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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.

18th month Internal Report

Period covered: from 4/05/11 to 30/10/12

Start date of the action: 4/05/11

Duration: 24 months

End date of the action: 4/05/13

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Introduction

After 18 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 October, 2 600 members had joined, 192 case studies are on line and 127 communities opened. Construction21 and BuildUP are now interoperable: case studies are automatically integrated in BuildUP; news feeds are set between the 2 platforms. In October, the network has received 20 000 visits by 13 000 unique visitors, generating 60 000 page views. Construction21 has thus become a significant stakeholder of each national green building eco-system.

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 (Green Building Councils) 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 (private companies or institutions) are therefore studied.

Construction21 sustainability is on tracks: all countries have expressed the wish to continue the project after the IEE period and are currently studying their future national governance. Without any surprise, the major issue will be the financial one, due to the really bad economic context and the necessary period to achieve financial independence via revenues generated by the platform itself (estimated at two additional years). Regarding the future international governance, the principle of an international association gathering all country operators has been set, extending the good cooperation spirit we have known from the beginning of the project.

The project advancement is on line with the forecasts, but reflects the strong time investment of project teams in dissemination. Only 72% of the budget has been spent at the end of October, as 75% of the time is gone. But 83% of staff costs have already been spent. Therefore it is expected that some budget adjustments will consequently have to be taken.

The project team is now 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 recruiting content providers and the intensification of the communication activities, especially via social networks and thematic meetings linked to Construction21 hot topics. The second challenge is the post-IEE sustainability preparation, to ensure each national Construction21 platform financial security and strong links with its national building eco-system.

1 Internal Report Summary

1.1 Objectives of the action (from Grant Agreement to end of October)

1.1.1 Objectives at consortium level

- WP1: Build the project team, manage the global project and coordinate partners' activities. Produce the required reporting documents.
- WP2: Create a multi-lingual on line platform, including a case study database adapted to professionals needs in all countries and interoperable with BuildUp.
- WP3: Train the project team and supply a common training tool (video).
- WP7: Set up the business plan and future international C21 legal framework. Sign sponsorship and press agreements. Define new countries integration process and sign partnerships agreements for C21 replication in new countries.
- WP8: Supply common communication tools. Ensure Construction21 visibility at European level and develop links with pan-European stakeholders and other European projects.
- WP9: Under request of EACI, contribute to common dissemination activities to increase the visibility of IEE-supported projects

1.1.2 Objectives at country level

- WP1: Build the national project team and manage the project at country level. Participate to the reporting at European level.
- WP2: Participate to C21 features elaboration and supply all translations needed for the good running of the national platform.
- WP3: Train the staff, case studies providers/reviewers and communities managers. Adapt the training tutorials in local language.
- WP4: Mobilize target groups by signing agreements with key actors (50 partnerships involving 5 M² professionals), deploy thematic communities, promote hot topics and hold side events.
- WP5: Recruit case studies suppliers and reviewers to achieve 500 qualitative case studies and 500 products in C21 global database. Manage annual performance awards.
- WP6: Launch the local and European community on each country's key theme and coordinate the other partners' action. Produce a report on this theme at European level.
- WP7: Set up the business plan for the local C21 platform. Participate to future international governance elaboration and the recruitment of new country operators.
- WP8: Ensure C21 visibility in each country by all types of communication tools (written supports, press releases, speakers' bureau, media partnerships, viral campaigns, meetings and events)

1.2 Achieved results and lessons learnt during the action (May 2011 to October 2012)

1.2.1 Project Monitoring at a glance

As the main result of this project, seven Construction21 platforms are on line from March 2012, as well as the network of collaborators and interested parties established. Despite its relatively short life, it is remarkable the visibility that Construction21 has gained within the European sector of sustainable construction. And different off-line activities have already been organized with the participation of registered C21 members in several countries, facilitating a direct feedback between users and the project team.

Today, 4 platforms out of 7 have gained a significant level of audience: France, Spain, Italy and the European one, with 400 to 1 100 registered members and 5 000 to 21 000 page views in October. Germany, Lithuania and Romania are still behind, with 100/200 members and 2000/3000 page views in October, but an increasing number of professionals are using the platform as a regular source of information and a place to show their work.

The preparation of the post-IEE period has now started following 2 axes. First of all, the consortium has elaborated an international offer dedicated to potential new partners wanting to open a new platform in their country. And the project has been officially launched in Stuttgart, within the Consense Fair, in June 2012 with a press conference, a specific presentation to European GBCs, and a booth where representatives from all the consortium countries presented the project to international visitors during 2 days.

In parallel, partners have begun to define their future governance. At Vilnius Seminar, in October 2012, all the partners have decided to create an international association with all country operators and set the main principles of management. And each partner has initiated discussions to develop its future governance and business plan at national level.

Period: May 2011 to October 2012

Hours spent to date: 82,7%	KPI: 2600 members 12 675 unique visitors & 61 000 page views in October
Direct Eligible Cost spent to date: 71,7% Time : 75 % of project duration (18 months on 24)	Noticeable: 192 case studies on line (38% final objective) 79 agreements signed (158% objective)

1.2.2 The 3 main lessons learnt emerging from the project

Communication activities have proven to be utterly important in the deployment of the website and were much more efficient (in terms of partnership agreements signed and publication of contents) once the platform had been launched. In other words, the possibility of showing the functions of the website

and how it really worked was essential to increase the rhythm of engagement and recruitment of content providers and moderators.

Another major lesson is the low level of social networks' usage among building professionals and the need to convince each potential member and demonstrate in detail how use the platform. The collective communication actions initially planned by collaborating with key organizations and media had consequently to be completed by one to one assistance towards professionals themselves and made necessary to increase the efforts of the team project in the dissemination activities. To this end, a wide range of activities have been undertaken since the beginning of the project, such as periodic newsletters, one-to-one meetings, phone assistance, webinars, workshops, guided-visits to Construction21 buildings, publication of articles in specialized magazines and mass-media, participation in national congresses, specific events linked to Construction21 thematic communities, sharing Construction21 contents on other social networks as twitter or LinkedIn, etc.

The use of all these different actions in combination with big efforts in terms of insistence and persuasiveness, have allowed to remarkably increasing the initial network of collaborators and the number of registered users.

Regarding the international development, Construction 21 has received strong marks of interest from several European GBCS. But the necessary costs generated by the creation of a new platform are clearly over the possibilities of these organizations (around 30k€ for IT developments, training and assistance for deployment). The consortium is consequently modifying its international development strategy, by searching in parallel potential partners and financial supports (international organizations or local public agencies).

1.3 Identified problems and corrective actions taken in the last period

Due to the current economic situation and an overoptimistic estimation of the voluntary involvement of experts and members, an intensive involvement of the team project members has been necessary since the beginning of the project to contact and convince content providers to join.

The reluctance of many professionals to share technical information about their buildings has also led several project partners to develop agreements with national partners (certification companies, auditors or other building observatories) or to organize national awards directly linked to Construction21 database.

Regarding the products, the number of products entered in the database is much lower than the number of case studies. One reason is that producers, who would be the most interested stake holders to show their innovative solutions, are not authorized to enter whole buildings in the database. Currently, case study providers are responsible for introducing innovative solutions of the buildings. To facilitate the entry of new products, the process will be improved and allow a producer to complete a case study entered by another user providing information of its own product used in such building. In addition, project partners will invite case study providers to include at least one example of innovative products/solutions used in their buildings.

Last problem identified as a general level for the whole project: many tasks as training, case studies entry, communities' development or communication were planned at a too early stage at the project, when the tool was still not available in an appropriate version. Many tasks have consequently been postponed (training, communication, targets mobilization...) a few months later. All the deliverables should be nevertheless achieved before the end of the project, but under the initially expected level (members or number of persons targeted by the communication for example).

1.4 Main activities in the next period (October 2012 to May 2013)

The project team will be focused on two major activities during the last 6 months of the IEE-period.

First, continuing the platform deployment with communication actions and content providers recruitment, each country with its specificities. A common action will be also led under the management of the German team with the organisation of an international contest of green buildings, in partnership with Metropolitan Solutions, at the beginning of 2013. The objective is to boost the recruitment of case studies as well as new members, hoping that case studies providers will incite their relationships to vote for their building.

The second major action will be the preparation of the post-IEE period, with the establishment of the new governance and business plan in each country and at European level.

1.5 Activities and impact after end of the action (after May 2013)

After the end of the IEE period, Construction21 main action will be the deployment of the new governance in each country and the search of partners interested in being associated to our growing network, by sharing efforts and costs associated to the development of Construction21 in each country. This new organization will be an opportunity to largely communicate around Construction21, in order to make arise its visibility and recruit both content and funding providers (general sponsors as publicity or service purchasers).

2 Consortium management during the action

2.1 Team building and management tools implementation

The kick-off meeting took place in Paris on the 16th - 17th of May 2011 with the participation of Pau Garcia Audi, EACI's Project Officer. This meeting introduced a friendly and efficient climate between the partners, which was maintained during the whole project.

The management documents were set in June 2011, before the arrival of the Project Manager (August 2011). Four reports have been produced so far: Internal Report in August 2011, Progress report in December 2011 (slightly postponed to include Barcelona meeting feedback), Interim Report, in March 2012, and again Internal Reports in September 2012 and January 2013.

Internal communication tools

A Construction21 community has been opened for project management and the project team uses regularly SKYPE or GOTOMEETING for collective or bilateral conf-calls and chats.

External communication

Partners were provided in September 2012 with a first basic communication package (logos, chart), a full PPT presentation of the project, a communication strategy and a proposal for a poster. Some additional documents (shorter PPT presentations, press releases, etc.) have been lately created by other partners for specific needs and are shared with the whole consortium on the C21 community. The communication kit (flier, roll up) created by IFPEB for the French market has been adapted by all the other partners for their country, as the documents created by PE and ESCI for the 2013 sustainable urban building contest.

2.2 Cooperation with BUILD UP and other European projects

The automatic links with BuildUP have been developed: the case studies integration was operational in June 2012 and 23 case studies have already been translated and transferred (around 10% of the global stock of BuildUP case studies). A BuildUp RSS feed has been set in March 2012 on the Construction21 homepage and should be replaced in January 2013 by a complete integration on the news feed of each platform (in each language). Construction21 news coming from the European platform is integrated in the BuildUp news section. Specifications have been proposed to BuildUP team for the co-registration (a specific message sent to each new Construction21 member to incite him to join Build UP and the same on Build UP side for Construction21), with a task planned in January 2013.

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, Repowermap, 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 will be taken into account within the final payment distribution, in 2013. IFPEB and RoGBC have received the 1st and 2nd pre-payment cumulated, as planned. 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.

A detailed analysis of each partner budget is planned in January 2013 to organize the request of a few transfers between partners and cost categories. For example, the German partners will finance the additional development asked for the product's entry process within case studies, and some partners will transform communication costs to staff costs, to compensate the specific efforts done to mobilize the professionals individually.

3 Progress of work plan and achievement (May 2011 to October 2012)

3.1 Achieved results per work package against initial objectives

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

The project teams are strongly involved in the project and internal communication tools set at the beginning of the project have run well during the 18 months. Monthly conference calls take place between all partners since June 2011 (except in August) and written reports and minutes are produced for all of them. These 2-3 hour calls have been proven to be very useful to track the development of the project and to foster the collaboration between partners.

Following the kick-off, physical project meetings have been organized every six months under the hosting of one or another partner. The second project meeting, held in Barcelona in November 2011, was focused on training activities about the platform use (front and back office) and the communication strategy. The third seminar held in Paris in May 2012 was the opportunity for the consortium to establish a first review of the project, 2 months after the official launch of the 7 platforms. The first KPIs, much under the initial objectives, led the partners to exchange about their best practices in order to adjust their actions for the development of audience and contents. The Vilnius Seminar, in October 2012, was focused on the preparation of the post-IEE period, with the elaboration of the future governance main principles. The last one, planned in Brussels in April 2013, will be dedicated to the launch of the “new Construction21” at European level and the official start of Construction21 under the new governance.

Regular emails and calls are held between IFPEB and the EACI project or financial officers to precise some rules and exchange about the results and following of the project, in a good cooperation spirit. EACI support was particularly appreciated by all partners to find a solution when RoGBC was struggling with financial difficulties.

A whole day meeting has been held every month between CIRIDD and IFPEB until March 2012, in order to co-build the features specifications and ensure a precise following of the project. A project conductor has been regularly updated to summarize all current IT issues during this period. Deliverables supplied by all partners, as translation packages, have been checked by IFPEB before sending them to CIRIDD. Some specific meetings or workshops have been organized with 2 or 3 partners involved in particular topics, as the finalization of case studies structure and vocabulary, or the preparation of the international launch in the Consense event, Stuttgart.

The reporting tools delivery has been running correctly during the 18 months, except a more difficult period at the end of 2012, when all partners were deeply involved in the daily deployment of their platform.

The national project teams set at the beginning have been relatively stable and constantly involved for the majority of the partners. In the second part of the project, marketing and communication internal resources have been requested in addition to usual project and content managers. The partner’s teams have been partially renewed with success by RoGBC (2 new people out of 3) and is on progress by DGNB

(4 successive project managers for 6 months, generating a lower involvement in the project, partially 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 a first public version of the 7 platforms on 23th of March 2013. Three beta version had been delivered in earlier steps (instead of only one planned) to suit precisely the needs expressed by all the partners and offer a realistic test environment. During the months following the launch, many improvements and new features have been applied, to adapt at best the tool to the needs of the different users. The training has been ensured by CIRIDD and IFPEB, via training sessions (Barcelona meetings and webinars), monthly confcalls or specific bilateral exchanges.

As a result, Construction21 platforms present today all the planned features and also many additional ones, which have been suggested by CIRIDD or the other partners to improve the navigation, the web design and the technical relevancy of the tool. To achieve that, flexibility and cooperation among all partners, and especially by CIRIDD, has been very important.

Construction21 has been completely renewed compared to the old French prototype: the platform is now a multilingual one, hosting currently 7 different languages and able to host additional ones in the future, using common taxonomy and performance indicators. The translation activity was a huge task and needed much more efforts than initially planned for all the partners in charge for the translations and even more for CIRIDD. The first translation packages have been reviewed several times, due to an evolution of the final features throughout the project and the difficulties to translate a list of words and sentences, without the real context of the website.

The case study structure, based on the French prototype, has been strongly modified to suit precisely the needs of the 6 countries and the universal criteria established by SB Alliance. It was also enriched by a products module, both accessible from the case study and directly from the products section. The new structure is directly issued from a common work of the whole project team and has been tested by practitioners in each country during a listening phase, in September 2012. Last improvements will be applied in 2013 to identify case studies participating to a contest and allow the direct entry of a product implemented in a building by the producer.

Members ranking features, internal search engines, audience and contents reporting tools have been developed. Export modules and translation engines for all the contents categories have been created in order to disseminate contents from the national platforms to Construction21 Europe, to share contents on all the other social networks and to make Construction21 accessible from many partners' websites. Construction21 is also completely interoperable with BuildUP and has become one of its significant contents providers (For more details, cf. 2.2).

In order to facilitate the communication towards and between Construction21 members, CIRIDD has also added features to the initial plan, such as a newsletter module or a tool to invite one's address book.

Construction21 is today a multinational and pan-European platform, with strong roots in each country and international visibility. The buildings database, running with a unique structure and common indicators in different European languages, offers an efficient dissemination tool at European scale: a German case study is for example visible in Lithuanian on the Lithuanian platform. Construction21 has then become a very powerful benchmark and promotion tool for European practitioners.

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

Staff training

The training for MC and TC staff has begun as soon as the beta version including the new case studies feature was available, in November 2011. A meeting has been held at ESCI in Barcelona, in November 2011, and the training material was commonly prepared by UCV, CIRIDD and IFPEB.

The logistic organization has been achieved by UCV, assisted by ESCI. The content was prepared and conducted by CIRIDD and IFPEB for IT demonstration and by IFPEB for the second day dedicated to communication and dissemination, with a special focus on social networks.

Two additional training webinars dedicated to the project staff have been held to explain the features implemented later (notifications, case studies entry process improvements, taxonomy, homepage, static pages and website general management) in February and March 2012. The new features or significant modifications applied in the following period have been presented by CIRIDD during each monthly confcall.

Experts and professionals training

The professionals training has begun in February 2012, a few weeks before the launch, and much later than initially planned. The first people involved were the providers of the first case studies. Most of the partners have chosen to train these experts to case studies entry and reviewing by face to face meetings or calls, adapted to the small number of people involved. ESCI has adopted a webinar approach, VGTU has organized a specific meeting to present the platform and the way to use it to its national partners. The next step for all the countries is the organisation of training for thematic communities’ management (real meetings or webinars, depending on the local context).

Communities’ managers and case studies providers have been trained by each project team by different ways: webinars, training sessions, 1 to 1 meetings, phone assistance. For the whole consortium, 250 people have been trained, far above the initial objective of 70.

A set of training videos showing how to use C21 on the English platform, completed by a voice over in English has been achieved by UCV and translated by all the partners. 25 are visible on the different platforms from April 2012 (objective: 20).

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

In addition to the early announcement of Construction21 during the listening phase in 2011, many actions have been undertaken by all the partners in the year 2012, with an increasing success after the platform launch and the real visibility of its benefits. As a result, 79 agreements are signed in October, ie 1/3 more than the initial objective of 50. These partnerships have been signed with many different

targets: professional associations, universities, media, companies... and have generated contents providers as well as communication relays towards their network.

The real start of communities' development has begun in June 2012, 2 months after the platform launch. 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. Partners face indeed difficulties to convince people to manage a group, especially in the countries with a lower audience, and many communities are currently still animated by Construction21 project teams.

130 communities are opened in October through the whole network and a few ones have already reached 100 members or more. This start is not as fast as hoped, but this feature is clearly identified as the best potential to bring new members and audience to Construction21, especially when they are linked to an off-line event organized around the same topic.

Communities are also used privately by several European projects or projects teams, as a collaborative tool to support their common work. This option is another way of development for Construction21, which can then become a daily tool for all the building professionals becoming to the group and invited to join by their project leader.

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 second period, as 192 case studies were on line at the end of October, from 16 to 45 cases per country. Germany, which figures were much behind the other countries' previously, has almost doubled the number of cases in October, thanks to the cooperation with a new partner, City world.

The case studies suppliers' recruitment was not as easy as hoped. Entering a case study needs to invest time, not really for the data entry, but more to collect the data and the owner authorization before. And many professionals are reluctant to share some confidential information. Moderator's recruitment is consequently not easy either. And for the moment, content managers are moderating and translating all the cases by themselves, except in Spain, where ESCI has set a specific moderation process by external experts.

For case studies too, the partners had to provide a very close assistance to practitioners to convince them and to help them to enter their cases in the database. Construction21 project teams have even entered a significant number of cases by themselves, to achieve a first level of published contents. The objective of 500 case studies in May 2013 should nevertheless be achieved, thanks to the big contest organized for the whole consortium by PE, in partnership with Metropolitan solutions, a German fair organizer.

3.1.6 WP6 – Building key-communities (p51)

The communities linked to the 6 topics identified in the Grant Agreement are on tracks and 70% of them are opened. In Spain, ESCI has already created the six ones with an interesting audience (around 150 members). In September, the 6 communities were opened in the European platform (LCA by ESCI, EPC by IFPEB, Price/performance by PE, SMEs by UCV). A few ones are already rather popular with more than 100 members and really become a central place where practitioners can exchange about hot topics. The main tasks planned for the next period is the development of the contents and audience, and the realization of surveys and synthesis.

3.1.7 WP7 – Preparing post-IEE sustainability (p55)

Ensure the sustainability of each Construction21 national platform

At Vilnius seminar, all partners have expressed their wish to go further with Construction21 after the IEE period. IFPEB intends to create a specific governance scheme around France GBC. The German team studies the principle of a DGNB members' association. RoGBC will manage it directly, as today, and ESCI plans to manage directly the platform at first, before creating dedicated governance with the main Spanish stakeholders (including a public construction agency and the Spanish GBC). VGTU plans to develop in parallel the Lithuanian GBC and its natural tool, Construction21. In Italy, ANCE intends to manage alone Construction21, with the support of UCV as a simple partner. The last months of the IEE period will be used by all the partners to precise all these intentions and set operationally the future governance and business plans in each country.

The question of the future revenues is not easy to solve in the current economic context, and it will be one of the main issues for each team project in the next months. Revenues sources imagined at this stage are:

- subsidies from national institutions or professional associations, interested in market education
- sponsorship and banners
- sales of specific services as case study data collection and entry, translations, research results dissemination, training to the use of social networks in the building sector

In the future, new features should be developed to provide some additional revenues sources from companies promoting their offer. A development scheme has been proposed by PE and discussed in Vilnius seminar and the first tracks identified are the creation of new databases about training, about products (a database linking to the different national EPD databases) and about sustainable city solutions.

Define Construction21 international governance

In Vilnius, the consortium has set the main rules of its future governance in a good common spirit. The collective goal is to keep this alliance of national and international management, which is one of the keys of Construction21 success. An international Construction21 association will gather the different country

operators (one per country) plus CIRIDD, as technical partner. The whole consortium has expressed the wish to see a European representative on board too, with operational terms to define.

The budget of this association would be constituted by a country fee (around 5k€), which represents the maintenance and hosting cost. IFPEB and RoGBC have proposed to co-manage the platform under a shared-risk model, their costs being covered by a specific international sponsorship. All this organization will be set more precisely in the very next months, with the objective to launch the “new” Construction21 model in April 2013, during the last project seminar in Brussels.

Develop Construction21 in new countries

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 explained 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 their domestic policy impacts. On the other hand, the deployment cost (around 30K€) appears as much too high for such organizations and represents a real threat for Construction21 future development in new countries. An alternative offer around 20k€ with a huge mutualisation of the costs and a reduced assistance was still too high.

The international development strategy has consequently been strongly reviewed. The priority is now to find first some financial sponsors (energy agencies, certification bodies, big international organizations or companies) who can find an interest in terms of market education to develop a new C21 platform. Ademe, the French energy agency, which leads the European and Mediterranean network in 2013 is enthusiastic about the project and should help. A first track has been identified by IFPEB in Morocco, where many French stakeholders have interests, and another one in Brazil. Many exchanges have also begun with North-European companies and associations, thanks to RoGBC and VGTU existing links in these areas.

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

During the first year of the project, the only communication was the announcement of the future portal on both channels: national and international events and consortium partners’ websites, with a link towards a “coming soon” international Construction21 homepage (September 2011).

The communication strategy has really been developed since the launch of the 7 platforms in March 2012, when it was possible to show concretely which contents professionals could find on Construction21.

At national scale

Each partner has set an organisation adapted to its national context, mixing classical media relationships, social media and Internet, direct actions towards partners, e-mailings and events. Communication

specialists have been involved at this stage of the project, issued generally from partners' teams or subcontractors (press relationships for IFPEB).

A first result of the communication strategy is the presence of Construction21 in different international and national congresses and events that have contribute to increase the visibility of Construction21 in Spain. Spain and France have also conducted specific media relationships campaigns with a significant impact on the specialised press (paper and web) and a real impact on the website visibility and audience.

After these first few months of practice, it's clear that targeted tools are the most powerful ones. They are indeed able to demonstrate the benefit of the platform by informing about an event or a topic adapted to the user's centres of interest. In this category, we find the social media sharing and the thematic events linked to specific Construction21 contents.

Social media have been used much more than initially planned 2 years before. Construction21 partners, and especially ESCI, IFPEB and ANCE are using intensively these tools to make Construction21 known, by sharing information about Construction21 or contents published on Construction21. Sharing a Construction21 content on Twitter or on a Viadeo/LinkedIn group triggers in the following hours (or even days) a significant number of targeted readers, who visit the portal in a personalized context: a topic they are interested in. They catch consequently immediately the benefits they can get from the website.

The other very powerful tool is the link between a physical event and Construction21 (a community on the same topic or a contest about case studies...). Inviting people who attended conference to upload the conference presentation on a C21 community can trigger in a few days dozens of new members. Once more, they discover Construction21 with an immediate benefit and a positive experience. This approach has been deployed essentially in France, Lithuania and Spain, with a good impact on audience results. With about the same amount or contacts, but essentially constituted of newsletters or e-mailings, Germany didn't get the same impact in terms of audience. The targeted information and the direct link to one specific Construction21 content is an essential key of success.

The consequence is the different distribution of the contacts than initially planned. At the end of October, Construction21 partners have already sent around 600 000 direct messages (including social media), i.e. the triple of the initial objective. On the other side, the indirect contacts, via partners or press, will be much under the target of 5 millions (500 000 at the end of October). This type of contact is essential to arise general notoriety of Construction21, but not so efficient to demonstrate each one his personal benefit and make him join.

IFPEB, UCV-ANCE and ESCI have also begun in July 2012 to send their first newsletters to Construction21 members, in order to build a personal link with their members and increase the platform traffic, thanks to an internal tool developed by CIRIDD.

At 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 FLOOR, 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 European stakeholders. IFPEB has also participated to EACI seminar in July 2012 and some links have been created with other IEE projects.

3.2 Success stories

ESCI- Spain: Guided professional visits to Construction21's buildings. This activity has manifold objectives: 1) to promote Construction21 with the collaboration of building owners and promoters; 2) to facilitate a direct contact between different professionals of the sustainable construction; 3) to foster the dissemination of good and already tested construction practices; and 4) to disseminate the published case studies. It has been decided to organize at least 4 visits, starting with Madrid (November 2012) and Barcelona (December 2012), and following in 2013 with Valladolid (in February) and the Basque Country (in March, city to be determined). A thematic community and news have been published on this topic, with a remarkable dissemination in social networks:

<http://www.construction21.eu/espana/articles/es/comienza-exitosamente-el-ciclo-de-visitas-a-edificios-construction21.html>.

4 Lessons learnt

4.1 Management

The nature of the project has been completely different before and after the launch. After the elaboration phase came the communication and management phase, using very different skills. Training, close management and exchanges between partners were essential to help everyone to find the best way to carry out this new task: the management of a website. The possibility to check the results achieved by other platforms has also been important in order to identify if the evolution of each country KPIs was “normal”.

4.2 Communication and Dissemination

Social networks and exchange activities have allowed a major dissemination of the project's activities with relatively low costs. In the current economic situation, resources are very scarce and therefore big

doses of insistence and creativity were necessary to engage external experts in the platform. In that sense, the cooperation with other organizations and research projects working on similar topics has been beneficial for all parts.

4.3 Conclusions

Construction21, international network constituted of different national platforms answers to a real need of the profession. It has been confirmed by the vast majority of professionals we met during these 18 months. And national building organizations are interested in participating to the governance in several countries. We are nevertheless creating very new ways of learning and communication in the building sector, where professionals are not yet familiar with the use of social networks. The audience rise is not as fast as hoped and needs a real investment in human resources to manage the targets mobilization.

Construction21, general interest project, must consequently find institutional supports to achieve the next steps of its development leading to financial autonomy. It will then become the powerful collaborative tool able to help building professionals to set new ways of knowledge co-building.