Use of the free software package Meteocal for the generation of interactive training pages
ABSTRACT

Granularity is one key for bringing added value to existing training materials. Training resources can be re-used for course building under a different structure with the help of the Meteocal tool for authoring.

1. The rationale for Meteocal

Every person has a different style to learn. Some prefer practical approaches, some like to understand the essential theory first. To take into account a variety of learners, like those in a course, a variety of paths is available. The user chooses how to cover the objectives of a module.

The figure below exemplifies several paths through the same module, with options for more or less practical approaches.

Granularity is the key for the selection of existing materials and its merging as part of a new interactive course. A module is the content of a learning session, about 45 minutes of interaction. The choice of contents inside the module is left to the user.

2. Creator: an assistant to create XML contents

Creator is an application to facilitate the creation of individual knowledge-objects, like question-and-answer or hotspots. In 2010 we have concluded the development of this application to cover drag-and-drop and matrix knowledge-objects.

The interactions generated by MeteoCAL rely on XML templates, produced with the Creator tool. Creator is an advanced editor that allows the easy definition of hotspot areas, the correct assignment of draggables to bays and the orderly generation of feedback for answers.

Typical interactions managed by MeteoCAL include index pages, question and answer, matrix matches, hotspots, drag and drops, and finally embedded applets.

To help with the creation work, an editing tool facilitates the combination of elements for an interaction. In the example below, a drag-and-drop exercise drills on the typical channel differences for different types of cloud (left hand side) and a hotspot exercise asks for the location of areas of precipitation.
3. Web references

http://www.eumetcal.org/MeteoCAL
is the site for downloading the authoring tool
http://oiswww.eumetsat.org/WEBOPS/meteocal/latest/
is a collection of Meteocal modules on satellite meteorology