

Ladok

- by Swedish universities
in cooperation

www.ladok.se

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Short on the History

- Initiated in the '70s by Central Gov't authority
- Individual universities managed the project for short periods
- The system not owned by the State as such!
- Swedish universities are highly independent; but with a uniform set of rules
- Since 1993 – by a decision of the Rectors' Conference – managed by a consortium (having first declined an offer from the central authority)

Owned by Member Institutions

- ◆ The Consortium's member institutions:
Today 34 universities *and* the National Board for Student Aid
- ◆ Covers > 98 % of the students
- ◆ Cooperation defined in a Consortium Agreement (5 years)
- ◆ The Ladok Cooperation Example –
- unique for the HE sector
- ◆ Universities exercise their influence at the assembly, twice a year.
Votes in relation to number of students

Un-orthodox Form for Association

- ◆ But the consortium form gives **restrictions**.
It is not a legal person:
 - can't employ, can't enter into contracts
 - must house our accounts in a university
- ◆ A government commission investigates the future form for association for universities themselves - this could open up new ways

Aims & Strategy

New strategy – good for 5 years

- Provide for member HE institutions useful, efficient and reliable system support in the study administrative field
- The needs of students, teachers, local and national administration
- Aims at facilitating cooperation, integration and exchange of information
- Provide support in comprehensive external contacts and cooperation

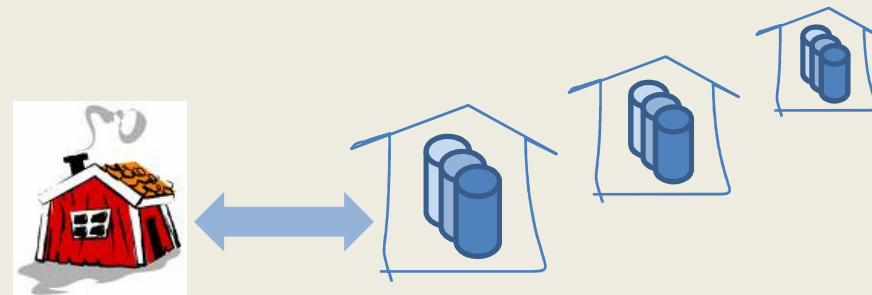
Followed by an IT-strategic operating plan

National – Local Level

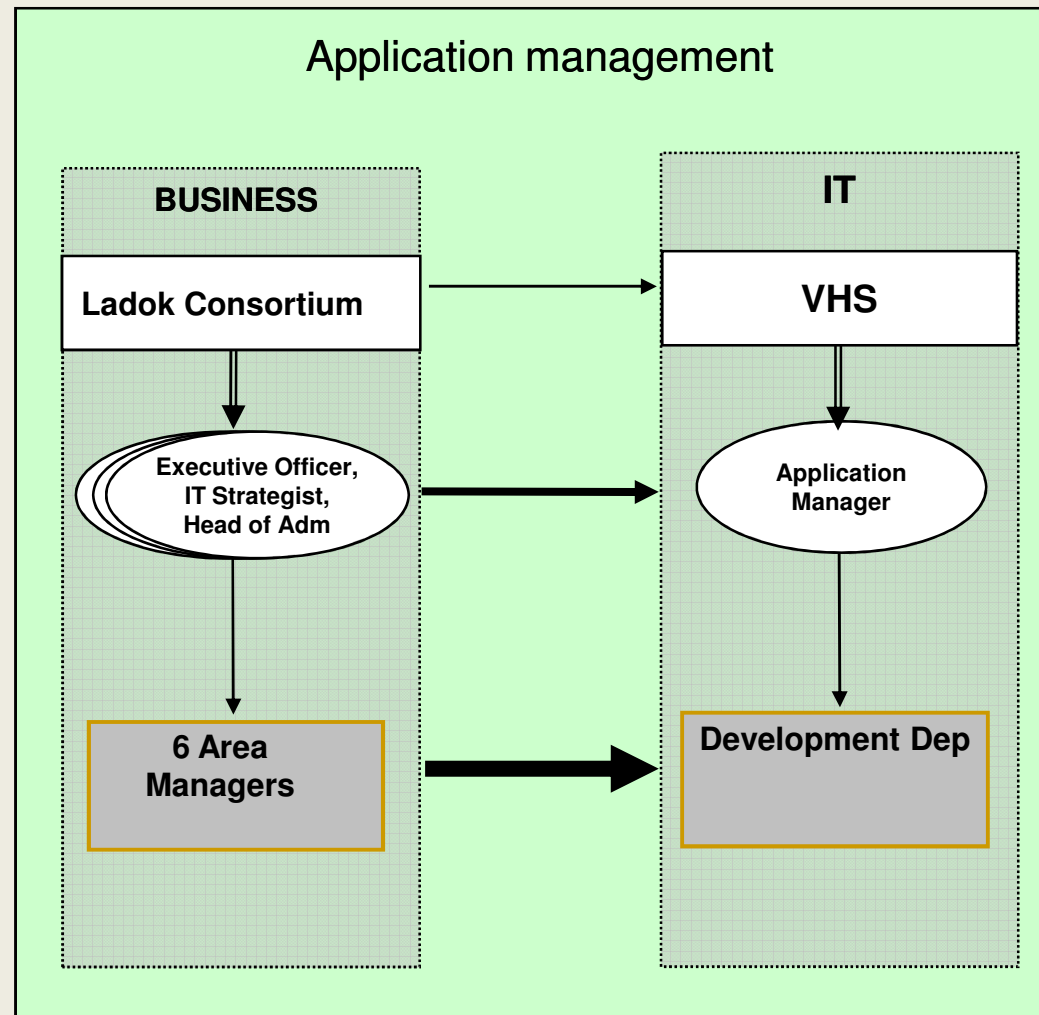
- Student databases is a strictly local responsibility. No national database
- System operating is a local matter – between the university and operating suppliers
- Two local roles are defined:
System owner and system manager
- We provide tools *and* service to local key roles

System operating of Ladok

- Operating suppliers at 3 universities
- The consortium had suppliers certified (security aspects mostly); 3 passed
- SLA set up between a member institution and a supplier. We supply the template, together with good advice



National Application Management



National Application Management, cont'd

- Separation of **Business** and **IT** parties (orderer and contractor) since 2004 - a more professional approach
- 5-year and 1-year contracts
- Consortium with two faces:
Provider – orderer
vis-à-vis universities
- Under the assembly: the board and a chief executive, representing the cons.
- Number of contracted co-workers:
Business: 4-5 full-time equivalents,
IT: around 30



Deciding What Should Be Done

Decided strategy
+ Focus decision

Local demands



Prioritize!



Decision in Board

Assembly



Annual commission,
further defined
& specified in
development projects

Finances...

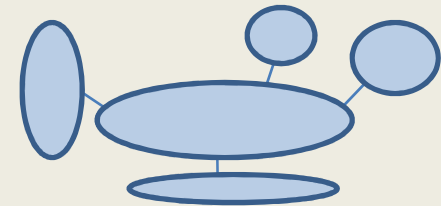
- Annual turnover of 4,6 M€
- equals to 10 € per student
- No regular government funding.
(exceptions made, for mandatory ordinance changes)
- Financed by member fees.
Still no entrance-fee. Members pay in relation to number of students
- Our host university invoices all members



Ladok Products/Functions

All functions available for all members!

- ◆ Ladok for expert users
 - Nouveau, client/server
 - Lots of functionality
- ◆ Ladok for students and teachers
 - Services for the web, certificates
- ◆ Ladok for user parties inside the university
 - follow-up functions. Before/after univ?
- ◆ Ladok for national authorities & other univ
 - Reports on a regular basis
 - Ping – support for admission, graduation & student aid
- ◆ Ladok for external parties
 - Ladok Connector notifies and provides new data



Relation to Other National Actors

- ◆ A number of national processes are totally dependent on a well-functioning Ladok:
 - Unified admissions system
 - Handling of student aid
 - Statistics production

- ◆ Education ministry
 - Allocation of resources for 1st, 2nd & 3rd cycles

- ◆ Supervising authorities
 - Quality assessment in HE
 - National Audit office
 - National Archives

Keeping up Competence

We rely entirely on fresh competence to be hired from universities. How refine?

- ◆ Ladok Academy
 - offers short Ladok-related courses
- ◆ Training for project team roles:
 - business input, testing...
- ◆ Local system owners and system managers
 - specialized training
- ◆ Study Administrative Conference
 - in May every year

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- ◆ Study Administrative Conference
 - in May every year - **wanna join in?**

Ladok consortium

- our relations
to universities
and the IT industry

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Relation to universities

Simple! ↩

- They own and finance us. They make the policy decisions concerning our activities.
- We act on their behalf when it comes to systems support matters regulated in the consortium agreement.
- We provide them with tools and are responsible for tool quality.
- We listen to their expressed and prioritized needs and are ruled by their standpoints.



How is this done?

Contacts for listening, gaining approval, decisions

- ◆ The assembly – government By The Book
- ◆ Through members of the board, executive staff, area managers
- ◆ Regular meetings with local system owners and system managers, and with members of development projects
- ◆ By polls and referrals to universities
- ◆ By means of our website (ladok.se), incl forums
- ◆ First-level training for local key-persons

Licenses, consultant services

- ◆ Contacts essentially through our main technique contractor, VHS, and their sub-contractor, the development department at Umeå university. They handle all license and IT vendor contacts.
- ◆ Consultants in development services - the development department in Umeå. Occasionally we use independent consultants for reviews, second opinion and certain investigations.
- ◆ We are moving towards regularly consider use of open source software solutions – Linux platform, MySQL dbms etc.

Operating services

- ◆ *Operating suppliers* are located at 3 universities, certified by the Consortium but contracted by each institution
- ◆ *Hardware platform* is a matter for the supplier, but based on strict recommendations from the Consortium and VHS as technique contractor



Other contacts

- ◆ On the owner/orderer side, two roles (part-time) are facing the IT industry:
 - an IT strategist and
 - an area manager for IT infrastructure, covering Ladok's relation to universities' IT structures and strategic crossroads in Ladok modernization.

University CIO:s and IT strategists, national cooperation contexts and Gartner group can exemplify the contact areas for these roles.



Cooperation with other European countries possible?

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Cooperate on ... ?

- Coop among the Nordic countries – closest by (e.g. NordForum)
Meet – talk – get to know one another!
- Our contribution will be related to a philosophy of cooperation and standardization
- Our students exist & make their choices in a European context.
Without student mobility – no need to cooperate!
- Cooperation topics:
Build bottom-up! to be able to
Follow the student!

Topics for cooperation

Concepts, definitions, representation

- Which variables? Mutual relations?
➔ Build conceptual / object *models*
- Meaning and correct interpretation?
➔ Identify differences
Discuss and agree on (?!) *definitions*
- How represent corresponding data strictly?
➔ Agree on relevant European *XML-schemas*
(EMIL, MLO etc)

Topics for cooperation, cont'd

Methods & techniques for exchange of student data

- Both students and administrators need this!
 - Let the student bring his/her info along??
 - Techniques not primarily to shovel heaps of data, but to be able to fetch/order relevant data
 - ➔ cf LadokPing, a tool for fetching student data from other Sw univ, for degrees, admission...
 - extend to "EuroPing"?
- We must be able to handle shared programmes, joint degrees etc.
 - ➔ Maybe build common modules for these purposes?

Topics for cooperation, cont'd

Facilitate for students and universities to meet in the HE supply-demand market

- Find the best ways to present HE alternatives for a European market
 - ➔ Agree on descriptions that give comparability.
Metadata on Learning Opportunities again!
Unified Eur student portal? With links to...
(cf PLOTEUS)
- Make admissions procedures over borders easier
 - ➔ Analyze processes first of all.

Topics for cooperation, cont'd

Decide to handle identities for the European arena

- Students must have at their disposal the means to be really mobil; Many cooperation projects in the field of identity handling, authentication, certificates, Shibboleth etc;
 - ➔ Map out relevant projects for coop
 - Link together – how far away is this?

Topics for cooperation, cont'd

Cooperation on statistics production

- Benchmarking for a number of purposes should be facilitated.
 - ➔ Again: Conceptual standardization and exchange techniques...
 - ➔ Surely our national statistics producing bodies must be interested?

Topics for cooperation, cont'd

Acquisition of new system modules ?

- In order to reduce cost, see what could be done - provided the right prerequisites.
 - ➔ Share cost by building single modules together or buy them together.
 - ➔ First of all: Let counterparts in other countries know in what phase of system modernisation you are and/or what is on your purchase list!
 - ➔ Carry out process analysis projects together with other parties, maybe a useful outcome.

The future for the consortium

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The near future

- ◆ Facing substantial change
some years from now
- ◆ - but we decide for ourselves!

- ◆ Probably a handful of new member institutions,
preferably non-traditional academic (right now
the Police Academy)
- slow growth.

The next 5 years or so

- ◆ *Above all:*
We prepare a process to migrate to the Next System Generation.
- ◆ Final decision not taken yet;
feasibility studies going on:
 - Business long-run needs, focusing How Best to Contribute to the local university whole
 - Technical risks in staying in today's solutions and possibilities that come with new technique
- ◆ Extensive process-oriented studies will follow

The next 5 years or so, cont'd

- ◆ Probably not many new application products added to future Ladok – rather intensify interaction with other application suppliers and organisations like us
- ◆ Maybe the Consortium will get the commission to take over the responsibility for system operating and thus the contracts with operating supplier/s.

Organization

- ◆ A governmental committee is investigating possible change in association form for university institutions.

Might give wider possibilities for universities to own and run enterprises like ours in a more effective form, e.g. as a company.

(But the Consortium construction has proved a vehicle for cooperation, well suited for the purpose.)

- ◆ We foresee increased international contacts,
 - at least to meet, learn and make plans
 - probably entering cooperation projects
 - maybe even starting joint ventures for building or acquiring of application modules