WHAT DOES JBOSS EPP 5 MEAN TO ME?

Red Hat recently announced a partnership with eXo Platform on a mutual project named GateIn. GateIn is a next-generation portal that brings together two very complementary open source projects into a new, unified project, leading to the creation of many new products and offerings from both Red Hat and eXo. GateIn will help the JBoss community continue its efforts to deliver a middleware-focused, enterprise-class portal while also adding innovative user and administration features from eXo.

We've spoken to a number of our subscribers about this effort. The feedback has been positive, yet each discussion raised a number of similar questions. We'd like to share those questions and our answers with you and all of our subscribers. If you have further questions, please contact Red Hat via your support or sales contacts.

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JBOSS AND EXO PLATFORM?

In June 2009 Red Hat and eXo Platform began to work together on a new open source community project called GateIn. This is a technical relationship where we are co-developing functionality that will form the basis of future enterprise-supported products and offerings from both companies. The GateIn project represents a merger of two pre-existing projects: JBoss Portal and eXo Portal. Both JBoss and eXo will continue to develop their own partnerships and go-to-market plans independently to best serve the needs of their customers.

WHY DID JBOSS AND EXO MERGE TECHNOLOGIES?

Red Hat and eXo were brought together by the mutual goal of improving their individual portal technologies. As each of us surveyed our strengths and weaknesses and began to talk about our future visions, the synergy was clear. We also began to recognize the great speed with which we could begin to deliver new features by working together in a community project. The community project gives each company the freedom to reuse the co-developed technologies and deliver them to customers in their own way. JBoss is focused on the core middleware infrastructure. GateIn

enables us to create the next-generation Enterprise Portal Platform that addresses our customers' requirements for better portal page creator and administrator control. eXo, which has a portfolio of content, collaboration, and social products, can take advantage of the GateIn infrastructure as a foundation for these user-centric products.

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE JBOSS PORTAL PROJECT AND GATEIN?

The JBoss Portal Project is the precursor to the GateIn project, and the two have several components in common. The JBoss engineering team will continue to move forward and evolve GateIn, and our community contributors have been encouraged to do the same. That said, we do not have immediate plans to stop hosting JBoss Portal Project on JBoss.org, and community users can still download and use the forums for the project as they always have.

WHAT MAKES THIS PARTNERSHIP UNIQUE?

This relationship truly demonstrates the advantages of the community development process. Each company recognized that there were benefits to cooperation and wanted to operate as peers. This is in contrast to the OEM-style relationship that is common in the software industry. Additionally, both Red Hat and eXo saw an opportunity for each company to focus and continue to evolve our work together. This is also unlike other technical partnerships where one vendor is opting out of a market space and uses a partnership to de-invest or reduce their costs. In fact, it is quite the opposite. The response from this new strategy has fueled continued increases in investment from both companies.

WHEN WILL GATEIN TECHNOLOGY APPEAR IN THE JBOSS ENTERPRISE PORTAL PLATFORM?

GateIn will be available in EPP 5, which we intend to bring to market in the first quarter of 2010.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS THAT EPP 5 WILL PROVIDE OVER EPP 4.3?

When planning began for EPP 5, the focus quickly centered on two key benefits that we could provide. First we decided to provide the ability to broaden the scope of what someone could build with a portal. Or to put it more simply, remove the focus of a portal server from meaning a portlet server. To do that, we took the following steps.

- Work collaboratively with partners and other ISVs to foster new solutions inside and outside of the Portal Platform.

- Provide a snappable architecture to support a wide range of extensions (WCM, collaboration, social networking).

- Make it easier to deliver a wider range of web assets (rich apps, gadgets, pages, content).

We also recognized that broader capability means little if it isn't easily put to work. That led us to the GateIn user interface and administration tools. Some of the features that make it easier than ever to build and manage sites include:

- Provide in-page management and customization to enable non-developers to assemble and manage their own sites.

- Provide an easy-to-use Personal and Group site concept.

- Significantly improve the administration experience.

- Revamp the way Portal applications are managed and organized.

WHAT IS THE MIGRATION PATH FOR JBOSS EPP 4.3 CUSTOMERS?

GateIn is a new code base, which means that moving to EPP 5 from previous versions will be a migration effort. As with most portal migrations, several steps will be required, but some may be automated. JBoss is developing documentation and, as appropriate, migration scripts to help customers. We will also be working with our internal services teams and partners to further develop migration expertise and offerings. For existing customers deployed on versions prior to EPP 4.3, version 4.3 will be fully supported until 2013.

BESIDES GATEIN, WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM EPP 5?

In addition to GateIn, we will be including Portlet Bridge version 2.0. Portlet Bridge 2.0 provides full support for JSF, Seam, and RichFaces applications to run inside the portal framework. However, the new version also supports JSR-286 based portlets and eventing. As a result, customers can now pass data between portlets and rich applications seamlessly and securely.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

For more information on GateIn, stay tuned to the GateIn.org page. We'll also be delivering news related to GateIn at blog.gatein.org.

As the EPP launch draws closer, we'll begin to provide previews, demos, and up-to-the-minute information on our product pages at JBoss.com (jboss.com/products/platforms/portals).

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