

Creating User Community for OCW through Sharing Lecture Movies

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Abstract: Three years have passed since first six universities launched their OCW sites in Japan and OCW have been entering into the second phase. In this phase, creating user community and globalization are very important key issues. And as a current global tendency more media-rich content like lecture movie is getting more users access. In this paper we propose the second phase OCW based on information sharing among users on lecture movies. By using this scheme users can easily create and share their comment on shared movies without language barriers.

Introduction

Eight years has passed since the launch of the first MIT OCW and now OCW has been global and open content infrastructure for the people who want to seek high quality educational materials. However some issues has remained to be clarified. First, major interests for participated universities were how to increase OCW courses efficiently and establish know how for launching and maintaining OCW sites based on traditional and so much attention has not been paid for end users opinions. But after establishing basic platform it is essentially important involve users to create user community. Recently as one of typical new activities more lecture movies have been publishing in many universities including our university. In this paper we describe pilot project aiming to create user community through sharing lecture movies.

OCW in Japan

In Japan as very first activity in terms of OCW, six major universities, which are Keio University, Kyoto University, Osaka University, Tokyo Institute of Technology, University of Tokyo and Waseda University, have launched their OCW sites simultaneously and the organization for information sharing among universities, named Japan Opencourseware Alliance had been established in 2005. And in 2006 we changed the organization from a closed consortium to an open consortium (JOCW) in Japan and started to recruit new members. Now (May 2009) members are totally 39 organizations, which are 22 universities, 5 NPOs and 12 companies, and more than 1000 courses are distributed from all member universities' OCW sites totally. Visitors to all JOCW sites is shown as Fig.1 and courses from member universities is shown as Fig.2.

After three years passed visitors has been increasing gradually due to increase of courses and members.

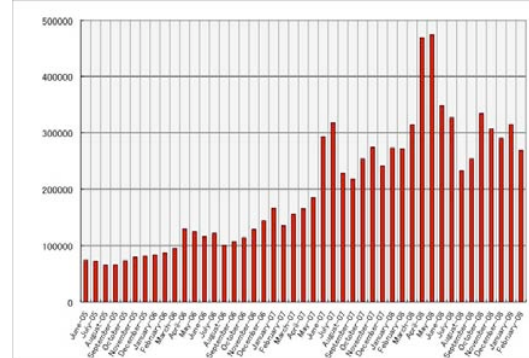


Fig.1 Monthly visitors to all OCW sites in Japan

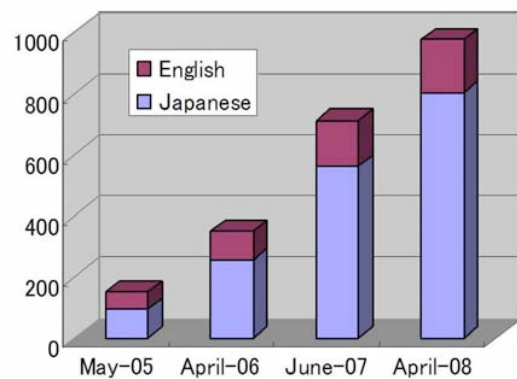


Fig.2 OCW Courses from JOCW

Keio OCW

Keio University is the one of six universities which launched OCW first in Japan and has been serving as a secretariat of JOCW from the beginning. At the beginning we published OCW contents in forms of

only text with 21 courses, 11 courses in English and 10 in Japanese. We made survey by interviewing nine professors who have opened their lecture as OCW. The result of interview is mainly divided to two categories, which are web publication and digitalization, and international contribution. Main opinions for each category are as following.

<Web publication and digitalization>

- It is difficult for individual academic staff to provide open educational resources, so OCW seems to be one of the best projects in this context.
- It seems to be more important to provide educational information to the general public than to prevent any information from being used in a wrong way.
- OCW enables us to accumulate intellectual assets by digitally archiving a variety of lecture information.
- By participating in the OCW project, we can re-organize the structure of our educational materials.

<International contribution>

- I would be most satisfied with knowing that some people, who live in a country where I would never visit in my life, use the information of my lectures.
- OCW provides Japanese academics with the valuable opportunity to publish their educational information internationally
- It might be necessary to connect OCW with some e-Learning projects in order to develop educational opportunities.

Visitors to Keio OCW site were about ten thousand for more than one year since beginning and there had been very little increase. It is difficult for OCW site to increase visitors because generally frequent update is required to gather more visitors but OCW sites could not be updated frequently more than semester by semester essentially. So we introduced OCW related content which could be updated more frequently than semester. Those are essay from alumni, and special on day lectures by professors emeritus which was conducted as a series of Keio University's 150th anniversary. Due to publishing those content, visitors to the site got up to about thirty thousand level. In addition to these frequent updating content, more lecture movies from OCW courses have been published. Recently we provided most of OCW video lectures as podcasting as well as windows media and due to podcasting, visitors have reached about fifty thousand level. Visitors to Keio OCW is shown as Fig 3. and access pages is shown in Fig. 4.

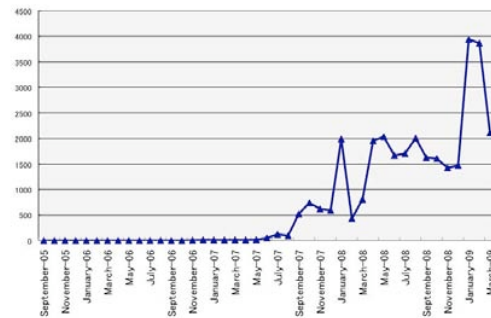


Fig.3 Monty downloads (GB)

Opinions survey and possibility in the future

Needless to say it is essentially important for any sort

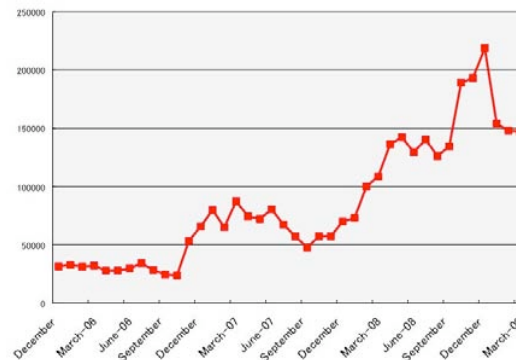


Fig.4 Monthly page accesses

of Web application to get a grasp of end users opinion and make a feedback on the service. However it is difficult to gather real user's opinion for OCW because OCW is free of charge and no need to register to use. So we tried to use the way of general opinions survey on the Internet, so-called internet research provided by the internet portal service provider.

We carried out Opinions survey related to OCW twice, which were in December 2006 and in December 2007 and number of examinees were about thousand for each.

The summary of the survey results are as below.

- (1) More than 90% gave positive evaluation about opening up of lectures in universities.
- (2) Awareness of OCW is slightly increasing.
- (3) Persons who would like to use OCW contents for their own learning are more than 80%.
- (4) Two-third of respondents answered that, as many universities as many regardless of national, public or private should launch OCW.
- (5) Ranking of discipline for OCW is economics (33.3%), information science (33.3%), operation/marketing (32.9%), literature (27.8%).

Q5 What kind of universities should open their courses?

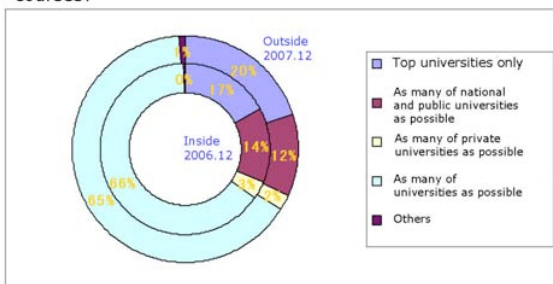


Fig 4-b example of Opinion survey results

Q6 Do you want to use course materials by yourself, when they will be distributed on the Internet?

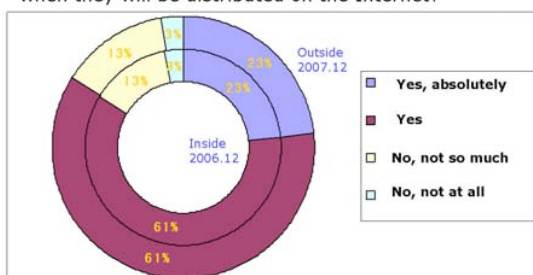


Fig 4-a example of Opinion survey results

According to the results of opinions survey, awareness of OCW is not high at the moment, but most people answered to use OCW as individual learning. So if we can make more promotion of OCW and improve usability from the learners point of view, OCW could be one key element of social learning infrastructure.

Current tendency of OCW in Japan

When the first six universities started OCW in 2005, most of contents published from them are text based syllabi and lecture notes, which are PDF format or HTML. However in 2006 University of Tokyo have started their first podcasting and those contents became very popular educational content in iTunes site in Japan. Since that time many universities followed by University of Tokyo and last year (2008) Kyoto university had agreement with Google to distribute their lecture movies of OCW on YouTube as special specification fitted as educational materials. Nowadays many educational movies from higher education as well as other educational fields. And according to our opinions polls many people requested movies next to text as desirable lecture information.

Requirements for educational support

One major criticism is that OCW provides only contents and no educational support, which is obsolete in Web 2.0 era.

That is really true from the learner point of view. OCW have to be geared much more learner centric and provide learner assistance to encourage individual learning practically. However so far leaving learner support seems to be inevitable because one of very high obstacles for universities to launch OCW is how they can get faculty members understanding and cooperation. Especially in case of MIT, they intended publishing all lectures they have. So in order to involve most faculty members it was very important to make sure no increase of their job any more. From that meaning they announced the message, "OCW does not provide access to MIT faculty."

Fortunately MIT cleared first goal, publishing all courses in 2007 successfully and OCW activity have been spreading out all over the world. So we can step into second phase, more learner-centric approach. In order to encourage individual learners it is essentially important to provide pedagogical assistant. But as I mentioned above it is impossible and not practical to let faculty members involve to this kind of support by force. So practical way to realize learner support is use voluntary network on the Internet.

Creating user community and tools

We have created tools for putting annotation for movies with no verification on the original movie, which is name as "fusen". Learners can put annotation on any position of the movie and annotations put by one learner can be shared by other all learners.

Procedures for use fusen is following;

- i) Select movie clip and watch
- ii) Click "fusen on it" button at the point annotation can be added
- iii) Fusen area which is located aside of movie is activated and ready for annotation
- iv) Write down annotation, Q&A on the area.
- v) Click "paste it" button.

Annotations are put on the same screen of movie windows and when some one click one of annotations, movie can be played from the position which annotation put on. Fig.5 shows example of screen using fusen.



Fig. 5 Screen capture of fusen

Future plan

We have just started launch of new site for fusion on OCW. From now we have trial for users and collect user data including log, opinions and etc. Now we published only Movies in Japanese but in near future we will publish those in English also. And we will promote project for translation on the net using this site. Most of lectures provided from Japan are in Japanese, which is another issue to be solved to make OCW really global activity. So we will start easy-to-use type translation project.

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Related Web sites

Keio OCW: <http://ocw.dmc.keio.ac.jp/>
Japan OpenCourseWare Consortium
: <http://www.jocw.jp/>