Template – Modifications Policy

The project recommends that the API provider provide, at a minimum, the following information:

* A description of the various types of technical modifications which can be made to the API (e.g. modifications to the call structure, security-related modifications, etc.), including the differences between the various types of modifications.
* The manner in which the users will be informed of various planned technical modifications (email, Twitter, notice on the website?)
* The amount of advance notice the users will be given of various planned technical modifications.
* The possibility of sharing the API’s road map, i.e. when new functions are planned to be released also further down the line.
* Where the API provider produces new versions of the API - how long will old versions remain after a new version has been launched?
* The manner in which users will be informed of shutdowns and serious problems.
* The manner in which users will be informed of changes to the terms and conditions of the licence for the API.
* The amount of advance notice the users will be given of planned changes to the terms and conditions of the licence for the API.

Example wording

We will inform you (as a user) with as much advance notice as possible of any modifications to one of our APIs. Our aim is to inform you as follows:

* Notice of a major modification to an API will be given at least three months before the modification takes effect, by email to the email address you used to register your account. “Major modification” means a modification which may either disrupt services which use the API or require modifications to the implementation of such services, for example where the API’s interface is modified in a way which results in existing code no longer being compatible.
* Notice of a minor modification will be given in the API’s documentation no later than the date on which the modification is launched. “Minor modification” means a modification which is not a major modification and which does not affect existing developed services.
* Emergency modifications (such as due to security problems) will be launched as soon as possible and communicated on our website. We aim to give notice of emergency modifications before a modification is launched, but occasionally we may not be able to provide information concerning an emergency modification until after it has been launched.
* Notice of any shutdowns or problems in respect of an API will be given by means of a notice on our website and, where we consider it appropriate, by email to the email address you used to register your account.
* Notice that we will be completely removing an existing API will be given at least three months before this takes place by email to the email address you used to register your account.
* Notice of changes to the terms and conditions of the licence will be given by means of publishing a new version of the licence on our website no later than three months before the new version enters into force.