AMQ RFC001

The OpenAMQ RFC system

version 0.1

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Contents

1 Cover

1.1 State of this Document

This document is a request for comments. Distribution of this document is currently limited to iMatix and JPMorgan internal use.

This document describes a work in progress. This document is a formal standard. This document is ready for review.

1.2 Copyright Notice

1.3 Authors

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1.4 Abstract

The OpenAMQ RFC system is modelled on existing RFC systems. Our goal is to create a light-weight but useful basis for capturing the discussions, proposals, and implementations behind key aspects of the OpenAMQ product. This document defines the OpenAMQ RFC system itself.

2 Introduction

2.1 Problem Statement

We face a challenging process of designing and implementing OpenAMQ, a product that is ambitious and complex. Our design process is heavily based on dialogue, prototyping, and rapid refinement of solutions. We do not have the luxury of spending a significant effort in a formal design phase that would document every aspect of the product before development started on it.

Our current tools are written documentation (e.g. the AMQ Draft Design), email lists, irc, and face to face discussion.

We need a more formal way of capturing specific aspects of the design discussion, so that these aspects can be refined and documented in a single well-defined place.

2.2 Argumentation

We could use many tools for capturing technical discussions: wiki, email, word-processors, memos. All of these have advantages and disadvantages. Email is trivial but has a low signal ratio. Wiki is centralised but does not work off-line, nor does it have any change management support (i.e. one cannot easily retrieve the history of changes). Word processors are good for final text but are poor for collaborative work.

We come thus to the Internet standard: simple text documents that can be edited with any text editor and which are held in a revision-control system (such as CVS).

A simple text file has the disadvantage of being poor input for final document production. I.e. such files must be manually reformatted if one is to use them in a word-processed document.

The solution to this is to use a tool that recognises the text format and automatically prepares it in different forms. iMatix has such a tool, gurudoc, part of our OSS Base toolkit. The current memo is written in gurudoc format.

2.3 Basic Proposal

Our proposal is to use a simple text format based on the iMatix gurudoc standard. This is aimed at making text documents that are readable in their original form, but which can be automatically processed into high-quality HTML, OpenOffice, or PDF formats.

Additionally, we propose a standard naming and storage scheme that ensures that the documents we make are accessible, safe, and can be easily revised by multiple people without risk of conflict or damage.

Finally we propose a simple procedure to ensure that the "ownership" of a document is well-defined, and that the transition of a document from speculative proposal to formal documentation is clear and documented.

3   Design Proposal

3.1   Definitions and References

The use and syntax of gurudoc documents is described in the documentation for iMatix Base.

3.2   Objectives

These are the objectives of the OpenAMQ RFC system:

1. To define a standard process for documenting the design process behind the OpenAMQ product.

2. To create a library of reference material that describes the actual implementations, along with alternative and speculative proposals.

3. To allow the automatic production of technical documentation on the product.

3.3   Architecture

The architecture is based on these elements:

- A standard syntax, structure, and style guide for documents called "AMQ RFCs".

- A standard archival system.

- A standard toolset, being the iMatix gurudoc tool.

- A standard process for writing, reviewing, and publishing AMQ RFCs.

3.4   Proof and Demonstration

We will consider the current proposal to be proven when we have a collection of AMQ RFCs that describes a significant part of the OpenAMQ product, and which has been reviewed and accepted by the OpenAMQ development team including iMatix and JPMorgan engineers.

3.5   Detailed Proposal

3.5.1   Document Syntax, Structure, and Style

1. Write the AMQ RFCs in English, using a maximum line length of 75 characters.

2. The AMQ RFCs will be written in US-ASCII-7 and without tabs or other special characters

3. Structure the AMQ RFC using the template provided in RFC000. Add more detailed headings if necessary, and remove headings that are not needed.

4. When referring to an AMQ RFC in a document, use the form "AMQ_RFCnnn".

3.5.2   Document Archival

1. The AMQ RFCs are numbered sequentially from AMQ_RFC001 (this document).

2. The AMQ RFCs are named amq_rfcnnn.txt where "nnn" is the AMQ RFC number.

3. The AMQ RFCs are stored along with the project source files in the directory amq/openamq/rfc/, using whatever revision control system is used for the project sources.

3.5.3   Document Toolset

1. The AMQ RFCs are written using the iMatix gurudoc format, allowing automatic conversion to HTML, OpenOffice, etc.

2. The AMQ RFCs are catalogued in a Boom project definition using the boom class "gurudoc text".

3.5.4   Document Process

1. The AMQ RFC numbers will be assigned informally on a first-come, first-served basis.

2. The AMQ RFC archive is owned by a single person, who will be assigned by the project manager to ensure that AMQ RFC numbers are correctly assigned, that the AMQ RFC project file is correctly updated, and that documents conform to the specified standards.

3. The AMQ RFC archive will be regularly published to one or more web sites for read-only access by interested parties. This process will be implemented as needed over time.

4. All team members are encouraged to comment the documents. Comments are always placed at the end in the section marked "Comments". The authors of the document may at their discretion remove comments from the document, especially if the comments request corrections or changes that are then implemented.

5. Extended discussions should be conducted by email and the results of these discussions captured in the AMQ RFC.

6. Whenever a new AMQ RFC is created, the author(s) will copy it to the current email list used for project discussions. When an AMQ RFC is updated, the authors may simply announce the update, or may copy the entire document, depending on the amount of change.

7. The project definition (project.pdl) for the AMQ RFC project will define the current set of AMQ RFCs.

3.6   Alternatives

We do not propose any alternatives at this moment.

3.7   Security Considerations

This proposal does not have any specific security considerations.

4 Comments on this Document

4.1 Date, name

No comments at present.