



OSGiTM Alliance

RFP 180 - IoT Protocols: MQTT

Draft

8 Pages

Abstract

In the IoT domain there is a widespread of communication protocols available for letting devices interact with each other. A popular publish-subscribe protocol for communicating with IoT devices is MQTT. This RFP focuses on ways to integrate the MQTT protocol with OSGi. The goal to bridge MQTT to the existing OSGi EventAdmin.

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0.3 Feedback

This document can be downloaded from the OSGi Alliance design repository at <https://github.com/osgi/design> The public can provide feedback about this document by opening a bug at <https://www.osgi.org/bugzilla/>.

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0.5 Terminology and Document Conventions

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "NOT RECOMMENDED", "MAY" and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in 6.1.

Source code is shown in this typeface.

0.6 Revision History

The last named individual in this history is currently responsible for this document.

Revision	Date	Comments
Initial	January 7 2016	<i>Initial contribution – extracted from initial RFP 177</i> <i>Tim Verbelen, iMinds – Ghent University, tim.verbelen@intec.ugent.be</i>

1 Introduction

Internet of Things (IoT) is becoming an important application domain of OSGi. The ability to run an OSGi framework on a gateway device as well as a Cloud server, together with the ability of transparently calling remote services using distributed OSGi makes it perfect base for an IoT platform. However, the proliferation of IoT protocols makes it difficult to integrate the many technologies available. One popular IoT protocol for connecting such IoT devices is MQTT. This RFP provides a solution to transparently handle MQTT events in OSGi via the EventAdmin.

2 Application Domain

In the current IoT domain we see a proliferation of different protocols for device access, remote management and IoT applications.

Various device access protocols are defined to interface with small (wireless) sensor devices, such as enOcean, ZigBee, Z-Wave, etc. Also for device management different protocols exist such as OMA DM, TR-69, etc. While these protocols are already being handled in the OSGi specification (103 – Device Access, 117 – Dmt Admin, 141- Device Abstraction layer, and specific protocol adapters for enOcean, TR069, ...), there are also many IoT protocols that are widely used on an application level (i.e. CoAP, MQTT).

One of the more popular application-level IoT protocols nowadays is the event based MQTT.

2.1 MQTT

MQTT is a lightweight publish/subscribe messaging protocol on top of TCP/IP standardized by OASIS. MQTT uses a central broker where all clients send their messages to and where clients can subscribe on certain topics.

The MQTT broker supports multiple QoS levels: QoS level 0 : best effort delivery: the message is not acknowledged by the receiver or stored and redelivered by the sender. QoS level 1: the message is guaranteed to be delivered at least once to the receiver. The sender stores the messages until it gets an acknowledgement. QoS level 2: the message is delivered exactly once to the receiver. This is the highest and slowest QoS level.

MQTT also supports so called “last will and testament” messages, which are sent out by the broker when the sender loses connectivity with the broker.

The MQTT specification does not specify any format the message payload should adhere to.

3 Problem Description

Although there are already solutions for using MQTT within an OSGi application, these still leave it up to the developer to use the specific APIs of the MQTT library used, which is currently not standardized in OSGi. To facilitate interaction with an MQTT broker, this RFP aims to bridge MQTT and EventAdmin:

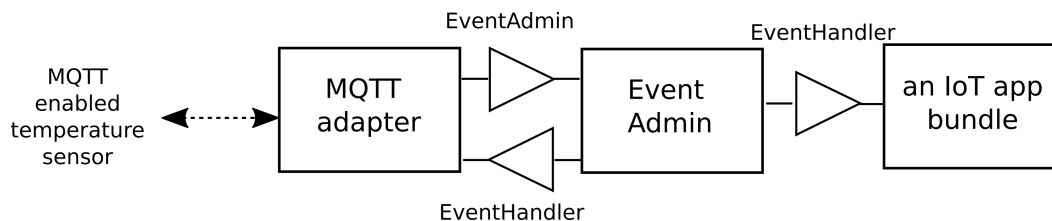
- subscribe to an MQTT broker topic by registering an EventHandler in the OSGi framework
- sending out MQTT messages by publishing an Event via EventAdmin

4 Use Cases

4.1 Integrate with small, embedded devices unable to run OSGi

Many devices are powered with a small microcontroller (e.g. Arduino-like) that is unable to run a full OSGi stack, but often does support communicating over IoT protocols such as MQTT.

For example a small temperature sensor connects to an MQTT broker and sends out MQTT events with the temperature value on topic "sensor/temperature". Withing OSGi, an IoT application bundle wants to listen to these events. This bundle registers an EventHandler with topic "sensor/temperature". An MQTT adapter bundle is configured with a MQTT broker URI and a set of topics to bridge to MQTT. Once the EventHandler is registered, the MQTT adapter will subscribe to this topic with the MQTT broker, and post any received MQTT message to the EventAdmin.



Similarly, one could also forward Events posted on the EventAdmin to the MQTT broker.

Since MQTT does not provide any structure for the payload, it is up to the application developer to correctly parse the MQTT payload.

4.2 MQTT as distributed eventing mechanism between OSGi frameworks

An adapter that translates MQTT events to OSGi events through EventAdmin and vice versa could provide a mechanism for distributed eventing in OSGi.

In this case, the MQTT message payload could be the JSON String representing the OSGi event using the Object Conversion spec.

TODO: relation with RFP 158

5 Requirements

5.1 MQTT

- M0010 – The solution **MUST** define a mapping from an MQTT topic to an EventAdmin topic
- M0020 – The solution **MUST** define a mapping from an MQTT message to an OSGi Event
- M0030 – The solution **SHOULD** provide a mechanism to define which OSGi Events should be sent to the MQTT broker
- M0040 – The solution **MUST** be configurable (i.e. which MQTT broker to connect to)
- M0050 – The solution **MAY** support the different MQTT QoS levels
- M0060 – The solution **MAY** support providing last will and testament messages

6 Document Support

6.1 References

- [1]. Bradner, S., Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels, RFC2119, March 1997.
- [2]. Software Requirements & Specifications. Michael Jackson. ISBN 0-201-87712-0

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