

OpenACS and EuroTcl 2024

OpenACS Panel

Future Directions of OpenACS Development

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Collected wishes (1/3)

OpenACS Hardening Wish:

- security level installation modes: high , medium, community.
This setting will change the default values of many parameters to harden the instance.
- ACS Authentication - password requirements (complexity, aging, length, history)
- CSP handling and centralized reporting
- OACS Unit test-like security posture scan/package.
Check and report on such things as
 - /api-doc/, /shared/, xotcl/version-numbers, /request-monitor/, ... permission checks
 - /resource directory is missing header tags to prevent cross-site-scripting
 - Are extra headers defined?
 - Are 404 pages configured?
 - Is SecureSessionCookie set to 1?
 - Report any mounted instance of file-storage that is publicly accessible.
 - Report subsite param ShowMembersListTo setting
 - Report RegisterRestrictToSSLFilters, SecureSessionCookie, CSPEnabledP, etc... setting
 - Is /ds/ installed and enabled?
- **New core package request:** Finite State Machine as a core package (perhaps an XoTCL-based approach?)
- **New core package request:** WS REST package, version management, etc.
- DS add back the /ds/select page. Was this removed for some reason?
- Cleanup use of ns_log notice vs ns_log debug, etc.

Collected wishes (2/3)

- **Issues with Oracle Support in 5.10**
(prepare examples from OACS 5.10: for example, file storage & "...Score?")
- **APM:** selectable (prerelease) versions of a package from the repository to install
- **GUI**
 - bootstrap template is using only a few bootstrap classes
 - richer templating support that is bootstrap 5 compliant
 - requires updating the template file to use bootstrap classes.
 - dynamic templates calls relative to file path- get details from Josue Cardona
 - list template - integrated with data tables (code generation)
 - acs-mail-lite configuration, best practices, guidance regarding deliverability failures and retries, etc.
 - Insights regarding the OpenACS startup process- some applications take a longer time than others.
- **NaviServer**
 - memory usage over time: under what conditions will NS release memory? (recommended monitoring tool?)
 - Trace tools / logs. We have seen mysterious crashes recently with 4.99.30
 - NaviServer compile flag to obfuscate the http server name and version number on error page
(GN: parameter "noticedetail", see <https://naviserver.sourceforge.io/5.0/manual/files/admin-config.html>)

Collected wishes (3/3)

OpenACS theming

- allow theming to override just the adp template and not require also the .tcl file to be duplicated
- db to JSON or multirow to JSON -> should we provide support via the platform? (see also https://openacs.org/forums/message-view?message_id=5797488)

OpenACS in general

- What is our mission statement / high level goal (for the future)?
 - Is it still being a community toolkit?
 - Is it being *the* web toolkit for Tclers?
 - Or what should be the USP?
- How can a sustainable strategy for achieving these goals look like?
 - Is it all about never-ending backwards compatibility for existing large instances?
 - Or is it attracting new users instead?
 - IMHO, these are conflicting goals.
- Drop CVS once and for all, move to GitHub and use all collaboration features there (incl. bug tracker, merge requests,...)
- How can we cleanup code/website/documentation
 - Who can decide to delete an outdated wiki page/docu page/package/proc;
 - how can we detect/vote on candidates to be deleted/deprecated/removed from core)

What answers we have for the big trends?

Big IT-trends

- Mobile computing
- Cloud
- Microservices
- Trust, Risk, Security, Dependability
- Generative AI
- Others?

Realistically

- We can't shape the trends, but we can't ignore it either.
- One strength of OpenACS are well-functioning large-scale applications, which need a path for development.