

meeting notes: kick-off for programmer



Published on *LTER Information Management* (<http://im.lternet.edu>)

Home > IM Working Groups > meeting notes: kick-off for programmer

meeting notes: kick-off for programmer

Tue, 11/06/2012 - 2:55pm — mgastilbuhl

Notes for Tuesday, 6 Nov 2012 VTC:

Web Services Working Group review of design for PersonnelDB

expected to attend:

James Brunt (LNO), Sven Bohm (KBS), *John Porter (VCR), Corinna Gries (NTL), Suzanne Remillard (AND), James Conners (CCE/PAL), Marshall White (LNO), Wade Sheldon (GCE), John Chamblee (CWT), *Jason Downing (BNZ), M. Gastil-Buhl (MCR), Mark Servilla (LNO)

and introducing Rick Clark (LNO)

Background stuff:

The final report from Mason:

<http://intranet2.lternet.edu/documents/web-services-working-group-report> [1]

The proposal for the next phase (never started)

<http://intranet2.ltnet.net.edu/content/ltnet-personnel-database-web-service...> [2]

development implementation on:

sunshine.ltnet.net.edu

The web interface:

<http://sunshine.ltnet.net.edu/personnelDB/?sp=a> [3]

web svn:

<https://svn.ltnet.net.edu/websvn/listing.php?repname=WSWG&path=%2Fpersonne...> [4]

Agenda: (from JamesB)

To try and make effective use of your time I propose something along the following for an agenda.

Introductions

Quick read-through review of ‘completed work’ and ‘outstanding work’.

Any major changes proposed to this work?

Questions from Rick.

Tiger-team volunteers.

Meeting schedule.

Notes:

JamesB

intro Rick Clark. sw developer specializing in php. Gastil will write Users Guide (and was at design WG). Corinna helped design, not code. James Connors worked with mason Kortz who did the php programming. Worked on design together. Wade Sheldon involved in design WG, esp database design. Handled xml specification, developed schema, sample code, xsl stylesheets. Since Mason left, Sven and Wade were co-leading the WSWG. Suzanne Remillard less involvement. In workgroup with Mason years ago and interested in the web services. Mark Servilla. John Chamblee lurking on behalf of IMExec. Helped write the buy-out proposal along with Wade and Sven for JamesC. Jason Downing interested in following, helped with use cases. Sven Bohm helped Mason with programming and initial design, use cases. Marshal White connection to the rest of the web (the ProfileDB).

Rick has had 8 hours to digest background materials, has questions.

JamesB

What was proposed already:

Completed work consists of database, id, roles, site; the xml schema for exchange of info; the php for read/write. UI for GET and request, search on name, site, role, active status. . .

xslt stylesheets to transform the xml schema into various human-readable formats.

A start on documentation and a Users Guide for GUI part.

Wade

Not clear how much Rick is familiar with bkgd and purpose. Idea is have had personnel db ported from Seattle old system years ago. Closed system. Combines profile info, id. From site IM standpoint, problematic. Can use web forms to manage info but some of us have sophisticated db at our site and want to synchronize more extensive info with db at LNO. Wanted way to do structured updates from site to network system. A lot of LTER sites want to programmatically retrieve personal info in xml or JSON so can display or use locally. Old db just outputs html. Getting structured output is one use case. Focused on data exchange schema. Use cases drove design of project. Recognise network-level roles versus site roles. Some people will be associated with more than one LTER site, a problem with current/old model. Want to separate core info from site roles. People move around. Wanted flexible schema, front loaded with exchange of info btwn systems. I/O is xml. Object-relational back end. Info in DB at LNO upon which can develop internal use apps in network.

Wade

Unresolved: how overlay on directions the authentication system in NIS? Questions. Desire for PersonnelDB to be central source of contact info to leverage accross various NIS components. Remove explicit contact info from ClimDB and other Silo-ed services. Those use cases would drive addl reqts. Were just talking about those as ideals. Not specific framework.

Rick

PersonnelDb wil have basic contact info. But most sites have own DB with more detailed contact info that does not nec go into main one?

wade

not detail, but ancillary finer grained role info. info about authorization to use site resources. which site wg or committees. demographic info that only traced at site. We all manage contact info plus other stuff. each site has diff related things. Marshal had ideas about moving profile info such as research interests out of the PersonnelDB and into a Drupal site ProfileDB. We have a substantial set of core contact info; just other stuff we want to keep separate.

JamesB

Contact info is 1:many?

Wade

Yes one stable identifier. And primary contact. But model allows other contact info that can be nested below that. Only the really key stuff: name, title, primary email are stable, for network identity. Contact info list provides as 1:n for institutions, date brackets. A flag whether a contact is primary or not. Sometimes manage summer or sabbatical address.

Corinna

People associated with multiple sites typically have an office at each site. Example a co-pi at NTL is also a co-pi at CWT.

JamesB

Primary site is no longer a sure thing.

Access model: per-site access control but did not work out a complete model. Currently there is authentication against the LDAP which gives local access.

Rick

Concerned about API side of things... no sort of API key or authentication to prevent anybody from deleting or adding users thru the API.

Wade

That may be right. The idea was that the API would sit behind a primary web-based authentication system. Auth thru the LDAP as a “front door”. The API was laid out naive about auth schemes. We all recognise we need to hook this system into whatever direction the network auth system becomes. That was not defined yet in Feb 2011. A gatekeeper or wall off the api. Need to look at this; need to appropriately secure.

Rick

I have been trying different ways to get this to work. Is there not a prototype already in place?

JamesB

Using the URLs ... have not been able to connect.

Rick

URL resource not found. Has someone seen it work thru the API side?

Wade

Did you look at the web app? Web app uses interface. Look at the syntax implemented in that web form's action.

Sven

We punted on the API security. Looked at approaches but nothing done on that.

JamesC

Looks like all the service calls are wrapped in the WSS? thingie. Echo something from there and get a ...

Wade

Site roles vs network. Wondered if .. now you have to be member of the IM group to go onto the LNO app to add or change your own site's people. Primary site is set when entry created. If from that site then can edit it. How to work around people at multiple sites. A use case was to have someone at LNO create the initial record upon request. A bit of critical contact info. Then sites would go in and add specific info for your own site. Anyone would be able to create an initial record. Then nobody else could delete that record but could add info for another site. Definitely a different concept how to manage a community resource.

JamesB

Self-describing system. Separate table for roles. Have to be added by privileged user.

Wade

Need gatekeeper for initial roles. Put in a ticket. From a governance standpoint.

JamesB

I can propose to meet in-house (at LNO) with Mark and a volunteer or two from among the site IMs to shake out the authentication part, within this next week, then put out for comments.

JamesB

the rest of the outstanding work includes:...

UI, was that intended to be the master user interface for here at LNO, a reference implementation? Then sites could use that as a template to make their own at their sites.

Wade

Not sure. That UI was clearly a prototype to demonstrate the core functionality. Will also be something more amenable to data entry at LNO, not sure.

JamesB

Will continue to keep up the reference implementation to test changes. Some (ie Mark) will want to use the API direction.

JohnChamblee

Whether the reference implementation will do what users want.

JamesB

from proposal: two demo projects: (1) xml send and retrieve and (2)? Is this something you want LNO to work with 2 sites to produce that?

Sven

We talked about setting up a javascript widget to receive and filter information.

Wade

I put that part in, a volunteer activity of WG. I had a start on that. If time, good to add that. A lightweight javascript routine to give to sites that want to display styled contact info and lists of personnel on their own websites. A relatively simple thing. That could stay in the domain of WG activities.

JamesB

Bottom of proposal: downloading formatted data, local updates into PersonnelDB, x to display results. With those in mind... Rick has enough to start. Could use prioritization what to do first. Adding new custom roles, was that included in the API just not in the UI?

Wade

right. it is in service layer but not interface.

JamesB

so finish interface to do everythingthe api can do.

Example impelmenations of uploading and downloading.

Wade

Might aid use of sys by sites: custom styling. If provision for essentially running the xsl transforms on LNO side, how to manage those. Cross-domain ajax is yucky. If could pass style id and have the transform done on LNO server side then get back output, that may make site apps easier to deploy.

JamesB

Want to co opt some site IMs to volunteer to work with Rick as a tiger team. Keep whole WSWG informed on monthly basis, weekly with small group.

Wade

Sven and I have been playing hot potato with the co-leadership of the WSWG. John Ch and I are occupied until end of Nov.

Sven

I can help out starting right away.

JamesC

I can help on a weekly basis an hour at lunch.

JamesB

Also some emails to trial ideas.

Corinna

I can be involved this month (November).

JamesB

To start now: Sven, JamesC, Corinna. Rick will spend more time looking at the PHP code to iron out the API, then wil work locally with MarkS and Marsh to draft authentication plan.

Wade

The xml is documented in the pdf. That has detailed explanations of each element, what we were thinking will go in each field. The DB has just the ERD-level documentation. Since those are parallel, the xml documentation might be useful to look at.

Rick

Sites have roles that only they would see in their own indiv drop-downs?

Wade

Correct. Not even meant to be visible at network level. For site-only use.

Rick

Have enough to get started.

JamesC

In the service directory there is ____ which should have all the patterns of the base URL. Everything that says registry handles. WS functions can wrap that.

Rick

The base url is defined in the db config file. I tried it and different permutations but it was not working. Will work with JamesC offline.

JamesB

Thank you for coming.

- Web Services [5]

- Copyright © 2012 Long Term Ecological Research Network, Albuquerque, NM - This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Cooperative Agreement #DEB-0236154. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in the material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

Please contact us with questions, comments, or for technical assistance regarding this web site.

Source URL: <http://im.ltnet.edu/node/1120>

Links:

[1] <http://intranet2.ltnet.edu/documents/web-services-working-group-report>

[2] <http://intranet2.ltnet.edu/content/lter-personnel-database-web-services-development>

[3] <http://sunshine.ltnet.edu/personnelDB/?sp=a>

[4] <https://svn.ltnet.edu/websvn/listing.php?repname=WSWG&path=%2FpersonnelDB%2Fclient%2F&a>

[5] <http://im.ltnet.edu/taxonomy/term/205>