Linux Tools 0.2 Release Review

Planned Review Date: 2009-05-06

Communication Channel:

news://eclipse.technology.linuxtools

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Introduction

- The Linux Tools project is a two-faceted project

  - Firstly, it provides tools and frameworks for writing tools relevant to Linux developers.

  - Secondly, it provides a place for Linux distributions to **collaboratively** overcome issues surrounding distribution packaging of Eclipse technology. The project produces both **best practices** and tools related to packaging.

- Project plan:

  - http://www.eclipse.org/projects/project-plan.php?projectid=t

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Features

- an RPM .spec editor with rpmlint integration

- plugins integrating the OProfile profiler with the CDT

- GNU Autotools CDT additions

- plugins bridging the CDT's hover help functionality with the various open source API documentation formats; called libhover

- Valgrind integration for memcheck, massif, and new in 0.2: cachegrind

- a plugin building and packaging tool named RPM Stubby

- ChangeLog management tools

- an editor for Systemtap scripts

Features continued

- 0.2 New and Noteworthy:

    - http://www.eclipse.org/linuxtools/new-0.2/

    - (will be moved to http://www.eclipse.org/linuxtools/new after 0.2 is released)

Non-Code Aspects

- We have not improved our user document much since our 0.1 release but as part of 0.3 have begun to use Mylyn's WikiText to generate our documentation from wiki.eclipse.org. Look for much improvement in 0.3.

- Post-0.1 we did a series of screencasts with audio. They are all available via our downloads page:

  http://www.eclipse.org/linuxtools/downloads.php

- One of our pre-1.0 goals is to interface with the Babel project to get our strings localized. We are constantly striving to have all of our strings externalized to facilitate translation.

APIs

- Being an 0.2 release, our APIs are subject to change.

- We have begun to internalize unnecessarily public APIs.

- We will converge on stability – and document such stability – in our APIs well before our 1.0 release.

Architectural Issues

- As our focus has been to bring Eclipse technology to Linux users who would otherwise be unaware of its power, we have continued to spend less time on extensibility than on user-visible features in our 0.2 release.

- As we work towards our 1.0 release, we will continue to better define our APIs while stabilizing them and documenting them.

- Future work on integration with tracing toolkits will enable us to have more extensible frameworks with exemplary implementations.

Architectural Issues continued

- Despite being user-focused, we have a few components which provide extension points:

    - our profiling tool framework whose use is demonstrated by our OProfile and Valgrind integration plugins

    - our ChangeLog plugin which allows for extensible parsers, formatters, and editors. The extensibility of formatters is demonstrated by our RPM .spec editor.

    - our libhover component. This plugin provides an extension point that defines a common documentation format for C library hover help.

Tool Usability

- Our 0.1 release has been well-received and at present has satisfied users. This 0.2 release will hopefully grow this base of satisfied users.

- Due to the large number of people packaging software for RPM-based distributions, our .spec editor has become one of our more popular features. The in-line warnings and error checking as well as templates and completion are incredibly useful features.

Tool Usability continued

- Our work integrating native profiling tools like OProfile and Valgrind has been introduced to excited audiences. We aim to bring the power of these tools into the IDE while making them trivial to use. Developers making use of our tools will be able to focus on their own projects and not on setting up the underlying tools.

End-of-Life

- We have no end-of-life issues to discuss at this time.

Bugzilla

- For our 0.2 release we have 0 outstanding release-blocker bugs.

- We have postponed a few enhancement requests until our 0.3 release.

- We closed 62 bugs during our 0.2 release cycle:

  https://bugs.eclipse.org/bugs/buglist.cgi?query_format

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Standards

- Our project conforms to the following ad-hoc standards:

  - Fedora RPM packaging guidelines

    - http://fedoraproject.org/wiki/Packaging/Guidelines

  - Informal conventions around use of the GNU Autotools

  - GNU ChangeLog formatting

    - http://www.gnu.org/prep/standards/html_node/Style-of-Change-Log

UI Usability

- Our project aims to conform to the Eclipse user interface guidelines

- All of our user interface components support keyboard navigation

- We now support interactivity of our Valgrind BIRT-generated charts and intend on further increasing our accessibility

- All of our strings are externalized but we currently have no language packs

Schedule

- We plan on having our 0.3 release in June 2009

- Our project aims to release minor releases (0.2, 0.3, etc.) every two months

- We are still playing it by ear to decide when our 1.0 release will be but are planning on Q2 2010

Communities

- Our project has a strong relationship with the various Linux distributions (Fedora, Mandriva, Debian, Ubuntu, etc.)

- The majority of our project's interactions occur on IRC (#eclipse-linux) and our mailing list (linuxtools-dev@eclipse.org (we are transitioning from linux-distros-dev@eclipse.org)

- We now have a centralized update site and use eclipse.org bugzilla for all of our planning and bug tracking

- We make use of our newsgroup for user feedback

Communities continued

- Our project members often speak at conferences including EclipseCon, LinuxWorld, FUDCon, and the Red Hat Summit

- Our team members maintain the following blogs:

    - http://overholt.ca/wp/ (part of Planet Eclipse)

    - http://akurtakov.blogspot.com/ (part of Planet Fedora)

    - http://picobot.org/wordpress (part of Planet Fedora)

- We interact often with the CDT project and make use of the BIRT and CDT projects

- We are growing our community of adopters

Communities continued

- An update on our project's progress was given at EclipseCon 2009:

  http://www.eclipsecon.org/2009/sessions?id=466

- Now that we have a standardized release process and plan, we are working to ensure that our three communities are properly nurtured at all times.

- Following our 0.1 release we have had a number of parties come forward to express interest in using, distributing, helping, and contributing.

IP Log

- Our IP log including information about all CQs, external contributions, and committers can be found here:

  - http://www.eclipse.org/projects/ip_log.php?projectid=techno

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IP Issues

- The EMO explicitly asks during the Release Review if any Member would like to assert that this release infringes their IP rights.

- If so, the EMO and the project will follow the Eclipse IP Policy in discussions with that Member.