



# ORNEC Newsletter – May 11, 2007

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All comments to [admin@ornec.ca](mailto:admin@ornec.ca)

**Dear ORNEC Participant:** Due to the torrent of information starting to grow as we enter the final year of the ORNEC project the administrative team at ORNEC CO are expanding the reach of the IDT Newsletter to cover all our researchers and partners.

Topics will include: significant research findings and the influence they are having on electronic commerce; funding and reporting issues related to the completion of the project; and items of general interest.

We aim to issue a newsletter every four months between now and the end of the project. This edition will focus on important administrative issues. Future editions will deal more with research content and impact.

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### 1. Recent News

- **6-month Extension**

Many of our current ORNEC projects were started in the first half of 2006 giving researchers less than two years in which to complete their research activities. In response to requests to extend the period of the projects ORNEC Admin has applied for and received a 6-month extension from the Ministry of Research and Innovation (MRI) The end date of the overall ORNEC program is now June 30, 2008 instead of December 31, 2007.

ORNEC is pleased to pass this extension on to all active research projects. All research projects with an end date of December 15, 2007 or earlier can now extend that date to June 15, 2008. This allows more time for completion of research and spending and more time to accumulate required private sector in-kind contributions. In return we ask all ORNEC participants to be prompt with their reporting in 2008 as the ORNEC Admin office will close at the end of June.

**No further extensions will be possible.** June 2008 marks both the end of the ORNEC project and the end of the ORDCF agreement that provided the funds. There will be no further extensions.

- **Cash Flow – Giving & Taking**

Unlike some funding sources the ORNEC grant money must be spent according to the matching rules by the end of the project or it is taken back by the Ministry even if it has already been deposited in the researchers account. This means that not only must all the grant cash be spent and reported to your Research Services office but also all the private sector support must have been received. If there is a shortfall on the private sector support grant monies will be clawed back in an amount equivalent to the shortfall.

**If you think this situation may apply to your project please contact ORNEC CO or your research services office immediately.**

- **ORNEC Board of Directors – New Members**

In June of this year Dr. Howard Alper completed his tenure as Vice President Research at the University of Ottawa and stepped down as Chair of ORNEC. His successor, Dr. Mona Nemer took over as Chair. Two new industry representatives joined the board as vacancies arose. Current Board membership is as follows:

- Dr. Mona Nemer, Vice President Research, University of Ottawa (Chair)
- Paul Bates, Dean & Industry Prof in Financial Management Services, DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University (Vice Chair and Chair Finance & Audit Committees)
- Mr. Dr. Brent Gallupe, Professor and Associate Dean, Queen's School of Business, Queen's University
- Mr. Carl Weatherell, Chief Project Officer, Office of the VP Research & International, Carleton University
- Mr. Reg Elliott, Director, IT Strategic Relationships, CIO Office, Enbridge Inc.
- Ms. Collette Lacroix, Manager, Higher Education, K-12 and Research Sector, IBM
- Mr. Thom Hounsell, Manager, Research and Special Projects, CIBC Corporate Security, CIBC

- **Year 4 Annual Progress Report (APR)**

No doubt everyone's favourite part of the ORNEC project is replying to Mohamed's requests for information for the Annual Progress Report, our accounting for contractual deliverables to the government that keeps the cheques coming. We are pleased to announce that Year 4 APR submitted to the Ministry of Research and Innovation (MRI) has been accepted. The Year 4 APR contains a large number of milestones and deliverables based on ORNEC activities and achievements during Year 4 (January 01 – December 31, 2006). ORNEC Admin worked feverishly during the months of December 2006 and January 2007 to extract and compile the necessary data and information from the individual project progress reports submitted to ORNEC Admin by project Principal

Investigators (PIs). Thanks to all ORNEC PIs for all their efforts and successes.

The Year 5 APR (final) is due to MRI on Jan 31, 2008 covering the period Jan 01 - Dec 31, 2007. As usual we are looking forward to receiving your progress reports covering this period by November 2007 from which progress data will be extracted and compiled into Year 5 APR.

- **New ORNEC website ([www.ornec.ca](http://www.ornec.ca))**

ORNEC Admin is pleased to announce the launch of a completely revised ORNEC website. It reflects a true picture of ORNEC's current and legacy research projects as well as the eCommerce capacity building activities. Please browse and provide any feedback you might have. If you want to update the description of your project or provide links to sites describing your research in greater depth send the text to ORNEC Admin and we will update it.

## **2. ORNEC Current Research**

At its onset ORNEC focused on eCommerce research capacity projects at partner universities (notwithstanding some excellent "Legacy" research projects). Over the past two years ORNEC has shifted emphasis to eCommerce research activities and currently there are 31 active research projects at ORNEC partner universities addressing different topics under ORNEC eCommerce Research Clusters:

Business Cluster:

- Identity Theft (4)
- eHealth and eLearning (10)
- eRetailing (5)

Internet and Society Cluster:

- Law, Ethics and Policies (3)

Technology Cluster:

- Web Services and Collaborative Environments (3)
- Transactions and Security (6)

For more information on ORNEC projects both legacies and current, please visit the new ORNEC website at [www.ornec.ca](http://www.ornec.ca)

### **3. ORNEC Challenges Ahead**

Although the 6-month extension approved by MRI is providing much needed schedule relief, there are some significant challenges facing ORNEC that have to be carefully managed before the new deadline of June 30, 2008. Successful completion of the project will require effort from all participants.

- **Under Spending**

Under spending of ORNEC cash as well as well as private sector matching cash contributions continues to be a major challenge. Although the 6-month extension granted by MRI provides some breathing space, still there is considerable cash that has to be fully spent before June 30, 2008.

- **Matching PS contributions**

The ORDCF funds that ORNEC provides require a one-for-one match with private sector contributions. There are many ways in which private sector contributions that you thought you had can fail to materialize and ORNEC has struggled with all of them. Small companies go out of business, larger ones change priorities, in-kind contributions are less than anticipated, letters of support are improperly worded...the list goes on. Unfortunately in this age of public accountability there is pretty much of a zero-tolerance approach being taken by the Ministry.

To be counted towards grant matching private sector contributions must be preceded by a letter of support from the company. This letter must be approved by the Ministry. The auditors will then

determine whether the contribution that was approved arrived and was used.

ORNEC researchers are encouraged to have proper documentation to prove that the pledged private sector in-kind (e.g. consulting interactions) have taken place and completed as pledged. The documentation will be examined and validated by external auditors at the annual ORNEC audits.

An early notice to ORNEC Admin of any hiccoughs in private sector contributions will make it easier for alternative sources to be found.

- **Matching institutional contributions**

There is also a need to ensure matching institutional contribution limits are being met as planned. Again proper documentation is needed and must be kept in order for the annual ORNEC audit. Specific to ID Theft projects additional matching institutional contributions are needed in lieu of matching private sector contributions. Extra attention is required for this special case.

- **Final Year 5 APR**

As mentioned earlier regarding ORNEC progress reporting to MRI, the final year APR for Year 5 (covering the period January 01 – December 31, 2007) is due to MRI by January 31, 2008. ORNEC is hoping to repeat the success story of Year 4 APR and is looking forward to receiving your progress reports covering this period by November 2007 from which progress data will be extracted and compiled into Year 5 APR.