HOLY GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF MEXICO, CENTRAL AMERICA, COLUMBIA, VENEZUELA AND THE CARIBBEAN ISLANDS

Communication Needs Assessment and Suggested Solutions





Technology for International Development, 94-812, Fall 2010, Mini 2 Professor Joe Mertz Varvara Pyros 12/9/2010

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Problem Statement

(A short summary taken from the Literature Review below:)

"A massive religious transformation has unfolded over the past forty years in Latin America and the Caribbean. In a region where the Catholic Church could once claim a near monopoly of adherents, religious pluralism has fundamentally altered the social and religious landscape. " (Steigemga, T, 2008)¹ Large groups of indigenous of Central America have recently asked to be brought into the Orthodox faith. One group in particular in Guatemala has about 500,000 participants.

With this influx of religious seekers, the Greek Archdiocese of the Orthodox Christian Church in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean has a great need for an infrastructure for communications. The Diocese is vast, and is experiencing tremendous growth. They currently only use a small percentage of the potential for information communication technologies. They don't even have a website.

¹ Timothy J. Steigenga and Edward L. Cleary, <u>Conversion of a Continent</u>, 2008.

Literature Review

"A massive religious transformation has unfolded over the past forty years in Latin America and the Caribbean. In a region where the Catholic Church could once claim a near monopoly of adherents, religious pluralism has fundamentally altered the social and religious landscape. "
(Steigemga, T., 2008)

"The public face of religion in Latin America has been transformed in the last half century... The Christianity of the future will be marked by vigorous competition and growing pluralism in an increasingly open and competitive civil society and political order." (Levine, D., 2007)ⁱⁱ

"Christianity has no future in Latin America if it does not take seriously this aspect of the world today. The end of the Constantinian era, marked by the 'death of Christendoms,' is the essential starting point for understanding the role of the churches at the outset of the third millennium." (Padilla, C. R., 1999)ⁱⁱⁱ

Current research as shown above, explains that Latin America, an area which was predominantly registered as Roman Catholic, is undergoing a radical religious change. The reasons cited by the above research generally falls into one of these three categories: 1. "Catholicism came to Latin America through conquest." (Levine, 2007) In other words, it was forced upon a population, rather than a spontaneous growth of spirituality from the indigenous population. 2. In the second half on the nineteenth century, the Catholic church accepted radical changes in order to conform to a newer society. 3. The clergy status was predominantly "restricted to whites of legitimate birth (Levine, 2007), and was authoritarian in times of competitive politics.

Latin Americans have a respect for the Greek culture, its arts, language, and of recent times with this change in religious culture, they have grown a deep respect for the ancient Orthodox Christian faith. The Orthodox Church does not proselytize – so how has this come about? Large groups of indigenous Mayans who researched the foundations of Christianity have recently asked to be brought into the Orthodox faith. One group in particular in Guatemala has about 500,000 participants.^{iv}

The Orthodox Christian faith may feel comfortable to them in some ways, as it has a vague similarity to Roman Catholicism with a structured uniform service. However, Orthodoxy varies greatly in aspects which allow a person to express a deep sense of spirituality within the confines of humanity, and a historical tradition extending from Christ and as He is revealed in the Old and New Testaments. As the Roman Catholic Church made significant dogmatic changes since the year 1054, the ancient Orthodox Christian faith has remained unchanged since her formation as declared by the first seven Ecumenical Councils. V

With this great influx of religious seekers, the Greek Archdiocese of the Orthodox Christian Church in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean has a great need financially and need for an infrastructure for communications. The Diocese is vast (reaching many countries), and given the above scenario, is experiencing tremendous growth. They currently only use a very percentage of the potential for information communication technologies. They don't even have a website.

They have asked me to assist in the development of their ICT, as I speak the three primary languages of this project: Spanish, English and Greek. This is a pivotal task, and important to proceed cautiously. Decisions and solutions made at these initial phases should consider the future and allow for the possibility of tremendous growth.

Solution Approach

Categories

I have categorized the ICT needs of the Orthodox Metropolis in Mexico into three categories:

- 1. **Web-presence and Donations:** They do not have a web presence. They would like to create a web-presence, which can be a source for information-sharing and a venue for donations.
- 2. **Communications:** Additionally, the representatives in each country or group of countries have a need to communicate amongst themselves for mutual support and improved efficiencies in their work.
- 3. **Information Management:** Additionally, the headquarters, located in Mexico City, has a need for information management. They would like to collect and manage information on donors and contacts to increase communication from and financial support to the organization. (This project will be addressed outside the scope of this project.)

Communication Needs Assessment and Suggested Solutions

Using the plan below, I have assessed the needs as best as possible given the short time-frame of this class. Additionally, it is difficult to complete the suggested solutions until the assessment is complete. As of the time of the class presentation, the results of the survey have not been completed, I have prepared a table of suggested solutions. If we more time than the short six weeks for the project, I believe these outcomes would look a lot different.

1. Communications Assessment:

- a. Country Comparison Chart: charting for each country within the Metropolis certain demographic measurements, common language spoken, ICT measurements, and computer awareness level of the Vicars (church leaders).
 - i. These charts will help the church leaders to see at a glance where is the current Orthodox population and where is the most potential for growth.
 - ii. Assess existing technologies where I can help facilitate the production of the web-presence with a goal of helping to facilitate dissemination before the holidays.
- b. Survey: Using different models, for assessment and preparation of questions, I will prepare a survey first for the Archbishop Athenagoras and secondly for the Vicars of the Metropolis. My objectives of the survey are three-fold:
 - i. Can technology help to improve communication within the Vicars (church leaders) within the Metropolis?
 - ii. What are the technological skills of the church leaders? (Is anyone opposed to technology?)

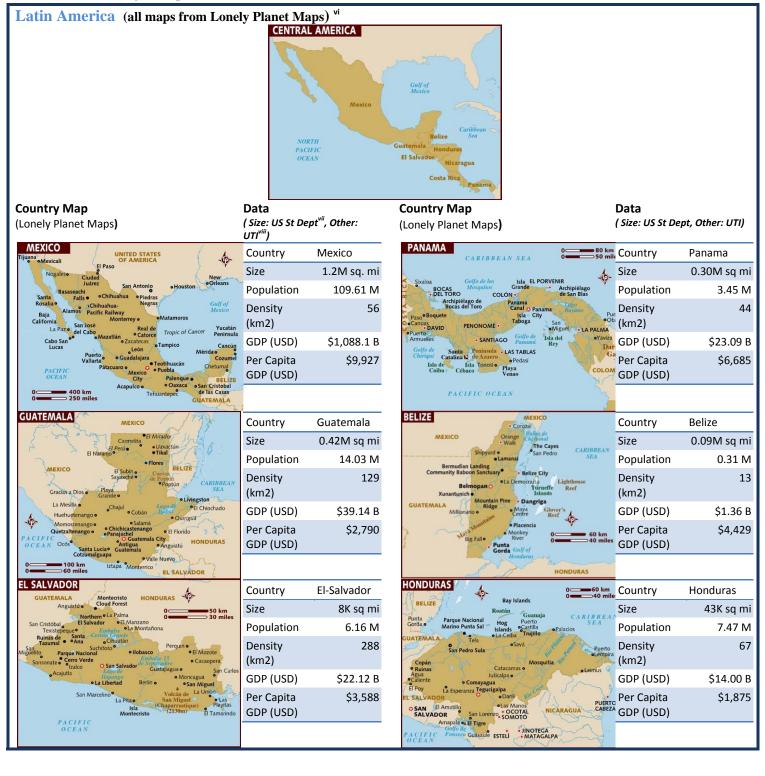
iii. If any Vicar (church leader) is affiliated with technology and may wish to collaborate to implement the ICT infrastructure within the Metropolis.

2. Suggested Solutions

a. Even though it is premature, as the survey has not yet been completed, I list some possible suggestions. I try to describe them in common vernacular, as the Metropolitan is unfamiliar with these terms, but is interested to learn.

1. Communications Assessment

a. Country Comparison Charts





Country	Nicaragua
Size	50K sq mi
Population	5.74 M
Density (km2)	47
GDP (USD)	\$6.25 B
Per Capita GDP (USD)	\$1,088



Country	Costa Rica
Size	19K sq mi
Population	4.58 M
Density (km2)	90
GDP (USD)	\$29.66 B
Per Capita GDP (USD)	\$6,478

Caribbean Islands (select islands only) (all maps from Lonely Planet Maps)



Country Map

(Lonely Planet Maps)





Data (Size: US St Dept, Other: UTI)

Country	Cuba
Size	0.07 M sq. mi
Population	11.2 M
Density (km2)	98
GDP (USD)	
Per Capita GDP (USD)	

Country	Haiti
Size	0.01 M sq. mi
Population	10.03 M
Density (km2)	362
GDP (USD)	\$6.80 B
Per Capita GDP (USD)	\$678

Country Map



ח	a	t	a	

(Size: US St Dept, Other: UTI)

Country	Dominican Republic
Size	0.02 M sq. mi
Population	10.09 M
Density (km2)	208
GDP (USD)	\$132.17 B
Per Capita GDP (USD)	\$13,099



Country	Bahamas
Size	0.01 M sq. mi
Population	0.34 M
Density (km2)	25
GDP (USD)	\$7.56 B
Per Capita GDP (USD)	\$22,136



Country	Puerto Rico
Size	
Population	3.98 M
Density (km2)	444
GDP (USD)	
Per Capita GDP (USD)	



South America (Venezuela and Columbia only) (all maps from Lonely Planet Maps)



Country Map (Lonely Planet Maps)



Data (Size: US St Dept, Other: UTI)

Country	Venezuela
Size	0.35 M sq. mi
Population	28.58 M
Density (km2)	31
GDP (USD)	\$311.42 B
Per Capita GDP (USD)	\$10,895

Country Map (Lonely Planet Maps)



Data

(Size: US St Dept, Other: UTI)

Country	Columbia
Size	0.44 M sq. mi
Population	45.66 M
Density (km2)	40
GDP (USD)	\$243.74 B
Per Capita GDP (USD)	\$5,338

Country Comparison Chart: ITU Data

International Telecommunication Union: <i>Basic ICT Indicators 2009</i> ^{ix} (Sorted descending order by # of internet users)										
	Ratio: mobile cellular subscriptions to fixed telephone lines	Fixed Internet sub- scriptions (000s)	Fixed Internet sub- scriptions per 100 inhab.	Estimated Internet Users (000s) (DESC)	Estimated Internet Users per 100 inhab.	Fixed broadband sub- scriptions Total (000s	sub-scriptions Per 100		# of Vicar s	# of Paris hes
<u>Country</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>Region</u>		
Mexico	4.3 : 1	10,045.0	9.16	31,019.6	28.30	9,651.	7 8.81	Central	4	6
Colombia	5.6 : 1	2,266.2	4.96	22,537.6	49.36	2,012.	3 4.41	South		5
Venezuela	4.1 : 1	1,483.2	5.19	8,918.0	31.20	1,343.	3 4.70	South		6
Dominican Rep.	8.9 : 1	429.0	4.25	2,701.1	26.77	396.	3.93	Caribb.		0
Guatemala	12.2 : 1			2,279.4	16.25	110.	0 0.78	Central	2	30
Cuba (access restricted to e-mail only)	0.6 : 1	39.9	0.36	1,605.6	14.33	2.	9 0.03	Caribb.	1	6
Jamaica	9.8 : 1	114.6	4.21	1,581.2	58.16	112.	2 4.13	Caribb.		0
Costa Rica	1.3 : 1	271.5	5.93	1,484.5	32.42	179.	8 3.93	Central	1	1
Puerto Rico	3.0 : 1			1,000.2	25.12			US	2	1
Haiti	33.7 : 1			1,000.0	9.97			Caribb.	1	1
Panama	10.6 : 1	213.3	6.18	959.8	27.79	201.	1 5.82	Central		2
El Salvador	6.9 : 1	150.5	2.44	746.3	12.11	149.	4 2.42	Central		0
Honduras	11.7 : 1	72.4	0.97	731.7	9.80			Central		0
Nicaragua	12.6 : 1			199.8	3.48	47.	0.82	Central		0
Bahamas	2.8 : 1	38.6	11.29	115.8	33.88	31.	9.24	Caribb.		0
Belize	5.2 : 1	8.1	2.65	36.0	11.73	8.	0 2.61	Central		1
									11	59

b. Survey

To achieve the objectives of the survey as listed above, the process will be completed in three steps:

- 1. Data Collection: E-mails and locations of Vicars/Priests in the different countries must be collected.
- 2. Literary Review: based on brainstorming sessions with Professor Joe and a current literary review, I have devised the questions
- 3. Survey Preparation and Dissemination: Once the questions are finalized, they must be translated and a Survey Monkey would be created. The survey questions will also be distributed over e-mail for countries such as Cuba who have restricted internet access.

1. Data Collection:

Vicar/priests located in Metropolis

Clergy	E-mail	Vicar	Location
His Eminence Archbishop Athenagoras	archbishopmexico@yahoo.com	V	Mexico Metropolis
Chancelor Rev. Arch. Damian	cancilleriasaog@gmail.com	V	Mexico Metropolis
Pechlivanidis	secmetcol@hotmail.com		Parish – Columbia
Rev. Padre Nicolas Antolinez	metropolimexico@yahoo.com.mx	V	Mexico Metropolis
	catedraldesantasofia@yahoo.com.mx		Parish – Saint Sophia
Rev. Padre Atanasio Alegria		V	Mexico Metropolis
Abba Pablo Rodrigues Diniz	Pablo-diniz@hotmail.com	V	Monastery – Mexico
Protopresbyter Father Mijail	garciahgarcia@hotmail.com		Parish – Columbia – Bogota
Padre Misael Rodriguez	marpaty155@hotmail.com		Parish – Columbia – Bogota
Padre Serafin Valencia Moreno	serafinhector@hotmail.com		Parish – Columbia – Medellin
Padre Crisostomo Arias Jaramillo	padrealberto00@hotmail.com		Parish – Columbia – Pereira
Padre Abraham Castellanos	pater.abraham@yahoo.com		Parish – Columbia – Cali-Pereira
Padre Jose Domingo Ruiz Ferror	jodorufer@yahoo.com		Retired
Protopresbyter Padre David Zapata	davidmario@interpla.net.co		Retired
Velasquez			
Padre Dimitrios Londono	gjaimelon@yahoo.com		Retired
Padre Giorgos Mejia Moreno	yorhum@hotmail.com		Retired
Padre Arch. Silas Segura Calvo	padresilas@yahoo.es	V	Central America Costa Rica
Padre Emmanuel Bardalez	fremmanuel@hotmail.com	V	Parish -Belize
Rev. Arch. Athenagoras	ortodoxagriega@enet.cu	V	Cuba
Padre Nicolas Perez Cabrera	padrenikolas@yahoo.com		Parish – Cuba – Habana
Rev. Arch. Andres Giron	monsgiron@gmail.com	V	Guatemala
Rev. Arch. Mihail Castellanos	armihail@hotmail.com	V	Guatemala
Padre Barnabas Jerome	frjerome2010@hotmail.com	V	Haiti
Padre Pablo Petit Homme	frpavlos@yahoo.fr		Parish - Haiti
Rev. Arch. Lazare Philojane	frlazare@yahoo.fr		Caribbean – Martinica
Rev. Arch. Andres Vujisic	hegumen@hotmail.com	V	Puerto Rico
Rev. Padre Peter Dileo	fr.peterdileo@yahoo.com	V	Puerto Rico
Padre Emmanuel Remoundakes	comunidadgriega@cantv.net		Venezuela
Padre Evangelos Zapata Jaramillo	soazevangelo@yahoo.com		Venezuela
Total	29	13	

2. Literary Review

How can you create a solution if you have not assessed the problem? To implement a communication solution for the Metropolis of Mexico, their communication needs should be properly assessed. Therefore, asking the right questions in any needs assessment is very important. M. Gilbert, in "Asking the Wrong Questions," discusses that questions should target behavior, be goal-directed and not "techno-centric". Using Mr. Gilbert's advice along with "What's Involved in Technology Planning?" from techsoup.org, along with a great dose of help from Professor Joe, I have created these questions below.

a. Questions for first round for Archbishop

The following questions were posed to the Archbishop Athenagoras of the Orthodox Diocese of Mexico, to assess his understanding and needs for communication with the Vicars/priests.

Question	Answer
On a scale of 1-5, when communicating with Vicar/priests in	(I not important, 5 very important)
different country:	
 How important is it to SEE them? 	4
How important is it to talk to MORE THAN ONE at	(1 not important, 5 very important)
a time?	5
 HOW OFTEN to you propose to communicate? 	2x/week, weekly, 2x/month, monthly?
7 1 1	2x/month
How important is it to include CUBA in these	(1 not important, 5 very important)
conversations?	5
How do you normally communicate with your	
Vicar/faithful in Cuba?	by phone
How important would it be to SEND EQUIPMENT	(1 not important, 5 very important)
so Vicars could SEE you when you communicate?	5
Anything else to add re: communicating with	
Vicar/priest in another country?	nothing else

b. Questions for second round for Vicars/priests in countries:

- a. My objectives of this survey are three-fold:
 - i. Can technology help to improve communication within the Vicars (church leaders) within the Metropolis?
 - ii. What are the technological skills of the church leaders? (Is anyone opposed to technology?)
 - iii. If any Vicar (church leader) is affiliated with technology and may wish to collaborate to implement the ICT infrastructure within the Metropolis.
- b. To accomplish these objectives, I need to survey their current state of technical infrastructure and technical skills. Does this infrastructure and their skill set enable technology-based communication?

English

- 1. What is your current access to a computer?
 - personal, in the office
 - personal, in the home
 - shared, in the office
 - shared, in the home
 - Other_____
- 2. What is your current access to the internet?
 - slow (e.g. dialup) from home
 - slow (e.g. dialup) from the office
 - moderate or fast from home
 - moderate or fast from the office

	• Other
3.	Do you see the computer or internet as an important part of your work for the Orthodox
	Metropolis of Mexico? How or how not?
4.	Do you wish to use the computer or internet more or less as part of your work for the
	Metropolis? Why?
5.	Is there a problem with your work that you need help to solve? Is there a particular goal with
	your work that you would like to reach?
6.	(Please choose one) I use email (never, daily, a couple times a week, occasionally).
7.	(Please choose one) I use the web/internet (never, daily, a couple times a week, occasionally).
8.	(Please choose one) I blog (never, daily, a couple times a week, occasionally, don't know what
	blog is).

- 9. (Please choose one) I use Facebook (never, daily, a couple times a week, occasionally, don't know what Facebook is).
- 10. (Please choose one) I use Skype (never, daily, a couple times a week, occasionally, don't know what Skype is).
- 11. Are there long periods of time when you are without internet access?
- 12. Was there an incident recently where you wanted to communicate to others, but could not?
- 13. Do you wish to use the internet more or less? If so, in what ways?
- 14. Would you like to be better connected with the Metropolis in Mexico?
- 15. Do you have other ideas or objectives that you feel the internet or computer can help you to reach?

Español (translation using Babylon.com^{xii})

1. ¿C	Cuál	es s	su	actual	acceso	a	una	com	putad	loraʻ	?
-------	------	------	----	--------	--------	---	-----	-----	-------	-------	---

- personales, en la oficina
- personales, en el hogar
- compartida, en la oficina
- compartida, en el hogar
- Other_____

2.	2.	Cuál	es	su	act	tual	acceso	a	internet?

- Lenta (por ejemplo dialup) de casa
- lenta (por ejemplo dialup) de la oficina
- moderados o rápida de casa
- moderados o rápido de la oficina

	Otros
•	1 71 1 115

- 3. Ves la computadóra o internet como una parte importante de su trabajo para la Iglesia Ortodoxa Metrópolis de México? ¿Cómo sí o cómo no?
- 4. ¿Desea utilizar la computadora o internet más o menos como parte de su trabajo por la Metrópoli? ¿Por qué?

- 5. ¿Existe un problema con su trabajo que usted necesita ayuda para resolver? ¿Existe un objetivo con su trabajo que usted desea llegar?
- 6. (Por favor elija uno) Yo uso email (nunca, diariamente, un par de veces una semana, ocasionalmente).
- 7. (Por favor elija uno) Yo utilizar la web/internet (nunca, diariamente, un par de veces una semana, ocasionalmente).
- 8. (Por favor elija uno) Yo uso uno blog (nunca, diariamente, un par de veces una semana, ocasionalmente, no sé qué es blog).
- 9. (Por favor elija uno) Yo uso Facebook (nunca, diariamente, un par de veces una semana, ocasionalmente, no sé qué es Facebook).
- 10. (Por favor elija uno) Yo uso el Skype (nunca, diariamente, un par de veces una semana, ocasionalmente, no sé qué es Skype).
- 11. ¿Hay largos períodos de tiempo cuando estás sin acceso a internet?
- 12. ¿Hubo un incidente ocurrido recientemente donde usted quería comunicar a los demás, pero no pudo?
- 13. ¿Desea utilizar la internet más o menos? Si así fuera, ¿en qué forma?
- 14. Le gustaría ser mejor conectado con la metrópoli en México?
- 15. ¿Tiene otras ideas o los objetivos que se siente la internet o computadora puede ayudarle a alcanzar?

2. Suggested Solutions and descriptions

Even though it is premature, as the survey has not yet been completed, I list some possible suggestions. I try to describe them in common vernacular, as the Metropolitan is unfamiliar with these terms, but is interested to learn.

Priority	Name	Description	Comments
НІ	Google Talk	Google Talk (GTalk) is a free Windows web-based application for instant messaging and voice over internet protocol (VOIP), offered by Google Inc. xiii	Different VOIP applications should be tested and determined which best meets the objectives of the completed survey.
НІ	Skype	"Skype is a software application that allows users to make voice calls over the Internet. Calls to other users within the Skype service are free, while calls to both traditional landline telephones and mobile phones can be made for a nominal fee using a debit-based user account system."	Skype uses a proprietary Internet telephony (VoIP) network based on peer-to-peer architecture.xv Skype could not be used to connect with CUBA directly, however, an account could be made to contact CUBA over the phone on a group Skype call.
ні	Website	A collection of web pages associated with a common domain.	The domain of www.orthodoxiamexico.org has been purchased and I am coordinating its development with centiva.gr, a development company in Greece.
HI	Wikipedia	Wikipedia is a free, web-based, collaborative, multilingual on-line encyclopedia project supported by the non-profit Wikimedia Foundation. ^{xvi} It uses the collaborative structure of a wiki.	A wiki is an easy win to disseminate information. The text is already written with the website. The OrthodoxWiki is a subset of Wikipedia related to information specifically relating to the Orthodox Christian faith.
MED	Blog	A Blog is an on-line journal or diary.	This could be used in the future to disseminate current events of the Metropolis.
MED	Domain Email	When a domain for a website is purchased, e-mails using this domain can be created, ex. sample@orthodoxiamexico.org	Priests and staff at the Metropolis each have their own e-mail accounts using hotmail, yahoo, etc. For uniformity, it would be helpful to use the orthodoxiamexico.org domain.
MED	List Server	An electronic mailing list is a special usage of email that allows for widespread distribution of information to many Internet users. *vii	The website should be able to collect e-mail addresses, and sign up for mailing lists.

Artifacts/Deliverables

- Data Collection From proceedings of Segundo Encuentro, when I visited Mexico, at their request, I used my digital voice recorder to record all of the sessions. I collected and organized photos from myself and others. I uploaded them to an unlisted Picasa Web Album to share with the participants. http://picasaweb.google.com/115987822560564332877/SegundoEncuentro?authkey=Gv1sRgCKCw mMP-5P2ZGg#
- 2. **Survey** With the survey questions above, I am in the process of entering them into Survey Monkey. The Survey will have logic based upon the user selection of language. The survey will be distributed over e-mail to the Vicars/Priests listed above. Here is the link for the survey: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2BCZ25P.
- 3. **Website** I facilitated the creation of the website with Centiva.gr. We hope to go live before the holidays. Development site is: http://mmexico.dev-centiva.com/index.php?option=com content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1&lang=en
- 4. OrthodoxWiki An easy win was to create an OrthodoxWiki. It could mirror the information already created for the web, and is searchable. Using this page as a model: http://orthodoxwiki.org/Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Zealand, I linked from this page: http://orthodoxwiki.org/Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Mexico%2C Central America%2C Colum bia%2C Venezuela%2C and the Caribbean Islands & http://orthodoxwiki.org/Athenagoras %28Aneste%29
- 5. *PayPal Account* I learned about and am in the process of creating a 501(c)3 PayPal account that can link directly from the website.
- 6. *Haiti Video* I recorded the raw file for this video while I was in Mexico on November 22, 2010 under the direction of Metropolitan Athenagoras. I compiled the video with photos and sub-titles using Windows Movie Maker: http://www.andrew.cmu.edu/user/vpyros/T4ID/Haiti_Video.wmv. This video will be linked to the Haiti page on the website. The file settings was for 150 KBS, a very slow speed for playback on the internet for weaker connections. Video was recorded using a simple Canon PowerShot digital camera.
- 7. **Promotional Video:** I recorded this video on December 1, 2010. It was compiled with photos and titles using Windows Movie Maker. This video will take the place of the video on the current home page: http://www.andrew.cmu.edu/user/vpyros/T4ID/OrthodoxiaMexico.wmv. The file setting was for 150 KBS, a very slow speed for playback on the internet for weaker connections. A few revised versions were made after the Metropolitan saw the video. Video was recorded using a simple Canon PowerShot digital camera.
- 8. **Domain E-mails coordination** In coordination with centiva.gr, I requested the following domain e-mails as a start: arzobispo@ortodoxiamexico.org, canceller@orthodoxiamexico.org, info@ortodoxiamexico.org, finance@ortodoxiamexico.org, varvara@ortodoxiamexico.org. I searched what type of standardized e-mails were present on www.goarch.org. One question still remains for me: what naming system do I use for domain e-mails to all priests of the Metropolis? Should it contain first and last name: ex: PadreNicolasAntolinez@orthodoxiamexico.org? It seems that using this format could make for long e-mails. I can't think of a simpler way to do this.

Bibliography/References

I know this is a bit unprofessional; please accept the citations below as list of resources and references for this project.

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