

2007-07-18 IRC MediaWiki discussion

Evanpro: [Evan Prodromou, MediaWiki developer](#)

marclaporte: [Marc Laporte, Tikiwiki admin](#)

(10:32:57) evanpro [n=evanpro@pdpc/supporter/silver/evanpro](#) entered the room.

(10:34:27) marclaporte: tomb: so you can consider that there is a need of better organisation or that there is a need of new coders recruitment policy -> yes, it is normal to have turn-over in volunteers. We need a "permanent" way to recruit & integrate help

(10:35:04) marclaporte: hi evanpro!

(10:35:19) evanpro: The "permanent" solution is coping with an ever-changing stream of participants, I think

(10:35:26) evanpro: hi marclaporte

(10:35:29) evanpro: How's things?

(10:35:41) marclaporte: evanpro: all is well, you?

(10:35:53) evanpro: OK, too busy for my own good

(10:36:00) marclaporte: 😊

(10:36:03) evanpro: Somehow I managed to be launching two new sites at the end of this month

(10:36:18) evanpro: One at DemoCampMontreal3 and one at Wikimania

(10:36:21) marclaporte: coping with an ever-changing stream of participants: I like that

(10:36:21) evanpro: So that's going to be fun

(10:37:33) marclaporte: we want the participants to stay as long as possible, so it has to be fun, friendly, productive, etc and the more participants there are to spread the work, the easier it is on everyone (make sure to avoid volunteer burnout)

(10:38:58) marclaporte: evanpro: I wrote something about [MediaWiki to TikiWiki converter](#) recently. I'd like to double check my facts. What do you think of:

http://dev.tiki.org/tiki-view_tracker_item.php?trackerId=5&itemId=1220 ?

(10:39:49) marclaporte: In essence: Is mediawiki going to add more features (forums, trackers, etc) or just become easier & easier to use with Drupal and other apps?

(10:40:28) evanpro: "MediaWiki is dumb and written by poopy heads..." Mark, this is really kind of childish.



(10:40:38) evanpro: One sec

(10:41:22) evanpro: phone call

(10:41:26) evanpro: So, it seems about right to me

(10:41:59) evanpro: I think one thing that you didn't mention is that a lot of the integration choices that Wikipedia has made are built in to the system, and hard to pull out

(10:42:23) evanpro: For example, instead of a general server-side caching interface, there's calls to Squid's caching tools sprinkled throughout the code

(10:42:41) evanpro: memcached is also tightly integrated

(10:43:31) evanpro: The MW developer group is about evenly split between people who don't want to support MW outside of Wikipedia _at_all_, and people who are doing a good job at least getting it distributable.

(10:43:42) evanpro: But it's still primarily developed to run Wikipedia, period.

(10:44:31) evanpro: I think it's doubtful that MW will add more features to make it more like a general community platform/CMS

(10:45:19) evanpro: And there are efforts to make it compatible with Drupal, but they're pretty hackish, and there's not much of a push inside the core developer community to make this happen

(10:46:08) Veejay: I've tried Drupal

(10:46:10) Veejay: Neat stuff

(10:46:24) franc1 n=franck@Broadband-Static-Central121.connect.com.fj entered the room.

(10:48:12) evanpro: So, I think you're really on to something, Marc

(10:48:44) evanpro: I think it would be a good idea to have some kind of MW import framework

(10:56:23) marclaporte: evanpro: ok, will Drupal develop a home-grown wiki then?

(10:56:44) evanpro: Yeah, I believe that there's a wiki in the 5.x distribution

(10:57:28) Veejay: Yeah

(10:57:32) Veejay: They have a wiki

(10:58:05) marclaporte: so how come MAJ had a talk about Drupal + MediaWiki integration?

(10:58:33) marclaporte: evanpro: do you think MediaWiki will switch to wikicreole?

(10:58:34) evanpro: Because she hacked like the wind to make it work 😊

(10:58:40) marclaporte: evanpro: 😊

(10:58:41) evanpro: "switch"? No

(10:59:25) evanpro: I think it's possible that MW will have a WikiCreole plugin at some point in the future

(10:59:38) CIA-1: gillesm * tiki/tikimovies/multiplayer.swf: multiplayer.swf improvment (progress bar for video)

(10:59:53) evanpro: But MW developers are afraid of our wiki markup and its parser

(11:00:12) evanpro: It's been added to and tweaked by so many people over the years, it's become really hard to document

(11:00:14) marclaporte: "our"?

(11:00:23) evanpro: "our" == mediawiki's

(11:00:28) marclaporte: interesting

(11:00:34) evanpro: Yeah

(11:00:56) evanpro: Which is kind of a bummer, because it's this document format that literally tens of millions of important documents are written in

(11:01:05) ***marclaporte needs a few minutes to think about all this.

(11:01:05) evanpro: And there's only one known good parser

(11:01:38) marclaporte: which one? (shows my ignorance!)

(11:02:04) evanpro: ...

(11:02:18) evanpro: the one in MediaWiki, of course

(11:02:24) jb154321 n=freenode@adsl-71-130-64-166.dsl.irvnca.pacbell.net entered the room.

(11:04:01) marclaporte: evanpro: of course, if mediawiki changes something that would be less efficient, it could mean needing dozens of extra servers...

(11:04:15) evanpro: Right

(11:04:33) evanpro: I think Wikipedia is getting somewhere on the order of billions of hits per day

(11:04:40) evanpro: It was some just insane number last time I read it

(11:05:16) marclaporte: + migrating all the content (from one syntax to another) would be a big undertaking, both to actually do it and all the tech support after...

(11:05:38) evanpro: OK, here we go:
<http://hemlock.knams.wikimedia.org/~leon/stats/reqstats/reqstats-daily.png>

(11:05:46) evanpro: 25k hits/sec

(11:06:12) evanpro: also it's important to remember that Wikipedia contributors have really pushed their wiki markup to the limit

(11:06:26) evanpro: They use all kinds of tricks and bugs in the parser to make weird stuff happen on

Wikipedia pages

(11:07:00) marclaporte: so there would be hundreds/thousands of pages to be reviewed?

(11:07:03) evanpro: And if only 0.1% of pages on English Wikipedia use some particular trick, that's 2000 pages that are broken if the trick is fixed.

(11:07:17) evanpro: (Roughly)

(11:07:21) marclaporte: (wow)

(11:07:43) evanpro: Wikipedia contributors are also pretty easy to get upset

(11:08:32) evanpro: 🤔

(11:08:44) marclaporte: You know how the grass is always greener of the other side.... I am thinking our grass just got greener...

(11:08:53) evanpro: Anyways, Wikipedia is a biiig boat now, and turning it is really hard

(11:09:01) evanpro: And MediaWiki doesn't move unless Wikipedia moves

(11:09:21) marclaporte: Tiki is also a big boat and we have our challenges

(11:09:26) evanpro: Indeed!

(11:09:40) marclaporte: but I am very optimistic

(11:09:41) evanpro: Oh, wait, I forgot to mention

(11:09:50) marclaporte: tell me more!

(11:09:57) evanpro: There's a decent parser that turns MediaWiki text into a structured XML format

(11:10:01) evanpro: <http://tools.wikimedia.de/~magnus/wiki2xml/w2x.php> <-- this one

(11:10:19) evanpro: If you were considering a MW-to-tiki converter, that might be a good intermediate representation

(11:10:44) Veejay: All written in PHP - so portable, so incredibly slow... about as fast as the original MediaWiki parser!

(11:10:45) Veejay: HAHA

(11:10:48) Veejay: That was good

(11:10:49) Veejay: :')

(11:11:49) marclaporte: evanpro: Right now, my #1 focus is to attract more talent & energy to Tiki. The project is too big/complex for our current active group. So we are stretching our volunteers too thin.

(11:12:44) marclaporte: evanpro: so, of course mediawiki to tikiwiki path is something with can provide a lot of influx

(11:13:28) marclaporte: Has there been discussions to fork mediawiki to have a general-purpose wiki edition?

(11:13:58) marclaporte: and remove memcached, squid, etc

(11:14:09) marclaporte: but keep the nice UI, the markup, etc

(11:14:14) evanpro: yes, there has

(11:14:19) evanpro: But it hasn't gone anywhere

(11:14:50) evanpro: As you probably know, there are a lot of people who want to have "a wikipedia"

(11:15:03) evanpro: And nothing but the exact Wikipedia software is going to suffice

(11:15:39) marclaporte: evanpro: I have felt the WikiPedia effect on my company

(11:16:07) marclaporte: They want a wikipedia, but I haven't had trouble because tiki vs mw

(11:16:24) marclaporte: I guess they wouldn't contact a tiki guy for a MW though...

(11:17:51) marclaporte: if wikipedia doesn't move to creole, I guess that dampens a lot of people's hopes...

(11:18:36) marclaporte: But I understand that it is an enormous amount of work & risk. And they must be already super busy coping with growth

(11:18:48) evanpro: I've got Chuck Smith on Jabber

(11:18:49) evanpro: One sec

(11:19:22) MikeW left the room (quit:).

(11:20:07) marclaporte: good old Chuck!

(11:20:56) marclaporte: does anyone know what wiki markup the drupal wiki is using?

(11:26:41) whegge_: having a problem with 'live support' running on XP. On my Ubuntu box it works fine, on another XP box it works. But on one XP box, I cannot go online. Any ideas?

(11:27:20) marclaporte: whegge_: which browser?

(11:27:43) whegge_: ie and firefox

(11:28:35) Yoni left the room.

(11:30:02) marclaporte: whegge_: maybe a firewall issue? (Wild guess)

(11:30:19) sylvieg: do you know what fancy type in the toc parameter does?

(11:30:23) marclaporte: whegge_: I guess you tried rebooting?

(11:32:00) whegge_: marclaporte: Not firewall, same network. Rebooting though I have not. Will try that.

(11:32:44) marclaporte: sylvieg: sorry, no

(11:33:08) marclaporte: evanpro: waiting for you 😊

(11:33:28) evanpro: OK, we started chatting about other things

(11:33:28) whegge_: cannot remember myself, just did that yesterday too. Brain is dead this week.

(11:34:05) whegge_: sorry did not mean to interrupt. Was an interesting chat though

(11:34:08) marclaporte: evanpro: no rush, but do come back 😊

(11:34:25) evanpro: OK, I gotta get moving along, though

(11:34:43) marclaporte: whegge_: no prob. Once day, I hope we have IRC chat threading !

(11:35:06) marclaporte: evanpro: I hope we see more & more of you here :-

(11:35:08) marclaporte: 😊

(11:35:45) evanpro: Sounds good

(11:36:01) evanpro: I'm going to hide out

(11:40:12) evanpro left the room (quit: "Ex-Chat").