

Theme: Shanghai library FOLIO project

Time: November 9, 2021 07:00pm (EST) / November 10, 2021 08:00am (GMT+8)

Attendees:

Vincent Bateau (Enterprise Architect, EBSCO)

Gang Zhou (Project manager, Shanghai library)

Sha Jiang (Technical Director, Jiata)

Lucy Liu (Product Owner, Folio China)

Notes:

1. What are the technical plans for the app store? (Gang Zhou)

Vince:

- The app store is becoming an important topic because with each release we are adding more modules; and some modules are not needed by everyone. So it's better that we don't provide these modules to every institution, but establish the app store mechanism that allows adding modules later.
- Conceptually no one is developing anything yet. There are certain things that we have to resolve before we can do this. We have to improve the build and release process; improve the mechanisms for removing dependencies between the apps so that the apps can be independently deployed. We also probably need to break up the larger apps into smaller ones.
- The app store itself has two parts: one part is to have the ability to install apps separately; the other part is an actual app store, a mechanism for distribution of the apps that can be easily incorporated into the system.
- The apps of the store are to be provided by providers. Unlike the iPhone apps, the folio apps won't be installed by the users, instead, they have to be done by the provider.
- There is nothing in progress that is doing this. But some preliminary and investigating work has been done to understand how to remove dependencies, how to packaging components, etc.

Gang Zhou: Any plans or milestones for this project in 2022?

Vince: No particular milestones or timelines for doing this. It's not prioritized. The reason is that all the institutions that will go live by next summer have already had the things they need. Things that will come up in the app store are not important to them. Nothing critical. What do you see the app store will be doing?

Gang Zhou: It will be easier for small libraries to install folio if there is an app store. It can also extend the folio platform in the future.

Vince: It makes sense. It's the same motivation that I have and the other providers have as well.

Gang Zhou: Any plans from TC?

Vince:

- No plans on this topic specifically. But there are plans on other topics that can enable the app store, such as plans to discuss the distribution mechanism, the builds, packaging, etc.
- TC is struggling with adjusting to the new governance model and how they need to operate in the system. They have been discussing policies around acceptance of new modules and new projects into the folio platform. This is also one of the missing pieces needed before we establish rules for the app store.

Lucy: This topic was mentioned in CC or PC meetings. It seems that not all libraries actively support the idea of establishing an app store. Is this something that will happen for sure or sth still questionable?

Vince:

- I think it will happen. Libraries would at most don't care about the app store if they don't need it. But no reason to be against it. Providers will definitely support this.
- People who don't support it maybe didn't fully understand the consequences of the current system and what this would allow us to solve. The fact that we are getting more and more difficult to get the testing passed with every release and more and more hotfixes is connected to the fact that everything is getting bigger in folio. The side benefit is getting folio smaller and lean so that we can add things after it is distributed.

Lucy: What procedure do we need to follow in order to make the app store happen? Will CC or PC approve the idea or decide to start the project, then TC will work on the technical arrangement?

Vince:

- PC mostly concerns functionality and specific functions that libraries need or what domain experts want. This specific question of the app store is more of TC's domain.
- The way it works is that somebody comes up with a plan or a working prototype, and asks TC if it can be included in folio. It's not a permission, but an acceptance. Anyone can propose it. Some guidance is needed in order to do that. The design would help identify what is needed by the folio platform, i.e., what is the distribution mechanism? It needs to easily deploy an app in folio. These requirements will help justify and accelerate any efforts working toward the direction of creating packages and removing dependencies among apps.
- If you want to specify something or come up with a design/plan, we can discuss with the Tech leads how to make the design better.
- TC is not going to drive anything in this regard in the near future. Anyone can come up with a proposal/design and start the conversation.

Lucy: Is the work of defining the minimum platform a prerequisite for the app store or a totally separate question?

Vince: It's related because the key point here is to separate the platform from the apps and to be able to easily add apps to the platform. I don't think the discussion matters very much. The platform is what it is right now.

2. What achievements can we expect from TC by the end of the year? (Lucy)

Vince: Nothing big planned.

- The least achievement in terms of features is the release plan for Kiwi and Lotus.
- There will be minor changes around authentication and token. Expiration code will be partially implemented.
- There are efforts to reduce defects, to increase testing and to improve the upgrade scripts.

3. What are the plans for supporting non-Marc data, for example, BIBFRAME and other data formats? (Sha Jiang)

Vince:

- The community has the desire to support other data formats. There have been conversations about expanding support for a different form of MARC, BIBFRAME. But no plan so far.
- What data format are you looking at?

Sha Jiang: Nothing specific. But some libraries might have the need in the future.

Vince: If any specific format other than MARC needs to be supported, the request should be submitted to the community. That will drive the development in that area. It's driven by demand.

4. Are you getting close to the grand opening of Shanghai Library East? (Vince)

Gang Zhou: Testing is scheduled Dec 2, 2021 .

Vince: Great. Looking forward to seeing new videos.