OSAF

OPEN SOURCE APPLICATIONS FOUNDATION

Status Update Number 8 -- July 30, 2003

I. O'Reilly Open Source Conference

OSAF was well represented at OSCON. Mitch gave a keynote on Thursday morning in which he talked about the Linux Desktop. The slides and the report which formed the basis of his talk can be found in pdf format at http://www.osafoundation.org/presos/desktop-linux-presentation.pdf and http://www.osafoundation.org/desktop-linux-overview.pdf , respectively. Four members of OSAF (Chao Lam, Andy Hertzfeld, Katie Capps-Parlante and I) gave a talk on Chandler, which can also be found in pdf format at http://www.osafoundation.org/presos/OSAFatOSCon2003.pdf. The talk has some information that is new, and so it's worth taking a look at the slides. Chao dreamed up a sample use-case, showing some of what makes Chandler so useful. Andy gave an architectural overview. Then Katie gave an overview of the data model, why it's different from standard techniques, how we approach it, etc. I think this is first time anyone has tried to put together a brief, ordered, coherent explanation for someone not involved in the design discussions. Katie took on the hard part of the presentation, and wins my Hero award for doing so. Ed Chao created the slides of the use-case, did a wonderful job of turning our somewhat randomly formatted information into an actual presentation, and so saved me from untold frustration.

The talk was well-attended, very few people left, and most people looked interested throughout the talk, which is always a good sign. There were thoughtful questions, which is even better. We also held a Chandler BOF, which probably had 40 people. OSAF folks answered a bunch of questions, and then the attendees gave us their thoughts on the Chandler project. It's hard to capture the tenor of a discussion, but the points that emerged the clearest were:

- your vision is huge; you need a crisper statement of it
- Release early, release often, don't wait for perfection

- Get the data model right, guarantee a migration path, and I'll jump in now

II. Move

OSAF moved to its new offices in San Francisco. We actually have a desk for everyone now. The building has been totally remodeled and there are still some loose ends (some of us are living in the Artic region, whereas the side of the building with the skylight is rather tropical), but we're close to being settled. Jurgen of course bore the brunt of the move, between facilities and phones and networks. No move is ever painless, but we seem to be in good shape now.

III. Mozilla Foundation

I spent much of the last couple of weeks working on the creation and launch of the Mozilla Foundation. (As part of its mission to promote open source end user applications, OSAF has paid me for a portion of the time I spend on the Mozilla project ever since I started working at OSAF.) Those of us in the Mozilla project have been working towards this goal for years, and it is thrilling to finally be there. Mitch was an enormous help in this project. He is the Chairman of the Board of the Mozilla Foundation and has personally donated funds to its support. We are thrilled to have Mitch involved with the project. The other Board members include Brian Behlendorf, a founder of the Apache project and collab.net, and 3 members of mozilla's project leadership: Brendan Eich, Chris Blizzard, and me. If you haven't already done so, check out Mozilla 1.4, or the next generation Mozilla Firebird Browser, or Camino for OSX, all of which are available from the new front page at www.mozilla.org.

The Mozilla Foundation is not a part of OSAF; it is a separate organization. OSAF remains focused on the Chandler project. Mitch will assist the Mozilla Foundation with strategic matters and Board level topics, but his day to day focus remains with OSAF and Chandler.

IV. Chandler Design and Development

- 1. The current 0.2 plan can be found at: http://wiki.osafoundation.org/bin/view/Main/DotTwoPlanning

- 2. Notification manager code has been checked in and is under review. Many thanks to Andrew Francis for his leadership here.

Andy and Andrew have now turned to the agent API and implementation, planning to have something posted shortly and then begin implementation.

- 3. Data Model. Recent meeting notes can be found here:

http://wiki.osafoundation.org/bin/view/Main/BrianDouglasSkinner-MeetingNotes-2003-07-24

- 4. Repository. Here's a list of recent repository work:

  - separated attributes and references (destabilising change)
  - fixed Path vs. UUID discrimination bug in find()
  - added error checks in UUID parsing
  - implemented value inheritance via InheritFrom attribute aspect
  - reworked None handling in getAttribute()
  - improved class loading error reporting
  - added Kind.newItem() factory method
  - added support for mx's DateTimeDelta type
  - updated dev guide on wiki to reflect latest changes
  - added support for simple queries
  - added attributes() generator/iterator method
  - added support for grouping multiple item definitions in the same XML file
  - battled Berkeley DB/DBXML with a python hang when importing dbxml
  - recompiled all dbxml components with gcc 3.3 and the problem is solved
  - started to think about dbxml implementation of Repository class
  - reorganized Repository code in preparation for dbxml implementation
  - updated milestone bugs to reflect current thinking
  - added Item.kind and added Kind <-> Items ref for faster kind based queries
  - debugged Kind <-> Items saving and loading
  - all schema of schema definitions are now in XML files and are no longer partially duplicated in python.

In addition, Katie took a first crack an integrating Andi's repository work with calendar, though there are still some snags to iron out.

- 5. Document Architecture design continues.

- 6 I don't know how to categorize a set of work Jed has done, but here's a description:
  - MrMenus? - Updated MrMenu?'s use of the ActionsBar? to match the menus and show off more functionality.
  - URL box - Bug#499 - Made the url box in the navigation bar wider to accomodate longer url's.
  - dialog.Destroy() - Bug#789 - Call dialog.Destroy() on all dialogs.
  - Generate 25 contacts - Bug#806 - The generate 25 contacts menu item was failing because of blank lines in the names.txt file.
  - About pages - Fixed each of the parcels to correctly locate their about pages (was broken during the move to parcels/OSAF). Parcels no longer use an absolute location, but rather look in self.model.path.
  - Splash screen - Fixed splash screens to allow for html that is long enough that it needs to scroll.

- 7. wxPython. Robin has been merging wxPython changes on the 2.4 branch over to the 2.5 branch. He also spent some time smoothing out the bumps in the implementation of the new build system, including some issues with the new way in which DLLs are built. The new build system uses a new system called bakefile (written in Python) to generate the native makefiles or autoconf input files for each supported compiler; Robin also spent some time helping to smooth things out with bakefile.

- 8. Chandler build and installation. Chandler now supports loading parcels from an external directory in addition to the default "internal" parcels directory. Morgen's description can be found at : http://wiki.osafoundation.org/bin/view/Main/ParcelLoading

-- MitchellBaker - 30 Jul 2003