XOOPS Aurora -- an eye of the community - Newsletter

NEWS_PDF_AUTHOR: tom

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If your wondering how you can offer assistance on this site, well that's easy, why not write documentation for various modules available to XOOPS, or if your a talented developer why not write some simply 'how to' guides, after all you may remember what it was like getting started in the coding world, perhaps you have some words of wisdom which could save someone time and even money, that you once lost.

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So what can we expect to see?

Up until now XOOPS branches 2.0.16 and 2.2.5 were not going to be merged for a fair while, and the only branch that would continue to be active was 2.0.16 through 2.3.

As your aware this was not pleasing news to those stuck on 2.2.5, however this has now changed, in what could become an XOOPS revolution, soon you will see a new code release merging both 2.0.16 and 2.2.5 branches together.

So what does this mean for you?

That means that whatever 2.x version you're actually using, you'll all be able to upgrade to the next version. However, as focus will be on this particular point, some of the most important changes present in the 2.3 branch of the SVN repository may be kept for later and won't be included in it.

The next question to be raised would be when?

Well there is no set date, however we're informed this won't be a few months, it will be sooner.

There would be no point in the community pushing for a date, if the release was delayed even by a day this will inevitably lead to disappointment.

The XOOPS Dev Team is requesting that the community gets involved and participates, there are still numerous bugs waiting to be fixed or reviewed on the Sourceforge site. Your help is welcome.

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Thinking of the future of it and it's growth, it has been thought to keep the site tools as simple as possible and shouldn't need more than the downloads module and content pages, leaving open the possibility to easily upgrade and maintain the modules, in this case the most essential one being wf-downloads.

We know that XOOPS is about to change, could you enlighten us on what's about to happen with regards to the work your conducting?

The opening of a site where once again XOOPS users will be able to find updated stable modules that are compatible with the most recent XOOPS version, in a repository neatly organized. Provide users with information of featured modules or themes that stand out because of their functions. Be able to consult user reviews of the experiences other users have with the modules.

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We believe that the new network of sites will create a much better environment for users to participate, contribute, and enjoy using XOOPS as well as motivate the formation of working groups.

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Ackbarr was the original server admin. When our XOOPS Servers were compromised, JMorris was asked to join the team to help monitor and harden the server. Later, when Ackbarr and JMorris both became too busy with their "day jobs" to monitor the servers, JDSeymour was asked to join to help with the management tasks. Ackbarr has since become VP at the company he works for and has taken on more of a consultant role.

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Who is currently part of the Server Team?

JDSeymour & JMorris

The Surpass Support team is also part of our team in a way because they bundled management services in with the hosting package. In fact, they were instrumental in getting the custom Apache/PHP config setup that we wanted.

Who are Surpass?

Surpass hosting http://www.surpasshosting.com/

They have been a strong supporter of the XOOPS Project for quite some time. Many XOOPS users choose Surpass because of their excellent support for the XOOPS Application.

What experience did the current team have, prior to joining XOOPS?

Ackbarr has been a Systems Administrator for EPC USA for years. EPC USA is the company who has been donating our current servers.

JDSeymour is self-taught, and very experienced, he offers consulting services in this field.

JMorris has an AAS with an emphasis in Computer and Information Technology. He holds a CompTIA A+ and Network+ Certifications. He also has 5 years experience in working with LAMP configurations. He's worked as a technician for WVU-P and Woodcraft Supply, LLC.

What would you consider the most difficult obstacle so far in managing the servers for XOOPS, and how did the team overcome this?

MySQL Load

The current xoops.org web site overwhelms a LAMP server with dual 2.8GHz PIV processors and 6GB of RAM. Even after optimizing MySQL, Apache, and PHP as much as it can be, the current site is too much for the server it is hosted on.

Between that and managing limited server space are the 2 reasons why we needed new servers.

Since EPC USA has moved away from the hosting business, we sought a strategic partner whose primary business is hosting so that we would be sure to have the resources available that we need.

How we overcame the issue with MySQL is that we negotiated a new, dual server package with Surpass hosting. Our new servers have the following basic specs

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Also, where our old configuration ran a full LAMP setup on both of our dedicated servers and just hosted different sites on different machines, the new server uses an Enterprise class architecture where Apache/PHP and MySQL are hosted separately.

MySQL runs on its own dedicated server to maximize performance and availability.

We also further fine-tuned the MySQL configuration by taking advantage of built-in caching functionality.

Examples are the thread_cache_size, query_cache_size and table_cache settings in my.cnf.

JMorris, how have you seen your role change in XOOPS and how do you see it changing again in the future?

Yes, since 2003, my role in XOOPS has changed several times.

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Since 2003, I've also released some free themes and modules in an attempt to give something back to the community.

As far as future plans go, I plan to remain an active member of the community and trying to give something back to the project that has given me so much.

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We are grateful for all of the assistance received and we would like to point out that this open collaboration is a perfect example of how much a community can accomplish when they pulled together and work as one big team. Thank you all!

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If your aware of my stance in the community you will also know that I share the same concerns as many others, lack of communications, releases, and so-forth, however along with the support

of some key players here I've had an insight into what's happening, I've not seen the whole picture, but I have seen enough to believe that a real wave of change is upon us, all it will take on our part is a little patience and support.

Once these changes start to happen the key aim is to once again put you back in the driving seat of Community Support, resurrecting the slogan 'Powered By You'.

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