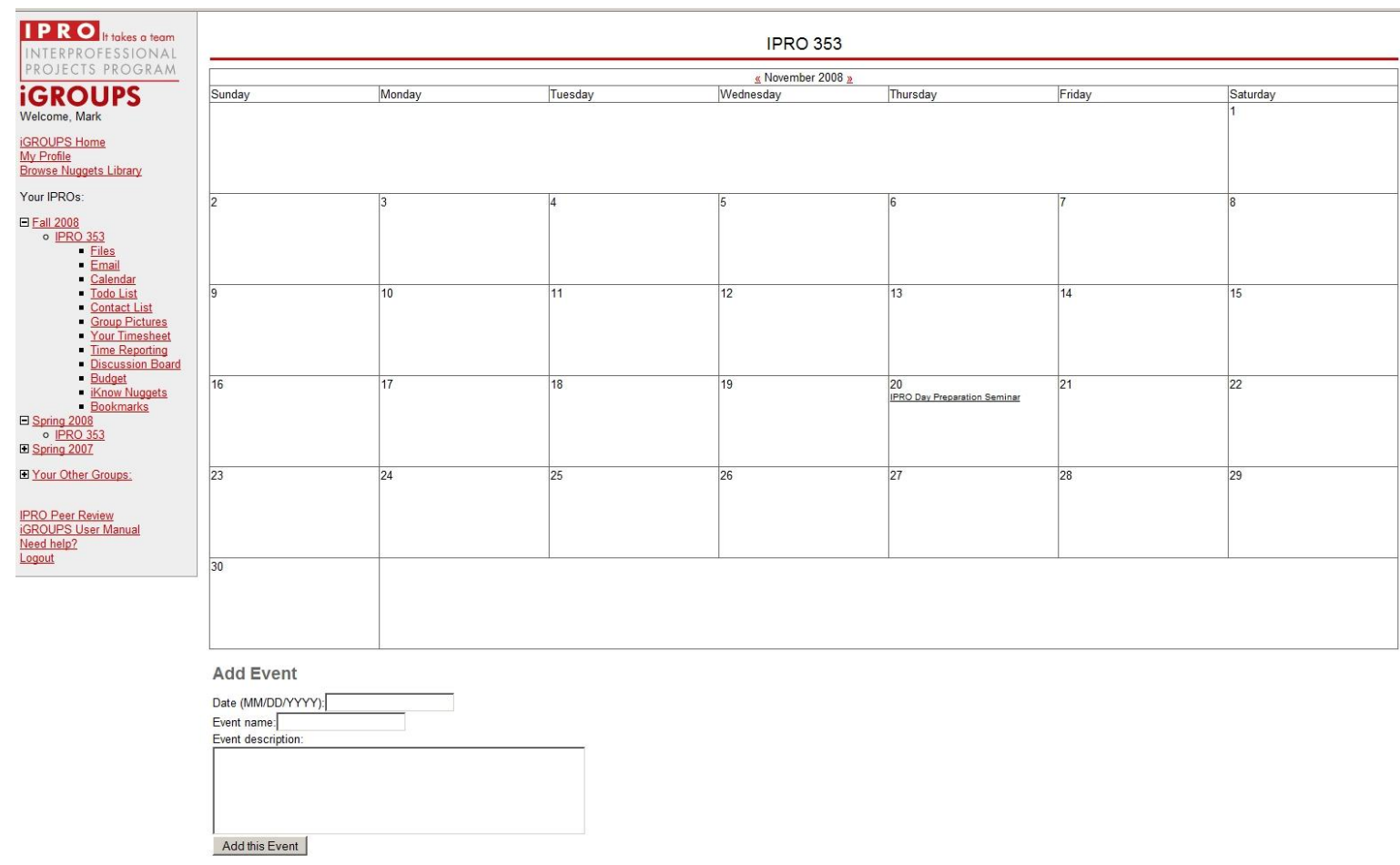


What is iGroups?

iGroups is project management software whose primary goal is to improve communication between group members. With those in the education field and in non-profit organizations not having a consistent method of communication, we've decided to market this product towards them.



iGROUPS



Our Problem

Illinois Institute of Technology has developed a group-collaboration software named iGroups. Can a return be generated on that investment? If so, how?



Decision

- It was decided that marketing iGroups will be delayed
- iGroups will be kept within Illinois Institute of Technology to further improve the program
- Additions to iGroups including Instant Messaging can easily be made by developers
- Once iGroups is commercially appeasable, it will be easier to cater to the education market

1. Substitution of iGroups by private software: @Task or AceProject.

The competitive analysis team conducted research on external group collaboration software. @Task and AceProject were the ones chosen due to their similarities with iGroups. The sub-team tested demo versions of both programs. Features, functionality, ease of use, and efficiency were evaluated to determine if substituting iGroups would be in the best interest of the university. The biggest incentives to switch from iGroups to a private platform are reliability on features, support, and the possibility of tailor made development according to the university's requests. The biggest pitfall is the reduction of IIT's brand influence, which is ultimately what is needed to this EnPro to succeed

2. Commercialization of iGroups in its current development phase.

Survey data gathered by the marketing team demonstrates that many users like to use iGroups in its current stage, and don't suppose any problem in terms of usability. Despite this, most think that the software is not ready yet to be commercialized due to interface aesthetics, features, and research done on the competition.

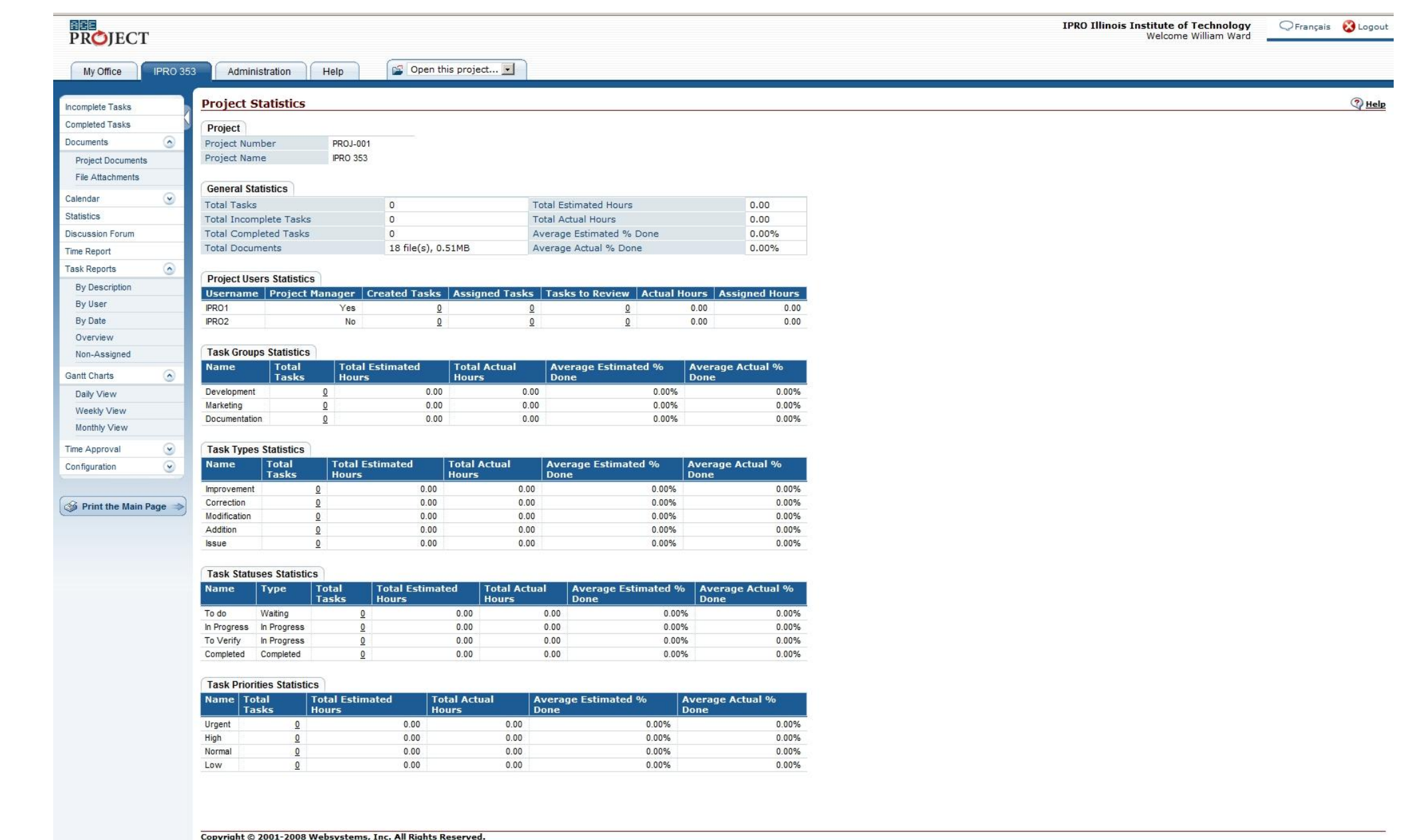
Marketing iGroups as it stands has the potential for great results. The premise is the generation of more users independent of the IPRO program, and the feedback generated from them. Developers would be swift to upgrade, debug, and implement more features if a bigger user base existed. Hence, a faster progression and evolution of the software would occur.

3. Continuation of the development of iGroups for future commercialization: With or without an IMI Innovations collaboration.

If the team decides to keep the software for further development, IIT would continue to benefit from having its own branding on the whole project, because of its "in-house" production. They will also benefit from the continuation of the EnPro 353 course, which will gather more brilliant minds to work on the project.

The current team has to decide on a collaboration with IMI Innovations, a software company located on the IIT main campus, which is about to publish a multiple user input tool called inPlex. The team is interested in applying the technology to the iGroups interface, but the negotiation terms haven't been settled.

Regardless of a collaboration, iGroups has the potential to become a strong contender in the collaboration software sector, but it requires some time to be polished before commercialization.



History of iGroups (this semester)

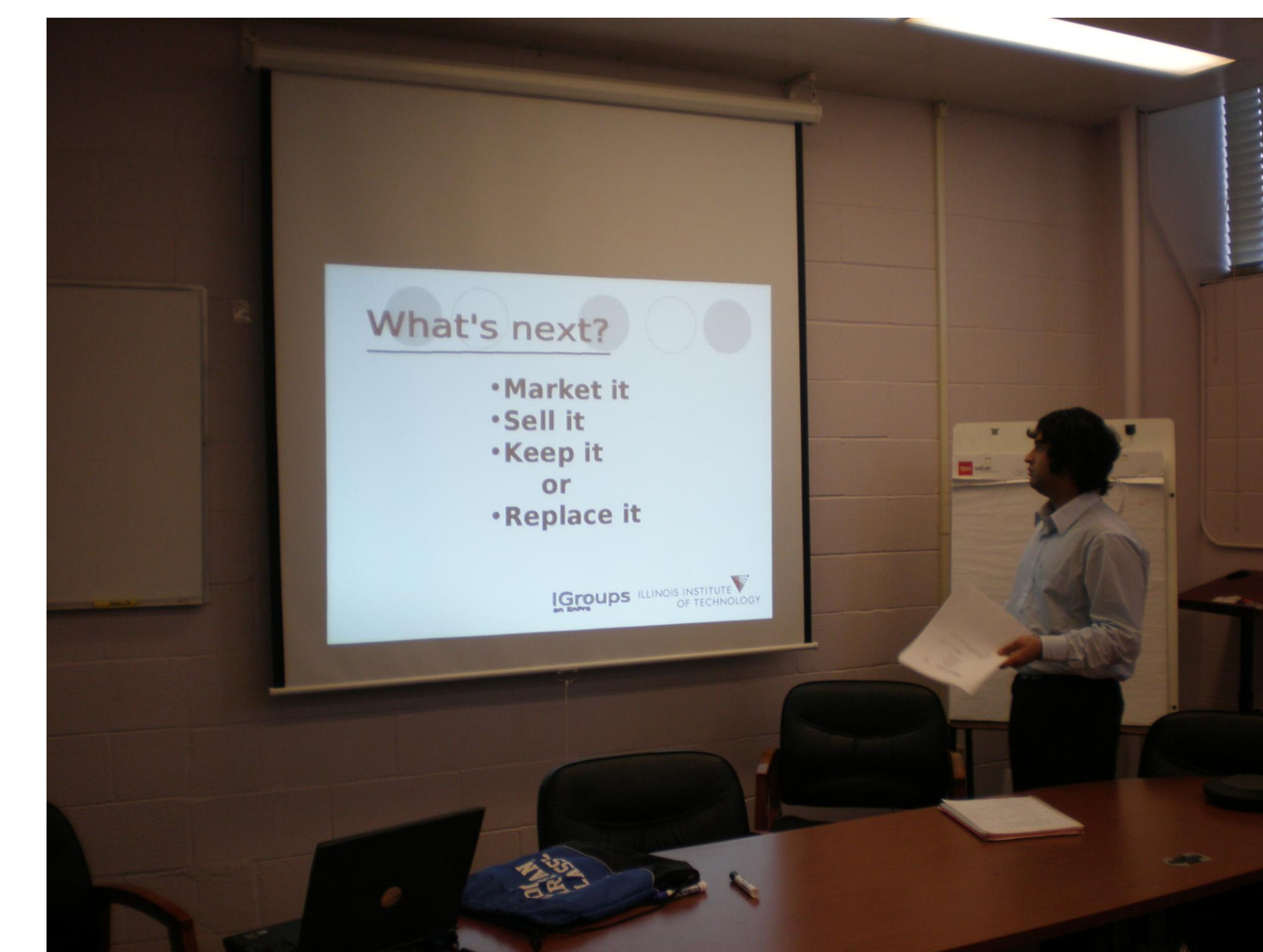
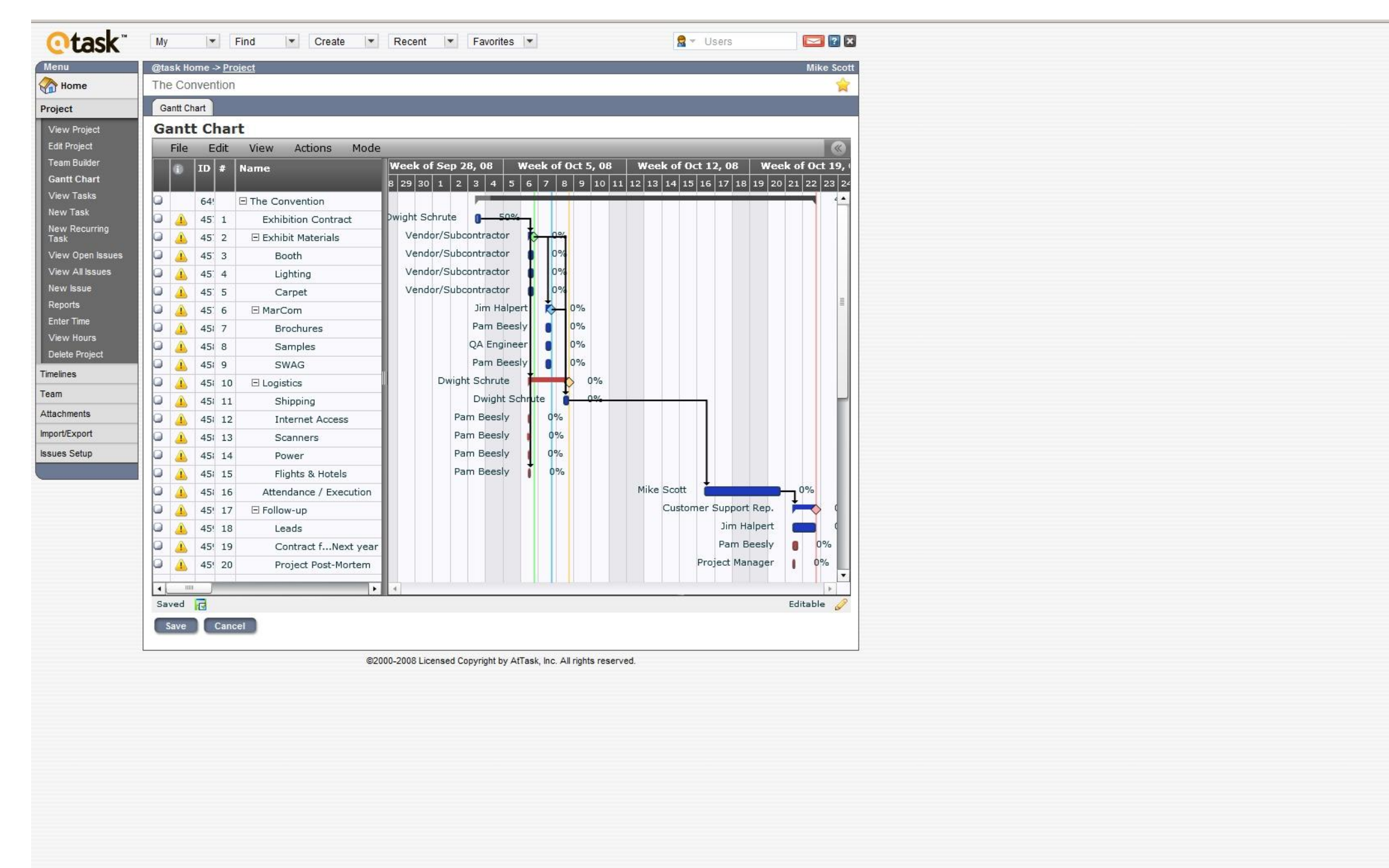
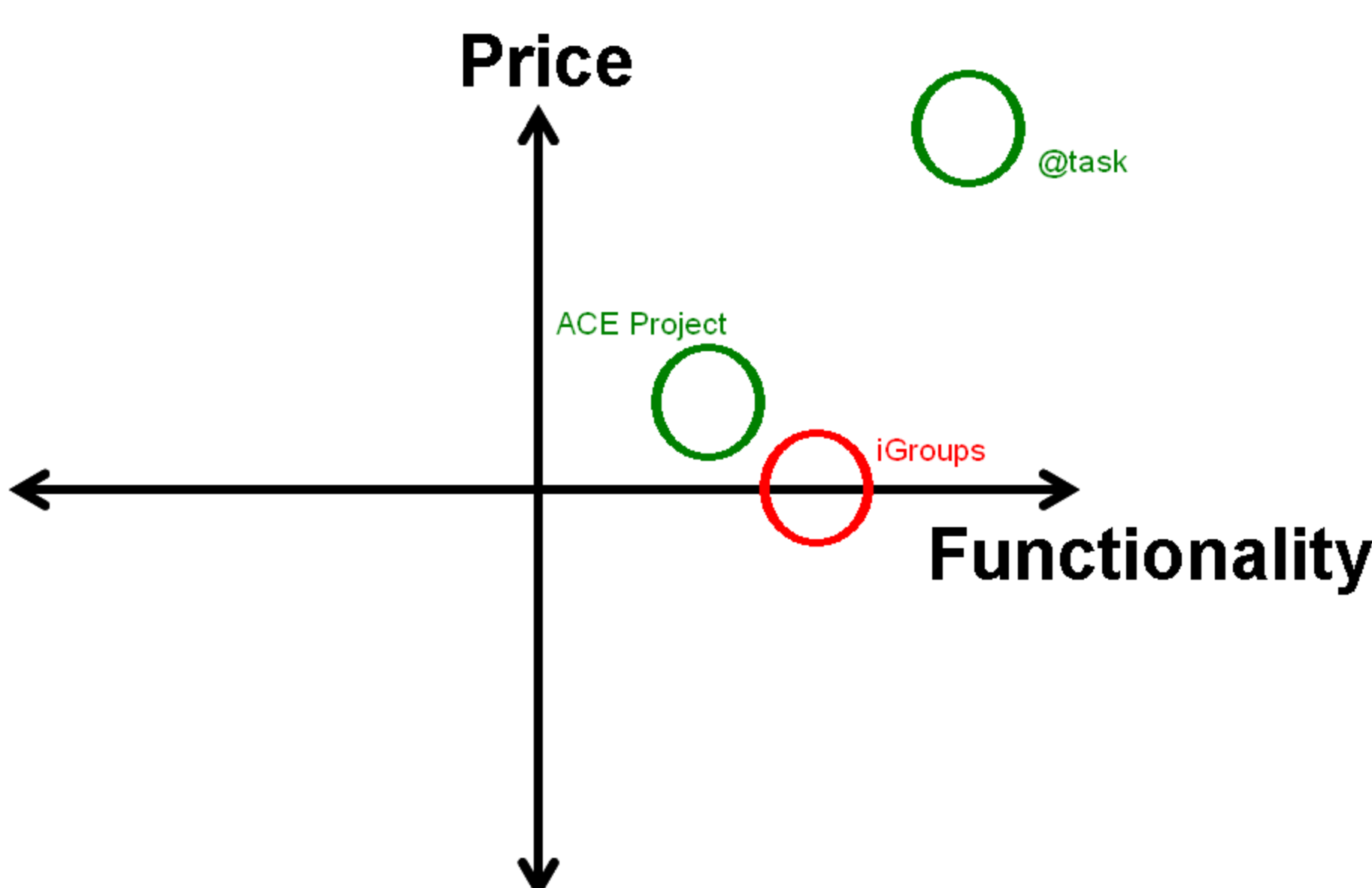
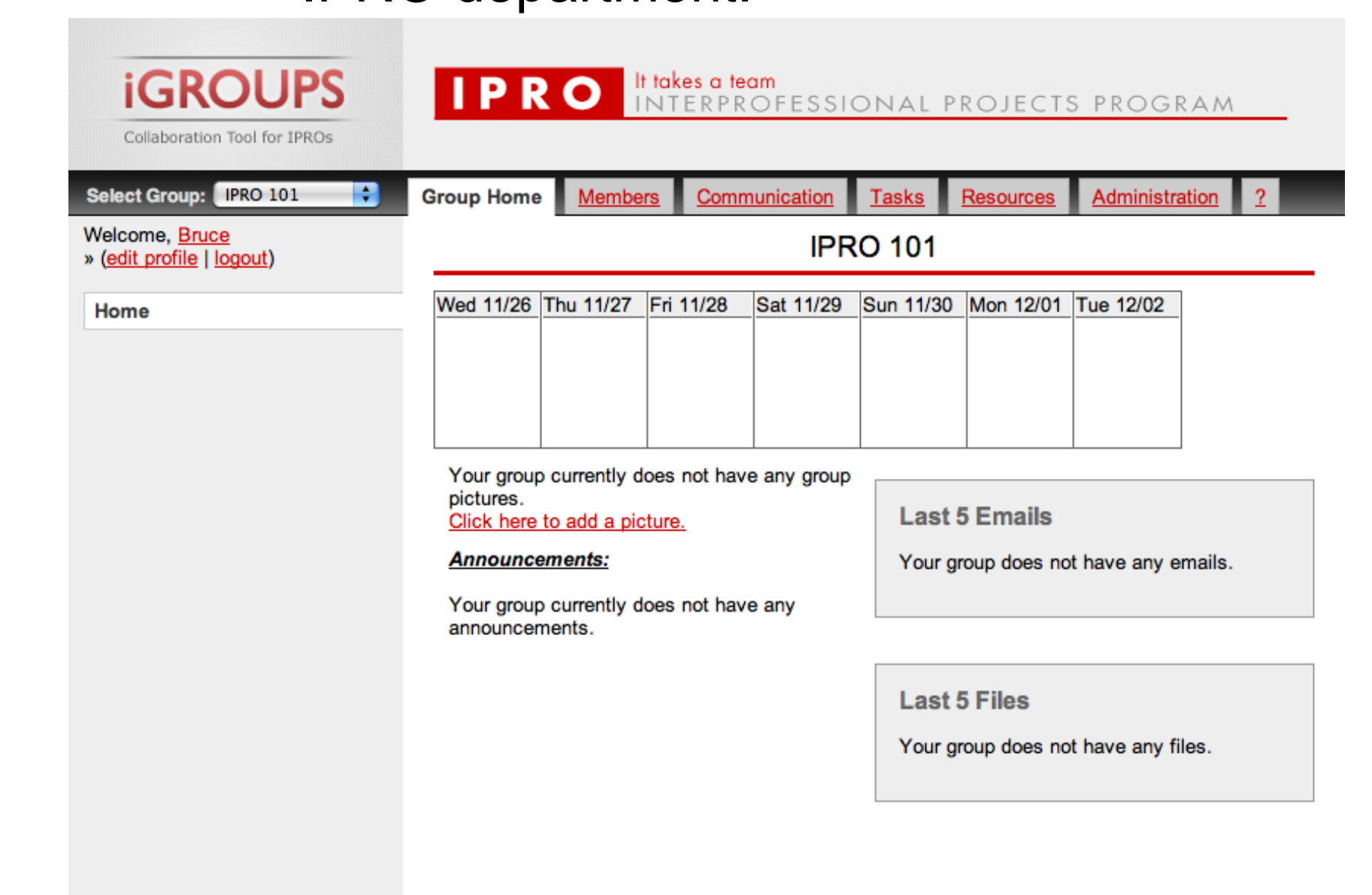
- September**
 - Group created to determine marketability
 - Subgroups Assigned (PMR, SMR, Legal, Naming, Website)
 - Began Considering IMI Partnership
 - Student and Professor Surveys carried out
 - iGroups name found to be copyrighted
 - Similar product found: Wiggio.
 - Not considered be direct competition
- October**
 - Target Market is changed from small business to education and organizations
 - iGroups is found to be unable to be patented
 - Began considering selling iGroups as a business
 - Changed iGroups classification from collaboration to project management
 - Defined competition changes from Blackboard to Aceproject and @task
 - Began considering replacing iGroups with competition
- November**
 - Focus group carried out with demo of new "Public" version of iGroups
 - Analyzed progress and defined future goals

Benefit Analysis

	iGroups	AceProject	@task
Communication	average	below average	average
Task Management	average	average	above average
Knowledge Management	above average	average	above average
Powerpoint and Spreadsheet	n/a	n/a	n/a
Positive influence on the IIT Image	above average	average	average

Looking Forward:

- Polish iGroups' current feature set and improve it's usability within the IPRO department.



(Example public site created with enhanced user interface.)

- Open up iGroups to all students for non-IPRO projects
 - Integrate into IIT's student web application suite (via the myIIT portal).
 - Get professors in various departments to encourage its usage for collaborative projects.
 - Re-visit the idea of marketing the software if we find that the software becomes useful outside of the IPRO department.