Sakai Newsletter

August 16, 2012

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1. I Congress Iberoamericano de Sakai

Dear all,

Universidad Católica de Murcia (UCAM), Instituto Brasileiro de Mercado de Capitais (Ibmec), Universidad Politécnica de Valencia (UPV) and the Sakai Foundation are pleased to announce that the I Congress Iberoamericano de Sakai will take place at Rio do Janeiro (Brazil) on October 16th to 18th.

The two main purposes of the conference are:

- To promote active participation in the Sakai South American Community
- To share experiences of Sakai as a solution for South American Universities

More information at

http://sakai.ucam.edu/?lang=en

Looking forward to seeing you in Rio!

The Conference Committee

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Estimado/a señor/a,

La Universidad Católica de Murcia (UCAM), el Instituto Brasileiro de Mercado de Capitais (Ibmec), la Universidad Politécnica de Valencia (UPV) y la fundación Sakai tienen la satisfacción de anunciar la celebración del Primer Congress Iberoamericano de Sakai, evento tendrá lugar en Rio de Janerio (Brasil) del 16 al 18 de octubre del 2012.

Los dos objetivos principales de este congreso son:

- Crear dentro de Sakai una comunidad activa para toda Sudamérica
- Presentar a entidades educativas de Sudamérica la plataforma y los proyectos desarrollados

http://sakai.ucam.edu/?lang=es

Le esperamos en Río!

El Comité Organizador

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2. Flying Kite

Welcome to Flying Kite, our latest Sakai Commercial Affiliate, and the first in Australia! Flying Kite's facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/flyingkiteAU

Best,

Ian Dolphin
Executive Director, Sakai Foundation
iandolphin@sakaifoundation.org

3. Sakai CLE 2.9.0-b07 Released

Hi All,

The Sakai 2.9.0-b07 release is up at: https://qa29.longsight.com/

Artifacts for other qa servers are here:
http://source.sakaiproject.org/release/2.9.0-b07/artifacts/

You can also build from source as usual from this tag:
https://source.sakaiproject.org/svn/sakai/tags/sakai-2.9.0-b07/

This release includes about 60 fixes that were merged from trunk as verified.
https://jira.sakaiproject.org/browse/SAK/fixforversion/12902

All indies were also released as b07. The list above does not include those fixes.

A new blocker was recently discovered: a bug that sometimes sends users of 2.9 through a regular browser to the mobile view -- https://jira.sakaiproject.org/browse/SAK-22484 .

The next release is Sakai CLE 2.9.0-b08, targeted for August 28, and ideally this will become the first release candidate pending resolution of all blocker items and other stuff.

(Please see the next item in this newsletter for information about extensive changes in Sakai CLE skinning functionality.)

Cheers,

Neal Caidin
Sakai CLE Community Coordinator
nealcaidin@sakaifoundation.org
Skype: nealkdin
AIM: ncaidin@aol.co

4. Extensive Changes to Sakai CLE Skinning Functionality

The upcoming Sakai CLE 2.9 release includes a major update to the look and feel of the CLE. This update required extensive changes to the existing skinning functionality.

Current skins used in 2.8 and older can be used in 2.9, but a configuration setting must be enabled in sakai.properties for them to function.

In addition, for anyone tracking the 2.9 release and developing or using skins based on the "NeoPortal" skin, recent changes in the beta7 release (b07) have eliminated the original design and replaced it with the skin targeted for 2.10. You will need to make changes to your new 2.9 skin based on the b07 release.

Please see
https://confluence.sakaiproject.org/display/DOC/Sakai+CLE+2.9+portal+changes
for more details.

Thanks,

Neal Caidin
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5. BLTI Admin Tool

Zhen Qian, Gonzalo Silverio, and John Johnston from the University of Michigan have refined the nascent LTI Admin Tool to make it production-ready for Sakai. The initial developer, Charles Severance, built a very useful, if somewhat homely and usability-challenged tool that needed some TLC. The UM team redesigned the interface, added support for all the LTI parameters available in the Basic LTI tool, and enabled LTI tools to be selected from the Tool Picker. These refinements now make it a trivial matter to configure new external tools and add new value to Sakai. External tools can be made available globally through the tool picker, added to individual sites, or stealthed.

UM is has been running this code in production since August 4th. The UM instance of Sakai has integrated with nearly a dozen LTI tools both commercial and internally developed. Some of these integrations include Piazza, LectureTools, eTextbooks, internal lecture capture systems, and several library services.

The local branch of this work is available at:
https://source.sakaiproject.org/svn/msub/umich.edu/ctools/PATCHED/basiclti/branches/CTools-2.7.2/

The related Jira ticket is BLTL-142. This work has already been checked into the Sakai trunk code.

John Johnston
Senior Business Systems Analyst
ITS Teaching & Learning, University of Michigan

6. UM Upgrades to CTools 2.7.2A and Adds More Integrated Tools

The newest version of CTools, released Aug. 4, includes several new tools for faculty to use in their teaching and research.

These tools provide new functionality and expand the capabilities of the existing services in CTools. For example, faculty now can use student course groups that are integrated with Google, share resources between online tools, set up groups in which instructors and students can work together in real time, and more.

"Our goal is to provide faculty with the tools and resources they need," says Sean DeMonner, director of the Information and Technology Services Teaching & Learning group. "We keep abreast of rapidly-evolving technologies so we can evaluate and quickly make the best tools available."

These developments are part of the NextGen Michigan program, a strategy for investing in the "next generation" of computing technologies. The new tools are:

- CTools + M+Google -- Faculty, students and staff now can access the core Google apps -- Calendar, Mail, Docs, and Google+ -- from links in the CTools banner.

- CTools + M+Box -- Box, a cloud storage and collaboration tool, can be added to any course or project site. Though users see Box in a CTools window, the cloud-based storage is external. All users can sign up for a 50GB UM Box account where they can set up online folders for storage and collaboration.

- CTools + Piazza -- Piazza is an online social media gathering place where students can ask, answer, and rate responses under the guidance of instructors. Instructors can endorse model responses, create polls, and track student participation.

- CTools + RCRS Research Integrity Project -- This project delivers interactive training modules on responsible conduct in research to postdocs, fellows and students, as required by federal funding agencies.

Another important development at UM is MCommunity/Google course groups. Instructors on the Ann Arbor campus can create course groups in the MCommunity Directory based on course membership information fromWolverine Access. The groups are updated regularly as students drop and add courses. The groups are synchronized to Google UMICH and can be used for sending email and sharing Google resources.

Margaret Wagner
University of Michigan

7. JIRA and Confluence Upgraded

Both JIRA and Confluence, along with associated plugins such as Greenhopper, were upgraded this past weekend. We are now running the latest release of each app (Jira 5.1.2, Confluence 4.2.12) [1].

Neal Caidin, David Horwitz and Steve Swinsburg helped me check the upgrade over the weekend (thanks fellas). Should anyone encounter an issue with the upgrade please email me at arwhyte@sakaifoundation.org.

Latest features:

JIRA 5.1
https://confluence.atlassian.com/display/JIRA/JIRA+5.1+Release+Notes

Confluence 4.2
https://confluence.atlassian.com/display/DOC/Confluence+4.2+Release+Notes

Greenhopper 6.0
https://confluence.atlassian.com/display/GH/GreenHopper+6.0+Release+Notes

Cheers,

Anthony Whyte
arwhyte@umich.edu

8. Call for QA Testers

Hello Sakai Collaborators,

I am continuing to get support for the QA effort.

If you are interested then the best place to start is to join the QA mailing list:

http://collab.sakaiproject.org/mailman/listinfo/sakai-qa

After that you should then sign up on the QA Testers Wall and indicate the amount of participation you will be able to contribute:

https://confluence.sakaiproject.org/display/QA/QA+Testers+Wall

Finally you should visit the QA Working Group space. That area will list the priorities for 2.9 testing and some areas that we need to focus. I would suggest beginning with the JIRA issues that need verification in trunk:

https://confluence.sakaiproject.org/display/QA/Home

If you have any questions then please let me know.

Sincerely,

Rob Egan
Support Specialist, Academic Technology & eLearning
Marist College
Rob.Egan@marist.edu

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9. Job Opening: Sakai Administrator at a Small University in North Carolina

Key Functions:
- Responsible for the administration, maintenance, operational support, and configuration management of the university's Sakai application

- Work closely with internal and external customers to serve as Sakai expert

Required Skills:
- Bachelor's degree

- Advanced knowledge of and experience with higher education applications including, but not limited to, the following:
        Working knowledge of Linux/UNIX and Windows operating systems
        Oracle II database development

Contact:
- Qualified candidates please send resume in MS Word to maclean@recruitwise.jobs.

10. Events

AuSakai 2012
18 - 19 September
Bathurst Campus NSW, Australia
Charles Sturt University
www.ausakai2012.com.au

I Congreso Iberoamericano de Sakai
16th and 18th October, 2012
Rio de Janeiro
http://sakai.ucam.edu/