BLIS Association Annual Report 2003

BLIS Board

The BLIS Board 2002 elected in AEC Systems Show 2002 in Anaheim was:
- Arto Kiviniemi, Finland - Chairman
- Richard See, USA - Deputy Chairman
- Jiri Hietanen, Finland - Secretary
- Vladimir Bazjanac, USA - Member
- Heikki Kulusjärvi, Finland - Member

Board deputy members:
- Susanne Backas, Finland
- Kent Reed, USA

The decision was that the Board would be in position until the exception for foreign members describe in the minutes will be officially accepted, or until the next annual meeting, which ever will happen first. The position of Kent Reed was dependent on the approval at NIST, to confirm that NIST employees can be officers in an association registered in foreign countries. The issue was never handled afterwards.

The Finnish law concerning members of the Board in a registered associations limited that the Chairman and majority of members had to be Finnish citizens, but it was changed in the Spring 2003. The new law has limitation only concerning Chairman and Deputy Chairman, which both have to be Finnish residents. There are no limitations for other members as in the previous law. The exception of the new law was applied so that only either the Chairman or Deputy Chairman must be Finnish resident, and the exception for BLIS association was approved by the Ministry of Trade and Industry on July 4th 2003.

Main Activities 2002

The main focus in BLIS activities has been in the development of BLIS web site and services. Patrick Houbaux has performed the server and web administration tasks on voluntary basis, and the Board wants to present its gratitude for him of this crucial effort.

Participation in Trade Shows

In Spring 2002 BLIS participation in COFES conference resulted some positive press publicity.

AEC Systems Show 2002 in Anaheim, June 3rd - 7th. BLIS booth, participants CSIRO, Graphisoft, Microsoft Visio, Solibri, Timberline and YIT. Cadalyst "Best of the Show" and CADENCE "Show Stopper" awards, and other very positive press publicity.

Software Products

BLIS/IFC 2.0 certification workshop in Tokyo on October 28th 2002 produced 8 new certified software products:
- NEC: IFC Data Server
- SUMITOMO Cement: ADT IFC-In/Out Version 1.0
- SUMITOMO Cement: Estimate Core Version 1.0
- FUJITSU: Personal BLD Rel 5.0
- KAJIMA: Arc DB-CAD D/W
- KAJIMA: Arc DB-CAD

- KAJIMA: MED DB-CAD
- KAJIMA: Str DB-CAD

After this event, the total number of BLIS/IFC 2.0 certified software products is 22, and the total number of software products supporting the BLIS Views of IFC R2.0 at different development stages is 60. More detailed information is available at http://www.blis-project.org/BLIS_Product_Public.html

Members

The BLIS members have been categorized into 6 main categories to help the members to identify possible partners and synergy between different organizations. The categories are:
- AEC/FM End User Organizations
- AEC/FM Service and Web Organizations
- AEC/FM End User Software Organizations
- Developer Software Tools Organizations
- AEC/FM Software Research & Development Organizations
- AEC/FM Organizations - Corporate Software Development

In total BLIS has 90 member organizations and the number is slowly increasing all the time.

Projects

Some projects in which BLIS SW products were used:

In 2002 Jiri Hietanen in the role of BLIS TC supported the Senate Properties Joensuu University project in Finland. This project consists of two new buildings for the university campus, both about 3000 sqm. The other one was already built, but it was re-modeled using the product model approach in order to provide basis for tests. The second building, which will be very similar to the first one, will start after the Summer 2003, and the experiences of the first building will be used to compare the results. The project is continuing the IFC based approach of Senate

Vladimir Bazjanac used a wide set of BLIS/IFC software tools in the schematic building design for E-Lab building at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, California, USA. Size about 3200 sqm, architect Stanley Saitowitz.

In USA Dianne Davis has activated several projects, which use product models and BLIS/IFC compliant software tools. Some examples Dianne presented in IAI Seminar, Washington May 14th 2003 were:
- US Coast Guard's Regional Strategic Plan to model all facilities. Focus in integration of NCS with object models, energy testing and security.
- US National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST); CONTAM Software update to IFC, Dr. Kent Reed
- CAD-GIS Technology Center; Secret Service-Park Service Project, ESRI GIS and Graphisoft ArchiCAD
- SHIP Group; Architects, Engineers, Contractors,and Software Vendors working with energy and security

Other BLIS members, who have on-going BLIS related projects in US are for example:
- US Army Corps of Engineers Research Labs (CERL); Dr. Francois Grobler
- Design Village; Dan Gonzales
- TriGlyph Architects; Kevin J. Connolly

In Australia CSIRO is supporting CRC for Construction Innovation projects to test interoperable tools in practice.

Web Hosting

A dedicated server was bought on the June 19 2002 from Nebula. It is currently hosted at nebula.fi. This server gives the possibility to the association to host:
- BLIS website (http://www.blis-project.org)
- BLIS databases (MySQL)
- BLIS mailing lists
- BLIS FTP site
- etc ...

This server is running under Linux, a RAID-1 hard disk is installed (2x40GB), the traffic is limited to 15GB/months and the line rate is 2MBit/s.

Website Development

General re-architecture of the website has been performed. Following areas are now open: Public, Developers, Users and Admin. The Users area is still in construction. It was intended to host the AEC BLIS Pilot projects but we have been putting those tasks forward in 2003.

The members' database is online and its online administration tool has been developed specifically for the needs of BLIS. This tool is accessible through both the Public and the Developers Area and the management of members can be performed through the Admin section.

A "Sample Data Files Management System" has been developed allowing members to upload and view IFC sample files and their corresponding screenshots and description. This tool is accessible through the Developers Area and the management of these sample files can be performed through the Admin Section

A "News Management System" has been developed allowing "news writers" to write news for BLIS. This tool is accessible from the Public Area and news can be managed through an "Admin" link in the news page.

An "Email exploder Management System" has been developed allowing to subscribe/unsubscribe members from the mailing list. This tool is only available in the "Admin" section but the public view of the subscribers to the mailing list is published in the Developer Area.

The mailing list archives are now published online in the Developers Area thanks to an open source tool called Eyebrowse (http://eyebrowse.tigris.org). The Email archives pages are automatically updated every 2 hours.

A "White Papers" subsection has been created in the Developers Area.

A "Press Releases" pages has been added to the Public Area

The list of all "BLIS Software" has been added to the Public Area.

An issue tracking system has been installed but is not yet available in any of the Area. Only the Admin area gives an access to it.

A statistics page is accessible through the Admin area.

The BLIS web server hosts currently also the SABLE website (http://www.blis-project.org/~sable)

Web Server Administration

The Antivirus F-Secure for Linux has been purchased and installed. An automatic scanning of the server is done everyday at 10:00 AM in Finland (Finnish time, GMT-2). The automatic update of the virus database is performed everyday at 9:00 AM (GMT-2).

The server hosts now all the BLIS mailing list (all@blis-project.org, dev@blis-project.org and lib@blis-project.org). The former mailing lists hosted previously by CSIRO have been closed.

The web access statistics are created everyday at 0:05 AM (GMT-2).

Bounced mails and unauthorized subscriptions to the mailing list are redirected to the BLIS Webmaster mail account for approval

A report of any connections made on the server is sent automatically to the BLIS Webmaster mail account every day at 4:00 AM (GMT-2).

The server hosts and Apache Web Server and a Tomcat Servlet Server.

The server hosts a MySQL database server on the port 3306.

The server is accessible through FTP (anonymous), SSH, HTTP, POP3 and IMAP:
- ftp.blis-project.org (port 21)
- ssh.blis-project.org (port 22)
- www.blis-project.org (port 80 + port 8080 for tomcat)
- pop.blis-project.org (port 110)
- imap.blis-project.org (port 143)

Some experimentation has been performed to propose some web services (still in experimentation).

Future Developments
- Hosting the BLIS FTP sites for users
- Creation of the "BLIS Software management system"
- Creation of the AEC BLIS pilot project pages.
- Creation of some online IFC related tools

Finances

Because BLIS has no membership fee, in 2002 there was no income. Almost all expenses have been related to the web server. Details and balances of 2002 and of the first part of 2003 are in the attachment.

Arto Kiviniemi
Chairman of BLIS Association