BEinGRID – Much More Than Your Everyday Research Project

Brussels, November 12, 2008 - *BEinGRID, the largest ICT project financed by the European Commission, will be hosting a booth at the ICT 2008 event in Lyon on November 25-27. This release describes why this project is causing such a stir in research circles.*

BEinGRID is much more than your typical research project. For starters it's huge, massive in fact. It has close to 100 partners, a budget over €24 million for a duration of 42 months. But that's just numbers. What really makes BEinGRID stand out is that it isn't trying to develop a platform, interconnect two technologies, solve a specific problem or explore new paradigms. No, BEinGRID is different. What BEinGRID really seeks to do is to stimulate the use of the technology in question, to bridge the gap between research and industry, to cross the chasm of technology uptake.

Celebrated emergent technology guru Geoffrey Moore postulates that there is a barrier along the hype-cycle between the early uptakers and the mainstream users. He calls this the "chasm" and describes how many technologies fail to cross it due to a lack of notable reference cases in the commercial sector.
The project, led by Atos Origin and running until November 2009, builds on the premise that Grid computing is ready to cross this chasm and sets out to create those beachhead success stories in the commercial sector that will catalyze further market uptake. It does this through financing 25 pilot implementations that have united academic and commercial Grid experts with SMEs who have identified a business need that could be met by Grid technologies. The pilots have deliberately been chosen to span across many industries including traditional sectors such as finance, energy and health, as well as novel application areas such as movie-making, architecture, agriculture and tourism. Each experiment focuses on a real problem faced by these businesses and seeks to solve it using different Grid technology solutions for collaboration, performance and enabling new services.

Running alongside these independent and semiautonomous subprojects, BEinGRID employs a team of Grid computing experts and another of business consultants experienced in the commercialization of emerging technologies. These two teams have a dual function: to advise and to observe. These groups are eliciting common requirements across the Grid pilots, their dependencies, elaborating common capabilities – a common functionality that solves an identified need - with associated design patterns, best-practice guidelines and developing missing generic software components, as well as studying the market forces and developing the business case in each implementation scenario.

Complementing this work, a knowledge and toolset repository has been developed consisting of Grid service components and best practices to support European businesses with the uptake of Grid (www.gridipedia.eu).

For an example of one of the Grid computing pilots, or business experiments, consider the following example:

Although Grid computing is no stranger to the financial sector (most financial institutions use some kind of Grid for number crunching on a massive scale, calculating growth, balancing risk, modeling scenarios, and so on), running Grids in-house requires local expertise. It has relatively high maintenance and presents challenges in managing capacity and demand, maintaining high return on investment (ROI) and ensuring scalability. In the course of the project, Italian consulting company INNOVA, in league with Grid computing experts SPACI, financial application developers from UNICAL and banks MPS and Finnat, has developed and founded a Grid-based application service provider (ASP). The service employs ground-breaking technologies to offer the desired and customized application through a portal, hiding the complexity of the system and placing access to the vast computation resources in the hands of those who need to use them.

To find out more, why not come along and meet senior members from the BEinGRID project at the ICT 2008 event? They will be at the BEinGRID stand, in the "ICT Gets Smart" exhibition area, stand number G15. In addition to access to the project management, regular live demonstrations of the work carried out in the project will be performed by the SME partners responsible.

ICT 2008 (http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/events/ict/2008/index_en.htm) is the largest research event in Europe. It is a forum for discussion and influence of European Union priorities in ICT (Information Communication Technology) research, where over €2 billion of funding will be available in 2009-2010. The event will feature the major current technological trends which impact upon strategic research planning and is aimed at researchers, innovators, engineers, policy and business decision-makers in the field of digital technologies.

Further information on BEinGRID can be found at www.beingrid.eu and for information on Grid computing in general, please see www.gridipedia.eu.

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