Requirements Specification Tool Experienc

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1 Rmtoo

1.1 Steps Taken to Evaluate Software

1. Download and install rmtoo archive.
2. Read included Readme.txt and Install.txt.
3. Moved project folder to install directory.
4. Perused the example requirements document/source for rmtoo using rmtoo.
5. Copied the project skeleton/template to working directory, and added some requirement files. These are simply text files in a very simple format.
6. Added a dependent "topic" for which requirements can be added.
7. Compiled the project which created an html directory (with a fully navigating html site), a clean formatted pdf, and two graphs showing dependencies.

1.2 Initial Thoughts

Even after reading the included Readme and man files, I wasn't entirely sure how rmtoo worked. It was made very clear what rmtoo was capable of, but not necessarily how to go about it. Reading the example project and makefile solidified my understanding of the format, which is actually quite simple.

1.3 Document Generation Process

Requirements are contained in .req files, which are in a simple key/value form. Within this file, all the properties and dependencies of the requirement are listed, such as Name, Description, Priority, Effort, etc. Topics are specified in .tic files which simple describe the topic and give it a name to be referred by in the requirements.

Once requirements and topics have been created the provided Makefile is run, and bingo! All documents are created and ready to view.

1.4 Analysis

It is too early in the quarter to tell if this is the right fit for the job, but as far as simply creating, managing, and linking requirements, rmtoo does a fine job.

2 Axiom

2.1 Thoughts

Axiom appears to have some nice features, but I did not think they warranted a complicated client/server setup. In order to use Axiom, I would have had to download and install the server software to my personal server, download and install the client on a Windows machine somewhere, and finally start testing. A huge problem with this software is that it is Windows only, and I do all my work on *nix and OS X.

3 Dia

3.1 Steps Taken to Evaluate Software

1. Download and install the dia package.
2. Play around with charts

3.2 Analysis

There really isn't a lot of mystery to this application, it really just does do diagrams. It is not a "programming" diagram tool, which is okay as we are doing a specification, not an implementation. More than likely there are many hidden features, but on the surface Dia is very simple and easy to use.

4 Conclusions

1. RMtoo is my first choice for requirements management. It is simple, text-based, and does not try to do too much.

2. Dia is a good choice for diagram editing, maybe another student will find a more suitable, requirements-oriented application.

3. I highly discourage the use of Axiom as well as any other Windows-specific applications.