▸D5.1 Specification of Quarterly Priorities – WikiRate.org

A schedule of themed huddles and its frame of the development of corporate network maps

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Abtract

Design and development priorities for corporate network mapping (WP5) are aligned with the ChainReact project's broader quarterly priorities via a "Schedule of Huddles". Themes for huddles (quarterly consortium meetings) have been designed to coordinate achievement of project objectives.

History

Version	Date	Reason	Revised by
0.1	3/22/16	Proposed Huddle Schedule	Ethan McCutchen
1.0	3/30/16	Full Write-up	Ethan McCutchen
1.01	3/31/16	Review and minor revisions	Richard Mills

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Executive Summary

For ChainReact to thrive, design and development of its three main struts – The Whistle[1], OpenCorporates, and WikiRate – must be well coordinated. Two of these struts – OpenCorporates and WikiRate – will collaborate to create extensive, usable maps of corporate relationships, and their efforts in this domain must be particularly well harmonized.

The grant's five milestones provide an overarching strategic roadmap, but to achieve more consistent alignment throughout the course of the project, the ChainReact Consortium has also embraced a schedule of quarterly meetings (called "Huddles") through which the project will support reaching our milestones and ultimately achieving our project objectives.

The present document outlines the themes of those quarterly meetings, which will support all partners in setting resonant quarterly priorities for their respective work. It then presents rationales for those themes, both in terms of how they support project objectives, and why they were chosen for the specific quarters to which they were assigned.

For each theme, we also consider the specific ramifications for Work Package 5: *Corporate Network Mapping – Design and Development*. The first three huddles are oriented towards the delivery of a proof-of-concept demo at ChainReact Alpha (MS2), by which WP5 will have delivered prototypical integration between all three struts. As focus shifts to our beta launch (MS3), we will increasingly focus on supporting the data needs of our pilot projects. By the time of our full launch (MS4) and media challenge (MS5), our company network maps will be extensively populated, and we will be exploring increasingly sophisticated means of enriching them further.

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[1] As noted in recent correspondence, *The Whistle* has replaced the provisional name *TalkFree* as the title of ChainReact's citizen reporting platform. To minimize confusion, we will use the name *The Whistle* in place of *TalkFree* in the names of work projects, tasks, and deliverables, including the name of the present deliverable.

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1 Introduction

Every quarter, the ChainReact Consortium will convene a *Huddle* during which we assemble (alternately online and offline) to assess progress, align priorities, and tackle the most significant conceptual, practical, and strategic challenges we're facing.

Each huddle will have a *theme* intended to reflect and focus the most important priorities of the quarter ahead. The theme is meant to be integrative, not constrictive; many topics outside of the theme will be discussed at each huddle. But there will be a major push to explore the theme thoroughly with the participation of all partners.

By the end of a huddle, each consortium partner should clear on their current responsibilities to the project, their deliverables due, the collaborators they will be working with, and the process by which the ends will be achieved.

This deliverable presents a *Schedule of Huddles* (Section 2) that includes a proposed theme for each huddle. The purpose of the Schedule is to ensure regularly timed huddles with thematic material driven by and supportive of the high-level objectives of the project. The canonical version of this schedule will reside at our shared documentation website and will be updated as dates and locations are determined and as themes are updated to reflect any changes in the strategic course of the project.

The document explores each huddle theme, its rationale, and how it will advance the project's core objectives. It will also give a high-level view of how these project priorities might translate into work priorities for tasks associated with Work Package 5: *Corporate Network Mapping - Design and Development*. This document does *not* seek to prescribe low-level development specifications for each quarter; that level of detail is to happen at the huddles themselves.

Note that a similar deliverable, D3.1 (Specification of Quarterly priorities – The Whistle), will be submitted as part of Work Package 3 (The Whistle - Design and Development). Because there will be just one consortium huddle per quarter, both deliverables will, naturally, have the same schedule, same themes, same theme rationales, and same connections to project objectives. The primary difference between D3.1 and D5.1 will be in the implications subsections of Section 4, which explore the implications of the quarterly priorities for the respective work package.

2 Schedule of Huddles

Quarter	Year	Month	Theme[2]	Location
I	**2016**	Jan 14-15	Kickoff	Cambridge, UK
II		June 15-16	Definitions	*Online*
III		Jul-Sep[3]	Proof of Concept	Cambridge, UK
IV		Oct-Dec	Usability	*Online*
V	**2017**	Jan-Mar	Pilot Campaign Design	TBD
VI		Apr-Jun	Pilot Campaign Execution	*Online*
VII		Jul-Sep	Pilot Feedback	TBD
VIII		Oct-Dec	Data Needs	*Online*
IX	**2018**	Jan-Mar	Scalability	TBD
X		Apr-Jun	Media Challenge	*Online*
XI		Jul-Sep	Adaptation	*Online*[4]
XII		Oct-Dec	Future Directions	TBD

Table 2.1 Huddle Date, Theme, and Location

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[2] The proposed themes are explained in more detail in section 4
[3] Exact huddle dates are set one huddle in advance.
[4] A second consecutive online huddle is scheduled here so that the final huddle can be in person.

3. Project Objectives

The Huddle Schedule was designed in support the following project objectives and project tasks (as articulated in the Technical Annex to the grant proposal, section 1.1.1)

3.1 Objective 1: Reporting

Identify irresponsible corporate activity.

This core objective is central to our system design, and the citizen reporting platform (The Whistle) is integrated within the ChainReact ecosystem to serve this end. Therefore it will be a focus of every huddle, broken down as follows:

3.1.1 Subgoal A:

Create a multilingual reporting platform to solicit reports about corporate behavior (The Whistle).

The alpha launch of The Whistle is the centerpiece of milestone two in M9 (ChainReact Alpha) and will therefore be focal in the initial huddles as we define, design, implement and hone its initial functionality.

Huddles: I-IV

3.1.2 Subgoal B

Run at least three reporting campaigns sponsored by international advocacy groups to drive participation on The Whistle.

Subgoal B can be broken down further into pilot campaigns and subsequent full campaigns.

Pilot Campaign

The first pilot reporting campaign is part of milestone 3 in M18 (ChainReact Beta), and the surrounding huddles are organized around preparing for and learning from the pilot campaign.

Huddles: V-VII

Full campaigns

Our full campaigns, which kick off with milestone 5 (ChainReact Media Challenge) will, naturally, respond to the lessons learned in the pilot campaign and will be considerably more extensive in reach. The surrounding huddles are designed to ensure success in these campaigns and proactive development of all required technical structures.

Huddles: VIII-XII

3.2 Objective 2: Mapping

Connect issues at corporate networks' edges to network drivers.

This objective requires the integration of all three ChainReact "struts": The Whistle, OpenCorporates, and WikiRate. The huddles are therefore critical to its success, because they bring the full team together.

3.2.1 Subgoal A

Seed and make navigable ChainReact's corporate relationship mapping data by automated processing of official public documents and cross-platform integrations.

Huddle II, which focuses on *Definitions*, will be especially critical to defining the best connection and integration points for the three struts. Honing and deepening the integration will be a recurring theme at each huddle in the first two years of the project.

Huddles: I-VII

3.2.2 Subgoal B

Deepen and improve corporate network maps by engaging corporations and their stakeholders via disclosure outreach.

While we will be building relationships with representatives of transparency-minded corporations as early as M7, we expect engagement of corporations and their stakeholders with the technical platform to begin as part of the pilot campaign (milestone 3). Therefore community engagement will become a focal topic of discussion at Huddle V (Pilot Campaign Design).

Huddles: V-XII

3.3 Objective 3: Responsiveness

Incentivize companies to address network issues.

The core of our strategy for effecting positive change in corporate behavior is:

1. Distill complex issues into something tractable: responsive ratings of known brands
2. Make companies care enough about those ratings to want to improve them by improving their behavior.

Objective 1 and 2 above will serve to generate the necessary data, but to have an impact it must be distilled and used. We already have a working conception of how incentivizing responsiveness will be achieved, and this is built into the design of the platform and the types of information it serves.

While this objective will seem distant in the initial huddles when the focus is on data generation and mapping, refining incentive structures will be increasingly central to later huddles, beginning with the pilot campaign.

3.3.1 Subgoal A

Support community development of network-aware corporate metrics on WikiRate.org.

These metrics represent the guiding end goal for ChainReact in data terms; to achieve these metrics on WikiRate we must combine reports from The Whistle with mapping from OpenCorporates and interpret both on WikiRate.org.

This objective will therefore be directly revisited at every huddle.

Huddles: I-XII

3.3.2 Subgoal B

Conduct integrated issue-focused ChainReact media campaigns that celebrate best- and denounce worst- performing companies

While the pilot campaigns will pave the way, they will not have a best- and worst- performance focus, because they will by definition be dealing with less comprehensive data that will make it difficult to make superlative claims. Therefore this particular subgoal really begins to receive full focus at Huddle VIII (Data Needs), at which point we will begin laying a path towards ensuring that our data can support bold claims of this nature.

Huddles: VIII-XII

4. Huddle Themes: Rationale and WP5 implications

Each of the following sections explores a Huddle theme, the reason the huddle theme was chosen, and anticipated consequences for the design and development of corporate network maps (WP5).

4.1 Q1 Kickoff

Huddle I, held in Cambridge, UK on January 14-15, 2016, provided the first opportunity for the ChainReact consortium to assemble as a coherent legal whole.

4.1.1 Rationale

We scheduled this "Kickoff" huddle as early as participants could make it in order to get the ChainReact project off to a strong start.

4.1.2 WP5 Implications

The Kickoff Huddle marked the first in-person meeting between developers of OpenCorporates and WikiRate and the most in-depth discussions to date about how their two systems would integrate. Figure 1 illustrates an updated understanding of relationship between the all three struts based on discussions held at Huddle I. Note the nature of data flows between OpenCorporates and WikiRate, the most important of which is a two-way flow of corporate network edges between OpenCorporates and the rest of the ChainReact data ecosystem through WikiRate (This will be explored in more detail in section 4.2.2).

Huddle I's most immediate implication for design and development was agreement upon the need for further research into the availability of data from which various kinds of network maps might be constructed. This research will be discussed in more detail in Q2, including at the second huddle, in order to refine network mapping structures and definitions.
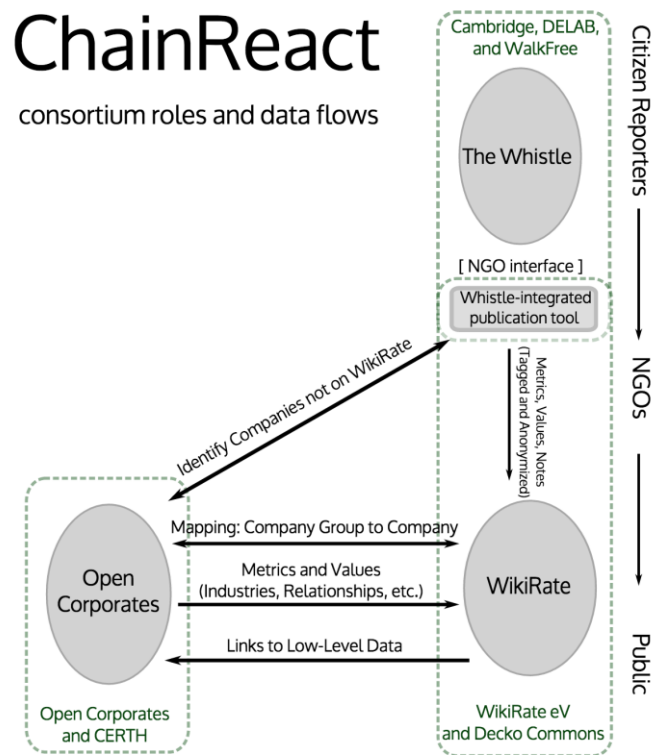

Figure 1 ChainReact consortium roles and data flows

4.2. Q2 Definitions

"Definitions" here refers to concrete, actionable, functional definitions of key terms, particularly those used at integration points between the different struts of the ChainReact platform.

4.2.1 Rationale

In Huddle I, we began tackling questions of definitions, many of which on the surface appear trivial, eg "what exactly is a company" or "what does a report contain". Successfully integrating The Whistle, OpenCorporates, and ChainReact will depend upon great clarity (and strategic wisdom) in defining these terms. Therefore we think it wise to make "Definitions" the focus of our second huddle, with a mind to ensuring that all integration points are well defined from very early on in the project.

4.2.2 WP5 Implications

Resolving and formalizing the definitions of "company" and "network" will be the top WP5 priorities in Q2. The process of settling these questions will require the integration of research, data mapping experiments, and lots of systems design.

Some basic principles became clear even at the Kickoff Huddle. For example, a "company" on WikiRate.org will not be the same as a "company" on OpenCorporates. On OpenCorporates there are hundreds of interconnected companies that combine to form what would be considered the single company "PepsiCo" on WikiRate.org (and in the minds of most citizens). In most cases, these "corporate groups", as they are described on OpenCorporates, cannot be reconciled into a simple hierarchy; there is not one legal entity that sits atop the others.

Generally speaking, OpenCorporates' definition of a single company is settled, in that it follows a narrow legal definition of a registered entity. WikiRate, meanwhile, is charged with making a complex data world interpretable, and this includes creating a working definition of companies that maps cleanly enough to common conceptions of what a company is – a conception that is dramatically simpler than legal reality.

While it would be correct to suggest that WikiRate is concerned with *corporate brands*, this does not in itself solve our definition challenges, in that brands are amorphous, and WikiRate's definition of company must be concretely mapped to OpenCorporates' definition if ChainReact is make use of the datasets to create a coherent picture of company networks.

"Company Networks" will also require further definition. In our current frame, we are exploring *control networks*, *supply networks*, and *brand networks*. In fact, at present, it appears likely that a *company* on WikiRate may effectively be represented as a specific kind of *brand network* on OpenCorporates. By the end of Q2, we expect to have these definitions (among others) worked out to a degree that will allow us to move forward at full steam with the work of integrating our existing data and web experiences.

4.3 Q3 Proof of Concept

Huddle III will focus on an end-to-end demonstration of the ChainReact concept, including report generation, data mapping, and interpretation within the WikiRate Ratings framework.

4.3.1 Rationale

A proof of concept implementation will not only help the developers and designers test the feasibility of their conceptual architecture, it will also help provide the marketing teams with materials that can be used moving forward to plan and support their outreach. It is to be expected that a proof of concept phase will also flesh out some needs for deeper conceptual design, and the earlier these needs are identified, the better.

4.3.2 WP5 Implications

A proof-of-concept implementation of our corporate network mapping will enable interactions on a demo copy of WikiRate.org that make use of OpenCorporates data. These interactions will likely include:

1. Linking from WikiRate to "further information" on OpenCorporates.com
2. Exploring conventional WikiRate metrics of which OpenCorporates is the metric designer, the values of which are populated from OpenCorporates
3. Exploring protypical "relationship" metrics on WikiRate that convey how one company relates to others

At the proof-of-concept phase, this functionality will not likely be released on the live WikiRate.org site, and in most cases may not yet automatically handle data synchronization.

To complete the proof-of-concept chain, we will also need to ensure that we can successfully move data from The Whistle to WikiRate (with mapping support from OpenCorporates), which may entail API enhancements

4.4 Q4 Usability

At Huddle IV we will focus on ensuring that our data-intensive project is retaining a human-friendly face.

4.4.1 Rationale

Proof-of-concept implementations almost always involve rapid development at the expense of usability. This is in many ways desirable, because it can be costly to optimize interfaces before implementation strategies are sufficiently mature. However, as a structured data project driven by non-technical contributors, it will be vital for ChainReact to revisit usability at regular intervals. Moreover, this early huddle in particular will focus on ensuring the emerging data plan is compatible with the emerging community plan.

4.4.2 WP5 Implications

The basic functionality involved in corporate network mapping fits very well into interactive patterns on WikiRate and OpenCorporates, so it is not expected in itself to diminish usability. However, the new data will open up many new interactive possibilities, and we expect to begin exploring those in Q4. For example,

once company networks begin to appear on WikiRate.org, we expect that users will want to be able to sort and filter existing listings (of companies, metrics, or topics for example) *by network*. Corporate networks are sufficiently complex that finding a way to represent these to users in an accessible way is a challenge in itself.

We also anticipate that we will put considerable effort into establishing data synchronization needs in this quarter.

4.5 Q5 Pilot Campaign Design

Our first pilot reporting campaign is scheduled to launch in M18; Huddle V will ensure that all consortium partners are aligned on the framing of the launch and their role within it.

4.5.1 Rationale

Three consecutive huddles will focus on the Pilot: two to prepare and one to digest. This scheme was designed to ensure that the pilot campaign is given every chance of success and that the consortium learns as much as possible from its shortcomings.

4.5.2 WP5 Implications

Whereas The Whistle can begin the pilot campaign with little or no data at all, corporate network mapping data need to be reasonably well pre-populated in advance of the first pilot. Therefore we anticipate giving considerable focus to data population in Q5 and subjecting the system to tests that approximate real use cases as closely as possible.

Having clarity around campaign design will be very favorable for WP5, because as soon as the pilot campaign subject matter is clear we can begin targeting relevant company network data.

4.6 Q6 Pilot Campaign Execution

Huddle VI, an online huddle, will focus on completing preparations for the pilot reporting campaign and ensuring deep alignment among all consortium partners.

4.6.1 Rationale

Designs for the ChainReact Beta Launch in M18 should be well settled by this huddle, but it will be an ideal time for the team to gather and ensure that all the pieces of the puzzle are fitting together as planned.

4.6.2 WP5 Implications

As our company mapping solution matures and our pre-population efforts confront diminishing returns, we will give ever greater emphasis to collecting additional information from ChainReact contributors. We will move from representing known relationships between companies towards uncovering relationships that are not currently known. The degree to which a campaign can uncover new relationships will depend very much on the nature of that specific campaign. The capacity for a campaign to produce this kind of data will be considered in the selection of early pilots, and we will aim for at least one early campaign that aims to generate this kind of information. By the launch of the first pilot campaign in Q6 the ChainReact eco-system

should offer at least a minimal implementation of functionality that allows for corporate relationship discovery.

4.7 Q7 Pilot Feedback

At Huddle VII we will focus on processing feedback about our pilot launch from various constituents, including citizen reporters, NGOs, and WikiRate community members.

4.7.1 Rationale

This "halfway" huddle will provide a space for the consortium to take stock of what is working and what is not, particularly with respect to functionality introduced as part of the pilot reporting campaign. It is not unlikely that this huddle will be a time for the consortium to consider strategic shifts, if necessary.

4.7.2 WP5 Implications

A top priority in assessing the success of our pilot programs will be seeing how well data is flowing from reporters to NGOs to WikiRate contributors to end users of WikiRate.org. WP5 developers will, in particular, look into ways that integration of company network maps can improve these flows and prevent bottlenecks.

4.8 Q8 Data Needs

Here we will assess whether the scope and quality of our data is progressing at a rate sufficient for us to achieve our project objectives and to make any needed adjustments.

4.8.1 Rationale

There is little need to explain the need for abundant, high quality data; if the data are either too sparse or too poor, the project cannot achieve its objectives. The rationale for the timing, here, is that two quarters after our pilot campaign we should have a fairly clear idea of the quality and quantity of data coming in and to form an updated data roadmap, which should be well clarified in advance of ChainReact 1.0. Though technical-sounding in nature, "data needs" is a full consortium topic, because it affects outreach, community building, and development alike.

4.8.2 WP5 Implications

Regardless of the volume of report data that may be coming in from The Whistle, WP5 will take this opportunity to assess how it can make best use of the available data and the knowledge resources of the ChainReact community. We anticipate that by this phase we will be able to integrate abundant network data from CERTH's intelligent data parsing. There may also be opportunities for hybrid parsing solutions that involve an integration of automated scraping with human contributors.

4.9 Q9 Scalability

Scalability of the ChainReact community and all its technical support systems will be a recurring topic of discussion throughout the project, but it will be a particular focus in Q9.

4.9.1 Rationale

In advance of ChainReact 1.0 (M27) and ChainReact Media Challenge (M30) it will be appropriate to focus on readiness to scale. By this time, we should be deploying relatively few new features for ChainReact but rather mostly fine tuning existing ones, including with performance optimizations and hardware readiness for rapid scaling.

4.9.2 WP5 Implications

Unlike The Whistle, OpenCorporates and WikiRate will be well beyond their initial scaling efforts by this phase. Both of which will be served by multi-server architectures, and the bounds of the growth of several data types, most notably Companies, will be delimited as early as Huddle II.

That said, all large systems need regular performance checkups, and the timing for this (in advance of the Media Challenge) will be helpful for both systems. We will want to be prepared for very successful campaigns that could bring a great increase in traffic.

4.10 Q10 Media Challenge

MS5 (ChainReact Media Challenge) is scheduled for M10 and will be the focus of the tenth huddle.

4.10.1 Rationale

Full-scale media engagement of the full scope of the ChainReact pipeline will require full-scale consortium engagement, so this was one of the easiest themes to plan.

4.10.2 WP5 Implications

Much like the pilot campaign, WP5 will want to bring in as much targeted supplementary data as possible to support the media challenge(s). Conversely, our areas of greatest data strength at this phase may shape the media challenge design.

4.11 Q11 Adaptation

Huddle XI will be organized around learning everything we can from the Media Challenge and making the necessary adjustments.

4.11.1 Rationale

While it's difficult to make any concrete predictions about what kind of adjustments will be necessary in a given quarter over two years away, we can confidently predict that we will want to continue to adapt.

4.11.2 WP5 Implications

As with all components of the project, the design and development team for OpenCorporates and WikiRate will be adapting to the needs of the project at this phase.

4.12 Q12 Future Directions

Our finale huddle will focus on the long-term vision for ChainReact.

4.12.1 Rationale

We want ChainReact to have a powerful positive impact for many years. Sustainability will be a point of discussion at every huddle, but the final huddle of the grant will provide an opportunity to really focus on the long-term perspective.

4.12.2 WP5 Implications

By the end of the project, we anticipate that OpenCorporates and WikiRate will have developed a robust symbiosis around corporate network mapping that will continue to be mutually beneficial long after the end of the grant. Our hope is that by this phase we will have uncovered many future opportunities to further improve shared understanding of corporate relationships and to deepen the relationship between all three ChainReact struts.

5 Conclusion

ChainReact is an integrated system, and the successful integration of its parts will hinge in part upon the successful integration of their strategic timelines. The Schedule of Huddles presented here has been developed with a mind to reaching project milestones and achieving project objectives while creating space for dynamically responding to feedback.

Effective design and development of corporate network maps will play a central role in the success of the project, and the present document outlines a clear roadmap for its implementation and integration into ChainReact.