

Managing Multinational Research Projects

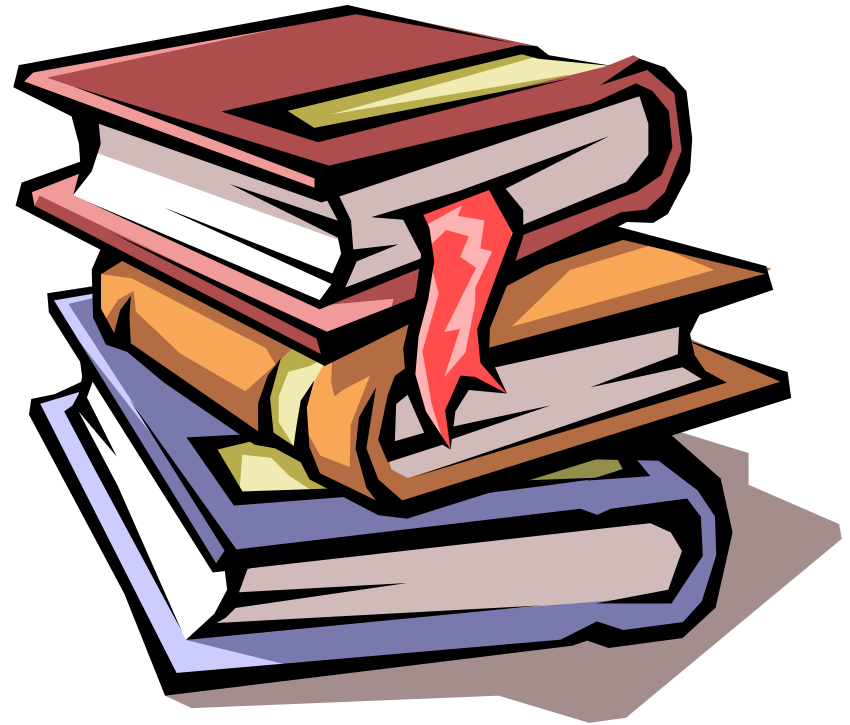
Thesis seminar presentation

HUT, SE110, 2.6.2000

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Thesis Structure

- ACTS background
- Applying for a research project
- Project contracts
- Technical guide
- IMMP background and results
- IMMP – lessons learned



ACTS



- Advanced Communications Technologies and Services
- Research programme in the 4th Framework Programme (1994-1999)
- Promotion of the use of information technologies, particularly in the public sector, but also through promotion of teleworking
- Promotion of investment in basic trans-European services, for Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) and high-speed networking
- Creation of an appropriate regulatory framework to ensure competition, guarantee universal service and security of information and communication systems
- Development of new technology training
- An increased industrial and technological performance in European business, notably through increasing research and technology development

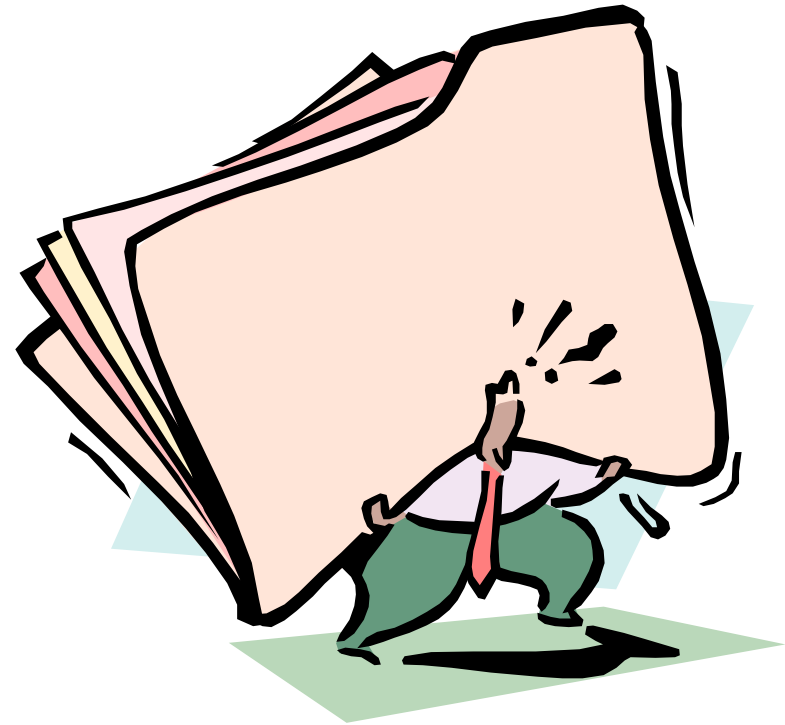
Applying for a Research Project

- Writing a proposal
- Software tools
- Proposal submission
- Project organisation
- Project documentation
- Cost claims
- Project audit
- Project modifications
- Differences between ACTS and IST



Contracts and Technical Guide

- Model contracts
- Consortium agreement
- Associate contract
- Subcontract
- Non-disclosure agreement
- Helpful documentation
- Basic requirements for the proposal
- Proposal format

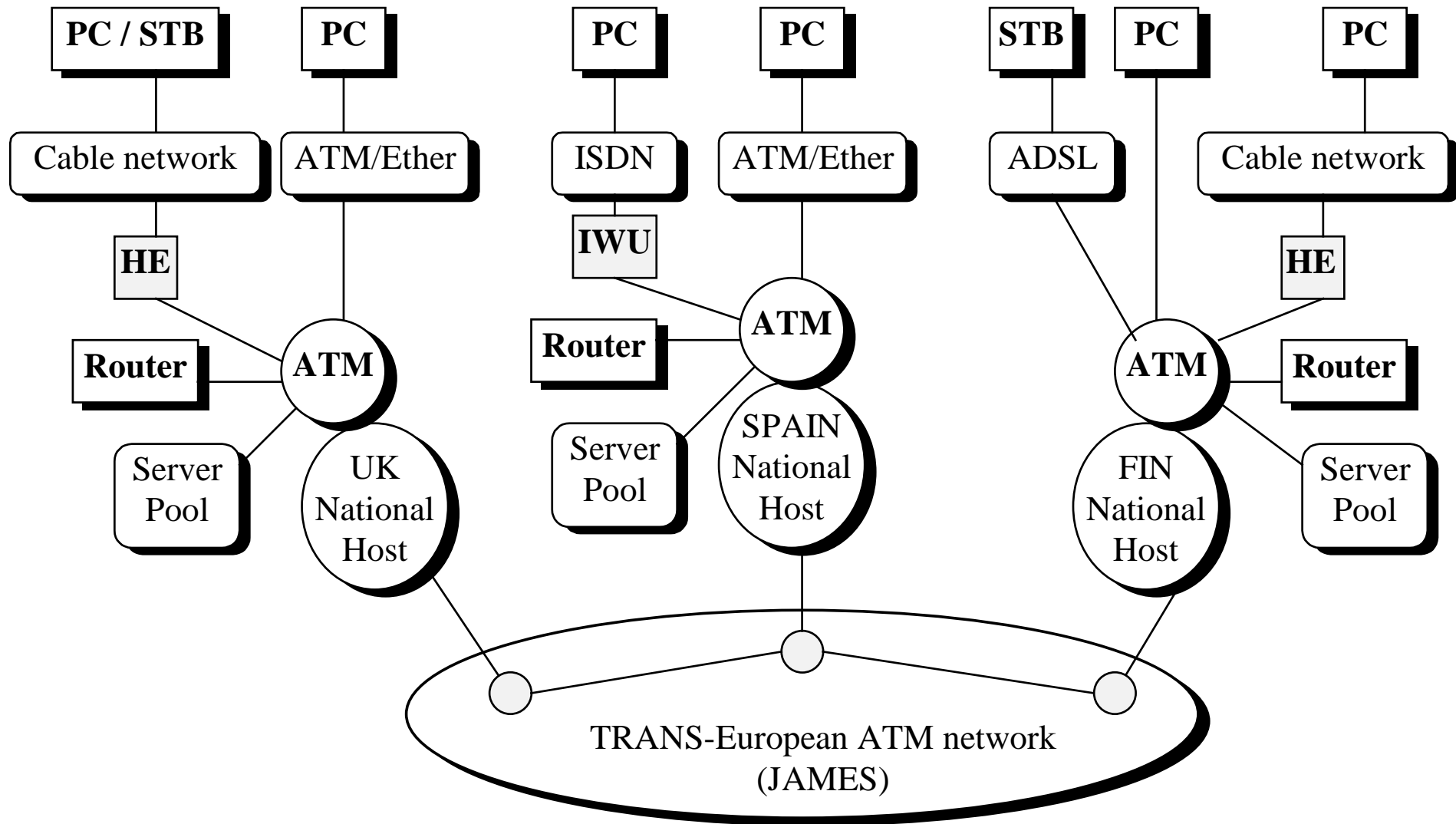


IMMP Background

- Integrated Multimedia Project, IMMP (AC023)
- Ran from September 1995 until June 1999
- ACTS project in the 4th Framework Programme
- c. 900 man months
- c. 9 M
- 12 partners from 5 countries



IMMP Trials



IMMP Results

- Developed platforms and components that allow creative, interactive multimedia applications to be developed, used and tested
- Studied multimedia environments, applications, and services
- Demonstrated and evaluated the feasibility of multimedia services
- Evaluated and tested end user requirements and needs and measured the acceptance of these services
- Measured and studied economic and social impacts



Lessons Learned

Deadlines are extremely hard to keep

- Multiculturalism means that there are many different attitudes towards deadlines
- The nature of deadlines in multinational and multicultural projects is quite flexible
- Needs a good control mechanism
- Needs efficient communication
- Requires good planning and timing
- Might mean shipping unfinished deliverables



Lessons Learned

Reporting on results is tedious

- When something is done it is often forgotten
- Reporting is made easy by
 - doing everything in a suitable way to begin with
 - keeping record of accomplishments
 - gathering those information into the monthly and annual reports



Lessons Learned

Reaching consensus

- In meetings it is hard to reach consensus
- Multicultural groups have multiple ways of coping with issues
- Reaching agreement in a meeting is important
- The agreement should be recorded
- The minutes should be ratified by the attendees afterwards
- Issues agreed upon can not be changed but unanimously
- Trust between the partners must be maintained



Lessons Learned

Short-term technological expectations

- These can not be basis for long-term planning in EU projects
- If the expectation is not fulfilled the plan is severely altered
- If the expectation is fulfilled the project loses its appeal



Lessons Learned

Having customers or competitors as partners

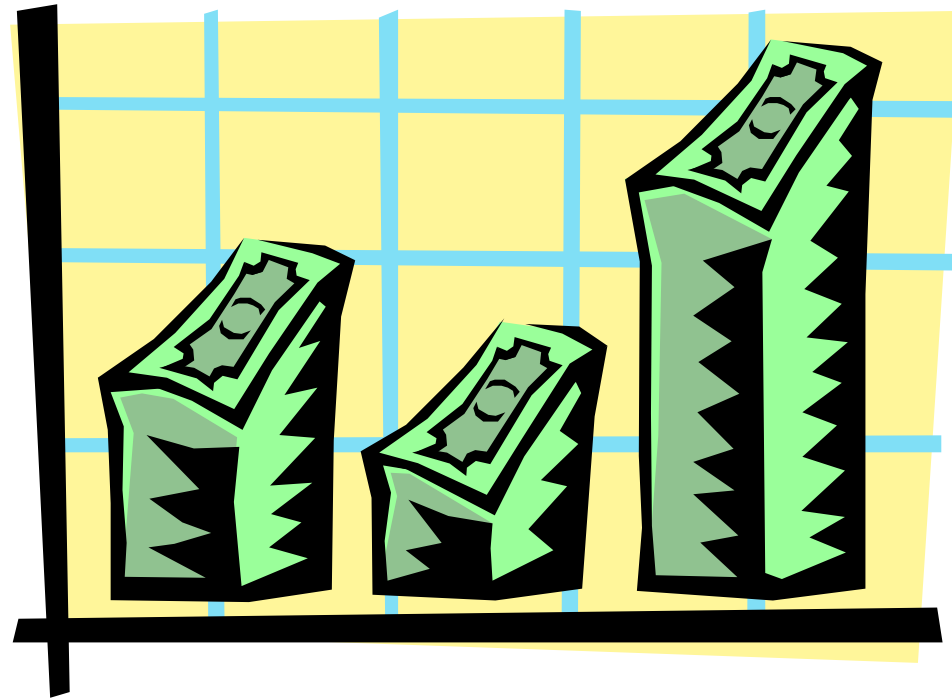
- Having many different customers as partners can compromise a partners role as a supplier and lower the ability to coordinate the project effectively
- Having competitors among the partners can narrow down Nokia's possibilities and actions
- Agreements external to the project may affect the project relationship
- Might lead to horse-trading



Lessons Learned

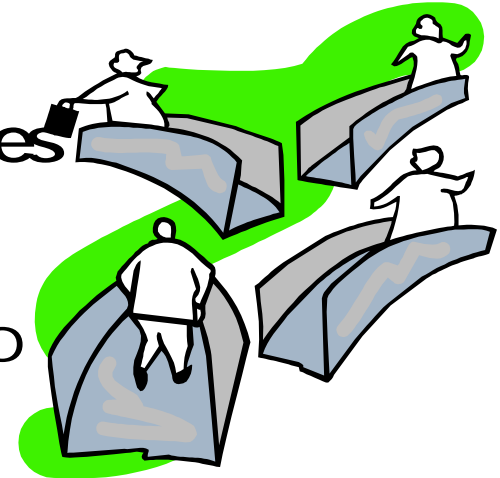
Small manpower allocation

- Small amount of manpower often means shallow commitment
- Project needs true commitment, not 10% work share



Lessons Learned


Rapid exchange of employees



- Poses serious threat to the project quality
- Long projects see many people come and go
- Project efficiency will suffer
- New people have new interests, incorporating these is hard
- Motives might change
- The actual work and its quality is dependent on the people performing it, not on the partner organisations
- It is important to build good chemistry between people, listen to their opinions and accept compromises

Lessons Learned

Disseminating the project results

- During the course of a long project, the funding parties must be kept awake by informing them about the project status
- Even though there is euphoria after finishing a long multinational project, the results should be communicated across to all the potentially interested parties, not just to the EU Commission
- Disseminating the project results is very important but must depend on the nature, ap timeliness and quality of the results achieved

Lessons Learned

Possibilities unique to multinational projects

- Networking across country and company boundaries
- Open exchange of ideas between culturally different minds
- Self assessment through cultural exchange



Why EU Research?

- Too few own resources
- Networking
- Image-building
- Organisational visibility
- Risk management
- Knowledge-building

