DCAT Feature review of DS-560 XMLUI News in config dir

JIRA Reference: https://jira.duraspace.org/browse/DS-560

Proposed: The original JIRA ticket advocates to put the frontpage news in the dspace.cfg and remove the requirement to restart DSpace to see it in effect. In fact, the news feature in XMLUI is a lot less user friendly than the (albeit basic) web interface for editing news in the JSPUI. If you look at it even more broadly you could state that a DSpace frontpage is by far not as customizable as modern web portal frontpages.

Currently present in JSPUI

http://demo.dspace.org/jspui/

- Top news box, can be edited in HTML in the webui
- Searchbox
- Community listing of all communities
- Sidebar: Newsbox, can be edited in HTML in the webui
- Sidebar: access to the RSS feeds

Currently present in XMLUI (Mirage)

http://demo.dspace.org/xmlui

- Top search box, has to be edited by the server admin, in a file on the server . Contents should be in DRI.
- List of all communities
- Searchbox
- Recently added submissions

Examples of changes or improvements in the community

Many XMLUI instances out there have nice frontpages and might also have customized the way to edit them. Some code might already be out there. Their developers might be motivated to contribute or work on this.

- Harvard DASH
  - **Frontpage look?** Very large news section with images, regularly being updated
  - **Backend edit features?** Unknown, requesting information
  - Implemented by: inhouse
- African Virtual University OER
  - **Frontpage look?** Different newsblocks, each with a title
  - **Backend edit features?** Each newsblock is a different xml file that should be edited in DRI. Each new block requires a change in the sitemap
  - Implemented by @mire

A modest look at other players in the field

http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/http://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/

- Introduction text
- Contemporary news with one news item, no links to a news archive
- "At a glance" box with links to top 10 downloads and 60 most recent additions
- "Paper of the Day" box featuring one item
- A line of repository vitals: number of papers, total number of downloads, number of downloads that year

http://eprints.utas.edu.au/

- Introduction text
- Different navigation boxes, almost like a sitemap

http://www.alexandria.unisg.ch/

- Elaborate recent news feature, with a short news listing & clicking on an item expands the view.
- Older news under "more research news", featuring only the headlines
- New books, featuring a thumbnail listing of books and some metadata
- Access to the RSS feeds for news
- Searchbox

General observations

- Only 20% of web users scroll "below the fold" of portal homepages
  - There's little use for any information included below the fold
- Graphic elements are nice
  - Opposed to other systems, DSpace homepages are relatively "dry".

DCAT discussion preparation

This request touches more broadly on the look & feel of a DSpace frontpage and the essence can be broken down into 3 questions:

1. Ideally, which features should be offered on the DSpace homepage?
     a. Should all of these features be standard & fixed, or should an admin be able to enable or disable some of them?
2. Which tools or modus operandi should an administrator use to alter the homepage?

DCAT review

Important, no one replied with 0 or -1.

DCAT initial assessment

The DSpace frontpage should feature following standard elements

- ...
- ...
- ...

The DSpace frontpage should feature following optional elements (to be enabled or disabled in a config file)

- ...
- ...
- ...

Since mostly non-technical people need to make changes, following elements should be edited from the admin web user interface

- ...
- ...
- ...

(if it turns out that these lists become very long, we should propose a phased approach with small chunks of changes/development, so the chances get a lot more likely that they will get through).

Previous steps

DCAT Review

We would like to hear the community's opinions and thoughts on this, and we'd like to try using the DSpace code committers' method for indicating your level of support, since that will help make it easy for them to understand where we're coming from on these:

- If you agree with the above assessment and have no additional comments, you can simply respond with a +1.
- If you disagree but have no comments, a -1 works, and if you have no opinion at all, 0 is fine. (And encouraged, since that means we know you've had a chance to weigh in.)
- If you *do* have comments or other ideas, you're not limited to the numbers, of course. So please do share your thoughts!

Next steps

DCAT Initial Assessment

Please give your list of features, as concrete as possible, for following 3 questions:

The DSpace frontpage should feature following standard elements:

- ...
- ...
- ...

The DSpace frontpage should feature following optional elements (to be enabled or disabled in a config file)

- ...
- ...
- ...

Since mostly non-technical people need to make changes, following elements should be edited from the admin web user interface

- ...
- ...