CAQ-Portal

At the latest, since introduction of Web 2.0 browser-based applications have got a high acceptance that can be ascribed to an improved usability and performance. The classical drawback of a limited usability – as opposed to the intrinsic advantages such as the (potential) availability of an application across company borders, a more efficient software management, and reducing client requirements to a capable browser – vanishes more and more so that the difference between a traditional and a web-based application becomes increasingly unimportant even from the user's view.
The significant technological progress in the field of web applications have motivated AHP to follow the common trend and complement the existing CAQ product iQ-BASIS by adding an own portal solution that allows to use classical iQ-BASIS features in a browser-based environment.

Workflow

The AHP CAQ Portal is the centre of any web-based activities in the context of the CAQ application iQ-BASIS. Running on a web server the portal and the *portlets* that are installed in it use the same database as the classical client/server solution and therefore allow to directly utilizing existing quality and master data without additional efforts. Which set of portlets – that means web-based features – is available can be configured for each user individually and of course also depends on the extent of using iQ-BASIS as CAQ system. (Examples of portlets that are currently available are listed in the section "Important Features at a Glance".) The user management is based on the same settings that have been specified for iQ-BASIS so that the administrative effort remains minimal regarding this aspect.
Depending on the underlying web server the portal is available in the Intranet or the Internet. The Internet approach allows involving third-party institutions such as suppliers in the direct usage of the CAQ system by accessing portlets. Modern security mechanisms ensure that this communication is riskless for both the user and the system provider.
The portal can be integrated seamlessly in most existing Intranet/Internet environments thanks to flexible layout functions and features like "single sign-on". The software uses up-to-date technologies and is independent from the browser with respect to the generated pages.
From user view the portal is started within the browser. The next step is logging into the system where users that exist in iQ-BASIS can keep their account details. Following the login the user has access to any portlets that have been activated for this user by assigning appropriate permissions. The user can then work in the system independently from the work place and the affiliation to the company that uses iQ-BASIS without requiring more software than a browser. Any data that results from these activities will be stored to the CAQ database directly and is in consequence available for use in the classical iQ-BASIS environment afterwards.

Important Features at a Glance

Existing portlets

- Action processing – The performer of an action gets an email that an action must be defined/edited and can directly open the action within the portlet by clicking a hyperlink in this email.
- Reporting – Using this portlet reports and evaluations configured in iQ-BASIS can be run and viewed as PDF outcome over the web. Currently the feature is limited to Crystal Reports reports but an extension to Microsoft Office is already planned.
- Gauge overview – Using a search function it is possible to determine the status of a gauge at any time along with viewing its master data list and history.
- Requirements for capability analysis – This portlet allows for creating that kind of requirements and gives an overview of existing records.
- Communication interface – The interface allows exchanging quality data such as sampling inspection, calibration data or 8D reports with business partners.

Interaction of the portal and iQ-BASIS

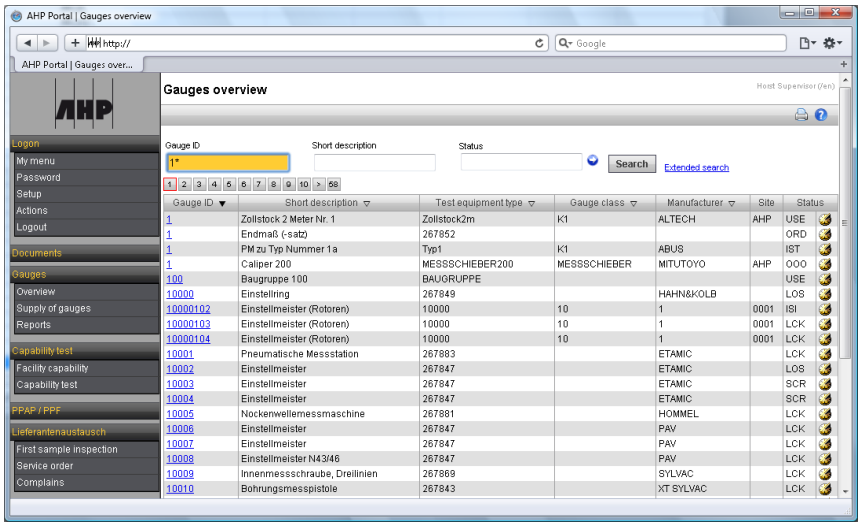
- Because the portal uses the same database as iQ-BASIS it is completely integrated. Data collected over portlets is available in iQ-BASIS and vice versa.
- A common system for managing users and permissions results in a minimal administration effort.
- A high level of reusing program code in both systems results in a very robust environment also for the portal.
- Using the portal even "external" persons get the possibility to work with/affect quality relevant data.

Special features

- Continuous capability to handle multiple languages
- Multi page overviews to minimize loading times and enable a quick browsing through the records
- Complete support by catalogues additionally offering a direct input of content without loosing validation
- Customizable menu considering the permissions that are configured in iQ-BASIS
- Different layouts usable
- Print view for current web page

Technological aspects

- Professional Web 2.0 user interface
- Support of any important browser
- Sophisticated security mechanisms for defending attacks (e. g. by SQL injection)
- Single sign-on



Interfaces to Other Modules

- *iQ-KONFIG* for managing users and permissions as well as other administrative data
- *iQ-GL* for a centralized maintenance of all master data that is relevant in other modules, too
- *iQ-PROJEKTE* for managing actions in iQ-BASIS that can be edited even by external persons using the corresponding action processing portlet
- *iT-MAIL* when it is necessary to send mails automatically (for example as a result of an overdue action)
- *iQ-INFO* if you need to create reports on your own – for example using Crystal Reports – that can be run and viewed using the reporting portlet
- *iQ-PMV* for managing gauge master data
- *iQ-PMF* for performing capability analysis