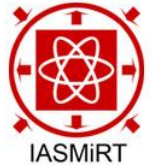


Technical/Webtool

Abhinav Gupta
Technical Advisor to the IASMiRT Board



Recent Events

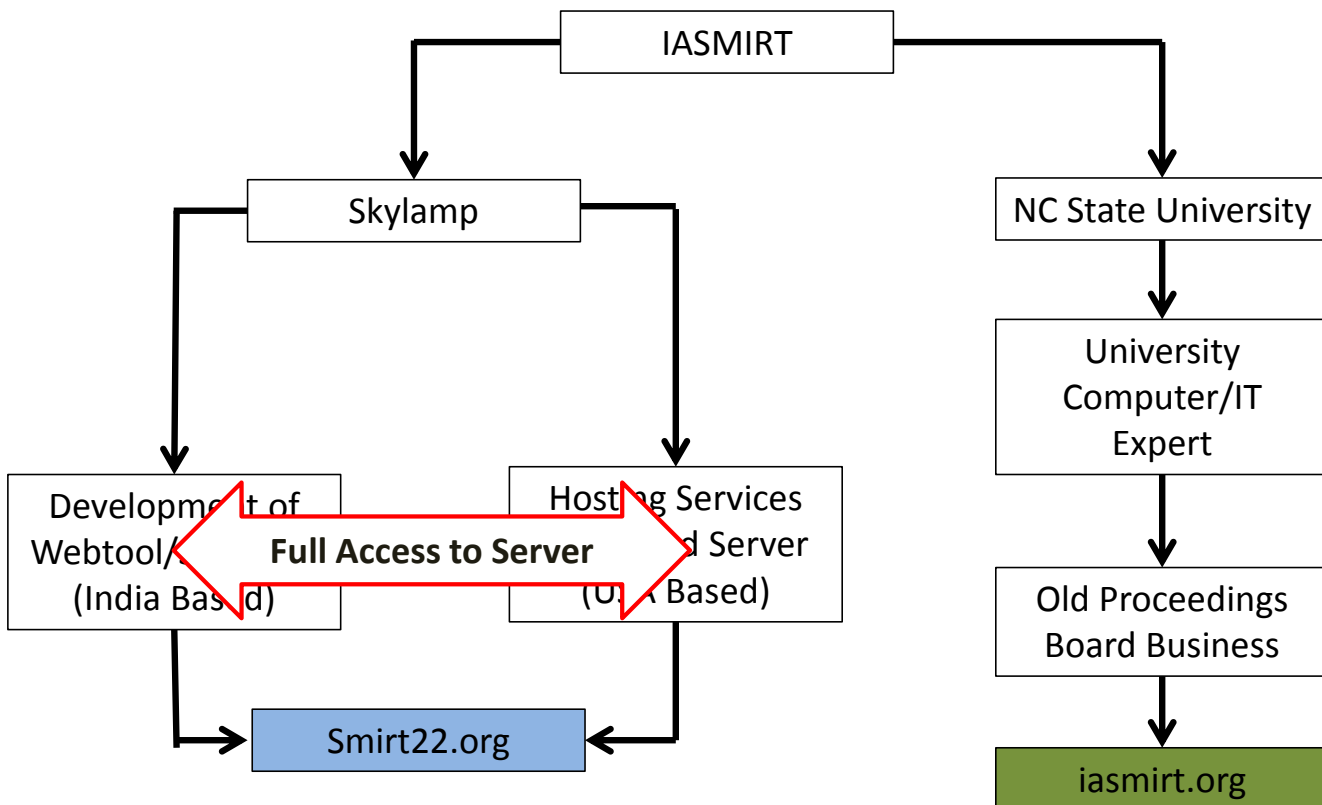


- As Technical Advisor to the Board, I would like to apologize to the SMiRT23 team, the IASMiRT Board, Advisory Board, and the ISC for not able to deliver a trouble free smooth operation of the SMiRT23 website/webtool.
- The team at NC State took the responsibility of delivering a high quality product but we ran into some major problems and I personally own the responsibility for what happened.

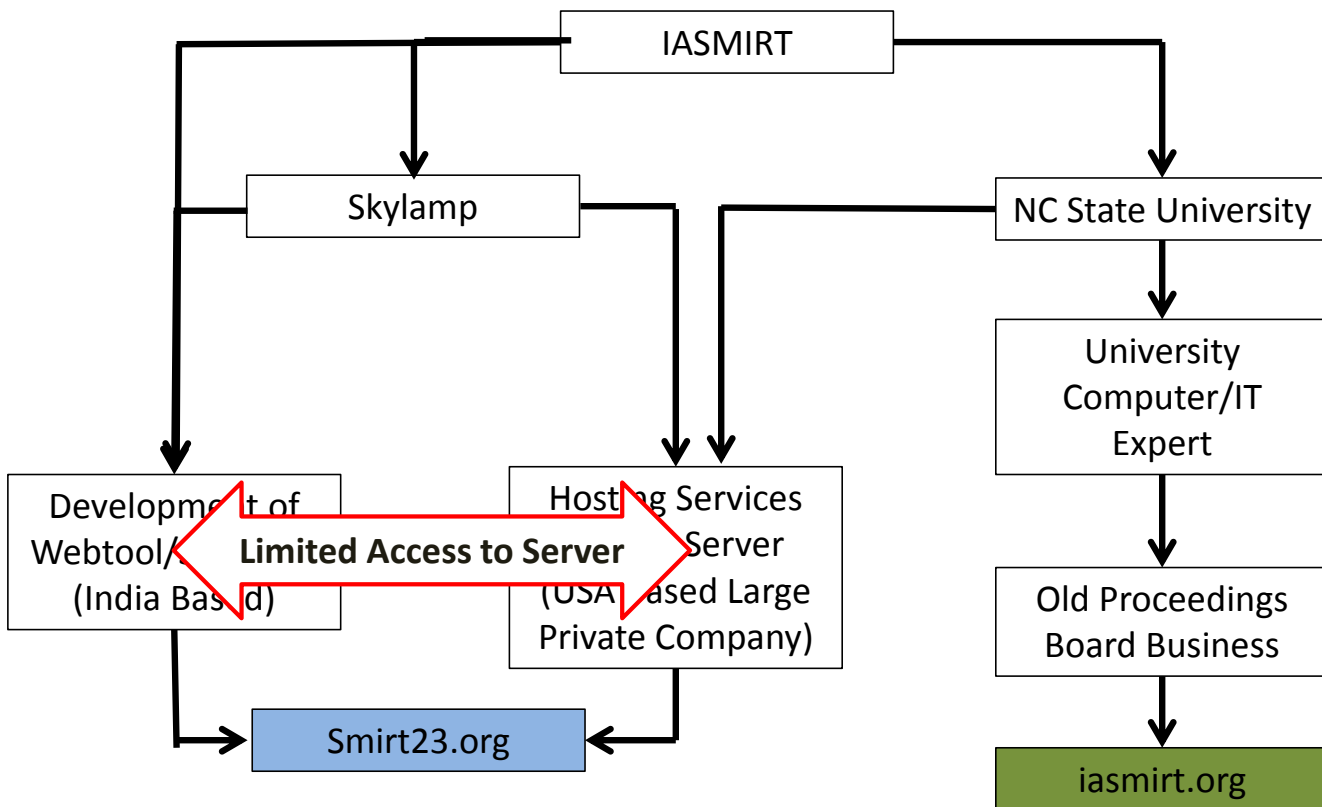
Report of the Technical Advisor

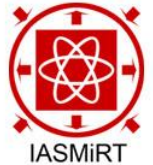
- In this report, I make an attempt to:
 - Explain what happened
 - Describe why it happened
 - Present solution to the problem
 - Commit short term support for SMiRT23
 - Explore options for long term strategy

Structure for SMiRT22



Structure for SMiRT23



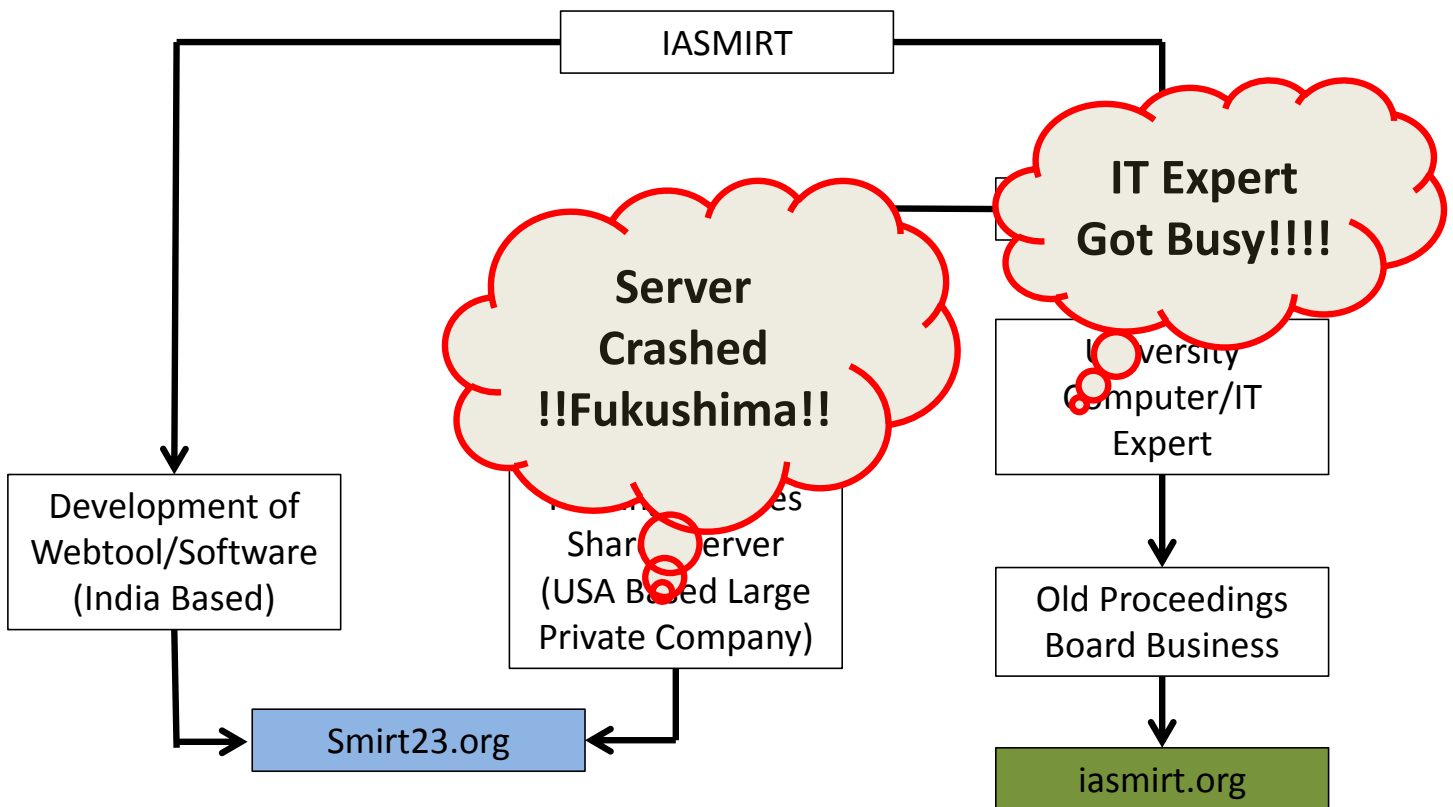


Things to Note!!!

- Considerations

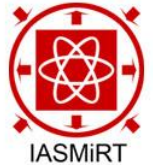
- Private hosting service HOSTGATOR hosts several million websites.
- Ensures security and customer service
- Limited access to developers ensures that iasmirt controls the access especially because we are on autopilot in this phase for most part.
- *Accepted shared server because we were told that it is sufficient and other websites managed on same servers by this expert had never crashed in the past decade.*

What Happened?





Sequence of Events



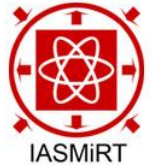
- First announcement (march) delayed - server setup for mass emailing.
- *Shared servers and databases* crashed in the last week of October.
- HostGator took a week to restore services – first week of November
- NCSU IT Expert suggested that we move the site to *Dedicated Server*.
- She moved the site but couldn't activate it. Dropped the ball and requested help of developers to fix the site.
- This is a complex tool which is not easy to move from one server to another midway during a conference. It creates complex file structure as users and abstracts are uploaded. Developers/students spent a lot of time to ensure complete functionality due to midway move.
- Took a full week for developers to restore things. Site is working now.

Why did it happen

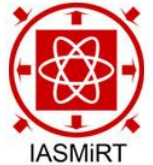
- Crashing of servers was just an *Accident* – a rare *accident*.
- Hundreds of thousands of other sites were down too.
- Shared Server was not a good choice.
- Limited access to developers did not help in restoring the site.
- Did not know that mid conference move was not easy.



What has been done?



- Dedicated Server is all set and working fine.
- Daily backups are being conducted.
- Developers are maintaining a parallel site which can be made live in case the main site goes down.
- Additional functionality requested by smirt23 team has been added.
- Developers have almost full access – *not complete*.
- In the process of finding how to transfer billing from NCSU IT expert to IASMiRT team.



Short-term – Support for SMiRT23?

- I am fully committed to providing the necessary support to smirt23 team.
- The students continue to test the site and provide the necessary help that I need to ensure success.
- We have responded to every request in the most timely manner.
- Developers have done a great job so far and they are committed to providing the necessary support.
- We have attended weekly conference calls with smirt23 team for the past several months and will continue to do so – as needed.

Long-term Scenarios

- One option – just don't use the webtool.
- If we continue to use it –
 - Provide complete access of servers to developers and have them directly manage it.
 - I and couple of other Board members should have authority to talk to server hosting company.
 - Develop formal contract with developers to provide support as needed and be responsible for backup site, backups, etc.
 - Have an admin at a centralized location to act as the “admin” to reduce the load on local organizers for dealing with account creation, abstract upload, duplicate abstracts, etc. Local organizers will still get copy of all communication but they would only need to worry about technical questions.