizations, social networks, physical events and universities. The second challenge is the post-IEE sustainability preparation, within each country and by integrating new countries, with the hope of opening new countries in 2013.

1 Internal Report Summary

1.1 Objectives of the last period (from March to July 2012)

1.1.1 Objectives at consortium level

- WP1 : Paris seminar 3th and 4th of May 2012
- WP2: Stabilize the tool, including the peripheral features implemented in March and the necessary improvements identified during the first weeks of public activity.
- WP3: Finalize the training video set in all languages.
- WP4/WP8: Launch officially Construction21 at European level and develop links with pan-European stakeholders and other European projects.
- WP7: Define new countries recruitment/integration process and initiate the international communication. Define the business plan and future governance mode and begin partners search for the future Construction21 management at an European level.

1.1.2 Objectives at country level

- WP2: Check carefully the national Construction21 platform and detect necessary improvements. Participate to team project discussion for decision about further developments.
- WP3: Train the case studies reviewers and communities managers.
- WP3 : Set training tutorials on line in local language
- WP4/WP8: Launch officially Construction21 in each country.
- WP4: Finalize the partnerships, the moderators and case studies reviewers' recruitment +Identify hot topics and organize the creation of communities.
- WP5: Set the case study reviewers team and a strong collecting and review process for case studies.
- WP6: Develop content on the 6 pre-defined topics and initiate the 6 trans-European communities in each country.
- WP7: Initiate the business plan/governance mode elaboration for the post-IEE period and begin to involve future partners in Construction21management of each national platform.
- WP8: Fully deploy all communication actions towards European industry stakeholders and experts with the different levels of the communication plan (close following of the partners for the mobilization of their own communication tools, media relations and events, social media and Internet strategy).

1.2 Achieved results and lessons learnt in the last period (March to July 2012)

1.2.1 Project Monitoring at a glance

May 2011 to July 2012

Hours spent to date: 69,3% <i>vs 67,8% planned at this stage</i>	Deliverables & Output monitoring: 64% deliverables achieved vs 68% planned
Direct Eligible Cost spent to date: 60,6%	KPI: 1800 members 10 000 unique visitors & 50 000 page views in July
Time : 62,5 % of project duration (15 months on 24)	Noticeable: 134 case studies on line (27% final objective) 46 agreements signed (92% objective) and 42 on tracks

As a result of the last period, the 7 platforms are on line from March 2012. The IT features have been daily improved and the peripheral IT developments done to suit at best the users' needs, as well as the link with Build UP.

The dissemination and communication activities have been fully developed. Thanks to a tool ready, the consortium partners were able to demonstrate "What you can do with Construction21". It was a great argument to convince people to join.

Today, 4 platforms have gained a significant level of audience, France, Spain, Italy and the European one, with 8 500 to 14 000 page views in July (and 300 to 800 members). Germany, Lithuania and Romania are still behind, with around 100 members and 2000/3000 page views in July. But they should increase quickly their audience, thanks to the actions taken in the last period.

The major lesson of this period is the fact that many building professionals are not really used to social networks. They face difficulties to use Construction21, even for a very simple action, as register or post news. Send only information by email is not enough to convince people to register. The partners need to contact directly and provide very close assistance to help users to handle the tool.

1.3 Main activities in the next period (August to October 2012)

The main purpose in the very next months will be to strengthen the partnerships and communication strategy around the tool, to strongly accelerate the rhythm of new members, new contents and audience.

2 Consortium management in the period

2.1 Team building and management tools implementation

The main action during this period was the Paris seminar, the 3th and 4th of May 2012. After the launch of the 7 platforms, it was the moment to exchange about the best ways to deploy Construction21 in each country. The starting analysis was the low level of member's recruitments and contents, rather under the necessary trend to achieve our goals. A special focus was made on news (objective: post 1 news/day for each platform and develop external partnerships with media). Another one about communities (how to create and manage it), for it is a major source of contents, but also a source of new members, thanks to the dissemination operated by communities managers themselves.

A session was also dedicated to IT issues, specifications and prioritization of necessary improvements and new developments. It was decided that we didn't need any further development about case studies ranking. With a strong database containing many case studies, we'll be able, at national or European level, to extract some interesting cases and co-organize some awards with external partners. Another decision aimed at helping the development of the "innovations" section, by transforming it into "products and services" section. Some products are indeed interesting for the database, for their participation to the global performance of the building, even if they are not at the top of the innovation scale.

The last topic of the seminar was the post-IEE sustainability. A document prepared by IFPEB detailing the governance of Construction21 after May 2013 has been validated by the Consortium. The main principles are the following: an international association will be created and each country will benefit from 2 votes (represented by 1 or 2 different partners). The association will be the tool's owner and will ensure the technical management and evolution of Construction21 platforms, via CIRIDD. The international association is also responsible for the recruitment and integration of the new partners (and eventually for their exit, if they don't manage correctly Construction21 in their country).

The costs generated by these actions would be financed by the international association budget, fed by the annual fees paid by the national partners and the potential revenues linked to the European platform activity. Exchanges about future revenues of each national platform have also been initiated during the seminar, based on a document prepared by IFPEB. Three major revenues sources have been identified: audience monetisation (ads, paying access for some part of the contents), services (translation, "social network push", surveys...) and sponsorships/subsidies from private or public bodies. Each national team is working separately to build its own business model and governance and this topic will be more deeply addressed in the Vilnius seminar, in October 2012.

2.2 Cooperation with BUILD UP and other European projects

The automatic links with BuildUP have been developed: the case studies integration is operational from June 2012 and 23 case studies have already been translated and transferred (around 10% of the global stock of BuildUP case studies). The current potential is 140 cases. A BuildUP RSS feed has been set in March 2012 on the Construction21 homepage. Construction21 news coming from the European platform is integrated in the BuildUP news section. Specifications have been proposed by

CIRIDD to BuildUP team for the co-registration and the task is planned in Construction21 schedule. It will be developed as soon as BuildUP is able to launch this last development on its side. The last part of the cooperation will be the connection of the communities, when they will be sufficiently developed on Construction21 side.

Thanks to IFPEB, ESCI, DGNB and PE networks as well as IFPEB participation to the EACI seminar for IEE projects coordinators, many connections have been made with other European projects. Some of them have already opened a community on the European platform (SB Alliance, CILECCTA, OPEN HOUSE, TTSB, SEEMPUbS, EeBGuide). And potential synergies have been identified with several other ones, as SB Challenge, Enerbuild, EnerbuilCA, GreenConserve, WinforRes, TrainRebuild, BuildupSkills.

2.3 Financial issues

The second pre-payment linked to the advanced Interim Report has been done by ESCI in May 2012 and each partner has received the amount initially planned in the Grant Agreement. The bank transfers' costs (initially paid by ESCI) and the advance given to CIRIDD at the beginning of the project have not been taken in account within this second pre-payment distribution. It will be done for the final payment, in 2013. IFPEB and RoGBC have received the 1st and 2nd pre-payment cumulated. The fragile financial situation of the Romanian partner, which had led to the 2 months advancement of the Interim Report is now consolidated and its participation to the project comforted.

3 Progress of work plan and achievement from March 2012

3.1 Progress and achieved results per work package against initial objectives

3.1.1 WP1 - Management and oversight (p29 of Grant Agreement)

In this period, marketing and communication internal resources have been requested in addition to usual project and content managers. The reporting tools delivery is running correctly. New reporting tools for the following of the KPIs (members, contents, traffic) have been delivered by CIRIDD and are accessible to the project team directly in their back office.

The project teams are strongly involved in the project. The renewal of the team has been successfully achieved by RoGBC (2 new people out of 3). It is still to be done by DGNB (2 successive project managers for 6 months and a lower involvement in the project), which is for the moment compensated by PE International, the other German partner.

3.1.2 WP2 - Adaptation of existing Construction21 to a full 6 countries website (32)

CIRIDD delivered the 7 platforms on 23th of March 2012.

During the last period, many improvements and new features have been applied, to adapt at best the tool to the needs:

- Translation corrections of many terms, which had been forgotten or not correctly translated in translation packages disconnected to the platform context.
- Finalization of the module "innovations" and transformation into "products".
- Update of PIWIK, the monitoring tool for the reporting about traffic KPIs.

- Creation of a KPIs module within the back-office, to follow the members' recruitment and the post of all the contents. The tool is parameterable by period and rhythm of analysis, giving a benchmark for all the platforms, so each partner is able to compare its own performance with the other ones.
 - Finalization of the case studies, news and communities export module for BuildUP transfers, pdf publication and RSS feeds constitution.
 - Specification of the BuildUP co-registration module.
 - 1st step of website optimization (by internal actions).
 - Creation of a newsletter module to be able to send regularly information managed by the platform manager to the members.
 - Creation of the notifications module, to send automatically last contents posted: news, case studies, member's communities or contents linked to a specific theme. All of these notifications are completely parameterable by the member (email or inbox, daily or weekly, for each content category and for each community).
 - Creation of news import module, to be able to integrate semi-automatically news feeds coming from external partners (media, blogs, associations...).
 - Modification of the boxes "top case studies" and "top news" (the most popular ones on a defined period, to allow a renewal of the contents shown).
 - Navigation improvements in the community section.
 - Creation of additional categories of members, to separate the profile between managers, case studies reviewers and news moderators and allow the recruitment of external people for these tasks.
 - Implementation of a ticket tracking module for a good following of all bugs corrections and necessary improvements.
- CIRIDD and IFPEB have also supported each partner for technical or usage issues.

3.1.3 WP3 – Training partners' staff, experts and professionals (p39)

The training videos delivered in March by UCV have been translated by the other partners. 25 are now on line (objective: 20), on all the platforms except Lithuania (still on progress). A pdf document has also been created by IFPEB and transmitted to the other partners. It's on line on several platforms and is sent to professionals by email to help them to post some contents more easily. Some specific communities have been created by RoGBC, UCV, ESCI or IFPEB to gather all documents linked to the use of the platform or the community management.

Communities managers and case studies providers have been trained by different ways: webinars, training sessions, 1 to 1 meetings, phone assistance). For the whole consortium, 216 people have already been trained, far above the initial objective of 70.

For the team project training, a specific webinar has been organized in April by CIRIDD and IFPEB to train all the partners to the last features developed.

3.1.4 WP4 – Mobilizing Target Groups - Local communities (p44)

During the last period, Construction21 partners have amplified actions with partners and local stakeholders to incite them to provide news and case studies or create communities. 46 partnerships

have been signed and 42 are on tracks: the objective of 50 partnerships in May 2013 is already almost achieved and will be largely exceeded.

The last period was the real start of communities' development. In France or Spain, for example, a list of potential themes has been defined by IFPEB or ESCI and discussed with local experts. Some of the topics have been created by Construction21 team and in a second step transferred to an external manager. Some other topics have been proposed by professionals themselves, who committed to manage their own community. In France, 35 communities are opened and many of them are managed by well-known national experts, which is a great asset to convince other ones to join. 18 communities are opened in Spain and 15 in Italy. Germany, Romania and Lithuania have 7 to 9 communities managed essentially by Construction21 team members. Partners face indeed difficulties to convince people to manage communities without any financial compensation.

Many partners have also begun to create relationships with universities, as ANCE and UCV in Italy (12 partnerships), which will lead to dissemination actions towards students from September 2012. All other countries have initiated such actions, as students are identified as a strategic target, besides the professionals. Thanks to their natural ability to use social networks, they should be a great boost for Construction21 audience.

3.1.5 WP5 – Case study management (p48)

The case studies providers' recruitment had been a high priority during the first year of the project, with a result of 64 case studies on line at the platforms launch, the 30th of March 2012. This trend has been confirmed in the last period, as 134 case studies were on line at the end of July. The situation is indeed rather different regarding the countries. There are 40 cases in France and 31 in Lithuania, thanks to strong agreements with external partners, and only 7 in Germany or 11 in Spain. The objective of 500 case studies in May 2013 is achieved at 27%. PE/DGNB actions towards DGNB auditors and LEED/BREEAM, their partnership with the real estate platform Thomas Daily, as the recent agreements with GBCs in Spain and Italy should bring the necessary trigger to accelerate the rhythm of new cases.

For case studies too, practitioners need a very close assistance to enter their cases in the database and Construction21 project teams have entered a significant number of cases by themselves.

3.1.6 WP6 – Building key-communities (p51)

The communities linked to the 6 topics identified in the Grant Agreement are now on tracks. All partners had created at least one or two "WP6 communities" on their national platform in July. In Spain, ESCI has already created the six ones with an interesting audience (from 22 to 109 members per topic). In September, the 6 communities are launched in the European platform (LCA by ESCI, EPC by IFPEB, Price/performance by PE, SMEs by UCV) and 70% of the national ones opened.

3.1.7 WP7 – Preparing post-IEE sustainability (p55)

Construction21 has been launched internationally in Consense, Stuttgart, on 19th of June 2012. The project was presented to the international professionals and press. The project has also been specifically detailed by IFPEB and RoGBC in the Euro GBCs meeting and received a warm welcome. Some potential partners asked for further information during the fair on a booth dedicated to

Construction21 and contacts have been taken with representatives of Hungary, Bulgaria, Finland, Ireland, Poland, UK and Croatia. The learning on this topic is double. On the one hand, GBCs are very interested in developing the Construction21 tool within their countries to multiply the effect of their domestic policy. On the other hand, the deployment cost (around 30K€) appears as very high for such organizations and is a real threat for Construction21 future development in new countries. That's why RoGBC, CIRIDD and IFPEB have begun to review the integration process initially planned to be able to propose a more attractive offer after the summer. Moreover, first contacts have been initiated with international green building organizations for a potential sponsorship.

Regarding the post-IEE sustainability preparation in each country, cf. 2.1.

3.1.8 WP8 – Communication to target industry stakeholders and experts (p59)

At the national scale, all platforms have been launched by the local Construction21 partners, with an organisation adapted to each national context, mixing media relationships, social media and Internet, direct actions towards partners, e-mailings or events.

At the end of July, 91 000 professionals have been directly informed about Construction21 by the consortium partners, ie 46% of the final objective. 160 000 have been targeted indirectly via press or partners (around 3% of the objective, but all contacts are not completely tracked).

IFPEB, UCV and ESCI have also begun in July to send their first newsletters to Construction21 members, in order to increase the platform traffic and contribute to its dissemination.

At an international scale, a press conference has been held with representatives of Construction21 founding partners (IFPEB, RoGBC, PE, DGNB, ESCI, UCV and VGTU). The two German partners and Interface FLOR, a private partner, were strongly involved on communication issues. An information has been sent to 11 000 people (journalists and professionals from DGNB network). PE and DGNB have also managed a Construction21 booth, where the different partners demonstrated the tool to many potential practitioners. A TV set was also used to show a generic video presenting Construction21 in English and German (realized by PE/DGNB) and an additional video describing a case study coming from the Italian platform (realized by UCV).

Some leaflets and rolls up produced by PE and IFPEB in English and German were displayed on the booth, as leaflets in all other Construction21 languages, adapted from the French one.

3.1.9 WP9 – Dissemination activities (p64)

Information about the project is now available on the 7 Construction21 platforms and the project has been presented by the Consortium partners to hundreds of national or European stakeholders. IFPEB has also participated to EACI seminar in July 2012 and some contacts have been taken with other IEE projects.

3.2 Deviations from the project work plan

Only deviations occurred in the last period.

Deviation	Taken Action
Practitioners' ability to use a social network less developed than planned	Direct meetings, 1 to 1 trainings, close assistance by phone have been done by all partners to convince and help the Construction21 early adopters.

3.3 Review of the main deliverables

Country	Nb people trained	Training videos in local languages	Agreements signed	Agreements on tracks	Direct contacts	contacts via partners /press	nb cities WP6 opened	WP6.eu
France	32	4	5	5	3 688	87 730	3	1
Germany	30	5	0	5	11 100	11 000		
Romania	75	5	0	6	21 000	5 000		0
Spain	40	5	15	10	8 000	35 700	6	1
Lithuania	14	0	15		1 215	500		
Italy	25	5	11	16	46 301	20 900	1	1
Europe		1						
Total	216	25	46	42	91 304	160 830	10	3
<i>Objective</i>	70	20	50	50	200 000	5 000 000		
	309%	125%	92%	84%	46%	3%		

For more details about results, cf. KPIs (5.2).

4 Work plan for the next period: August 2012 to April 2013

4.1 Planned activities in the next period

4.1.1 At consortium level

- WP1: organize the next seminar in Vilnius, 23th and 24th of October 2012 and the final report.
- WP2: finalize the last developments validated by the consortium in Paris seminar (Contextual push of content, Registration on Buildup, Members' ranking, Improvements on Case studies moderation process and contents' styles, 2nd step of website optimisation...).
- WP3: create a users' guide and a Questions & Answers section.
- WP4: amplify target groups mobilization to collect additional news, case studies, products and communities + boost the cooperation between the Construction21 platforms and with Build UP.
- WP7: recruit some new partners for developing Construction21 in new countries + define in detail the future Construction21 international organisation.
- WP8: create video and internet tools to accelerate exponentially the members recruitment by the members themselves (network effect).
- WP9: ensure partners involvement for IEE dissemination.

4.1.2 At country level

- WP1: ensure the good following of the reporting, KPIs and deliverables (and justifications for final report and audit).
- WP3: contribute to the User's guide and Questions & Answers section.
- WP3: train and manage CS reviewers and communities managers.
- WP4: amplify targets groups mobilization, especially with media, networks heads and universities, in order to collect additional contents and open new communities
- WP6: open the last WP6 communities. Initiate the preparation of the annual reports for everyone's topic.
- WP7: define the future national governance and business plan.
- WP8: strongly amplify communication actions to develop Construction21 notoriety (viral marketing, public relations, Construction21 newsletters ...), directly or via partners.

5 Appendices

5.1 Hours spent / deliverables achieved

5.2 Main KPIs for Construction21 audience and traffic network