

Dear Mark and Steve,

Below is the summary of the Grid Primer tutorial that Gridwise has delivered at the Global Grid Forum 14 in Chicago.

In short, we rate this event very successful. It brought the right type of audience. Most of the participants valued it high. I think it was an excellent event both for the GGF and Gridwise Technologies, mainly as a vehicle for educational/demystifying message. It did not have direct business benefit for Gridwise, but we rather think of it as part of a long term process of creating Grid awareness, which eventually would have its role in shaping the new market in which we participate and benefit. We would like to deliver this tutorial again, in a slightly improved form and with a larger audience.

Overview

Generally, the tutorial went as planned. It took 4 hours, with a 10 minute break. The first part was a technology overview, the second part was a business side overview. Participants were definitely more interested in the first part.

There were also three demonstrations, one of them during the first part of the tutorial and the other two after the second one.

We made the tutorial interactive and we managed to engage participants into several discussions, also among themselves. People were very keen on learning each other's perspective, which was valuable because of their differing background and because many of them weren't quite the beginners. However, this wasn't always easy because the group was fairly diverse, sometimes with differing expectations.

We also encouraged participants to interrupt with their questions or comments. This happened several times and we were able to make short 'side trips' towards two or three niche subjects that the audience was interested in.

We had some chocolates, souvenirs and off-topic 'wake up' slides for those who could not stand 4 hours of teaching. After the class it could be seen that people were tired, but the anonymous feedback forms were very positive.

People filled in an online questionnaire before registration, and the paper feedback form after the class was done. For extra feedback, we have also later talked in person to several attendees later during the conference.

Participants

There were about 12-15 people in the room, about three of them only joined for part of the material. I know about 10 registered participants. 7 people filled in the entry questionnaires, and 6 people filled in the feedback forms.

Of the 10 registered participants, 6 came from the industry, and 4 came from government/academia. They mostly described themselves as technical leaders or managers. They came to the tutorial to:

- understand how to become Grid service provider
- learn about usability and state of the art of technologies/apps/tools
- learn how to 'sell' Grid to management
- learn how to encourage people to do resource sharing
- learn relationships between various Grid technologies

Feedback

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Within 6 people who filled in the anonymous feedback form, five were positive or extremely positive. We are especially proud of these statements:

- „Especially capable presenters”
- „Excellent course”
- „Worth the time and helped clear relations between technologies”
- „Well thought of & comprehensive”

Only one form was predominantly critical. Most critics we received was constructive. We plan to take it into account with future editions of the Grid Primer.

Critics we will not address

One participants said the training didn't match his/her expectations because of „too low level”, the other suggested to include „more technical details”. However, two other persons said instead things like „lot of material”, „a little bit quick”, and the majority was comfortable with the level. We conclude the GridPrimer should not become significantly more technical than it is now.

One participant wanted to hear more about standards; this view wasn't shared by others.

Critics we want to address

Some audience members wished to see

- mapping Grid technology to commercial examples
- business model and market about resource providers (2x)
- more use cases and examples
- a detailed life cycle of a 'grid event' from top to bottom
- shortened last section on 'best practices', replace with actual implementation

Note that except for the second one, none of these remarks repeated more than once. For obvious reasons (specifics of the technology time-to-market), these requirements are very difficult to fulfill.

Another less obvious reason is that our 4-hour material is already packed with facts, and two participants already complained for too much knowledge. However, our general feeling is that people would be eager to skip some theoretical material in favor of **learning by example**. Although it isn't an easy task, we want to improve our material in this direction.

We would also like to improve our demonstrations (although there were no critical remarks here). We feel they are too basic. As the vendor-neutrality requirement is difficult to address here, we would welcome suggestions from the GGF.

Finally, we received one set of technical comments (better structuring of the material) that is helpful.

Suggestions of improvements for the GGF

In our conversation you also requested that we suggest what the GGF could have done better. We have not seen any major problem here and we think our cooperation went well. Minor things to improve could include:

- Improved marketing: we are grateful for Steve's emails and Mark's keynote remark. We also think better planning of the marketing action could attract more new people to the Grid Primer, and eventually attract more people to the GGF.
- Cross linking between ours and GGF's Grid Primer web pages. Our page had more information and also allows people to become comfortable with presenters' Cvs, company profile, and online material (will publish soon). Such information makes people more comfortable with the class and potentially more willing to sign it.
- Better scheduling: having the Grid Primer on the first day of the conference was certainly a good idea. In the same time, we think that we might have 'competed' with other tutorials that were scheduled simultaneously, with a topic very similar to ours. People were forced to choose between the two.
- Intellectual property statement: We had initially agreed that the material is not branded by the GGF and as such its IP belongs to Gridwise. Therefore we were confused with the meaning of the GGF intellectual property statement that was distributed to participants during the tutorial. We would like to clarify this issue.
- Early notice: We would appreciate receiving the notice from the GGF as early as possible about the future editions of the GridPrimer. This would allow us to book the tickets ahead of time and eventually fit or almost fit within the \$1000 personal travel allowance

Summary

We think this event was a good start and we propose to continue this activity on the following GGF conferences. GGF's input to the content and form is welcome. We believe it is highly beneficial for the GGF to have such an introductory material, where people can see a coherent picture of Grid computing trend. Eventually they become better prepared to participate in the community, better understand their needs and the available solutions. It is also beneficial for Gridwise, which is interested in maintaining contact with the technology users and people seeking Grid solutions. We are looking forward for a similar feedback from your side, and a decision of the future directions.

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