Evaluating a Virtual Community

This paper focuses on community engineering and on the evaluation of a community platform for cancer patients. A community platform on the Internet has the potential to serve ubiquitous information and interaction needs and to compensate for a lack of information and interaction offers for a designated target group. Following an introduction, we briefly describe the virtual community krebsgemeinschaft.de, a platform for German speaking cancer patients. The main part of the paper focuses on the engineering process employed and the framework for the ongoing evaluation. Thereafter the objects and methods of our evaluation are described in detail. Finally, we address the validity of the results and draw conclusions. By the time of the conference we assume to be able to present more empirical results from our research.