



History, Theory and Future

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- ◆ Overview of what Moodle is
- ◆ Background and history
- ◆ Some theoretical background and aims
- ◆ Statistics
- ◆ Support
- ◆ Development
- ◆ Some lessons learned
- ◆ Future directions
- ◆ Two scenarios (if we have time)

- ◆ A software application that can be added to a web server to create a flexible web-based environment for creating and managing online courses.
- ◆ A modular toolbox for creating online activities and assignments
- ◆ A content manager for integrating nearly any content
- ◆ A system for creating communities of learners
- ◆ Assessment aids with detailed logging and grading
- ◆ Can work together with other systems in your environment
- ◆ Free, Open Source software under the GPL license
- ◆ Compares pretty well with products like WebCT and Blackboard
- ◆ A work in progress!



- ◆ Administrator of online learning at Curtin University
 - ◆ Experienced developer of internet software (since 1986)
 - ◆ Dissatisfied with existing products at the time
 - ◆ Had the ability to fix problems and customise software but was prevented by closed-source licenses
 - ◆ Developed passionate belief in the possibility of something better
 - ◆
- ◆ Masters and PhD research
 - ◆ Performed detailed case studies of online classes and students
 - ◆ Detailed reviews of education literature

→ **Moodle 1.0, August 2001**

- ◆ Collaborative learning – everyone is a potential teacher as well as a learner
- ◆ Learning through the act of creating something for others to see
- ◆ Learning by observing actions of peers
- ◆ Relating of new knowledge to personal contexts (transformative knowledge and constructivism)

Attitudes to thinking and learning

◆ Separate Knowing

Interacting with others in a more critical or argumentative way, seeking to prove or disprove “facts”. Very much scientific tradition.

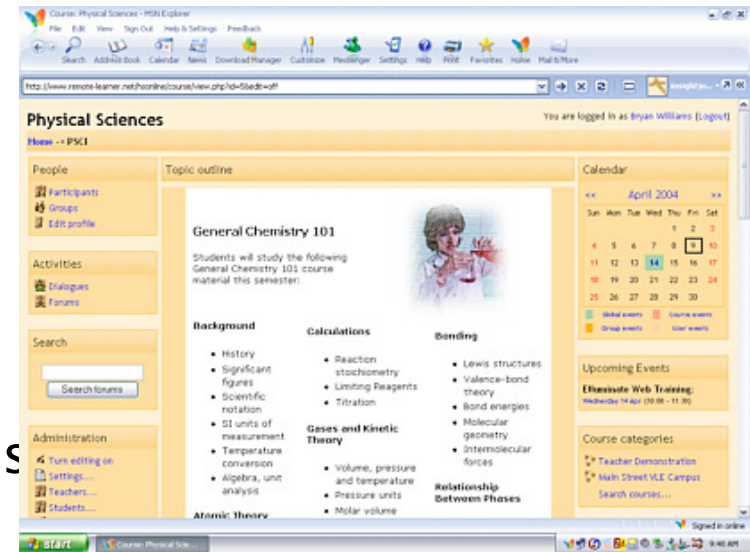
◆ Connected Knowing

Interacting with others in a way intended to achieve mutual learning, seeking points of view and better understanding of reasons and motivations.

◆ Constructed Knowing

An understanding of both the above with the ability to use of each of them as appropriate to the dialogue.

- ◆ Course design is based on the simple metaphor of a series of activities
- ◆ There are nearly 20 available types of activities, such as forum discussions, assignments, glossaries, chats etc, and each has many options.
- ◆ Creating courses is quite simple and lends itself to constant re-evaluation and re-shaping during a course.
- ◆ Filters provide auto-linking and auto-formatting of text, solid mathematics notation and integration of multimedia (sound, video) throughout courses.
- ◆ Email notifications of events and posts keep interaction bubbling
- ◆ Content from around the web, including packaging standards like SCORM can easily be introduced at any time.
- ◆ Moodle courses can be packaged and moved around.



Moodle is downloaded over 400 times each day

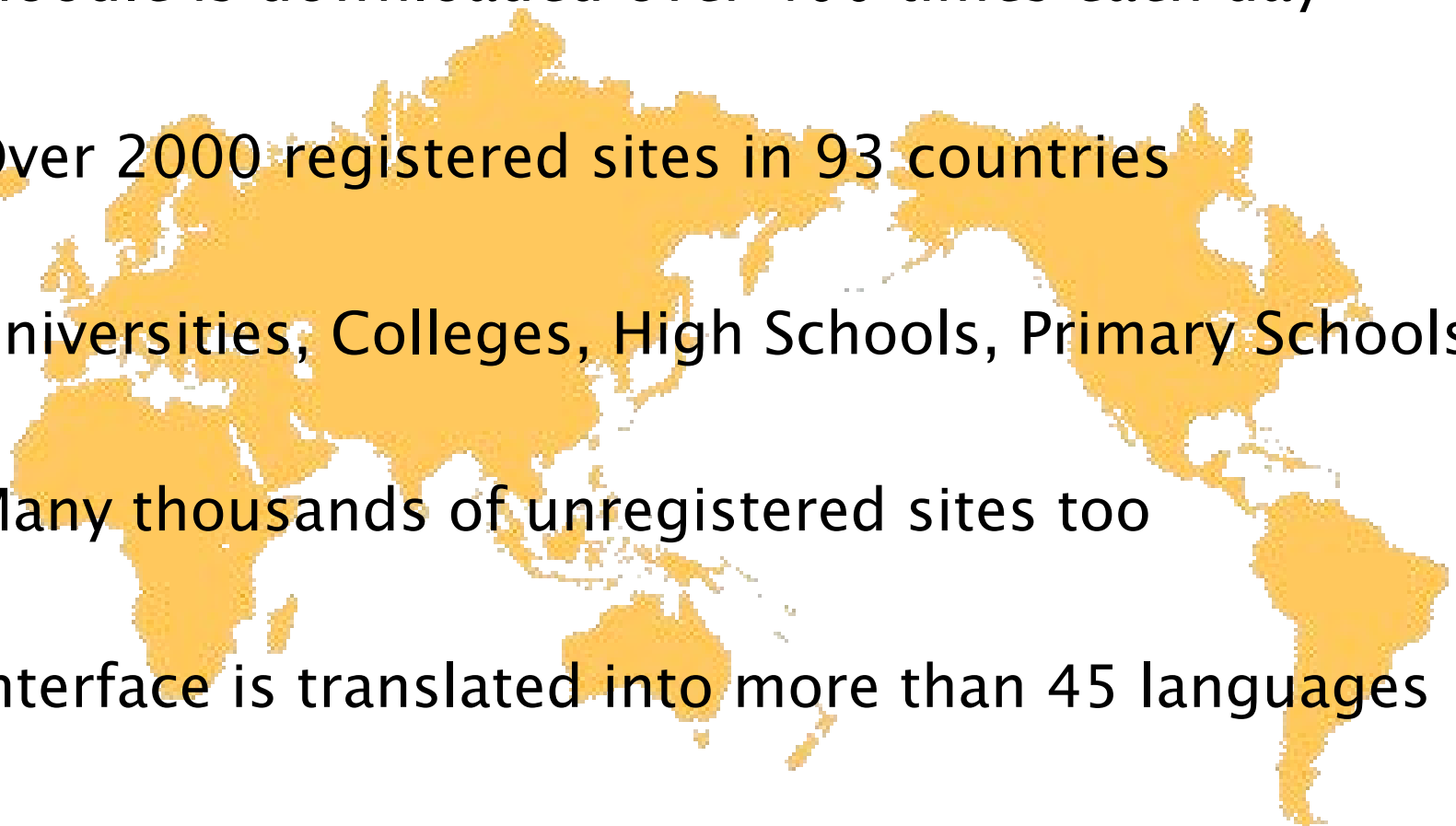
Over 2000 registered sites in 93 countries

Universities, Colleges, High Schools, Primary Schools

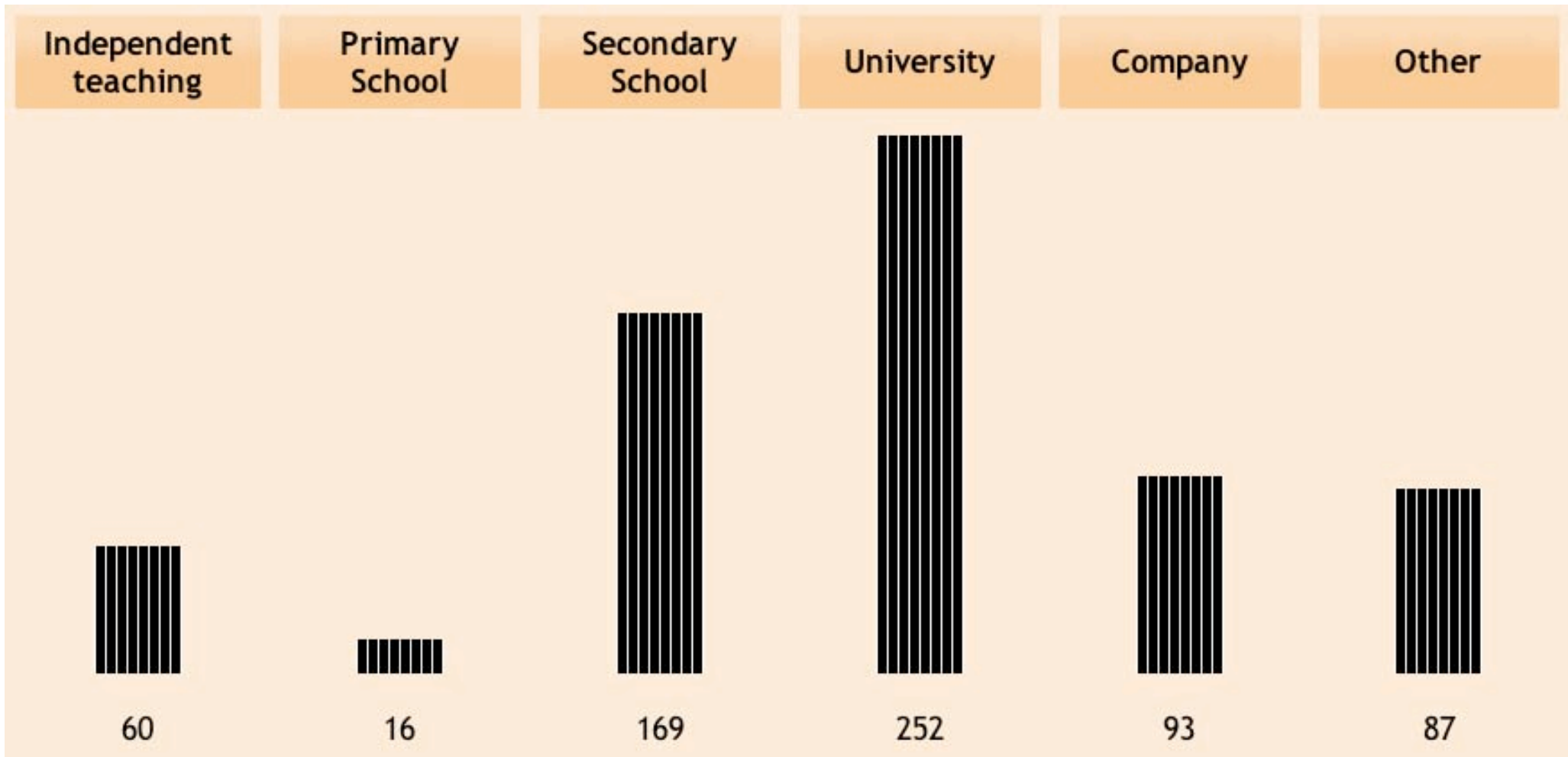
Many thousands of unregistered sites too

Interface is translated into more than 45 languages

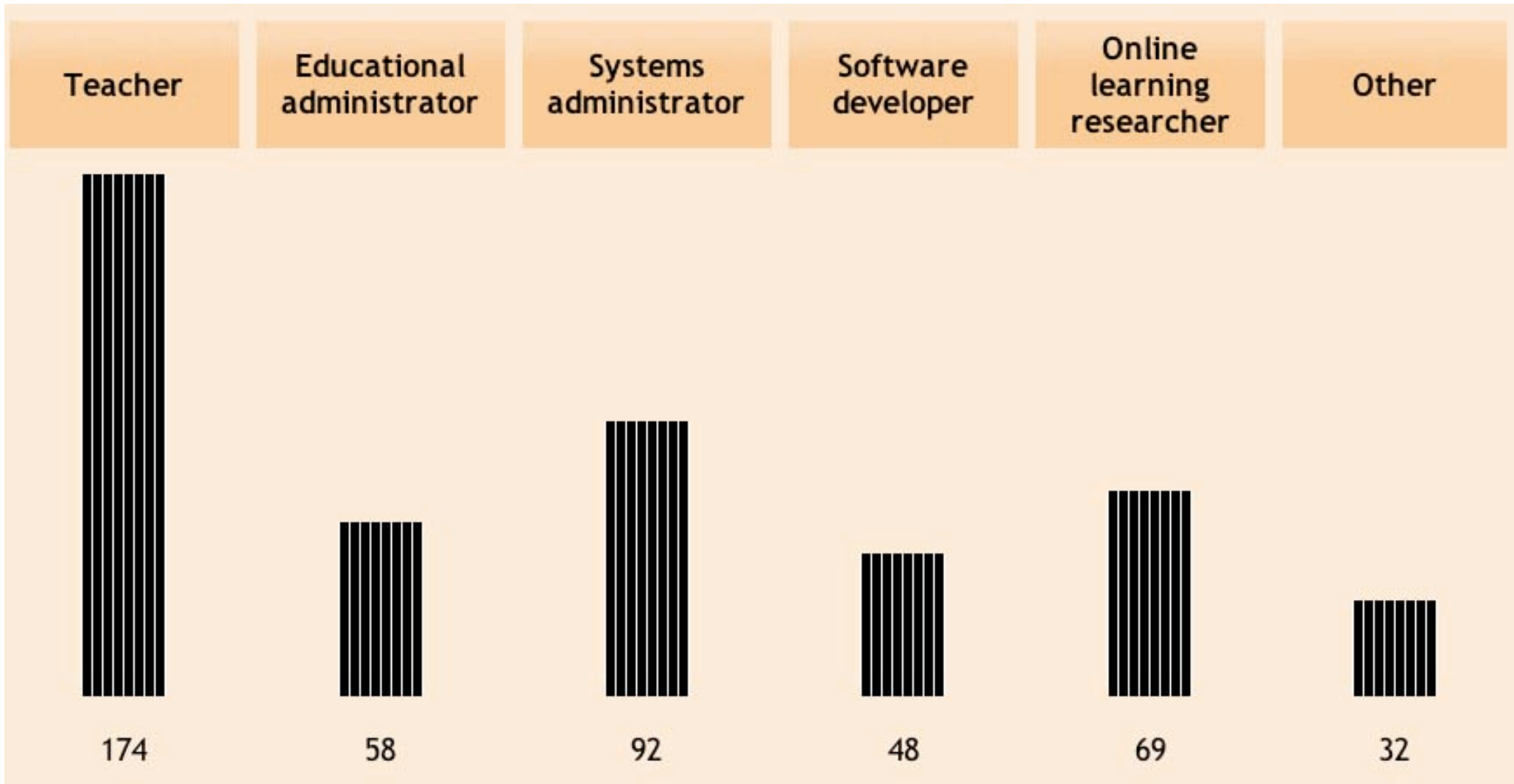
Over 3000 recent participants in the support forums



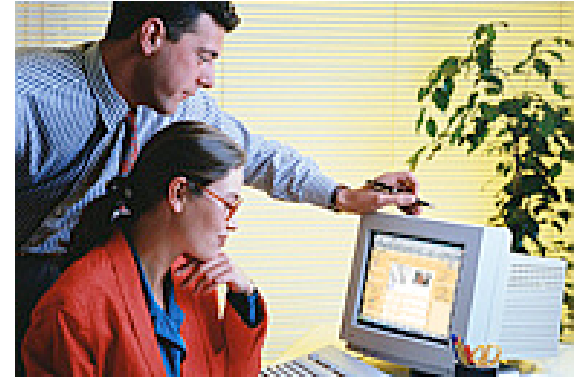
Where are you using Moodle?



What role led you to being a Moodle user?



- ◆ Local support – Moodle creates employment for local IT staff all around the world
- ◆ Community support via forums at Moodle.org and elsewhere on the web
- ◆ Commercial support via world-wide Moodle Partners at Moodle.com



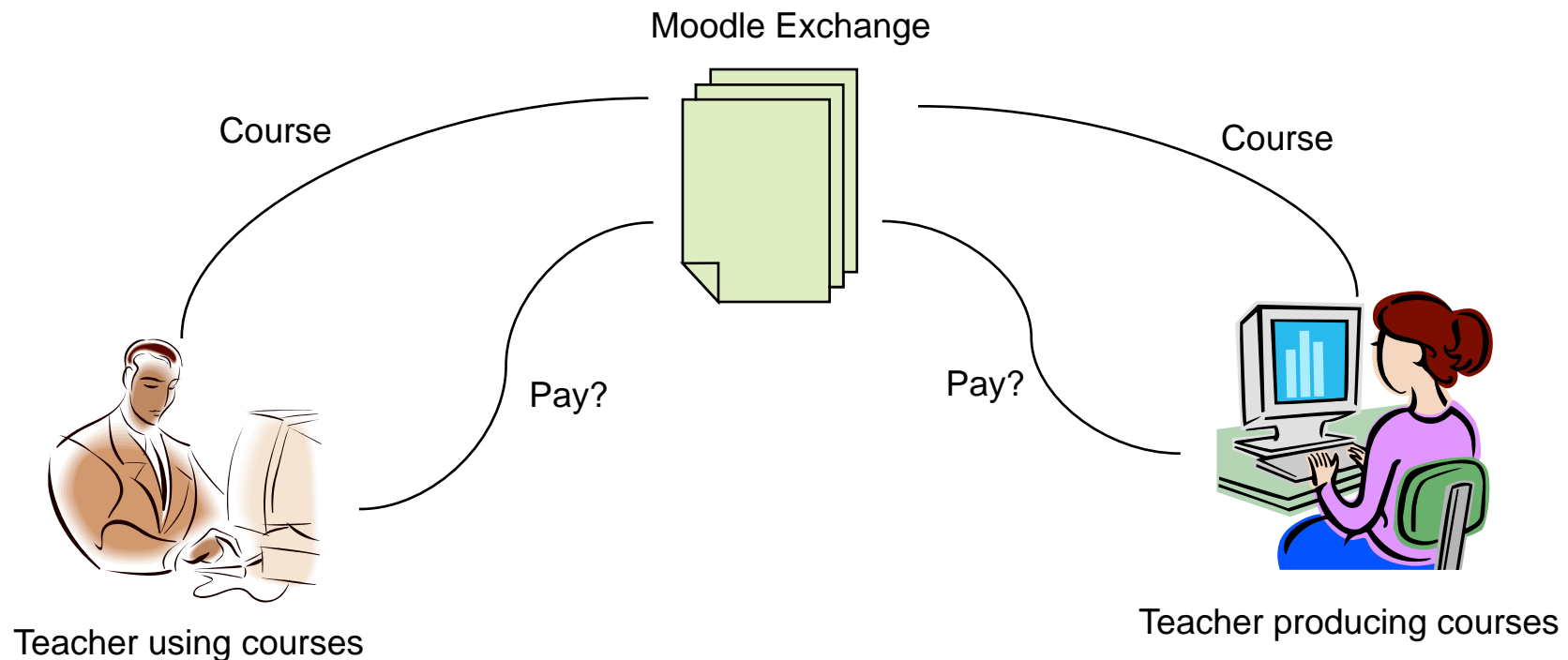
- ◆ Over 75 contributing developers in total
- ◆ Many are teachers or students who are “scratching an itch”
- ◆ Many are paid by their institutions to produce customisations
- ◆ Some are contracted via moodle.com by clients who need certain features
- ◆ Not everything ends up in the main release – Moodle’s modular structure provides choice
- ◆ All modifications are also Open Source

- ◆ Learn and acknowledge other's backgrounds
- ◆ Pay close attention when listening/reading
- ◆ Take care when writing, re-edit as necessary
- ◆ Respond sooner rather than later to keep connection "hot"
- ◆ Respond in the other's terms
- ◆ Ask "Socratic" questions that promote critical thought in the other
- ◆ Introduce your own world as it relates to the other's discussion to give the other an opportunity to make further links

- ◆ Better documentation
- ◆ Further simplification of the user interface
- ◆ Further clarification on the programmer interfaces
- ◆ Custom-defined roles
- ◆ Further options for most modules
- ◆ Increased performance and scalability
- ◆ Even better integration with existing systems
- ◆ Templates and accessibility
- ◆ Increased pedagogical support
- ◆ More standards support
- ◆ Portals from within Moodle sites to subject-based communities
- ◆ Course sharing



- ◆ Moodle courses already can be compressed into a single file and shared between installations
- ◆ We are working towards automating this process via the Moodle Course Exchange, creating a shared marketplace for teachers.



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- ◆ Quiz features are a hot topic in Moodle
- ◆ Many people want many different things, but it's not possible to do everything.
- ◆ So, we used a forum for suggestions and discussion about ways forward, with some moderation
- ◆ From that, a Choice activity (poll) was created of the top-six wanted features.
- ◆ People can vote on one, and they can change their vote according to ongoing discussions and experience.
- ◆ Everybody can see who chose what, which helps to gauge not only the amount but the type of support for each option – this also affects discussion as people learn about each other's backgrounds and needs.

- ◆ Similar techniques can be used to negotiate learning goals in a class.
- ◆ Facilitated discussions can be used to brainstorm options (within reason)
- ◆ Class decisions can be made, leading to further activities, assignments, etc.
- ◆ Online tools can make this easier to manage, even in a face-to-face class.

- ◆ Moodle has a staggering amount of work, including planning, coding, bug fixing, documentation, support, teaching etc
- ◆ Whenever I find an enthusiastic person in the community who matches a job that needs doing, I will give that person the tools, instructions and communication to do the job.
- ◆ For example, the Moodle.org courses on Business, Conferences, Documentation and even the list of sites.
- ◆ It doesn't always work out (especially with volunteers) but when it does that person feels like a valuable contributor to the structure we are building together.
- ◆ These leaders also have a chance to build groups around themselves and help others.

Available Courses

-  **Community Discussion**
 - Using Moodle
 - Moodle Documentation
 - Moodle for Language Teachers
 - Moodle for Business Users
 - Moodle Conferences
 - Moodle Exchange
-  **Community Discussion**
 - مودل العربي
 - 简体中文 Moodle
 - Deutsches Moodle
 - Finnish Moodle
 - Japanese Moodle

- ◆ Students are **constructing** for their peers
- ◆ Best way to learn is to teach (and it can be fun to be “the teacher” in an online course!)
- ◆ Encouraging teamwork
- ◆ Coping with different personalities
- ◆ Role-playing, simulations
- ◆ Preparing for careers
- ◆ etc...