SYSTEM CAPABILITIES OF “ALUMNI NETWORK” IN UNIVERSITY OF FORESTRY FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE INDICATORS OF GROUPS 5 AND 6 OF UNIVERSITY RANKING SYSTEM

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Abstract

This article presents the system “Alumni Network” of the University of Forestry. It gives a view of the possibility for development as a mechanism for monitoring and analysis of indicators of the Group 5 Prestige and Group 6 Professional and career realization from University ranking system developed and maintained by Ministry of Education, Youth and Science. The obtained results of this analysis will help taking timely measures for improvement and sustainability of the values of these indicators and this way increase the rating of University of Forestry.

Key words: University ranking system, educational and scientific product, “Alumni Network”.

Introduction

Implementation of mechanisms of University ranking system developed and maintained by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science creates real prerequisites for valuation of the efforts of the universities in terms of their educational and scientific product.

With most weight (35%) in University ranking system is Group 6 Professional and career realization. The indicators in it are:

- Graduates’ insurance income;
- Unemployment among university graduates;
- Professional development and career in the chosen field of study;
- I gained confidence that I will succeed in life;
- I created important contacts and friendships;
- Employers’ preferences.

Group 5 Prestige is weighted 10% in University ranking system. The indicators in it are:

- Secondary education diploma GPA;
- Prestige among students;
- First choice;
- Foreign students.

The indicators in these two groups actually show real assessment from all users for quality educational and scientific product of the university and its acceptance as an educational and research institution in the community. The establishment of mechanisms for their reporting and analysis would help to achieve high values of the indicators and their resistance.

Some of the indicators in Group 6 Professional development and career in the chosen field of study; I gained confidence that I will succeed in life and I created important contacts and friendships, somehow are included in the developed and already are in use in the system “Alumni Network” of University of Forestry.

In the system there are 444 registered graduated users and 6 present students in the University of Forestry in the period from the beginning of 2011 to mid-2012.

Of all registered graduated students 260 have filled what position they occupy now or have occupied in the past. Total “occupy now or have occupied in the past” positions are 354.

Of these 354 positions:

- 92% (327 positions) of occupied positions are related to acquired qualification degree;
- 8% (27 positions) of occupied positions are NOT related to acquired qualification degree.

They inputted information containing address, email address and phone number, allowing feedback with them.

What is the “Alumni Network” of University of Forestry?

To continue the relationship of graduates’ students, The University of Forestry created a web-based system “Alumni Network”. The fact is that many of the graduated students of the university are realized employees in prestigious public institutions and private companies. The system “Alumni Network” was created to help make it easier to inform members about the life of the University and to promote their active participation in it. Anyone who is a current or former stu-
Alumni database is created to achieve goals such as:
- to provide to the university real statistical data for graduates students and their professional realization;
- to promote the realization of active contact between graduates, present and future students, to maintain relations and cooperation between them and to provide opportunities to develop their careers;
- to promote the exchange of experience between members of the system, whose knowledge and capabilities can be useful for the others;
- to assist the employers in the recruitment and selection of staff in the specific occupational areas in which the university offers educational and scientific product;
- to assist the academia structures in organizing and conducting seminars and conferences;
- to provide public support for university, to assist in the mission, goals and objectives of the University of Forestry.

Used technologies
For development of the system are used PHP technologies and MySQL database. PHP is a free open source software. Its syntax is friendly to people and easy to analyze. It is built-in HTML, i.e. “switch” PHP mode when necessary. PHP is cross-platform. PHP software is stable and does not change radically and incompatible between two successive versions. PHP is fast - when PHP is compiled as a module of Apache, it is significantly faster than the use of other scripts. PHP facilitates communication with other programs and protocols.

MySQL is a simple, not complicated database where there is no need of complex business solutions, but of good performance. It presents opportunities for searching in databases and for service of Web requests because it is fast and reliable. MySQL is free. Data can be of any type - from simple text lists to complex structured corporate information. MySQL organize data in tables, allowing quick access to them.

System “Alumni Network” is optimized for search engines like Google.com, Yahoo.com, Bing.com, Yandex.ru, Ask.com, Dir.bg and others by:
- implemented appropriate metadata on the pages;
- appropriate usage of alternative texts of graphics and links;
- registration in popular search engines and catalogues.

Implemented modules in “Alumni Network”
In the system are implemented modules, extracting data for former alumni:
- module “database alumni” - retrieves information about former alumni, which are filled in, in the database (information about the education and information about the professional status), divided by faculties and sorted by year of completion and names of registered users;
- module “number of registered students” - presents information on the number of registered users in the system and reports the number of “active users”, filled in a year of completing the UF and the number of “passive users” - made its registration but not filled the field for year of completion;
- module “statistics” - presents graphically ratio percentage of students who noted that occupy position and those who do not occupy position associated with the acquired qualification degree;
- module “newly alumni” - outputs a report of the graduates students and their registration date by months.
- module “statistics by faculties” - graphically represents the percentage of students, divided by faculties, who responded positively and negatively to the question “Is your position linked up with the acquired qualification degree”;
- module “present students” - outputs a report of the current registered students and their registration date by months.

Used functions
JpGraph library
JpGraph is an object-oriented library for creating graphics for PHP. The library is completely written in PHP. At the present application this library is used for the graphical representation of statistical data for registration thru pie chart

Functions
There are many functions. The function is the name which is given to a block of code that can
be implemented by calling the function by name. For example: The function `this_profstatus_exists` checks if registered users have filled in professional status in the database.

```php
function this_profstatus_exists($user_id, $date1, $date2, $rabotodatel, $profsector,.......){
    $q=mysql_query("SELECT * FROM profstatus WHERE fromdate='$date1' AND ..........' ");
    if(mysql_num_rows($q)>0){
        return true;
    }
    else return false;
}
```

We give the function variables that check whether they are equivalent to those in the base. The function `(mysql_num_rows($q)>0 from row 6 allows to understand whether the query returns valid, real, positive records from the database. Therefore, returning a positive result > 0, return true, therefore the user has recorded data for professional status in the database.

Conclusions

The system “Alumni Network” has the potential to be developed to become a tool for regular feedback from current and former students of the University, allowing monitoring of indicators of Group 6 and Group 5 of University ranking system, developed and maintained by MEYS.

This can be achieved through:
- adding fields for additional information including indicators of both groups;
- development of corresponding modules for extraction and statistical processing of this data;
- developing and carrying out regular surveys of registered members.

The results obtained by the analysis of the data will give the possibility of taking timely actions for improvement and resistance of the values of these indicators to be taken and thus raise the rating of University of Forestry.