

# **1 iAgora - Study, Travel, Work Abroad - Connecting Internationals**

## 1.1 Roger Espel Llima <roger (at) iagora.net> exclaimed:

- Date: Fri, 16 Nov 2001 17:58:05 +0100
- Traffic: several million hits / month
- URL: <http://www.iagora.com/>

iAgora was started in mid-1998, as a community site for internationally minded people. After investigating the major existing web development systems, we chose to go with Linux, Apache and mod\_perl. Three years later, we're very happy with this choice.

At iAgora we are constantly adding features and sections to our site, and refining the ones we have. For us it was very important to have a flexible platform, that would give us complete freedom in organizing our code, and customizing how the pages are generated.

We have found the combination of Linux, Apache and mod\_perl to be:

- \* cost-effective

There are no software licences to pay, the programs are easy enough to install and configure, and many free support and middleware modules can be obtained from CPAN.

- \* stable

The running servers have had very few crashes, and generally not needed much maintenance. We have also found it very useful to be able to administer the servers remotely.

- \* flexible

Since mod\_perl lets perl access low-level hooks within Apache, it is possible to have complete control over any aspect of its operation.

For instance, we found it easy and convenient to create virtual URLs, where some path elements were matched to database queries rather than directories on disk, while still basically serving an HTML file.

- \* adapted for large site creation

Mod\_perl gives us complete control over how HTML and perl code interface to each other. By using a templating to the fullest extent, we minimize the amount of duplication both in HTML and perl. This also lets us have common navigation and design accross the

whole site, while separately maintaining the various form-based applications that make the site.

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