

Luis Interview by mose

mose, luis - 27 Aug 2003 02:13 GMT-0000



Interview of Luis about TikiWiki

You already know Tikiwiki, the living CMS/groupware solution available under LGPL licence. Luis Argerich is the first authors of that web application. He's the source of the source, and, guess what, he's also open source. So, here is the code. Questions are from mose, answers come from Luis, expect some technical parts.

Tikiwiki Origins

When did you begin to code tikiwiki ?

In October 2002. We are just about to reach our first Birthday 😊

Was it an individual or a group process, before submitting in sourceforge ? In both cases, how that work have been conducted?

It was planned as an application to be driven and developed by a community, of course you can't just "have" a community to begin so the project started as an effort of just a few people.

What motivated the first coding of Tikiwiki ? A personal need ? A contract ? a group challenge ?

None, I was frustrated for the lack of a collaborative tool that could be used in portals and intranets grouping a Wiki, Forums, Blogs and other tools so TikiWiki was started.

Tikiwiki mythology

What is the real origin of the choice for Tiki name ? The mixed use of tiki statue and Kon-tiki picture blurs the tracks ..

Well since our first feature was a Wiki some people started to call it "Tiki" I don't know why.... This was before (yup, before!) being in SF. So we decided to adopt that name and call the project Tiki.... Of course the name "Tiki" was taken in SF and we choose TikiWiki.

What happened that made the hugs from Mr Polidor are so much valued ? Is there a story behind that ?

I think that this question must be answered by the lucky winners of the hugs ...

Did you feel at any time being a guru ? Do you support a philosophy?

Nah..... 😊

Tikiwiki Technically

Some devels propose changes in the design of tikiwiki. What do you think that could be considered before rewriting anything ?

I think the current design does the job, of course it can be refined but that will only make the design nicer for techies and development harder for the community. The only design principle that must be followed in my vision is simplicity. We would be still writing the wiki if we had used a sophisticated design ...

Is there in tikiwiki components that wasn't intended to stay in the state they are ? could you give some examples of unfinished work ?

Unfinished work..... I guess the whole application is unfinished work there's always something to improve, something to add and things that can be enhanced. If you meant if there is a feature that is currently completely different to what we have planned the answer is no.

You did work on many xml projects before tikiwiki, are you still in that business ?

Yes, I'm still working with XML.

Do you think tikiwiki can get more xml cleverness inside (for structured content for example) ?

I don't think so, overusing XML is a bad practice, we don't have to use XML just because it is cool ...

What was planned for future use of smarty new version ?

.....

Where does the Sterling name (in Smarty_Sterling) come from ?

From a previous project that was never finished called Sterling, a name used in an Asimov book....

Nothing to do with any person named Sterling.

How far smarty have been patched to reach tiki integration ?

Smarty has not been patched, in fact when a new version of Smarty is released you can just overwrite the files in the tiki/Smarty directory and everything should work. We just extended Smarty adding many plugins that are in the Smarty/plugins directory so everything is flexible.

Can you talk about that motivated the creation of Galaxia ?

It's simple, there wasn't a free open-source web-based workflow engine available in PHP. And workflow engines are a very good tool in many organizations.

How do you feel Galaxia can evolve now ?

I'm sure it is the area of Tiki that can evolve more, just take a look at other workflow engines or commercial tools for modeling bussines processes, there's a lot to be done and it's not such a complex task, you just have to move data from one place to the other, that can be done easily in PHP. A free open-source web-based business processing tool can be a complete revolution specially for small organizations that can afford a full fledged commercial application.

What is the reason some tables are named users_* in db rather than tiki_* like others ?

Originally this was designed in that way so the user management system could be shared between Tiki and other applications, so tiki tables were named tiki_* and the tables related to user management were named users_*

Can you talk about oddities that development included in database ?

....

What is your opinion about languages management in tiki and about how do you think we could improve it ?

This is complex, it has to be efficient and easy for the translators, I really don't think there's room to improve without compromising either performance or simplicity a balance must be kept.