



OPEN SOURCE APPLICATIONS FOUNDATION

Status Update #3 -- April 3, 2003

It's been a while since the last report, as I was traveling for a bit. There's a lot going on at OSAF these days.

1. 0.1 Release

We've continued to work on the upcoming 0.1 release, which is described in the 0.1 docs I posted a while back, and also in Mitch's recent blog postings. We think we've got most of the basic parcel functionality pulled together, but there is still a chunk of work to do to get it ready to release.

We've arranged for Mitch and Andy to give a presentation at the O'Reilly Emerging Technologies Conference at the end of April, and for OSAF staff to do a Birds of a Feather session. We're also planning to hold a series of online chat sessions after the 0.1 release to answer questions and be generally available. Ducky Sherwood will host these to provide continuity, and we'll have the relevant developers available. We know most people can't go to the Emerging Technologies conference, so we're hoping this is a good alternative.

2. Design, Architecture and Product Planning

Ducky has taken the set of email requirements she put together and posted a while back and is working on prioritizing them.

Our thinking about database architecture has begun to coalesce. Rys has posted a set of documents reflecting the current state of his thinking. These are interim documents, we're not ready to say they reflect "current OSAF thinking" until other OSAF staff have had a chance to digest them and think through all the issues. So right now you'll find them in the Jungle. To find them, you can scroll down the Jungle page to the list of contributors until you find and click on Rys's name, and then see the list of what he's posted. (This makes me think that the top level Jungle page could be reordered for clarity, something I'll put on my list of things to look into.) Once the documents reflect a shared consensus of OSAF staff, we'll move them into the Chandler Discussion Topics with the "current OSAF thinking"

label. As you can tell, we're being rather conservative in this. But we feel it's better to be careful than to describe something as our current plan of record until we're a little surer that it really is a plan shared by most of staff.

Brian Skinner has volunteered to help us document the data model. Document is a bit of a misnomer since Brian is really serving as a forcing function by organizing these issues and pointing out all the things we need to think about. We're thrilled to have Brian's help, and he's causing our thinking on the data model to progress much faster than it otherwise would. There's not enough to post yet, but this is an important area where Brian is helping us get good traction. Katie is working with Brian on this, as well as thinking about an API for the Python repository.

Morgen is working on migrating to Python2.3 and wxPython2.4.0.7

3. Investigation of Higher Education Opportunities

In addition, many of us have spent time thinking about the world of "Higher Education" and what Chandler would need to make sense for use in a university setting. OSAF has just received a grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation to do more detailed planning as to how Chandler might meet university requirements. OSAF will continue on its initial development course, while simultaneously investigating what else would be required for Chandler to be useful in a university setting. Katie, Ducky, Lou, Alexs and Jurgen have all spend some time on the technical evaluation. Chao is orchestrating the effort and I am coordinating our interaction with the Mellon Foundation and a number of universities. Chao and Pieter are working on pulling this investigation into a cohesive plan. After that we'll evaluate the feasibility of a version of Chandler aimed at the Higher Education market.

4. General

Michael Toy is learning his way around our plans, build system, python, and the set of development issues we hope he'll manage for us. Sometimes he feels as if his head is going to burst, but we're confident he'll stuff the necessary info into his head and keep on going.

Chao is trying to coordinate the 0.1 Release, development of the product roadmap and our investigation of the needs of Higher

Education. Chao's not as voluble as Michael in describing how close his head is to exploding, but he's got a million things on his plate. I've been looking into the licensing plans for Chandler. The plan of record has been to adopt a model similar to that used by MySQL, Sleepycat and Roadrunner. In this model, recipients must either (a) make their entire application available under the GPL or other approved open source license, or (b) get a commercial license from OSAF. This model would allow the open source world to use Chandler as open source software, and would retain the possibility of commercial licensing fees to OSAF. I haven't found any "show-stopper" issues with this model so far. I'll be starting a discussion of this on the OSAF mailing lists shortly, so if you've got thoughts please let me know.

-- MitchellBaker - 03 Apr 2003