## Behind the Scenes of Google Project Hosting

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### What is Google Project Hosting?

- It's a collaborative development environment for open source projects
- Features:
  - $\circ$  Easy project creation and administration
  - Version control with Subversion or Mercurial
  - $\circ$  Source code browsing and reviews
  - $\circ$  Issue tracker for defects, enhancements, other tasks
  - $\circ$  Wiki for project documentation
  - $\circ$  Downloads for project releases



#### What kind of projects do we host?

- The stats for our projects look similar to the OSS community as a whole, but skewed toward web tech
- We also host focused communities for eclipselabs.org and apache-extra.org





#### **Project Topics**

Academic Simulator Game Web Security Mobile Database CMS **Robotics** 3D

Graphics OperatingSystem Accessibility **Emulator Music** Video Networking 25.1% Embedded Editor ... 10.3% 7.8%

> ..3% 4.4% 4.5% <sup>4.7%</sup>



### Why does Google offer this product?

• When we launched in 2006:

- Promote long-term health of OSS community
- $\circ$  Help make OSS developers productive
- Reinvigorate the CDE category
- Today in 2011:
  - $\circ$  Even more focused on developer productivity
  - Support strategic OSS Google-sponsored projects
    - GWT, Chrome, Android, and ~1000 smaller ones

 $\circ$  Help bring more development into the cloud

### **Key Features**

When we designed GPH, we took some risks and did some things a little differently than they had been done before.

- Easy project creation with no moderation
- Simple project home pages
- Subversion and Mercurial on Bigtable
- Googley artifact search and key-value labels
- Wiki centered on the page list
- Integrated source code browsing and code review

## Easy project creation with no moderation

• Problem:

 $\circ$  It's tedious to host software engineering tools yourself

• Status Quo:

 $\circ$  Project creation wizard, then wait for moderation

#### • Our solution:

- $\circ$  Simple one-page form to create a project
- $\circ$  No moderation or review at creation time
- Allow empty projects to proliferate, but rank them low in search results
- Open the door to spam projects, but detect and demotivate abuse

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## Easy project creation with no moderation

- How has it worked out?
  - $\circ$  Many thousands of projects have been created
  - People used to complain about empty projects, but now we have so many good projects that bad ones are easily out-ranked
  - $\circ$  We still fight spam, but it has decreased



### Simple project home pages

#### • Problem:

 If users visit ten different OSS projects, they need to learn ten different website navigation schemes.

#### Status Quo:

 Limit project owners to plain text descriptions, but then they put the real info in custom websites instead.

#### • Our solution:

- $\circ$  Use a standard project nav for accessing tools, but give some flexibility to replace tabs with wiki pages
- Project logos
- $\circ$  Use wiki markup for project descriptions



#### Simple project home pages

- How has it worked out?
  - People have built a lot of great project home pages
  - $\circ$  Feels like a community site, not like a card catalog
  - $\circ$  It breaks down where project owners don't bother to provide any details



# Subversion and Mercurial on Bigtable

• Problem:

 $\circ$  Host a million OSS source code repositories reliably

Status Quo:

 Run stock subversion servers sharded across a fixed number of machines

#### • Our solution:

- $\circ$  Dynamic load balancing across any number of servers
- $\circ$  Fits into Google infrastructure
- Bigtable is a NoSQL database that is inherently scaleable and reliable within one datacenter
- $\circ$  We added distribution across datacenters

# Subversion and Mercurial on Bigtable

- How has it worked out?
  - We host many, many thousands of projects
  - $\circ$  We handle a huge number of concurrent users
  - $\circ$  Speed is a problem, because of SVN's protocol
  - $\circ$  We still have occasional read-only periods



## Googley artifact search and key-value labels

- Problem:
  - Let users search complex artifacts easily
     Let project owners customize the tools
- Status Quo:
  - $\circ$  Tons of built-in fields and widgets
- Our solution:
  - Single search text box with search operators
  - Auto-completion of search operator terms
  - $\circ$  Use key-value labels instead of enumerated fields
  - $\circ$  UI makes key-value labels feel like real custom fields

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## Googley artifact search and key-value labels

- How has it worked out?
  - $\circ$  Certainly exceeded expectations
  - People seem to understand it and have used it extensively
  - $\odot$  About 1/3 of active projects use the issue tracker
  - $\odot$  Over 1000 active projects have 100-1000 issues
  - $\odot$  Largest project has 73,000 issues and growing

### Wiki centered on page list

#### • Problem:

- $\circ$  Wiki's are messy and disorganized
- Establishing navigation takes time and distracts
- $\circ$  When hunting around, you don't know when to stop

#### • Status Quo:

 $\circ$  Start at some initial page. Use macros for page lists.

#### • Our Solution:

- By default, take visitors to a complete list of pages first
- $\circ$  Each page has both a WikiWord and one-line summary
- Wiki pages can have Key-Value labels that show in the list view, just like issues
- Optional wiki sidebar for custom navigation

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#### Wiki centered on page list

- How has it worked out?
  - Page list landing page works really well: reduces workload on authors, always up-to-date
  - $\odot$  About 1/3 of all our projects use the wiki
  - $\odot$  79 active projects have 100-1000 wiki pages
  - $\circ$  Of the top 20 projects with the most wiki pages:
    - 4 replaced the list with a custom page, 16 kept list
    - 3 made a wiki sidebar, 17 rely on list view

## Integrated source code browsing and code review

- Problem:
  - Existing source browsing tools required too many clicks, made it hard to navigate deep trees
  - Certain OSS teams were great at using email for code reviews, others didn't try
- Our solution:
  - $\circ$  AJAXy directory tree browser
  - $\circ$  Go directly to source file content, metadata is on the side
  - Client-side syntax highlighting for speed
  - Double-click adds post-commit review comment
  - Show +1/-1 scores on the revision list page, comments on revision detail page.

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	🖒 <u>r9469</u>	Yet one CSS fix for Firebug start button (Mac OS X). Related to issue 4093	Feb 23 (2 days ago)	odvarko
	☆ <u>r9468</u>	[swarm] testing boots to installAll, user boots to ready	Feb 23 (2 days ago)	johnjbar@johnjbarto
	5.7 r9467	Idvnel first attempt at error recoverv	Feb 23 (2 davs ago)	iohnibar@iohnibarto

## Integrated source code browsing and code review

- How has it worked out?
  - $\circ$  Some scalability limits on huge directories and revisions
  - Teams that really like reviews want pre-commit reviews
  - We deferred to stand-alone tools for pre-commit reviews
  - $\circ$  About 10% of projects have done code reviews
  - Heaviest using project has over 4000 review comments
  - Most common usage is to say "Thank you"

#### **Pro Tips and Power-User Features**

- Keystrokes
- Issue Grid
- Issue templates and filter rules
- Project people pages and custom permissions
- User groups



### Pro Tip: Keystrokes

Issue tracker has keystroke accelerators

 Navigate: next, previous, up to list
 Jump to search field
 Add a comment (reply)
 Enter issue (compose)
 Press "?" for full list



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#### Issue Grid

- Issue grid view shows a 2D scatter graph
  - $\circ$  Triage: star count vs. type
  - Release planning: milestone vs. priority
  - $\circ$  Workload balancing: milestone vs. owner



#### Issue templates and filter rules

- Project owners can define templates for new issues

   Makes it easier to enter new issues of common types
   Channels the efforts of non-members toward good issue reports
- Project owners can define if-then rules that automatically add labels and CC users
  - E.g., if it is labeled Security, automatically restrict access
  - E.g., if it is labeled Component-Printing, automatically CC the person in charge of printing



🍘 chromium – Project Hosting 🙁 \pm

← → C (S) code.google.com/p/chromium/adminIssues

New issue templates						
Choose Template: Defect report from user Defect report from developer Security Bug Translation Issue Regression Defect on Linux Defect on Mac OS ChromeFrame Issue Broken Webpage Layout Test Failure New Feature NaCI Issue Flash issue (private) Flash Security issue (private Privacy issue Enterprise Issue	1 1 1	<ul> <li>Only offer this temp</li> <li>Summary:</li> <li>Enter one-line summary</li> <li>Users must edit issu</li> <li>Description:         <ol> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol> </li> <li>What is the expected r</li> <li>What happens instead:</li> <li>Please provide any add possible.</li> <li>Status:</li> <li>Unconfirmed</li> <li>Owner:</li> <li>Labels:</li> </ul>	Iate to project member ue summary before su result? ? ditional information b	elow. Attach a screenshot if	he issue	
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List and grid preferences						

Default columns shown in list view: Learn more

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← → C (S) code.google.com/p/chromium/adminIssues

#### Filter rules

Filter rules can help you fill in defaults and stay organized. Learn more

	If the item has all these labels:	Then, do the following:	
1.	regression, channel-stable	Add Cc:	aloge@chroniun.org, aranha@chroniun.org
2.	regression, channel-stable	Also notify email: 🛟	aloga@chronium.org, arantha@chronium.org
3.	area-Webkit	Add Cc:	karan@chronium.arg
4.	javascript	Also notify email: 🛟	dglaskov-buga@chronium.org
5.	ReleaseBlock-	Also notify email: 🛟	allage=b@chronium.arg, aric biblio@gnail.com, ariting
6.	video	Add Cc:	scherkus@chronium.org, kylep@chronium.org, hcien¢
7.	FlakyTest	Add Cc:	phojden jr@chronium.org, mel@googie.com
8.	Feature-Sync	Add Cc:	Im@chronium.org, rick@chronium.org, zaa@chroniun
9.	NewFTP	Add Cc:	phajdan jr@phronium.org
10.	os-mac	Also notify email: 🛟	as mac issues@chronium.org
11.	Security	Add Cc:	excutig@dranium.arg
12.	os-chrome	Add Cc:	sity@chronium.org, askidag@chronium.org
13.	Feature-Bookmarks	Add Cc:	siy@chranium.org.jrg@chranium.org.mrossatli@chrc
14.	Feature-Sessions	Add Cc:	ais/@dranium.arg
15.	Area-Compat	Add Cc:	karan@chronium.arg
16.	i18n	Add Cc:	winenfo@xio pe.minenfo@ik ge.minenfo@kfik
17.	3D-	Also notify email: 🔹	arlin@ahranium.arg
18.	Area-Compat-Web	Add Cc:	tarar@chranium.org

×

☆

## Project people pages and custom permissions

- The "People" pages show what each project member is responsible for doing
  - $\circ$  An easy way to give credit to people for their work
  - Declaring who's in charge of X can motivate them
  - The auto-complete list of common "duties" helps project owners notice roles they might need to fill
- On the people detail pages you can grant fine-grained permissions
  - $\circ$  E.g., allow a contributor to make certain kinds of edits
  - E.g., allow certain project members to access restricted artifacts





### User groups

- Project owners can create user groups and make them project members
  - Create user groups on groups.google.com, or in your FYD control panel
  - Add the email address of the group to the project
  - Group members get to see other group members in auto-complete menus



### How it all works

- Architecture
- Implementation
- Operational experience



### **Google Project Hosting Architecture**







### **Google Project Hosting Replication**



- Multiple datacenters, but only one is live at any give time
- Asynchronous replication of Bigtable data
- When failing over from one datacenter to another, the site must be in a read-only mode until replication catches up

#### **New GPH Architecture**







### **New GPH Replication**



- Multiple datacenters, all live all the time
- Megastore writes synchronously to multiple Bigtable cells
- Custom replication for version control (also Paxos)



#### Implementation

- About 200 KLOC of Python, 80 KLOC of C, Some Java
- Custom Python web app framework
- Parallel threads to make each request faster
- Follow-up work done in a batch processing system
- Not internationalized, but we handle unicode
- Unit tests and selenium tests

#### **Operational experience**

- Frequent server-side updates, not user-visible
   Schema changes must be backwards compatible
   Flags to control new feature launches
- Biggest operational challenges:
   latency spikes and fail-overs
- Technical support and community management:

   We use our own issue tracker for tech support
   Google Group for tech support
   Automated analysis for spam and malware
   Usage reports highlight unusual projects
   We ban spammers and abusive users from the site



#### The Team

Ali Pasha Ben Collins-Sussman Nathan Ingersoll Jason Robbins Logan Hanks Robert Spier Lucas Bergman Jon Trowbridge Tony Zale Nathaniel Manista Nate Kopchick Vijay Menon Augie Fackler Jeremy Wall Jacob Lee David Borowitz