

Minutes of the meeting with Vivisimo Inc: 2-7-2006

We met today with Raul and Ann at Vivisimo and learned the following about the system, currently known as AskRaul:

- First and most importantly, the system is in our opinion nifty. We agree with Don that it has real potential for use in baseball stadiums, or sports bars in general.

- The Java code is in the possession of David Garmire. Raul will help us get it, ideally within a week.

- The system runs on flat files hardcoded into the program. This is not exactly the most efficient or extensible way to do this, so we would want to move to some sort of free database software (MySQL comes to mind).

- While the technique could work in general on most any database, the English output is very tied to the particular format of the current database. If we decide we want to change the format of the database, we would need to modify the rules used to generate the English grammar.

- Right now the program only works on players per year. This is easily the most frustrating feature on the current system because it leads to claims like Babe Ruth is tied for the most home runs with Babe Ruth. There is currently no way to get statistics based on a player's career, or to say something like John Smith won the most Golden Gloves. That would be one of the primary things we would like to change.

- The current system is a bit buggy, and is only guaranteed to work on the computers it was built on.

- Raul seems pretty unconcerned about the IP issues with this. He just wants to make sure that the code is only seen by the team. Don should work out the whole range of IP issues though in case someone ever wants to buy it.

In my personal opinion, the system was very interesting and seems like a perfect fit for the ETC. It is a program that has some good functionality, but needs a lot of work with a the user interface and user experience. I also really like it because the team seems very well suited to its development. There are clear ways that every member of our team could help. I'd say it would be highly likely that we would come up with a great product if we didn't have to deal with the wall. Because of the pressures of the wall, I'm less certain of how far we'll be able to get with this project.

On a technical note, I think that a good way to structure this program would be to use a MySQL database for the actual data, use Java for the processing of the statistics, and send it to Flash in the same way that Peacemaker does.