

XOOPS Core Development Updates As Of August 1st, 2010 - XOOPS

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The XOOPS Project is approaching its 10th anniversary and we are looking forward to a new boost of its growth.

As of last month, we have released [XOOPS 2.4.5](#) and are preparing [XOOPS 2.5 in SVN](#).

Meanwhile, as the most significant development in years, XOOPS 3, the new Xoops Engine, is also in development for over a year now. Yes, it takes a lot of time, but we only have one chance to do it right! Just think about re-designing a car from a gasoline-based engine to an electric engine. There are a LOT of dependencies that have to be taken care of, and redesigning XOOPS is very much the same, or actually even more complicated, if you still want to use your tires and other parts from your old car.

We've been thinking long and hard about what the new XOOPS should be all about! We could tweak the current XOOPS, and make it slightly better, but it would be the same as tweaking a gasoline engine, while the world is moving to electric engines and alternative energies. The current XOOPS served us very well for almost 10 years, but it's time to get XOOPS again to the forefront of CMS and web application development, and have an engine that well carry us in the next 10 years!

Current core development status:

2.4: led by phppp and trabis. The branch is currently frozen with a final release 2.4.5, a potential release of 2.4.6 will only be considered in case security issues are found.

2.5: led by ForMusS, Trabis and phppp. This branch is mainly focused on backend and user experience improvements.

3.0: new Xoops Engine, led by phppp. The system is re-designed from the ground up and will serve the project for the coming years.

The new Xoops Engine has been a long development, and it is now getting ready for gradual, step by step, public releases.

On June 30th, 2010 an internal preview group was created for the purposes of getting new Xoops Engine ready for public Alpha release as soon as possible.

The group consists of developers, designers, and testers, with tasks of:

- * To identify what critical features are missing in the X3 before public Alpha release
- * To help complete technical presentation about new Xoops Engine architecture
- * To help finish critical system services and modules
- * To improve a community theme that will be shipped with new Xoops Engine

- * To work on legacy modules to create an out-of-box module package that will be ready for public release
- * To help create demo/debug websites

On July 1st, 2010 the first new engine package was sent to the preview members and a lot of positive responses were received, validating the direction.

I have been very focused on the new Engine development, with no much public presence on <http://www.xoops.org> and it caused some confusing messages. Additionally, I was forced to clean up the code mess in 2.4.5 core and therefore had to stop X3 development, till we were able to release XOOPS 2.4.5 with Trabis' help.

I am very happy to see that ForMusS and Trabis are willing to take the responsibility of leading 2.5 development to let me focus on X3 development after 2.4.5 release.

The new engine development has been intensively in progress along with feedback from preview members, a second package was finished on July 28th, 2010 with more people involved. A third package is expected in three-four weeks.

As for a Public Alpha, I am not able to state the specific date, as it depends on preview group's evaluation and corresponding development, but right now we're shooting for October 2010. Before the new Engine goes public, there will be documents and presentations available from time to time.

The highlights of the new XOOPS Engine:

- 1) X3 is a new engine (the bare bones)
- 2) The engine supports different or multiple packages
- 3) Legacy XOOPS Core is one of the supported packages
- 4) The new engine supports multiple sites and multiple instantiation of XOOPS

What do we inherit from XOOPS legacy

- * Modularization
- * Theme
- * Template

What do we expect to improve in new Xoops Engine

- * Flexible architecture and elegant code and implementation
- * Modern MVC architecture: faster development, state-of-the-art technology
- * Distributed deployment respecting virtual hosts
- * Contributor friendly skeleton: easy to manage
- * SEO capable URL routing
- * Solid and rich libraries and frameworks
- * Ready to implement unit test

Today I would like to share couple of diagrams with you that was sent to preview group on July 1st:

[Xoope Engine Feature List](#) and [Xoope Engine Route](#)

Finally, a brief roadmap for new Xoops Engine I hope will be useful to you:

- 1 Feature and technical presentations: from August to October 2010
- 2 First public Alpha release: October 2010, for public review and test (to be determined by preview group)
- 3 First beta release: November/December 2010, for public development and design, as well as legacy module/theme migration campaign
- 4 First RC release: January/February 2011, for public application test, module migration and documentation
- 5 First stable release: spring 2011

I truly hope that this will give you a better idea of where we're heading. It's been a lot of hard work, but based on the first reactions from the Internal Preview Team, it was worth it. And I hope that once we release the Public Alpha and you'll have a chance to review it yourself, you'll agree as well.

For the time being - please be patient and let us focus on the development. And please help us with the [Blue Move](#) and the [XOOPS 2.5.0](#) development.

Taiwen Jiang (a.k.a phppp)
August 1st, 2010

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