



news



Intelligent Business on Demand (IBOD) has launched its new government-funded social enterprise search site. The site improves the visibility of social enterprises; organisations that attempt to effect social good by applying free-market business strategies. IBOD's new search site provides highly valuable opportunities for these enterprises to gain exposure, to network, and to exchange ideas, form partnerships and pursue funding.

IBOD recognised the need for a social enterprise search site while setting up its own social enterprise; Stepping Stones Support. IBOD resolved to improve this situation by putting in place an effective, web-based social enterprise search engine.

"We quickly realized that the real 'glue' and heart of

the matter was search," said Gemma Chambers, IBOD Director.

"It should be easy to find any social enterprise anywhere in the UK, and this should be a free national resource."

IBOD received major funding from the government to initialise this project and having considered a number of vendors, chose Flax.

"In order to redefine a sector that has significant positive impact on communities," added Chambers, IBOD Director, "we needed a comprehensive system that we could modify and extend, and that would grow with our needs. We needed a company with a deep focus and understanding of search technology, and an established history of building these kinds of

systems. Flax was immediately pro-active and helpful to our needs. There aren't many companies that hold Flax's degree of passion about their area of work."



"It boils down to how fast Flax understood our needs, their process of building real prototypes, and getting down to the nitty-gritty in an agile process was key. Flax's fast responses and good communication sealed the deal. From initial contact, through developing the prototype and starting the full version there were no real issues. This is testament to Flax's deep knowledge of search technology. Our needs have been met perfectly."

socialenterprisesearch.com

Xapian 1.2.0 arrives

Xapian 1.2.0, the first of a new 'stable' release series, was announced a few weeks ago and we've just uploaded pre-built binaries for Windows and associated build files. You can find them on our Xapian downloads page:

http://www.flax.co.uk/xapian_binaries

This version of Xapian, which is at the heart of the Flax software, features a new, faster, more compact database format and enhanced backwards compatibility with existing databases; a built-in replication system (so in a distributed system you only need to propagate the changes to a Xapian database across the network); a "Match Spy" interface to allow information about search results (such as facets) to be gathered efficiently; subclassable "Posting Sources" to allow extremely flexible search customisations and many more improvements. Nearly all of these have been available previously in the 1.1 'development' series – you can find out more about how development and stable releases differ on the Xapian RoadMap page:

<http://trac.xapian.org/wiki/RoadMap>

Flax Website Redesign

We've now completely redesigned the Flax website – we hope you like it. We've tried to focus more on explaining exactly what we do and how the Flax open source search platform might be able to help your business.

Of course, there are sure to be teething problems – if you find anything that doesn't work do let us know!

<http://www.flax.co.uk/>

About Flax

The Flax Team is highly active in the information retrieval market with international clients from sectors including academia, public relations, e-commerce, government and private businesses.

The Flax™ project delivers a cutting-edge enterprise search solution, using the power of open source software to drive down costs and provide world beating search performance with no software licence fees.

The Flax Team also provides general expertise and development in technologies such as Java, C++, Linux, Windows and XML.