

HyperNews

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Mail communication



- What problem is this trying to help us solve (or at least improve)?
- Everybody is drowning in email
 - This will *never* disappear, but we have clear data points that it can be *much* better than it is in CMS (for example) at the moment
- The mailing lists as used currently at CERN are little more than a glorified email aliases (with a “hint” for those using procmail or other client-side filters). It is basically a “push” model.



Simba2



- Some (missing) features of Simba2 make the problem worse:
 - not easy to use in any other way *except* subscribing to the full list (e.g. the archive is difficult to access, no alternative “views”)
 - no threading; difficult to point at individual messages, threads or discussions by URL; poor search engine
 - must know list names in advance, no central “view” of the full set of lists for the experiment
 - management of lists is scattered across many people in the experiment with different and sometimes puzzling policies



Simba2



- Fundamentally Simba2 and many such systems are designed to manage a large number of *independent* mailing lists
- Within CMS I claim(ed) that we want a single, unified system with independent *discussions* (what I mean by this will hopefully become clearer in the subsequent slides and demo)
- This is the realm of “forum”, “news” and “bulletin board” systems, but we *also* want mailing list functionality.



What is HyperNews?



- A discussion management system used in BaBar, STAR, Geant 4, Panda (GSI), several univ. groups, etc.
- It is what I would call a hybrid system:
 - “mailing list” features, but it presents a single, integrated system instead of many disjointed mailing lists
 - “forum”/“news”-like features
 - plus a (usable!) web interface allowing other ways of accessing the information than your mail inbox
- It is a replacement and improvement on Simba2 functionality, not Savannah, Twiki's or webpages



HyperNews History



- Original version was from HyperNews.org
- Modified/extended over the years by people at SLAC, BNL and elsewhere (Torre introduced it at SLAC and then BNL)
- In what follows I will be discussing the “SLAC HyperNews”, namely the latest version from HyperNews.org plus the SLAC-hosted changes
- The original developer has asked the SLAC people to take over the primary development (and website, I believe)



HyperNews



(Web Demo)



HyperNews



- Why HyperNews at not <insert-forum-technology>?
- Almost any “forum” system you pick would improve on the basic Simba2 mailing list functionality.
- We can debate the pros and cons of the various possibilities for years, however they all in the end lack some functionality. We need to pick one reasonable one and *make* it a winner.
- We proposed HyperNews primarily because it has been used as the main communication system for two other HENP experiments and thus we start from a solid base. In addition we had the possibility of coherency between CMS and Atlas.



Status



- CMS and Atlas both have HN instances at CERN
- Admin-less membership creation for those with CERN accounts: ssh to `hypernews.cern.ch`. HN member name is the same as unix, but separate password.
- Currently:
 - BaBar has 1800 members, ~400 forums, 250k postings
 - CMS has 266 members, 36 forums and ~1100 postings
 - Atlas has 65 members, 17 forums and ~270 postings (includes a set that were originally setup at SLAC and imported to CERN)
 - USCMS has 75 members, 16 forums and ~250 postings