A Virtual Campus for E-learning Inclusion:
The Case of SVC-G9

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Abstract: Academics and professionals agree that, to adapt higher education institutions to the XXI century, it is imperative to extend the use of ICT as well as the virtualization of many human-interaction activities. There is therefore a need to move from the use of ICT as support tools to e-learning instruments based on virtual environments. These environments can be used for e-inclusion. That is, systems can be used to remove communication and interaction barriers that people with disabilities may face in the real world. This paper presents a project which implies the implementation of a virtual interuniversity campus where nine Spanish higher education institutions took part. To enhance Web accessibility as the usability of the system by users with disabilities is one of the main project's objectives. In addition, the paper analyses the teen-year experience of an e-business course for engineers offered simultaneously by the nine universities through this platform. The main conclusions of this work can be valuable to higher education institutions which have implemented or intend to implement a virtual interuniversity campus.

1   Introduction

The degree of development of certain domains is considered to be linked to the level of implementation of ICT ([Lucio-Nieto et al., 12]; [Soto-Acosta et al., 13]. However, the adoption of ICT has followed different patterns depending on the environment. Thus, although the business context has reached high levels of ICT adoption, other important contexts for the future of generations such as higher education remain certainly laggard in comparison ([Bernard et al., 04]; [Jones et al., 10]; [Park, 09]; [Tallent-Runnels et al., 06]). Despite of this, e-learning has become increasingly common in higher education institutions all over the world. The existing literature considers e-learning as an advanced pedagogy that makes use of digital technology ([Nichols, 08]; [Rosenberg, 01]), and is related to the use of the Internet and other