

Rice University accesses an open source course management platform by developing an SOA extension with an IBM grant.

Overview

Rice University

Houston, Texas, United States
www.rice.edu

Industry

- Education

Products and services

- IBM WebSphere Enterprise Service Bus
- IBM Software Services for WebSphere

“By providing us with a grant, IBM enabled us to extend our Sakai educational platform to incorporate federated searches of university archives via a service-oriented architecture and enterprise service bus. We can now make greater contributions to the worldwide community.”

—Gary Kidney, director of academic and research computing, Rice University

Founded in 1912, Rice University is a private research university in Houston, Texas, noted for its elite undergraduate division and its strength in the applied sciences. It is considered a pioneer in nanotechnology, artificial heart research, structural chemical analysis and space science.

Challenge

To offer its students a world-class research environment, Rice University wanted to adopt the open source Sakai environment: a collaboration and learning tool used by 125 universities. The university believed that integrating the system with its environment would improve collaboration among students and faculty. Funded by an IBM Shared University Research (SUR) grant, Rice implemented the Sakai environment as an open, nonproprietary repository and worked with IBM to connect educational applications into the open source platform.

Solution

As a component of the SUR grant, IBM Software Services for WebSphere connected Rice University’s Connexions open courseware solution and DSpace library holdings applications to the Sakai environment. Leveraging IBM WebSphere® Enterprise Service Bus software, the IBM services team enabled the standardized interchange of resources within the open source infrastructure. Students can find the information they need in this integrated environment, and faculty have the ability to use the Connexions application to develop a course and publish it to the Sakai collaboration environment, making it available to diverse audiences.

Benefits

- Improved standardization, development and support efficiencies by migrating to an open source education framework enhanced with a service-oriented architecture (SOA) approach
- Simplified search operations by federating three separate searching tools into one
- Implemented the robust, open Sakai environment in only 18 months
- Developed the necessary in-depth knowledge to extend and customize the Sakai environment



For more information

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