How to make FOSS work in and for the public sector.

Patrick Sinz
AFUL

FOSSOman www.fossc.org

CC BY SA

AFUL LIBERTÉ - PÉRENNITÉ INTEROPÉRABILITÉ

Internal Issues in Promoting FOSS in the public sector.

- “Arguments”
  - Why should “I” care ...
  - I'm not used to …
  - We do not have the skills
  - I do not want to put our existing relationship at risk with “unproven solutions”

Wrong target

How to handle internal issues

- You need to find the stakeholders drivers, and select doable projects.
- Demonstrating to someone that they are all wrong is rarely “helpful”.
- But Success breeds success.

- Yes sovereignty is important.
- If you are scared of your “partners” you are in vendor lock in and should flee out of it at all cost.
- If your team does not have the right skill sets, training them is a way to make them grow and stronger in the long term
- ...

All true but do not solve short term issues.

External Issues

- Old Partners are not prepared
  - FOSS ??
  - What should they be doing in five years ?

- New partners are not setup to work with you.
  - Certification ?
  - Government specific process knowledge ?

- In most case changing legacy means double billing...
- And a new solution has to learn old tricks (compatibility issues)
  - Take a small steps approach first, and look for small but demonstrable benefits that demonstrate your capacity to deliver)

We only lost 470 M€ …
(and didn't use FOSS)

Basic strategy

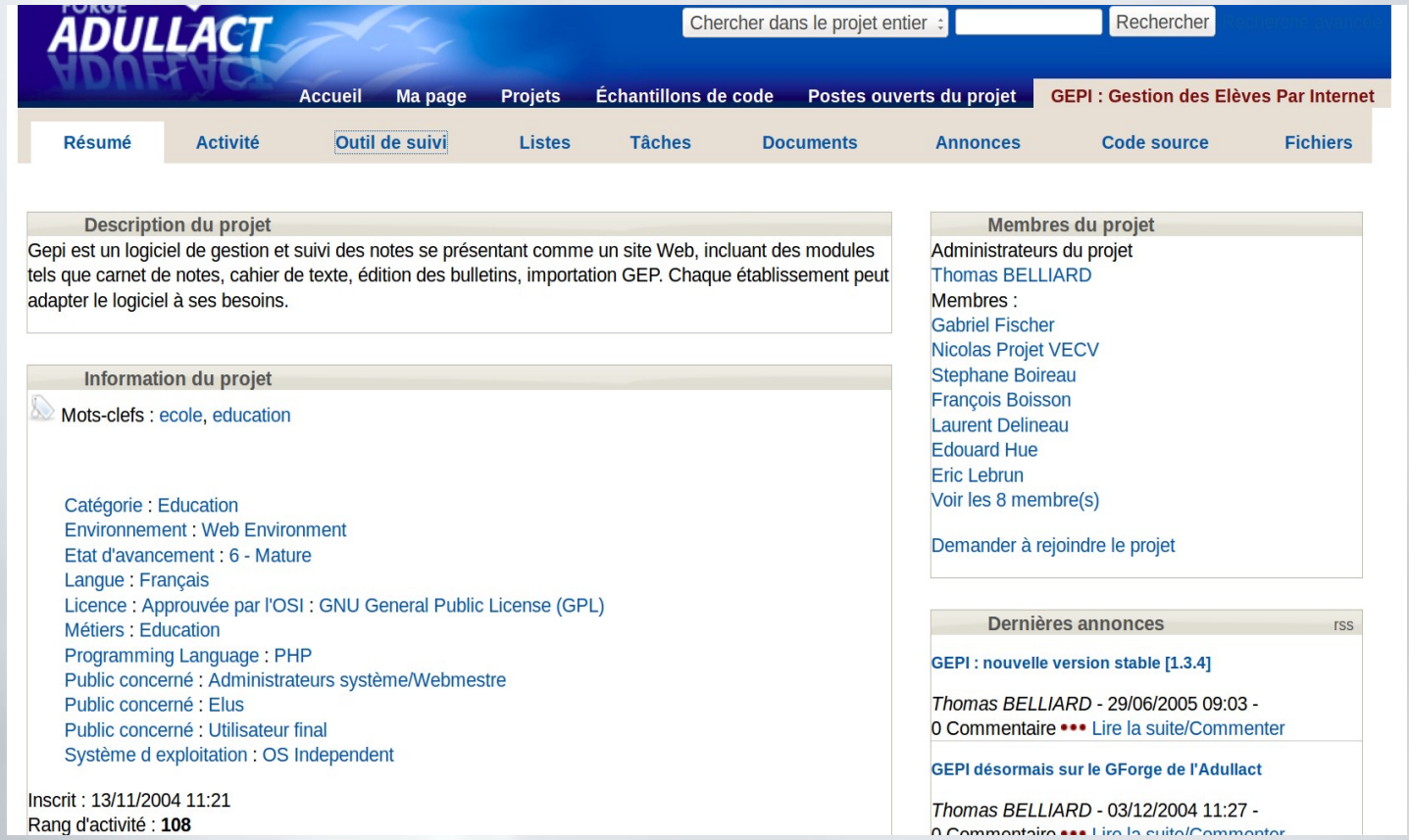
- Identify and remove tendering issues.
- Organize collaboration
- Find Champions
  - It's better to work well on a small project with somebody who is committed to your common success,than to try to survive a large project with people who would prefer you to fail.
- Move from a “large project” model to a continuous improvement project.
  - UK Health Care, French new fancy Payroll system, … what huge projects do best is to fail hugely.

Organize Collaboration

- The adullact / Osor model
  - Create a repository of Public Sector Solutions that you can share between Agencies
  - Promote content, software and policies, best practice.

- Create subject matters working groups/consortium.
- Enable agencies to “softly” align their needs and timing.

Share a Forge



Share Code
Manage versions
Share Documentation
Enable feature requests
Enable bug tracking

Promote activities

National level example: http://www.adullact.{org,net}

Integrate internationally

EU Level Joinup Platform : https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/

Move from large project to continuous improvement

- Focus on open formats
- Focus on interoperability
  - Once you have enough content in Open Format you can progressively add small external components, instead of one large mamouth “does it all solutions”
    - (remember, mamouth went exctinct)
- Use Open Data to promote ethical Public Private Partnerships.

Adaptation and collaboration

- When moving to a FOSS solutions remember it's a journey.

Questions ?

Patrick@Sinz.fr
Patrick@Aful.org