Bugs & Wish list

Migrating 18.8 to 21.4 fails utterly, breaks layout | Tiki Wiki CMS Groupware :: Development
Migrating 18.8 to 21.4 fails utterly, breaks layout

Status
    ⊗ Closed

Subject
    Migrating 18.8 to 21.4 fails utterly, breaks layout

Version
    21.x

Category
    • Bug

Feature
    Installer (profiles, upgrades and server-related issues)

Resolution status
    New

Submitted by
    hman

Lastmod by
    hman

Rating
    ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ (0) ❓

Related-to
    • ⊗ Installer not ready for PHP 7.4 in Tiki 18.x
    • ● Please update theme creation documentation

Description
    I have test-upgraded my test site (which is a copy of the productive site with slightly less content,
    but duplicate files, layout, CSS) and upgrading failed. Miserably.

    First, there was one (1) SQL error:

    📄

    UPDATE `users_objectpermissions` SET `permName` = 'tiki_p_read_article' WHERE
    `permName` = 'tiki_p_topic_read' AND `objectType` = 'topic' Duplicate entry
    '4dadd7eebd7a5fc8790114f9f5aaa8b6-topic-Anonymous-tiki_p_read_art' for key 'PRIMARY'

    For the moment, I checked the checkmark in order to proceed (it's not the productive site anyway,
    and I have a backup of both the files and the DB).

    After logging in, I was flabbergasted. I thought my layout (originally done by Gary to imitate a
    standard layout of 12.14 that was dropped with later updates: Geo) was kind of conservative,
    absolutely nothing fancy. Standard, classic Tiki layout with 3 containers, a header, a left module
    zone, a center wiki content and a right module zone.

    There is one horizontal menu which was VERY hard to create on 18.8 (because creating menus from
    scratch is simply not possible (at all) on 18.8., due to an unfixed bug. I made it possible with a trick,

I created a second standard menu, exported it, modified it as needed, and re-imported.

Since at that time I did not want to indulge in the depths of the CSS, I created style directives in the context of the menu, which worked satisfactorily. Most of the site is classic Wiki content. Some articles for news, a calendar (which was horribly bug-ridden and thus dysfunctional on 18.8) and a small shop (CART).

So nothing fancy at all. No categories (besides what CART brought with it), no perspectives, etc.

And now the catastrophe: The left module zone is now sitting on the right, and the right module zone went to far-right. Yes, both left and right module zone now sit on the right-hand side.

The menu is a mess with wrong fonts, wrong sizing, wrong spacing etc.

When I call the control panels, they come up as one column (!) in a seemingly endless page, hardly usable at all.

This is the worst upgrade I have ever witnessed. And I thought 12.14 -> 18.2 was a bad. Little did I know...

I checked the look & feel setting, found nothing special in there, it is still on "classic Tiki 3 container". The admin setting was off, to "1 container", but setting that to "Classic Tiki 3 container" to match the site's default changed nothing...

If Tiki keeps breaking my layouts, I am seriously considering to let go. If it weren't for more than one decade of content, I would be gone already. Enough is enough.

Solution
> Closed due to insufficient information about the specific breakage in the customized theme. Comments made about the development process have been noted.

Importance
> 10 high

Easy to solve?
> 5

Priority
> 50

Demonstrate Bug (Tiki 19+)
> ## Please demonstrate your bug on show2.tiki.org
>
> Version: trunk ▼

Demonstrate Bug (older Tiki versions)
> ## Please demonstrate your bug on show.tikiwiki.org
>
> Version: 18.x ▼

Ticket ID
> 7913

Created
> Tuesday 02 November, 2021 11:00:30 GMT-0000
> by hman

LastModif
> Thursday 28 July, 2022 04:14:42 GMT-0000

Comments

Gary Cunningham-Lee 02 Nov 21 11:39 GMT-0000

The wording of the subject of this bug report seems rather misleading to me. As far as I know, upgrading a freshly made Tiki 18.8 to 21.4 goes smoothly with no layout breakage, etc. I understand that upgrading your particular website didn't go smoothly, but is that due to bugs in Tiki or special factors in the case of your website? I've updated Tiki installations from 18 to 21 with no problem, as I believe a number of people have, so I think it might be more constructive to try to find what caused the problem in your case than to make the broad statement that upgrading Tiki is broken. Of course if a broken 18.8 to 21.4 upgrade is shown to be reproducible, then my assumption is wrong and fixes are needed. But if layout, etc. is broken due to site-specific factors, then perhaps we need better documentation for the upgrade process when custom themes are involved, etc.

Is the layout of your site broken no matter what theme is active, such as the "Default" theme? I'm assuming you cleared the Tiki caches and after the upgrade. It sounds like, for some reason, the correct CSS isn't being applied, at the least.

hman 02 Nov 21 12:42 GMT-0000

Thanks, Gary. I'll give that a try. But you might know this particular CSS. It's Geo, written by you, for me. For Tiki 18.2. Over the years I only changed some fonts and colours, no fundamental changes. What is new is the horizontal menu, which I did not have originally.

hman 02 Nov 21 12:49 GMT-0000

Of course I cleared cache. I also tested on a different PC with a different OS (Windows instead of Linux).

I switched to Amelia for testing. Amelia was, on Tiki 12, the "parent" of the later dropped original Geo, so I figured Amelia might still be kind of similar. It is. The colours are weird, fonts also (At least to me). But left module zone went back to left, and right to right... So the arrangement is okay with Amelia.

After switching back to Geo, arrangement was broken again...

Gary Cunningham-Lee 02 Nov 21 13:45 GMT-0000

I've kept the Geo theme files in my local theme dev installation, just updating and compiling them along with the others. I uploaded a copy of Geo.css as an attachment to this task page, which you can try using and see if it makes a difference.

hman 02 Nov 21 13:56 GMT-0000

Thanks for that. But it claims to be for Tiki 23... Can't do sftp with it from the office, anyway.

Gary Cunningham-Lee>hman 02 Nov 21 15:38 GMT-0000

Replied to Thanks for... I think it's worth a try even though the version number isn't an exact match — maybe not so much has changed between the versions in regard to the theme stylesheet.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 02 Nov 21 22:30 GMT-0000

Replied to I think it's...
Your CSS looks almost right (almost, of course it lacks all the colour and sizing work I've done, it ignores (?) the font and size parameters I have given directly to the menu (although it produces a cleaner default), and it does give classic control panels icons as a table and not one single row.

Now tell me, what have you done?

Obviously Tiki has changed layouting massively (again!). Sorry to say that, this is a pain in the ass, not only in Tiki. Everyone throws away proven functional and ergonomic GUI styles for what? Just for the sake of change? Windows looks like a black hole, Android looks like a blank sheet of paper, icons everywhere have no depth, no color, buttons have no borders and don't look like buttons at all. Most GUIs these days are simply ugly and unergonomic. It's like the whole of this industry goes crazy.

DON'T DO THIS!

I know that changing GUIs is the easiest way to simulate (yes, simulate) innovation, while in reality it's the opposite. It's a step backwards to force users to learn to master a GUI anew all the time. Users hate that.

And admins hate it when a carefully crafted CSS goes out the window just because of a software update.

Gary Cunningham-Lee>hman 03 Nov 21 07:19 GMT-0000

Replied to
Your CSS...

I would say that the fact that the Tiki 23 version of the Geo theme essentially works as expected indicates that Tiki has not changed layouting massively. I don't believe the layout templates have changed at all, except for minor adjustments. There have been some incremental updates but nothing radical.

I understand your point about the current trend of flat design and its limitations; I think the

visual simplicity comes at the cost of comprehensibility. But as mature (i.e., "old") software that's still being maintained and further developed, we need to meet the expectations people have about modern software, to attract new users and developers. On the other hand, I hope Tiki can appeal to a range of people including those who like skeuomorphic interface design, etc. and in fact some of the themes I've been working on, if I ever get them finished up, are designs specifically chosen/created to be an alternative to the mainstream.

Your experience does reinforce for me the importance of documenting layout and interface changes so custom themes and so on can be properly updated for a Tiki upgrade. We can't stop developing the Tiki interface (and other parts of the code) simply because users have made customizations that need to be preserved. But we can do our best to clarify what has changed and what must be done in the update process.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 03 Nov 21 10:22 GMT-0000

Replied to
I would...

I would say that the fact that the Tiki 23 version of the Geo theme essentially works as expected indicates that Tiki has not changed layouting massively.

Then please tell me why your Geo CSS, written for 18.2, that runs flawlessly on 18.8., has massive and fundamental problems on 21.4?

I didn't say Tiki changed layouting massively with 23. But obviously Tiki changed layouting massively with 21!

Nail in the coffin...

If this trend continues it means I get forced (!) to either rewrite or heavily debug the CSS with each LTS version. Carefully crafting a CSS until everything fits is roughly half a man-month of work. I am not willing to spend that much every couple of years, when either Tiki or PHP force me to upgrade. This is by no means justifiable workload.

It means working for the trash can. To spend half a month to undo the damage that an upgrade caused? To essentially build a GUI, that had already been built? Time and again and again? Sorry, in my point of view that sounds insane.

Sorry, I do not want to offend anyone. Especially not you, Gary. You helped me out, and I thank you again for that. It was mostly you who had the work when 12.14->18.2 broke the layout. But this matter makes me angry, in the future I will have to do that.

We can't stop developing the Tiki interface (and other parts of the code) simply because users have made customizations that need to be preserved.

No one says there shouldn't be room for innovation. But the GUI must (and I am adamant on that) rest solely in the hands of the admin.

Someone, not long ago, wrote "we must stop the bleed". THIS is the bleed. I understand Tiki mostly relies on volunteer work. But my advice is, that Tiki's devs should adopt this "the customer is king". And Tikis customers - are admins.

If you force admins to rewrite or debug THEIR user interface, you'll lose them. If they, too, are volunteers (like I am when it comes to my Tiki installations) then forcing them to unnecessary extra work (greatly) reduces their willingness. If they operate a commercial Tiki installation, I predict that -if not some project manager or supervisor- then the controlling division must FORCE those people to not work unnecessarily.

I do work at a larger IT enterprise. We do have CMS running (more than one, but none of them Tiki). I am not involved in the operation of those (unless we get called for testing). But I am dead sure, if any of those commercial CMS solutions would force a rewrite or heavy debug only due to a version upgrade, this would immediately trigger two projects:
The first would to implement those rewrites or debugs and the second would be to get rid of that product as fast as possible...

Gary Cunningham-Lee>hman 03 Nov 21 11:44 GMT-0000

Replied to
I...

Ok, I was careless making that statement that your post starts with. I now realize that Tiki upgraded from Bootstrap 3 to Bootstrap 4 in Tiki 19 so this would have a big impact. There have been a couple of major upgrades in Tiki's layout methods: from native "lite.css" pre-Bootstrap layout to Bootstrap 3, and from Bootstrap 3 to Bootstrap 4, which could be characterized as "massive" changes — two, in the years of Tiki's development, other layout changes being incremental and generally minor.

There's a page to describe the changes for Tiki 19 here: https://themes.tiki.org/Bootstrap-3-to-4-transition that's linked from the Tiki 19 doc page (https://doc.tiki.org/Tiki19). Did you happen to check these doc pages before upgrading your sites and make adjustments, or did assume that the old stylesheet would work as expected without modification? As I mentioned earlier, maybe we work harder to let people know that these big changes like the Bootstrap version upgrades will require custom themes to be recompiled, etc.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 03 Nov 21 13:02 GMT-0000

Replied to
Ok, I was...

Did you happen to check these doc pages before upgrading your sites and make adjustments, or did assume that the old stylesheet would work as expected without modification?

Frankly, no, I did not check that. I want as few upgrades as possible, so I jump from LTS to LTS (which is, by the way, the way Tiki recommends!). Actually I don't want ANY upgrades, but I realize that is unachievable. If not for other reasons, then for the dreaded incompatibility issues PHP's devs happily create time and again...

Also frankly spoken, I don't want to wade through descriptions describing releases I never

installed to find out what the sum of negative impacts MIGHT be.

Sometimes features are removed in later versions, sometimes altered, so what could be the impetus to read about another outdated version? Any information in that is supposedly outdated as well....

I want to read one document when switching from LTS A to LTS B... Yes, my expectation could be wrong, but I guess that most admins that travel along LTS versions won't read everything "in between"...

hman>hman 04 Nov 21 15:23 GMT-0000

Replied to
Did...

Now I did read https://themes.tiki.org/Bootstrap-3-to-4-transition, but to be honest: I did not understand half of the stuff in there.

I consider myself to be "kind of experienced" in customizing a CSS to my needs. Not expert, but certainly not novice, somewhere in between. But this page does NOT give me clues on what I have to do in order to keep my GUI running, so I dare to conclude that the many admins that have less hands-on-experience with CSS won't even start to read that (IF they would find it). It's an imposition.

If reading AND understanding AND executing such documents is necessary to keep a Tiki installation running, this is definitely another nail in the coffin.

This is were you are bleeding the most.

Gary Cunningham-Lee>hman 04 Nov 21 15:27 GMT-0000

Replied to
Now I did... Comments noted. We'll try for more clarity next time.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 04 Nov 21 15:31 GMT-0000

Replied to Comments... Don't break customers' GUIs, then you don't need that clarity. Embracing bootstrap was the wrong move, and it seems to get worse. It WILL get worse, when bootstrap goes to PostCSS.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 03 Nov 21 15:58 GMT-0000

Replied to
Ok, I was...

There have been a couple of major upgrades in Tiki's layout methods: from native "lite.css" pre-Bootstrap layout to Bootstrap 3, and from Bootstrap 3 to Bootstrap 4, which could be characterized as "massive" changes

Not to mention the massive changes that v5 will bring if they embrace PostCSS... I strongly detest bootstrap a) because I strongly disagree on it's visusals, b) because it is void of any stringent graphical concept that is discernible and c) because it's another dependency...

In the 1960s-1970s, when pictograms were invented, designers would fill entire books writing about the design principles and WHY this and that where done the way they were done.

Example: Oitl Aicher, the designer that gave the 1972 olympics in Munich it's unique design, designed everything. From the typeface over the matchboxes sold to the color of the suits of the personell at official receptions. His work for the olympics fills a huge folio...

Or Lufthansa. Their design was kept stable from the Seventies to just two years ago (actually it borrows some elements from the Munich olympics). Lufthansa was the first airline world-wide to have it's name in bother upper and lower case. Even today that is rare. And now Lufthansa only changed one CI color.

I don't see any such thought-through concept behind bootstrap.

Embracing bootstrap (it came from Twitter!) has done much harm to many products' visuals.

Gary Cunningham-Lee>hman 04 Nov 21 15:42 GMT-0000

Replied to
There... Bootstrap is a layout framework to unify the look and feel across a websites various pages, and to provide a responsive foundation (i..e., good appearance and usability in all screen sizes). That is its main strength. If a Bootstrap website is unattractive, that's because the particular visual theme created for the framework wasn't done well enough, in my opinion; I wouldn't say it's the fault of Bootstrap itself.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 04 Nov 21 15:49 GMT-0000

Replied to Bootstrap is...
Bootstrap is a layout framework to unify the look and feel across a websites various pages, and to provide a responsive foundation (i..e., good appearance and usability in all screen sizes).

IMHO Tiki never had problems with that. Bootstrap is factually making ALL websites look kind of uniform (and dull, if I may add). Bootstrap is a foreign framework that was, in my

perceiption, alien to Tikis inner workings. But instead of creating an abstraction layer that would enable Tiki content to cooperate with bootstrap components, to me it seems like Tiki ripped it's heart out just to assimilate itself to bootstrap, and all GUIs customers built on that are what, collateral damage? Tiki will make all changes that bootstrap is going to make, so the breaking-of-GUIS is a scenario that will repeat with further Tiki LTS? Now that's a productivity killer, in my view.

hman>hman 04 Nov 21 15:55 GMT-0000

Replied to
Boots...

If this would be a highly popular OS project with numerous devs and users, this would be the moment when the project forks.

Just look at what happened to Gnome, when the proposed new GUI elements wer disliked by so many users. Whole Linux distributions forked. Ubuntu forked into Linux Mint because users hate constant fiddling with the GUI.

Gary Cunningham-Lee>hman 04 Nov 21 15:59 GMT-0000

Replied to
Boots...

Maybe the inconsistencies weren't apparent on the user side, but were a problem for developers to deal with.

Also, switching to Bootstrap means there is a familiar framework for new developers, something of an industry standard, rather than arcane custom code that was off-putting to new developers.

I don't agree that Tiki ripped its heart out. A layout framework is a neutral thing; what makes Tiki Tiki is the functionality and features, not the particulars of page elements, which are just containers.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 04 Nov 21 16:41 GMT-0000

Replied to
Maybe the...

what makes Tiki Tiki is the functionality and features, not the particulars of page elements

Then an abstraction layer would have been not only a better, more transparent way, but also an easier one.

Let's look at another example: Firefox is, like Tiki, a powerful software that once was the leader of the pack, and now struggles with dwindling user and dev numbers.

Just look at the shitstorms that Mozilla ist getting regularly because what they see as "GUI enhancemens" is viewed by many as a design desaster constantly getting worse. Google for "Firefox and Proton".
Look at how many users Firefox lost because of the questionable move to include Pocket and Hello (which no one asked for).

Gary Cunningham-Lee>hman 05 Nov 21 06:21 GMT-0000

Replied to
what...

"*Then an abstraction layer would have been not only a better, more transparent way, but also an easier one.* "

I would have to see more details about that in order to respond to the idea.

hman>hman 03 Nov 21 13:18 GMT-0000

Replied to
I...

Please also take into account the amount of work that is necessary to work around the numerous bugs...

From what I could see after test-upgrading the test installation to 21 is: 21's calendar is NOT "much better" than 18's. opaqueCalbox is still broken, you cannot click on events in calendar view, in list view the wrench icon is functionless etc...

I have to "sell" these shortcomings to my users as well. I simply cannot "sell" them that a version upgrade makes a major overhaul of the CSS mandatory. They don't even know what a CSS is. And they don't care! If it means work, they don't want it.

The one question I will get, and I'v gotten that already, is "why did you choose Tiki if it doesn't run well and needs lots of extra work?".

My users (in this particular case a non-profit org) are well aware that we entered a customer-lock-in situation when I recommended Tiki.

hman 20 Jul 22 15:31 GMT-0000

Since nothing has happened in this thread for more than half a year, I try to restart this.

"I would say that the fact that the Tiki 23 version of the Geo theme essentially works as expected indicates that Tiki has not changed layouting massively."

Well, module zones that shift from left to right and from right to far-right seems like a massive change. A control panel that gets displayed in one single, endless column looks like a massive change to me.

Since no one bothered to write a primer "how to adapt your CSS to the new Bootstrap reality" and no conversion tool exists, I will have to reverse engineer your new 23.x version of Geo, making a diff to your version 18.2, hoping that I do not end up with a thousand or more changes. And after that I have to figure out for myself what that teaches me to do to my customized Geo.

The alternative to that is to re-do all the changes I made to your 18.2 Geo to become my customized Geo over the course of several years. But these number between 100 and 200 changes. Colour matching, font matching, spacing, alignments, you name it.

And the work of customizing Geo isn't even finished, there are still some fonts that I try to hunt down their respective definitions, even with the analysis tools of Firefox I did not find where on earth they got declared...

When I started using Geo, it was already 95% of what I envisioned. The biggest drawback of Geo was, which I only learned later on, that it defines many things in relation to the basic text font. Unnecessary many things. When I switched basic text to a serif font, some elements of Tikis GUI that have no obvious relation to basic text turned serif... I could break up lots of those interdependencies, but so far not all (enough to go into production).

Gary Cunningham-Lee 21 Jul 22 09:26 GMT-0000

Hi hman,

I attached a Geo.css for Tiki 24 to this page, if you would like to try it at your site, but I'm not sure which Tiki version you are using, so don't know if this is appropriate or not.

I agree, there's no simple conversion tool to change a non-Bootstrap theme to a Bootstrap theme. In my experience, I just visually examine the original theme, checking body background color, text color, size, and font-family, and so on, and specify the Bootstrap variables with those colors and sizes, etc. Then I look at larger page elements like module boxes, which will become Bootstrap cards, and specify the card-related variables to match the original appearance, and so on. So this isn't converting so much as re-creating. There are online Bootstrap stylesheet creators that can facilitate this, but of course it's best attempted after becoming familiar with CSS and Bootstrap (and SCSS) to some degree. There can be unexpected results when CSS rules don't stay within their intended scope, and so on, so the more familiar one is with how all of this works, the better.

We're upgrading to Bootstrap 5 in October, with Tiki 25, so that will be another hurdle to help people get across. 😃

hman 21 Jul 22 10:53 GMT-0000

"I'm not sure which Tiki version you are using"
Currently 18.8. If successful, I would like to go to current 21. I do NOT want to skip LTSes. I always want to have one functioning LTS as a working fallback.

"so that will be another hurdle to help people get across."

Or another reason to get cross with Tiki. If you shove it down the throat of your users without a proper migration path or conversion tool. I stand by my wording "if Tiki breaks my layout again...". If that happens (again), I'm gone...

hman 23 Jul 22 14:22 GMT-0000

Thanks, Gary.

I have made a diff from your Tiki 23 Geo to your Tiki 18.2 Geo. And -low and behold- 16 THOUSAND lines of changes. Which is sixthousand more than the entire length of Tiki 23 Geo, in other words, Tiki 23 Geo is a COMPLETE REWRITE. Do you still think "Tiki has not changed layouting massively" ?

Tiki went completely incompatible with itself. If Tiki continues on this course (disregarding existing Tikis, disregarding bug tickets, massive flood of bugs in essential basic functionality, and at the same time massively EXPANDING the code base and thus making the problem of being unable to deal with the vast amount of code EVEN WORSE) this will deliver the death knell to Tiki. Tiki's user base is already only a mere shadow of Tiki's glorious past.

hman 23 Jul 22 14:44 GMT-0000

Diff of version 24 to 23 another 550 lines! I predict that no ordinary admin will have patience to follow Tiki on that road. Commercial enterprises will calculate the enormous cost that this creates and compare to the gain it brings (nothing), hobby admins, if they come from older days like me, will find a lack of spare time, and many of the younger crowd simply will not want to indulge into CSS at all.

Devs, you are actively digging Tiki's grave here. Stop the Bootstrap madness, before it is too late.

Gary Cunningham-Lee 23 Jul 22 18:59 GMT-0000

Sorry, but Bootstrap isn't the problem; it's the solution. What is necessary here is to recognize that the process of creating and maintaining CSS files has changed over the years because of the increasing size and complexity of web software. A CSS framework like Bootstrap is what enables consistency across page elements and site features and so on, so the wheel isn't constantly being reinvented, so to speak, and Bootstrap, being a familiar and popular CSS

framework, also allows new developers to quickly understand and contribute to the Tiki project.

Another reason for the increasing size of the CSS files is because, with every major release, Tiki has more features and perhaps more functionality added to existing features, so these additions generally require associated CSS. It's not Tiki needs more and more CSS to do the same job as before.

No one expects stylesheets of software as multi-featured as this to be edited by hand. These days the stylesheets of all projects the size of Tiki are compiled from SCSS or a similar method. Therefore, even a few changes in variables, for example, can ripple through the CSS and cause many, many lines of code to change. No one is expected to go through those lines by hand, so saying some number of lines has changed isn't really relevant. What is pertinent is to check the changes in the SCSS variables file, for example, or the changes in the tiki-selectors file or the SCSS file for the feature or page element in question, if there is some problem in the CSS, because those files are used to create the CSS.

In my opinion the layout of Tiki hasn't changed significantly, in a high-level view of the layout, and I track and use many Tiki themes through these sequential versions; the layouts are essentially the same and aren't broken for any of the themes I've been maintaining. I agree there are a lot of changed lines in the stylesheets, but this is for the reason that I mentioned, and the solution to a broken layout is to examine the page and see what changes made locally, for example, are responsible; in other words, a more focused examination is needed, and counting the number of changed lines in the files isn't really relevant.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 23 Jul 22 21:28 GMT-0000

Replied to
Sorry,...

I disagree. To me, Bootstrap is Tikis death spell. You are giving up control over Tiki essential CSS design, handing it over to Twitter Inc. (which, by the way, creates a dependency you will have to list in your SBOM). You have to offer what Twitter decides is needed, and drop what Twitter does not like. And everything has to be written as Twitter dictates.

"No one expects stylesheets of software as multi-featured as this to be edited by hand."

Funny, as this is the only effective way Tiki offers...

Tikis built-in customizing features are so powerless, you cannot create a decent web design with them. Thus you must (!) edit one of the built-in CSSes or build one from scratch. I did the former, and invested hundreds of hours until the overall design was satisfactory. You cannot create good-looking GUIs purely in a CSS design suite, you have to see it on a live site (or at least a development site) to see how it comes out in different use case scenarios. I do NOT want to lose that work. Likewise anyone else having invested that amount of work will have the same demand for continuity.

Therefore I have to demand that Tiki is compatible with itself. It isn't.

"and the solution to a broken layout is to examine the page and see what changes made locally, for example, are responsible; in other words, a more focused examination is needed, and counting the number of changed lines in the files isn't really relevant."

This cannot be done. I have a working CSS (working on 18.8), which doesn't work on 21. I can only compare my CSS to the un-altered CSS, which is your Geo 18.2. Which doesn't work on 21, either.

But from your 18.2 to 23, you (!) made tens of thousands of changes. I suppose you made none of those light-hearted, my assumption is that you knew what you were doing (and what had to be done). I cannot determine which are the ones that would magically make my CSS work on 21. The number of permutations to be examined (because many affect each other) is astronomical.

Onfortunately you devs did not bother to share your knowledge with us. Not in a "cookbook", nor in a conversion tool. You simply left us user/admins in the jungle.

And by the way, I do not like the idea that I started on the Open Source Software road to find myself in a dependency on Twitter, Inc. With Twitter in the dependancy tree, I would not expect contuinity will play a bigger role in the future than it has played in the past.

Maybe you know wiki.c2.com? On https://wiki.c2.com/?TikiWiki there was some criticism regarding Tiki Wiki. Most of them are still valid today. A quote: "Unfortunately, the approach appears to be more of an add-all-the-features-we-can-find-anywhere, while not being very focused on overall quality, good design, or XP processes." At the end, this page lists 20 "cool TikiWiki sites". From those, only ONE is still online and uses Tiki Wiki (version 1.9 ⚠️.

Security issues keep coming, https://www.cvedetails.com lists almost 40, 7 of them on Tiki versions currently supported.

I started with 1.8.3. in 2004. I have seen Tiki Wiki grow and flourish, now I see it dying. It makes me sad, but I have to accept it.

hman>hman 23 Jul 22 22:00 GMT-0000

Replied to
I...

"No one expects stylesheets of software as multi-featured as this to be edited by hand."

Oh, I forgot:

What else IS then expected that we have to use? Please name that tool, put it on the list of prerequisites that are needed to run Tiki, thanks.

Gary Cunningham-Lee>hman 24 Jul 22 09:13 GMT-0000

Replied to
I...

> *I disagree. To me, Bootstrap is Tikis death spell. You are giving up control over Tiki*

> *essential CSS design, handing it over to Twitter Inc. (which, by the way, creates a dependency you will have to list in your SBOM). You have to offer what Twitter decides is needed, and drop what Twitter does not like. And everything has to be written as Twitter dictates.*

Twitter, inc. doesn't own the Boostrap code; it has an MIT license. If Twitter, Inc. were in a position to "dictate" something we don't like, we could simply fork Bootstrap but, as detailed below, Twitter, Inc. isn't in such a position.

> "
>
> *"No one expects stylesheets of software as multi-featured as this to be edited by hand."*

Sorry, I should have been more clear. What I mean is that no one is expected to write a Tiki theme stylesheet starting from an empty file all the way to completion. It is quite possible to use the browser's DOM inspector to identify the CSS rules affecting a particular page element and add a new CSS rule to override the themes' rules. This can be added as a custom rule in Look & Feel admin, or as a "custom.css" file.

> "
>
> *Tikis built-in customizing features are so powerless, you cannot create a decent web design with them. Thus you must (!) edit one of the built-in CSSes or build one from scratch. I did the former, and invested hundreds of hours until the overall design was satisfactory. You cannot create good-looking GUIs purely in a CSS design suite, you have to see it on a live site (or at least a development site) to see how it comes out in different use case scenarios. I do NOT want to lose that work. Likewise anyone else having invested that amount of work will have the same demand for continuity.*

It's true that the Theme Customizer tool has been needing updating, but this work is now under way. About "editing one of the built-in CSSes from scratch," this is what I referred to earlier as, in 2022, not a productive approach. Modern large CSS files are compiled, not written by hand, and if significant changes are needed, the successful method is to start with the theme's SCSS files and make changes at that level. It is true that people may be familiar with CSS but not with SCSS or its workflow, but that would be true for any technological advancement. That said, again, the editing method depends on what needs to be changed, so, relatively simple changes: add custom CSS; more global changes: edit the SCSS variables, etc. and recompile the stylesheet.

> "
>
> *Therefore I have to demand that Tiki is compatible with itself. It isn't.*

No, it isn't. If that were the rule, then we'd still be using HTML tables for layout, 2003-style. The code has to progress to keep pace with advancing technologies and take advantage of new things, which does mean that users may need to upgrade anything custom that they have made if they want to use new Tiki versions, which, by the way hopefully address issues such as you quote from the wiki.c2.com site below .

> "
>
> *"and the solution to a broken layout is to examine the page and see what changes made locally, for example, are responsible; in other words, a more focused*

> *examination is needed, and counting the number of changed lines in the files isn't really relevant."*
>
> *This cannot be done. I have a working CSS (working on 18.8), which doesn't work on 21. I can only compare my CSS to the un-altered CSS, which is your Geo 18.2. Which doesn't work on 21, either.*

For me in some cases, I've had to install an older Tiki version and put the older theme stylesheet there, and compare that visually to the current version. Or, if that's not possible, at least it's good to have screenshots of older Tiki versions if the idea is to maintain visual authenticity with them.

"

> *Onfortunately you devs did not bother to share your knowledge with us. Not in a "cookbook", nor in a conversion tool. You simply left us user/admins in the jungle.*

I believe devs and other users have responded at length to your various bug reports, etc., so I think it's a bit unfair to say you have been left in the jungle. It's true that there isn't enough documentation, but this is a volunteer project and time is limited for everyone.

To get back to the point, do you simply want a Geo theme (that is, a theme that has the appearance of the original Tiki Geo theme but with updated CSS) that runs on Tiki 21?

"

> *And by the way, I do not like the idea that I started on the Open Source Software road to find myself in a dependency on Twitter, Inc. With Twitter in the dependancy tree, I would not expect contuinity will play a bigger role in the future than it has played in the past.*

Twitter, Inc. isn't in the dependency tree; Bootstrap (MIT-licensed) is. "*Mark Otto and Jacob Thornton worked on the Bootstrap framework while at Twitter, version 1.0 was officially named "Twitter Bootstrap" but was later on shortened to Bootstrap. We're now at version 5.*" (https://www.reddit.com/r/bootstrap/comments/s5bopy/difference_between_bootstrap_and_tw itter_bootstrap/|link]); see also https://getbootstrap.com/docs/5.2/about/overview/.

"

> *Maybe you know wiki.c2.com? On https://wiki.c2.com/?TikiWiki there was some criticism regarding Tiki Wiki. Most of them are still valid today. A quote: "Unfortunately, the approach appears to be more of an add-all-the-features-we-can-find-anywhere, while not being very focused on overall quality, good design, or XP processes." At the end, this page lists 20 "cool TikiWiki sites". From those, only ONE is still online and uses Tiki Wiki (version 1.9 (!).*

Hm, last edit in 2014. So it's hoped whatever is criticized there would have been fixed or improved, as the Tiki code progresses, although possibly breaking in some ways compatibility with earlier versions, which you pointed out as a problem, above. If this is a paradox, then I guess it is resolved by breaking compatibility when necessary, to improve the software, in principle. In contrast, for example, wiki.c2.com hasn't been updated in a long time and doesn't display properly in phone mode. So there are choices to be made.

About Tiki websites from 10 years ago not still online, I suspect some number of them were

just retired for reasons not having to do with software. In other cases, people can choose the software that meets their needs. Tiki might be overkill now for some use cases, if you just need a simple portfolio presentation or blog. A primary strength of Tiki is the combination of wiki and trackers, for example, which isn't easily matched by alternatives to Tiki (Software Overview and Model).

> *Security issues keep coming, https://www.cvedetails.com lists almost 40, 7 of them on Tiki versions currently supported.*

Of course, over the years, security issues occur in an actively developed and growing project. All known security issues in Tiki have been addressed, as far as I know.

> *I started with 1.8.3. in 2004. I have seen Tiki Wiki grow and flourish, now I see it dying. It makes me sad, but I have to accept it.*

I don't agree, but appreciate your opinion. I think Tiki is evolving in a changing environment to continue to have viability.

> *"No one expects stylesheets of software as multi-featured as this to be edited by hand."*
>
> *Oh, I forgot:*
>
> *What else IS then expected that we have to use? Please name that tool, put it on the list of prerequisites that are needed to run Tiki, thanks.*

As I stated earlier, the tool you need depends on the task at hand. If you want to make a minor change, then perhaps identifying the page element in question and adding a custom CSS rule would be enough. But if you want to make changes that are reflected throughout the site, such as changing button colors in a way that also changes the button active and button disabled colors, this would be *possible* by copying the relevant lines of the stylesheet and editing them with new colors. I did this initially with early Bootstrap versions when working on the FiveAlive theme child themes.

However, the "best practice" way is to change the button color variables and recompile the theme stylesheet. This is why familiarity with SCSS is useful. This is the method I've used more recently for the FiveAlive child theme colors, etc. Tiki contains the tools for this, as the SCSS compiler is a PHP script in the package. So you would need an editor, such as PhpStorm, which many Tiki devs use and is free for use with Open Source code. I've used MS Visual Code, too. I like https://scout-app.io/, too, which is a really lightweight specialty application for this purpose. But it does require a basic understanding of how SCSS works and knowledge of where the relevant files are in the theme's directory, etc.

We are also working on updating the Theme Customizer feature in Tiki, which is a visual style editor for the standard page elements.

I'll probably retire from this thread unless there is something specific I can help with regarding the Geo theme, etc.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 24 Jul 22 16:59 GMT-0000

Replied to
"Modern large CSS files are compiled, not written by hand, and if significant changes are needed, the successful method is to start with the theme's SCSS files and make changes at that level."

Well, Tiki doesn't provide the files from which the default themes were generated, so this approach is just *invalid*. Also, again, state the tools necessary.

But you have, in my point of view, lost yourself a bit in constructing an argument to counter mine.

Why?

It simply does not matter whether someone edits CSS by hand or with a tool. NO ONE wants to re-do his/her webdesign purely because the Wiki software gets incompatible with itself! No one wants to experiment on what has changed. A DETAILED migration path is absolutely mandatory. And that migration path MUST start at the status quo.

With tool or without, good web design is a process that takes WEEKS of intense working. If you force people to throw that work into the garbage bin und re-start, you will realize, if that happens repeatedly, that people will have a point at which they react by doing something completely else: throw the offending software into the garbage bin and invest the time into migrating their data to a plattform that values protection of investment more.

I am working in a large-scale IT operation. We have several Wiki-like systems of differing proportions. When we created small collaboration plattforms for small groups, I DID NOT advocate for Tiki. Because I learned (the hard way) that Tiki would not value our investment in labor and/or money.

Besides the features that Microsoft Office currently gains in terms of Teams, Sharepoint and Co, there is an instance of Coyo. Coyo has had some release changes, but they NEVER went incompatible. They wouldn't dare.

And should Coyo require additional work due to new, changed, or dropped features, they would inform way ahead of time, and provide DETAILED migration paths. They would not, like Tiki, leave admins alone in the jungle. That is why I deem Tiki unfit for productive environments. Tiki lacks investment protection.

hman>hman 24 Jul 22 17:15 GMT-0000

Replied to
"Modern... The problem isn't even that you went incompatible. The problem is that you DON'T CARE. Not you personally, I do not want to offend you. Especially not you. But Tiki devs in general don't care about users/admins. I have seen this time after time after time.

Gary Cunningham-Lee>hman 25 Jul 22 07:37 GMT-0000

Replied to
"Modern...

> *Well, Tiki doesn't provide the files from which the default themes were generated, so this approach is just invalid. Also, again, state the tools necessary.*

Tiki does indeed provide the files from which the default themes are generated. Look at the files of any theme included with Tiki and you will see the SCSS files for the specific theme, which import global Tiki SCSS files as well as SCSS files from the Bootstrap library that comes with every Tiki installation. Unlike some workflows that use external tools, Tiki uses a PHP library to compile themes, also included with every Tiki package. All you need is a Tiki installation and a compatible editor or IDE, and your web browser to check results visually, etc.

> *A DETAILED migration path is absolutely mandatory.*

We try to provide migration paths for changes that everyone is subjected to, such as migrating images from the now-defunct image gallery to the current files gallery. And we try to provide documentation to notify people what each version adds or changes, in fairly general terms. But when the issue is unique modifications that individual Tiki admins make, the solution probably requires posting information about what is broken exactly (that is, what the theme should look/behave like and what it actually looks/behaves like after an upgrade), the responses to which depend on devs, etc. having time to respond in this volunteer project. I'm not sure I've seen that level of detail yet regarding your Geo theme.

> *I DID NOT advocate for Tiki. Because I learned (the hard way) that Tiki would not value our investment in labor and/or money. . . .*
> *Besides the features that Microsoft Office currently gains in terms of Teams, Sharepoint and Co, there is an instance of Coyo. Coyo has had some release changes, but they NEVER went incompatible. They wouldn't dare.*
>
> *And should Coyo require additional work due to new, changed, or dropped features, they would inform way ahead of time, and provide DETAILED migration paths. They would not, like Tiki, leave admins alone in the jungle. That is why I deem Tiki unfit for productive environments. Tiki lacks investment protection.*

You are comparing apples and oranges, as they say. Microsoft, in selling proprietary software, obviously has a budget that covers this kind of support. And, correct me if I'm wrong, but isn't Coyo (now part of Haiilo) also a commercial product? I would like to think that a volunteer-maintained and -documented project like Tiki can match the upgrade support provided by software that people are paying for (paying how much I don't know because there are no posted prices, only a "form to get your customised pricing information from a member of our team" which is not usually an indication of low-end pricing) but thinking we can match them may not be realistic.

If you want to make a fair comparison, then compare a proprietary solution like Haiilo to a Tiki enterprise support package from, say, EvoluData. Having paid for the support from EvoluData in the same way that Haiilo's support is paid for, then you can be assured you will receive it specifically for your needs and you will have staff available to assist you, if not carry out for you, with any necessary upgrade migrations.

"

> *The problem isn't even that you went incompatible. The problem is that you DON'T CARE. Not you personally, I do not want to offend you. Especially not you. But Tiki devs in general don't care about users/admins. I have seen this time after time after time.*

Well, I've seen time after time that they do care, so it may be a matter of perspective. When devs' efforts do fall short, it's probably more a problem of not enough time than of not caring. I know that's true for me.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 25 Jul 22 10:06 GMT-0000

Replied to

I dare to differ. Your own statement "When devs' efforts do fall short, it's probably more a problem of not enough time than of not caring." should lead to you asking the question WHY there is not enough time?

Tiki's code base has grown way over the amount that the remaining devs can handle. That is the root cause of your problem. Devs can't fix things fast enough, so bug reports pile up, and you progress to new versions with new code (thus new bugs) anyhow.

The only solution to this is cut the size to one that you can handle.

You possibly don't want to hear it, but I say it anyhow: Remove 90%+. These are better kept by their respective devs (if they are still on the team) in (true) plugins. If those devs are no longer on the team and the function is not deemed mission critical, retire it.

If developers only want to write new code (to fill THEIR needs), but not contribute to a bug eradication plan, then let them write plugins, which will only remain as long as they do.

This will free up developer time to get the remaining 10% as bug free as possible. All progresssion should IMHO be halted unless at least 90%+ of the open bug reports are solved and the others have a perspective. In the core, there should be no bug in functionality left before a progression to next version can be envisioned.

"Tiki might be overkill now for some use cases"

That is WRONG. Tiki is overkill for ALL use cases. Not even Tiki makes use of all features. I allege that there is no site anywhere that does. The concept of one monolithic code has to come to it's practical end, because it cannot be maintained. Like dinosaurs, there IS a limit to size.

If you look at the CVEs, there are some that "make your toenails roll up". How on earth can there be a bug that an admin PW gets reset if "enough" failed login attempts were made?

That's not a bug, that is something someone wrote in the code deliberately. It is proof that "security by design" is no concept Tiki devs follow.

Tikis market share is estimated to be around 0,07%: https://www.slintel.com/tech/web-content-management/tiki-wiki-cms-groupware-market-share

They list 257 customers with Tiki. Drupal has more than 118 THOUSAND. Tiki once was the leader of the pack. Tempi passati. Tiki lost tremendously. Quite possibly I am one of only very few who ever spoke up, and I understand that being Cassandra isn't popular.

Most customers will simply have drawn consequences and silently migrated to a plattform where they see their investment in labour and money more protected, but this is speculation, unless one of those who left speaks.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 25 Jul 22 16:40 GMT-0000

Replied to
Hm, I can't find those *.scss.

"Tiki does indeed provide the files from which the default themes are generated. Look at the files of any theme included with Tiki and you will see the SCSS files for the specific theme, which import global Tiki SCSS files as well as SCSS files from the Bootstrap library that comes with every Tiki installation. "

SCSS files are only present in /vendor_bundled/vendor/fortawesome, /vendor_bundled/vendor/jcbrand, /vendor_bundled/vendor/alxlit and /vendor_bundled/vendor/h5p, and none of them seem to have any connection to the themes at all.

In /themes and all subdirectories, a search for *.scss yields 0 files.

```
MYNAME@MYMACHINE:/media/MYUSER/Home/WWW/agim/tiki-18.8/themes$ find . -
name *.scss -print
MYNAME@MYMACHINE:/media/MYUSER/Home/WWW/agim/tiki-18.8/themes$
```

Gary Cunningham-Lee>hman 25 Jul 22 17:10 GMT-0000

Replied to
Hm, I... Ah, looking at your search query, I see where we are miss-communicating. You're talking about Tiki 18. That Tiki version and earlier use Bootstrap 3, which uses LESS rather than SCSS, which is used since Bootstrap 4, in Tiki beginning with Tiki 19. I thought we were talking about Tiki 21, which is where .scss files will be found.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 26 Jul 22 08:44 GMT-0000

Replied to Ah, looking...
Ahem. This topic is "Migrating 18.8 to 21.4 fails utterly, breaks layout".

"Ah, looking at your search query, I see where we are miss-communicating. You're talking about Tiki 18."

What else could I be talking of than 18.8 ?? And your Geo was written for 18.2...

Let's come back to your statement

"No one expects stylesheets of software as multi-featured as this to be edited by hand."

So what would have been better if hadn't edited your CSS by hand, but used some tool on some LESS source file?

How do I benefit when I work with LESS than with CSS if LESS is dropped, because it got out of fashion, and the new star on the Bootstrap heaven is defined to be SASS?

I guess I would be in hell's kitchen just the same with no real difference, looking at the Stack Exchange discussions on converters...

"That Tiki version and earlier use Bootstrap 3, which uses LESS rather than SCSS"

I am sorry, but my time machine is broken, and until I get it repaired, I cannot travel into the future to download CSS sources that will be released in Tikis future in order to work with them instead of CSS files...

And Bootstrap talks about adopting PostCSS. Will Tiki once again topple everything when the Bootstrap guys out of a frenzy go PostCSS?

How good are all webdesigns done on SASS sources if SCSS gets tossed in the waste bin to favor the next big sh*t, PostCSS?

Are we users/admins expected to rebuild our Webdesign each time these guys change their mind and topple everything time and again?

"We try to provide migration paths for changes that everyone is subjected to, such as migrating images from the now-defunct image gallery to the current files gallery. "

Ah, yes, the defunct gallery migration, I forgot. That is one (of very many) bug reports still open...

"A CSS framework like Bootstrap is what enables consistency across page elements and site features and so on,"

This is precisely why I hate Bootstrap. It makes numerous website all look the same: Dull and lifeless. And everything has to be "mobile first", no one asks the admins if this is what he or she wants. I don't want " mobile first".

The WWW used to be about diversity, a multitude of styles... And while it makes the web dull, it forces people to reconstruct their webdesigns (with or without tools) just to follow their frenzies...

Don't you realize that this forces TWO change/release cycles onto users? The ones that Tiki creates, and the ones that Bootstrap enforces? API stability as a paradigm should be something you could copy...

How about adding a layer of Tiki defined entities, like a "CSS system abstraction layer" that stays stable even when the underlying machinery is swapped?

Actually, that was the initial goal of CSS... Wikipedia: "CSS is designed to enable the separation of presentation and content".

Torsten Fabricius 26 Jul 22 10:07 GMT-0000

Hello,

I kind of stumbled over this 'bug report' and the following discussions from 2021 and 2022 through my mailbox, when I relised a reproachful response from the thread opener.

In my personal opinion, it is not a bug, when in case of a major upgrade of a software very specific custom changes for example in the css design or layout stop working.

It is always a decision to make, wether to do custom changes and following to be responsible to maintain the custom changes for future major upgrades or to accept a basic common design and technical community decisions and that for be relieved from maintaining any custom code.

In my humble opinion, Tiki is one very good balanced community and software in respect of respecting environments of user projects.
Over the years a massive amount of efforts and knowledge from many active developers and supports was put into the software and into the community to guarantee, that everything that was developed by using legacy code works all along literally all upgrade versions.

There is no way that I see for any FOSS or proprietary software project, that custom changes made my software users/developers on their own behalf could be known and maintained for free (like free beer) by the (often voluntarily contributing) developers of the software or a company.

This basic rule was ever the same, from start of Tiki including pre-Bootstrap times and years before Tikis existence valid for all other software projects.

Further more, Tiki addresses the requirement of many users to add custom code / custom design to the software and the same to add as few as possible individual maintaining burden, by providing several optional types of abstraction layers, which make it quite easy to alocate custom changes to few specific places and to keep track about them and to ease the maintenance to a very reasonable amount.

It is just a matter of interest and knowledge and willingness of a longterm power user to accept community decisions and to simply use the provided abstraction layers and to individually structure or backup or document that in a meaningful fashion.

In my mind the use and the way of structuring is basically common sense and Tiki provides the tools.

This said, after more than 12 years being a Tiki community member and power user / admin user, I have to state very clearly, that most of Tikis active core developers like for example Gary Cunningham-Lee amongst a plenty of others is very friendly and always tries to help out where he can.

Since I know Gary, he was always very open to thoughts and suggestions of community members (users, devs, admins etcetera) and did put an exeptional amount of work into Tikis philosophy of consistency, optionality, respect for the enviroment, hence the individual work and dependencies of other people etcetera.

I feel some kind of disappointment, when a bug report (as this one) is used more for a type of political discussion questioning old and well discussed and well concidered community decisions instead of using the correct place for that:
The developer pages on dev.tiki.org, the developer forum on tiki.org or the community chat, which is currently in a process of moving from IRC to Gitter/Element/Matrix after nearly 20 years.

It is absolutely ok to critisize the use of a certain Framework or other technical decisions and to suggest alternatives to the developers.
At this point it is to the developer or customer, who submits the suggested changes to convince the other developers to do the changes or alternatively to add another Framework or legacy system and to maintain that for a considerable time in the future until it gets well adopted by the community or ceized by the submitter.

I find it unfair to Gary, who is one of the developers who carry most of the burden of keeping the Bootstrap Framework and all the existing and new Tiki themes consistent (and in legacy version running intact across Tiki and BS versions), when he is critisized for unwillingly braking individual custom changes he is even completely not responsible for.

And I find it gracious, bountyful and very cooperative, when Gary still tries to explain and to help against all odds.

Thank you Gary.
And thank to every member of the Tiki community, wether being developer or admin, documentator or consultant, power user or newbie.

Best regards,
Torsten

hman 26 Jul 22 13:58 GMT-0000

Hint: Maybe your reaction would be another if YOU lost hundreds of hours of work. TWICE.

What enrages me is that there was and is no migration path. In my professional life, my employer has several hundred software packages in software delivery. None has ever had such a break without migration paths and/or conversion tools.

John Morris 27 Jul 22 02:55 GMT-0000

My head hurts.

I am not a dev, not even a coder, but I can play with CSS a little and customize my site. Whether it's Joomla, WP, Drupal, Tiki, if you customize the appearance, I thought you always run the risk that your customization's may not work with the next upgrade etc? And that is the risk you run. I know I am ignorant of these things, but it seems to me that if you are putting in hundreds of hours into customizing a website built on anything, and a few upgrades pass, and now the customization's aren't working, I'm not sure what to say about that, it just seems to my common sense that a huge risk is being taken when you mess with the core of any website software to a great extent.

In that case, if I wanted to customize a website to the hilt, and if I had the chops to do it, I'd create my own website from scratch and not have a dependency on some other software. Just my two cents.

hman 27 Jul 22 07:53 GMT-0000

If that were true, Tiki should advise it's users/admins: Do not customize, use only predefined demo layouts, customizing is at your own risk. Who would want a CMS that can only be used with the presets??
Tikis promises are:

- when a standard CMS isn't enough
- Web pages edited like a wiki but with any layout and style
- Custom themes are supported and encouraged.
- On-site appearance customization is also supported.

Oh, I also found

- Free-of-charge and premium themes, simple single-CSS file themes and elaborate packages with Less files and images, and anything in between - all are welcome." *Less ?*

But now we are really getting side-tracked here...

Gary Cunningham-Lee 27 Jul 22 09:45 GMT-0000

From one Tiki version to another, normally there is just incremental change to the code, and especially regarding themes, there is little if any change that would "break" a theme. However, somewhat infrequently there is a major change that affects themes.

his happened with Tiki 13, when Tiki shifted to Bootstrap 3, and in Tiki 19, when we upgraded from Bootstrap 3 to 4. So that's a total of two major, theme-disrupting events in the 19 years of Tiki's development. My apologies to Tiki users who made a custom theme or customized a theme prior to one of these events and were disappointed that the theme didn't work as expected after the upgrade. But we did give warning and upgrade information at the time — please see https://doc.tiki.org/Tiki19 and https://themes.tiki.org/Bootstrap-3-to-4-transition.

Tiki development can't be frozen in a world of continuously improving technology, just for the sake of preserving user customizations. And we try to keep people appraised of the situation as we did around the release of Tiki 19. We try to respond to reasonably posed requests for help, and in this particular case I attached two Bootstrap 4-compatible versions of the Geo theme, which work fine for me in their respective Tiki installations, and one of which worked for the bug report poster here, as stated above.

I should have taken a step back at that point and realized we're talking about theme changes that

straddle Tiki's Bootstrap 3 to 4 upgrade, which accounts for the bulk of the changed lines of CSS. I should have caught that and hopefully an explanation about that twice-in-19-years type of event might have led to a better discussion here. But I stand by what I've said about Tiki's development model and so on, and appreciate the comments of Torsten and John also.

Soon we'll be releasing Tiki 25, which will be the *third* theme-shaking event in Tiki's 19 years as we upgrade from Bootstrap 4 to 5 (although I should add this version still uses SCSS so there isn't another CSS pre-processor change, so is much less seismic) . And Bootstrap brings in this version greater support for CSS variables, which (*ah, progress* 😃) make theme customization easier, without SCSS compiling — intro info at https://hackernoon.com/an-introduction-to-css-variables-b72835qs and https://getbootstrap.com/docs/5.0/customize/css-variables/. I've only dabbled in CSS variables in Tiki a little so far, but they look very promising.

hman 27 Jul 22 12:22 GMT-0000

I try to be brief, promise, so:
"So that's a total of two major, theme-disrupting events in the 19 years of Tiki's development."

Depends on your update cycle. If you, like I do, go from LTS to LTS, its more intrusive. And the next, the third, disruption is already on the horizon, if Bootstrap goes PostCSS!

"My apologies to Tiki users who made a custom theme or customized a theme prior to one of these events and were disappointed that the theme didn't work as expected after the upgrade."

Apology accepted.

"But we did give warning and upgrade information at the time — please see https://doc.tiki.org/Tiki19 and https://themes.tiki.org/Bootstrap-3-to-4-transition."

Ahem, something that only comes up in the transition from 18 to 21, as 19 was no LTS ! As I wrote a lot earlier, this page is VERY hard to understand, I am deem myself to be not expert, not novice, something like "advanced". Ordinary users/admins won't understand a word. Btw, the page is broken: "This plugin was recently added or modified. Until an editor of the site validates the parameters, execution will not be possible.".

"Tiki development can't be frozen in a world of continuously improving technology,"

That is self-explanatory, and no one (me included) expects that. But there is a difference between migration and disruption.

Gary Cunningham-Lee 27 Jul 22 14:01 GMT-0000

Major changes aren't introduced in LTS versions, for the sake of stability/dependability, but generally in the first release after an LTS to allow plenty of time to make follow-up adjustments before the next LTS. In the case in question, the page about Tiki 21, the first LTS after the Bootstrap 3 to 4 upgrade in Tiki 19, says "*If you are upgrading from a previous LTS version, such as Tiki18, you should check out the release notes of Tiki19 and Tiki20. Mainly, you should know that there has been a major change from using Bootstrap 3 to 4, and thus, custom themes need to be adjusted accordingly.. . . .*" so if theme modifiers read that doc page they would know what to expect, and the themes.tiki.org page I cited earlier (sorry, try this URL:

https://themes.tiki.org/tiki-index.php?page=Bootstrap%203%20to%204%20transition) had more information about updating themes. If there is a way we can be more explicit about this kind of thing, we're open to suggestions.

hman 27 Jul 22 15:52 GMT-0000

"So that's a total of two major, theme-disrupting events in the 19 years of Tiki's development." By closer inspection, that is actually two major, theme-disrupting events FOUR years apart. Quite possibly soon becoming THREE in EIGHT years. Every four years a major, theme-disrupting event.

If 25 will be (quoting you) "the third theme-shaking event" then I'm gone. I won't do redesigns every four years, sorry no way (2014, 2018, 2022). I simply don't have time for that.

Gary Cunningham-Lee 27 Jul 22 17:40 GMT-0000

The theme changes for Tiki 25 (and the next LTS that follows it, Tiki 27) won't be as extensive as those in the earlier cases because it isn't a switch to Bootstrap or a switch from LESS to SCSS; it's still using SCSS (no plans ahead for PostCSS as far as I know).

We've updated all of the themes in the Tiki package and it's been quite a smooth process. but then we are using the SCSS compile method to produce them fresh from their variables files, so it's not really updating the CSS so much as re-creating it. I have a (and will have an updated) version of Geo that I'd be happy to post if it would be helpful for you to use as a base for customizing. Also, for general documentation, I intend to write a doc page on modifying a theme with CSS variables. But if you find it's not worth your time to modify the theme, that's up to you, and I hope you find a more suitable software solution.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 27 Jul 22 19:54 GMT-0000

Replied to
The theme...

"The theme changes for Tiki 25 (and the next LTS that follows it, Tiki 27) won't be as extensive as those in the earlier cases because it isn't a switch to Bootstrap or a switch from LESS to SCSS; it's still using SCSS (no plans ahead for PostCSS as far as I know)."

I am sorry. My confidence in the truth behind that is ZERO. You delivered yourselves to the mercy of Bootstrap. They talk about PostCSS for a *long* time!

https://github.com/OEvgeny/bootstrap-postcss

When they embrace PostCSS you must follow suit, and all investment we could make into SASS today becomes scrap tomorrow. When they move on to the next hype, React, or whatever the next big sh*t is, you must follow suit. And everyone will have to re-design time and again.

Basically, it's a lack of respect for all users who undoubtedly in total invested much more

labour into creating content than all developers in creating code. Simply because there are so many more users that devs. I don't blame you personally, Gary. But developers together.

You just lost me.

Gary Cunningham-Lee>hman 28 Jul 22 04:12 GMT-0000

Replied to
"The... Ok, I've repeatedly responded to your posts. I've responded with information and tried to present a more positive point of view, and have offered assistance and have uploaded current versions of the Geo theme file, but you only seem interested in countering with negativity about some detail in my responses, without ever letting us know specifically what is broken in your theme customization or showing screenshots or allowing site access so we could actually help. I don't really have the time to debate the philosophy of software development any further. Since you've made your choice, I'll just say thanks for your input, and close the bug report.

hman>Gary Cunningham-Lee 04 Aug 22 19:52 GMT-0000

Replied to Ok, I've...
That's not true.

"without ever letting us know specifically what is broken in your theme customization"

Attachments

	filename	created	hits	comment	version	filetype
⬇	scss_find_geo.txt	25 Jul 22 17:03 GMT-0000	0	Comprehensive list of all *.scss in the entire Geo folder		
⬇	scss_find_geo.txt	27 Jul 22 16:26 GMT-0000	0	Comprehensive list of all *.scss in the entire Geo folder		
⬇	scss_find_geo.txt	27 Jul 22 17:15 GMT-0000	0	Comprehensive list of all *.scss in the entire Geo folder		
⬇	scss_find_geo.txt	27 Jul 22 19:38 GMT-0000	0	Comprehensive list of all *.scss in the entire Geo folder		

⬇	scss_find.txt	25 Jul 22 16:50 GMT-0000	0	Comprehensive list of all *.scss in the entire Tiki folder	
⬇	Geo_23_18.2.diff	23 Jul 22 14:37 GMT-0000	0	Diff of Geo in version 23 against version 18.2	
⬇	Geo_24_23.diff	23 Jul 22 14:47 GMT-0000	0	Diff of Geo in version 24 against version 23	
⬇	Geo.css	02 Nov 21 13:41 GMT-0000	0	Geo theme CSS file compatible with Tiki 23 and earlier	Tiki 23
⬇	Geo.css	21 Jul 22 09:13 GMT-0000	0	Geo.css for Tiki 24	Tiki 24

The original document is available at
https://dev.tiki.org/item7913-Migrating-18-8-to-21-4-fails-utterly-breaks-layout