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CERN Alerter – RSS based system for the information broadcast to all CERN offices

Friday, 9 November 2007 11:30 (30 minutes)

Nearly every large organization uses a tool to broadcast messages and information across the internal campus (messages like alerts announcing interruption in services or just information about upcoming events). These tools typically allow administrators (operators) to send "targeted" messages which are sent only to specific groups of users or computers, e/g only those located in a specified building or connected to a particular computing service.

CERN has a long history of such tools. The last one - NICE Alerter used on all Windows-based computers had to be phased out as a consequence of phasing out NNTP at CERN. The new solution continues to provide the service based on cross-platform technologies, hence minimizing custom developments and relying on commercial software as much as possible. The new system, called CERN Alerter, is based on RSS (Really Simple Syndication) for the transport protocol and uses Microsoft SharePoint as the backend for database and posting interface. The windows-based client relies on Internet Explorer 7.0 with custom code to trigger the window pop-ups and the notifications for new events. Linux and Mac OS X clients could also rely on any RSS readers to subscribe to targeted notifications. The presentation will cover the architecture and implementation aspects of the new system.

Approximate Length (in minutes) (default is 15 minutes for Site Reports and 30 minutes for others, including questions)

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Primary author: Mr OTTO, Rafal (CERN)

Presenter: Mr OTTO, Rafal (CERN)

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