

Collaborative Focus Areas project (in support of DITA)

In addition to the requirements already defined which are specific to this project, I have compiled a list of standard measures for evaluating any Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) technology.

FOSS Technology Requirements

1. Community

How viable is the community supporting the product? Are there independent contributors? How active are mailing lists, web sites? Is the community healthy, friendly and welcoming to newcomers?

2. Low Entry Barrier

How easy is it to get started? Is the product a turn-key solution with immediate value after download? How consistent is the documentation, how hard is it to familiarize oneself with the codebase?

3. Product Maturity

How robust is the underlying code? Are sound software engineering practices in use? Is the architecture clean and consistent? Are changes to the code regression-tested?

4. Industrial Strength

How much does the product scale? How flexible and stable is the product, how well does it perform? Is it secure?

5. Off The Shelf Components

How much does the product make use of standard components? Is the architecture modular to accommodate external code?

6. Feature Set

Does the product have a conservative feature set, or does it have many bells and whistles?

7. Standards Compliance

How much does the product use and interoperate with standards?

8. Usability

Is the user interface understandable for non-technical persons? Is it consistent? Does it follow usability best practice?

9. Platform

How well does the application fit into our infrastructure?

10. Security

What is the profile and track record of the community vis-a-vis security best-practices? How

often is the project listed in security vulnerability alerts, and what is the response time?

11. License

What is the license, and is the source code freely available?

Research and Analysis to find suitable Candidates

Taking the input of the project team, and combining that with my own experience, I have been able to actively research and analyze the current field of possible solutions to narrow our focus to a short list of viable candidates. Here is that list with some notes and references to further information.

PHPGroupWare

The releases are fairly frequent, although they are behind on their roadmap plan to release version 1.0. The list of applications and 3rd-party modules is impressive. FUDForum is integrated as the forums component, and FUDForum is probably the strongest standalone forum solution in FOSS. This one is packaged in debs, so it is available on Debian systems out of the box.

Drupal

Has a long list of well-developed modules, which cover all the functionality we've discussed

<http://drupal.org/project/Modules>

There is a generally positive, albeit cursory, review at About.com

(<http://weblogs.about.com/od/softwareplatformreviews/gr/drupalreview.htm>) A much more thorough

review is at http://www.businessblogconsulting.com/2004/09/drupal_blog_pub.html

A follow-up / clarification was made here <http://www.bryght.com/blog/boris-mann/harold-and-camerons-drupal-review-for-rick-bruner-some-commentary>

One solid point worth noting is that if ever OASIS, or a FA wanted to have a hosted solution, it is available through bryght.com (<http://www.bryght.com/>)

A list of themes and modules used on drupal.org's own site <http://drupal.org/node/27367>

CivicSpace (<http://civicspacelabs.org/home/comparison>)

Is a special distribution of Drupal, with added community features. A comparison chart showing the features is at <http://civicspacelabs.org/home/comparison>

Mediawiki

Is the king of wikis these days. Powers wikipedia. Info at

<http://www.mediawiki.org/wiki/Documentation> Wikipedia is especially good at ontologies and

advanced wiki features. I'm not sure that our users will demand what mediawiki has to offer, nor that wikipedia will be able to offer the other components needed in our platform. I need to look at the ways to integrate a solution that includes wikipedia with, say for example, FUDForum to provide the forum functionality.

Joomla

Is content focused, and may not have the maturity of developed functional modules beyond CMS

Mambo

Is the original before Joomla, and is not as well embraced by the community.

Horde

Wiki is not full-featured. Documentation is often missing.

phProjekt

terrible UI and usability. Documentation a complete rev behind development, generally unpolished. The developer wiki actually uses wikipedia rather than 'eating their own dogfood'

openGroupware

Lenya

<http://lenya.apache.org/roadmap.html>

Enterprise CMS in Java

Serendipity

serendipity <http://s9y.org/1.html>

Excellent blog

b2evolution

b2evolution <http://b2evolution.net/>

Excellent blog, multi-user

Notes to self

Possible load test script from <http://forum.mamboserver.com/showthread.php?t=11782>

```
gayle@athene:~/bin> cat slashdot.sh
```

```
#!/bin/bash
cat /proc/loadavg | awk ' { print $1 }' >> ${1}
for i in `seq 1 12`;
do
    for j in `seq 1 10`;
    do
        /usr/sbin/ab2 -n 5 -c 5 http://athene/~gayle/${1}/ &
        sleep 1
    done
    cat /proc/loadavg | awk ' { print $1 }' >> ${1}
done
```