Using profiles to replace mods

2018-02-24 : mods.tiki.org will be retired (date tbd) as it no longer has anything useful.

Any useful code was added to the main code base.

And Packages can be used for things that can't / shouldn't live in main code base

The rest of the page is conserved for posterity.

This is brainstorming about if/how/when Mods could or should be deprecated, and superseded by Profiles.

See also how PluginArchiveBuilder for an idea of how the packaging could work.

Status as of 2012

- Mods is code in SVN: http://tikiwiki.svn.sourceforge.net/viewvc/tikiwiki/mods/trunk/
- Most of the mods are abandonware and most of the good stuff was merged into core a long time ago but there are a handful of useful/maintained mods which are not in core because of licensing
- Mods can't deal with versioning
- Mods can't deal with translations
- The Mods installer hasn't been improved in years and it's unlikely someone will step up.
- Mods installer can't work in some places because of file permissions
  - For themes, download links are provided at themes.tiki.org pointing to the theme archive at the Sourceforge repository, for people that can't install via the mods admin. But this entails downloading and then uploading the files so is more trouble than an installation via mods admin or profiles.
- One thing the mods are used for fairly actively is themes that can't be included in the Tiki package due to license conflicts. On the theme creation/maintenance side, it has been good to use SVN for the versioning function. I hope this would continue with profiles (via wiki history?) or be improved, as there is a lot of redundancy in the current system (full set of files for each theme for each Tiki version, even though sometimes there is little change).

The Idea

- Mods is a packaging/distribution tool for files managed in a SCM (SVN). Instead, profiles could be used to deploy and wiki pages could become the SCM, with a nice Web-based source code editor

No change

- The license of the content can be GPL because the user installs themselves

Benefits

- Contributors can contribute via the browser (especially interesting for translators)
- We would be using maintained code
- Regarding themes, module configuration is an increasingly important aspect of theme-specific layout and function, and so it would be great to use a profile to apply the module configuration of a new theme. If this profile could also contain or enable the transfer of CSS files and background images, etc., that would nicely put everything in the same installation process.

Challenges

Translations

- How to sync SVN with the wiki?
- Translation branching strategy
- How does get strings and other tools need adapting?

Binaries

- How to deal with binaries?
  - Profiles could be improved to handle binairies
    - Tiki_logo_in_base_64 was made from http://www.greywyvern.com/code/php/binary2base64

File permissions

- mods has a web installer
  - PluginArchiveBuilder can generate the zip on demand of a bunch of files and we let people install themselves if file permissions are an issue

Long term

- We could imagine moving translations completely to this, but we would need to upgrade our scripts

Related

- To Mods Or Not To Mods