X3Profiler is:

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Advertising Plan

Our Web Page

What is going to make your product look so incredibly awesome that people will be compelled to download and play with it?

The idea of profiling a program has been around for quite a while, but there are no available tools for organizing and viewing data graphically. Our project fills this void, becoming the first open source graphical interface to a profiler. In addition, X3Profiler allows the user to hold on to data from gprof output and its resultant graphs in customizable collections. X3Profiler also employs a very intuitive and flexible user interface and innovative design.

What other exciting features is your website going to have?

In addition to many of the standard features one might expect, our website will also contain a comic strip section. It will feature stories about our team members and various quirky events along the development process.

What other websites are you going to get to link to you?

As X3P is a tool for programmers, we will place links in several well-known (within the community) programming and project sites. We will list our project in Sourceforge.net, Freshmeat.net, and Vaults of Parnassus: Python Resources (http://www.vex.net/parnassus/). We will also submit to DMOZ for general search engine placement.

How are people who use your software going to be able to ask questions about it?

Most of the time, if one user has a question, multiple users will be interested in the answer. To tackle the most common questions, we'll have a FAQ just like most product websites do. Sourceforge also supplies forums where users and developers can ask and answer questions (as well as submitting and responding to bug reports). We'll be taking advantage of those. In addition, we'll have the e-mails of the group members listed, so anyone will be able to communicate directly with the team.

Where are you going to put your web page, so that it doesn't disappear once the semester is over?

Our project is already officially hosted on sourceforge.net, so there is no worry of losing the web space any time soon.

Our User Community

Our project is not intended for use by just anyone. X3Profiling will only be used by programmers working on large projects that require profiling. This means, in general, we should tailor our advertising and community to those users (and developers).

What online forums/community sites can you post ads about your exciting new software?

One general way is to use our group page on thefacebook.com as a conduit to our Sourceforge page. On our group page, we have basic information about our project, such as the roles of individual members, and project member contacts, and a main web page link, which in this case will be our Sourceforge page. To get our name out, we will first make message board posting in all other facebook groups relevant to CS, software, or information technology. Those interested will be directed to our group page and eventually to Sourceforge.

Our Sourceforge site will be the main outlet for showcasing our software. There are, as of right now, 16 active projects related to profiling on Sourceforge and none perform the functions of X3Profiler. Everything about project from downloads of the software, CVS, to tests, to bug reports will be on there. Having our main site on Sourceforge will be a way of showing legitimacy for those in the community that are not sure of the utility and credibility.

The cs.general newsgroups could also be a good forum for advertising our project. This will reach a wide audience not only in the CS department faculty and students but also anyone expressing interest

in anything CS related.

Is there anyplace you should put up fliers, or more traditional advertising?

We can put up fliers in DCL/Siebel, to best reach our target users (as well as possible developers). One obstacle to overcome is the fact that most areas require us to be a registered organization.

How will your users be informed of new updates of your software?

Again, we will use Sourceforge to help here. News about new releases will be posted on our website, as well as to the project page, where users can get RSS feeds pertaining to news.

Our Developer Community

What sorts of online forums/community sites can you post adds to convince people to improve your exciting new codebase?

Since our user community consists of developers, our methods for finding users will be the same as finding developers. We can simply kill two birds with one stone: asking for people to both use and develop our application with the same announcement(s).

How will you make it super-easy for these new fledgling developers to get your product compiling so they can change it?

There is no compiling. The installation instruction are quite simple, and Python resources are available all over the web to learn about using it. We'll provide links to some of the better sites for Python. Since Python is interpreted, the changes are near-immediate, so development is "super-easy."

How will these new developers know what features still need to be added/improved?

Our Sourceforge site will allow discussion among people who have downloaded and tried out our software in the feature requests. New developers will see suggestions from other users in our Sourceforge forum and will be inclined to implement functionality that they are interested in.

What license will you release this software under?

We will release this software under the GNU General Public License.

Deployment Plan

Installation Instructions

The installation instructions for our program are quite simple, and will only be given for the Linux operating system. (there is also a note below for OS X adaptation) The main reason is that our program is simply run, there is no compilation step, no linking, no nonsense of that kind. Before you can run our program, however, you will need to have 2 primary dependencies installed in your system, otherwise the Python language will not be happy.

Also notice that we are not including any installation instructions for these dependencies. Although you might not approve of this, we think it is the right thing to do. It is also fairly standard practice in the open-source community. First of all, the installation instructions for each of those modules are bound to change with time, and if we do not keep up to date with them, the system might not function properly. In addition to that, the installation instructions for such dependencies are not our domain, these should be fully specified by their respective developers.

Thus, to install our application, follow these easy steps:

1. Get a copy of the X3Profiler code from our repository, or by downloading the tarball.
2. Follow the links for each dependency and use their instructions for getting each of these to work on your system (should be straightforward):
   a. Pyx (python graphing package).
   b. Numarray (python numerical package).
3. Once the dependencies are in place, move the X3Profiler to some folder of your choice.
4. Start a terminal, if it one isn't open already, then navigate to the folder containing the X3Profiler application.
5. Type 'python x3p.py'
   At this point the application should load up and the graphical user interface should appear in the main screen ready for use.

Note: this application can be run on Mac OS X without any modification, though, you will have to make sure that you do not use an x11 terminal. For some reason, you have to load this application from the 'common' terminal included in OS X.

Testing

At the end of the semester, our project will remain in "Beta" until we get significant feedback from users. As with many open source projects, users will be advised that there may still be bugs left in the application.

As a part of the download, we'll include our testing suite, so that anyone can run them and verify that recent changes haven't broken anything. We will ask that developers who add features/bugfixes to the program also add tests to this suite, so it becomes more and more complete.

These practices won't cease when we move to a "Production/Stable" development status; we believe that the testing should always be freely available for anyone to verify.

Transition

This is mostly what is described above. At the end of the semester, we'll move our project resources to Sourceforge, and begin looking for other users/developers. Since our project is specialized, with a technically savvy target audience, we will depend on mostly technically oriented options to advertise our project (on the web and on campus).

If a user is interested, the download/installation of the project is very simple for them to try out. Since python is interpreted, there should be very few cross-platform issues (Windows is not currently an option, as gprof is not generally available).

Developers and maintainers can come from anywhere, as we move from RUP to a more flexible Bazaar development pattern.