CACHE Website to Become Wiki Compatible

Tom Edgar – University of Texas

The CACHE Trustees decided in late 2007 to convert CACHE's website into a wiki-like web page. All of cache.org's information was loaded into the new wiki-like system, using the Plone platform, a leading content management platform. All of the CACHE files available to the public were upgraded with a new look to run on a server on the Plone platform. All the broken links on the website were removed or updated when available.

The main advantage of a wiki-compatible site is that any person with adequate permissions can update part of the site; the updates are submitted to one reviewer for its acceptance and then published to the general public. This converts the sites into more cooperative spaces where much more information can be added and discussed. Another very important advantage is that editing is very easy, and can be done online in a Microsoft word-like environment. There are many more advantages; see Plone's videos at you-tube or at www.plone.org.

Plone is an open source Content Management System (CMS) that can be used to build corporate web sites, news sites, extranet services or intranet, publishing system and documents repository, groupware tool, e-commerce, etc. A CMS is a web application designed to make it easy for non-expert users to add, edit, and manage a website. A CMS automatically generates navigation elements, makes the content searchable and indexable, and keeps track of users and their permissions and security settings. Plone is free software.

Plone is rather unique in that everything in Plone is an object. Plone is developed with the Python programming language on the powerful and free Zope application server, which is an object-oriented web application. The Plone project was started in 1999 by Alan Runyan, Alexander Limi, and Vidar Andersen. At the SolutionsLinux 2003 conference, the Plone Team released Plone 1.0, supporting 22 languages. In 2004, the Plone Foundation was formed to protect and promote the use of Plone.

Other strengths of Plone are as follows:

- Plone is easy to install. You can install Plone with a click and run installer, and have a content management system running on your computer in just a few minutes.

- Plone is easy to use. The Plone Team includes usability experts who have made Plone easy and attractive for content managers to add, update, and maintain content.

- Plone is international. The Plone interface has more than 35 translations, and tools exist for managing multilingual content.

- Plone is standard. Plone carefully follows standards for usability and accessibility. Plone pages are compliant with U.S. Section 508, and the W3C's AAA rating for accessibility.

- Plone is Open Source. Plone is licensed under the GNU General Public License, the same licnese used by Linux. This gives you the right to use Plone without a license fee, and to improve upon the product.

- Plone is supported. There are close to a hundred developers in the Plone Development Team around the world, and a multitude of companies that specialize in Plone development and support.

- Plone is extensible. There is a multitude of add-on products for Plone to add new feature and content types. In addition, Plone can be scripted using web standard solutions and Open Source languages.

- Plone is technology neutral. Plone can interoperate with most relational database systems, open source and commercial, and runs on a vast array of platforms, including Linux, Windows, Mac OS X, Solaris and BSD.

There are four ways to view and interact with a site made with Plone. The live view is the online site made up of documents that have been published. The site and authoring view are the ones that are accessed by those who manage the content. Finally, the admin view is where users and groups are administered. Each user that sails within a Plone site can access a given content, depending on the user role and the state of the content. The content has one of the previously defined workflow states. **Admin** has access only to that area. **Editor** can only add and edit content but cannot publish it. **Reviewer** is the only one who can change a document state to "published" and therefore is visible in the live site.

The roles are defined by access levels. A site reader is a user that only has permission to read; the editors, programmers and administrators' roles are defined in a similar way. The content administration is extremely simple because the environment is oriented to documents and folders. In the Plone site a user with edition permission has, by default, the site tree to the left and the content area in the center. In the upper part of the latter four tabs, *contents, view, edit*, and *sharing* are shown. *Contents* shows the current folder contents, the size of each component in kilobytes, modification date and state in the workflow. *View* is a preliminary view, *Edit* edits content, properties defines the value of such attributes as Allow Discussion or not, Effective Date, Expiration Date, Language, document goal information and Keywords, i.e., Document Metadata. Finally *sharing* is a way to allow others' access to collaborate with you on the content. To share an item, search for the person's name or email address in a form, and assign them an appropriate role. The most common use is to give users Manager permission, which means they have full control of this item and its contents (if any).

Plone is released under the GNU General Public License (GPL). Major development is conducted periodically during special meeting called Plone Sprints. Additional functionality is added to Plone with Products, which may be distributed through the Plone website or otherwise. The Plone Foundation owns and protects all intellectual property and trademarks. Plone also has legal backing from the council of the Software Freedom Law Center. The name Plone pays homage to the Warp Records band Plone.