

Open Source Collaboration Apps in Rails

BoF Session
Railsconf 2007

Themes

Rails

Open Source

Web-based collaboration apps (and RIAs generally)

Integration, interoperability, CMSes, modular apps

Proposed Session Plan

We discuss and show our app (Deme) - 15 minutes

Questions (1-2 minutes)

Other app demos by BoF attendees

Discussion of themes (open source, collaboration apps, integration)



Deme: web-based group deliberation and dialogue

► Todd Davies - background

Leo Perry - Deme in Rails

Ben Newman - New client-side features



Deme is aimed at...

Volunteer advisory boards

Neighborhood associations

Consortia of nonprofits

Grassroots activist groups

Labor union chapters and caucuses

Clubs and religious congregations

University-based groups

Ad-hoc citizen groups (e.g. for community planning)

Supporting groups to...

Get to know each other and share information

Define their mission and goals

Make and observe rules (e.g. bylaws)

Plan joint activities

Make budgets and spend money

Issue joint statements (e.g. press releases, flyers)

Form committees and work with other groups

Keep and retrieve records of all these things

History

PHP development (2003-2005)

Redesigned UI, Ajax development (2005-2006)

Reimplementation in Rails (2006-2007)

Old version – group homepage

Demo Group

Logged in as **todd**
[logout](#) | [my groups](#)

Demo Group

DEME version is 0.5.0

This is the description of the group, which can be edited by anyone with access to the group. In this case, you are in the Demo Group, which is meant as an interactive introduction to Deme and its features.
[\[Edit this summary\]](#)

Welcome, **todd** [:::my settings](#) [:::logout](#) [:::my groups](#)

Meeting Areas

- [Learn Deme Here](#)
- [Sandbox](#)
- [Deme Discussion](#)
- [mymeetingname](#)
- [RM Players](#)
- [testi testi](#)
- [Discussion](#)
- [Members assembly](#)
- [Eureka!](#)
- [Puppu](#)
- [The Cybernetics of on-line deliberation](#)

[Create new meeting area...](#)

Announcements

- Jan-14: test
- Dec-29: Test2
- Nov-29: This is a short announcement.
- Sep-17: Test
- Mar-15: Welcome to the Demo Group! Click the "Learn Deme Here" meeting area link on the left to get an introduction to meeting area features.

[View all announcements](#)
[Add new announcement](#)

General Options

- [My profile](#)
- [Member List](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Links](#)
- [Library](#)
- [FAQ \(Frequently Asked Questions\)](#)
- [Search](#)
- [Chat](#)
- [Leave this group](#)

This site uses [DEME](#) software.

Done

Old version – meeting area

Meeting Area

Groupspace: [My Groups](#) > [Demo Group](#) > [Learn Deme Here](#) Logged in as **todd**
[Turn help off](#) | [logout](#) | [my groups](#)

This item: **3. Example: Document** [Global comment](#) | Sort comments by: **item** subject date author

[-< To item index](#)

3. Example: Document [Document]

Preface:
This is an example of a document, and you are reading the "preface" of the document. Read the document below for more information about documents, and, if you like, you can post a comment on this document.
Document posted by: **andrew**, Feb 02, 17:21

General comments on this document:
[New document announcement](#)
[Example of a general comment on a document](#)

A document can be anything that contains text you want people to read. It is possible to post and view documents other than plain text ones (e.g. pictures, Word documents, video clips), but currently only plain text documents support in-text commenting (explanation of in-text commenting will follow shortly). But there are many possible documents that can be posted in a meeting area even now. A document could be the proposed bylaws of your group, a press release you are drafting together, an interesting article you want everyone to read, or something else, as long as it is in text form.

Deme was designed to support document collaboration, document-centered discussion, and decision making about **Example of an in-text comment - andrew** documents. "Document collaboration" means that two or more people work together to draft and/or revise a document. In the action menu (the pulldown menu filled in light blue) you can always select "New document" to post a document from scratch. When you are currently viewing a document in the folio viewer's item display, the action menu will also contain an option for

3. Example: Document **andrew** [prev](#) [next](#) Message #: 7

Comment: **Example of an in-text comment -**
Feb 02, 17:26

I am inserting this comment into the text of "Example: Document", in between the words "about" and "documents." I don't have anything particularly to say about these words, or the surrounding context, other than to show that an "in-text" comment like this can be placed anywhere in the text of a document. This is done via the "Comment on item" feature selected from the action menu when a document is loaded into the folio viewer.

Notice that, when you click on the item reference for this comment (the underlined first part of its header), the folio

Done

Old version – Decisions

Meeting Area

http://www.groupspace.org/deme/groups/Demo-Group/marea/?marea_id=1

Groupspace: [My Groups](#) > [Demo Group](#) > [Learn Deme Here](#) Logged in as **todd**
[Turn help off](#) | [logout](#) | [my groups](#)

This item: **4. Example: Decision** Global comment | Sort comments by: [item](#) [subject](#) [date](#) [author](#)

[<- To item index](#)

Example: Decision [Decision]

Question: Let's try to make a decision. The decision concerns whether the text of 'Example: Document' is sufficient as an overview of how documents function in a meeting area. Click 'Vote now' to make your choice known, and note that you can annotate your vote with a comment. I have selected 'consensus' as the decision rule, meaning that everyone has to agree for this proposal to pass.

Decision called for by: **andrew**, Feb 02, 17:31
[Announcement Message](#)

Voting has closed. [Closing message](#)

Choices	Total votes
Approve "Example: Document"	1
Don't Approve "Example: Document"	1

Member choices/comments:

andrew [Approve "Example: Document"](#)
Feb-02, 17:32
I agree with the current state of "Example: Document"

guest [Don't Approve "Example: Document"](#)
Jul-05, 07:05
Just to see what happens.

Did not vote:
[todd](#) [bruden](#) [bbhatt](#) [mehedet](#) [calt](#) [mings](#)

4. Example: Decision **andrew** [prev](#) [next](#) Message #: 8

Comment: **New Poll: "Example: Decision"** - Feb 02, 17:31

Respond to this comment

Let's try to make a decision. The decision concerns whether the text of 'Example: Document' is sufficient as an overview of how documents function in a meeting area. Click 'Vote now' to make your choice known, and note that you can annotate your vote with a comment. I have selected 'consensus' as the decision rule, meaning that everyone has to agree for this proposal to pass.

Done

Redesign – meeting area

about:blank - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address about:blank

Meeting Area **General Dev and Design** General@Development.Groupspace.org

Logged in as aarontam my groups | logout

Item View Combined View Discussion View

Goto Actions New Comment Find Collapsed

Groupspace.org
My Groups
Development
General Dev and Design

Group Options
My Settings
Member List
Calendar
Links
FAQ
Library
Bulk Subscribe
Email Options
Meeting Areas
Homepage

<< hide options

19. Goals [Document]

Preface:
Here's the list from my whiteboard last night - feel free to comment/revise/add more. I've added a few things.
Document posted by: todd , Oct 01, 15:16

General comments on this document:
[View document attachments](#)

Some Deme Project Goals for 2004-2005 (not complete)

- Email integration (posting) - Brendan and Andrew
- Bug/break list (Item 4, Deme 0.3) - Alex and Andrew
- New stuff for users - Todd, plus others as needed for coding
- Documentation website
- Friendliness - new tooltips, labels
- Aesthetics
- Outreach to developers, funders, users, stakeholders - Todd = Deme development workshop
- New funding proposal for Haas
- Grant proposal for outside funding
- Academic outreach - Todd = Conference in March/April
- Revise white paper, publish
- Other design goals
- Novice infrequent user vs Experienced frequent user modes
- Reformat indexes, display by relevance
- Better cross-referencing interface and appropriate same-window placement
- Sectioning items/discussion
- Better organization and editability of item index
- Wiki-like editing/comments keyed to versions in header
- Better privs/customizability [look/feel options](#) [todd](#)
- Code cleaning/reviving
- [Virus checking?](#) [todd](#)
- [Implement poll/survey](#) [todd](#) [Member participation statistics](#) [todd](#) [Presence detection](#) [todd](#)

Link to this item

debugging...
See raw docref'd text
See orig text

Top

Comments | Expand all | Collapse all

- New Document: "Goals" - todd - Oct 01, 15:16
- Virus checking? - todd - Oct 11, 16:02
- Presence detection - todd - Oct 11, 16:04

Comment: **Presence detection** - Oct 11, 16:04

Would be very useful at some point, especially if profiles had links to IM addresses.

Respond to this comment

Link to this message

- Member participation statistics - todd - Oct 11, 16:07
- Implement poll/survey - todd - Oct 11, 16:41
- look/feel options - todd - Oct 12, 21:06

New Comment

Meeting Area Members

Online (3)

- aarontam
- newmanb
- todd

Chat

aarontam joins the chat.

aarontam says to all: hi!

todd says to all: hi hows it going?

newmanb says to all: pretty good.

Start Chatting

hide chat >>

Groupspace.org

deme v0.6

Done

Internet

start

about:blank - Microso...

2:43 PM

Redesign – group homepage

about:blank - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help Address about:blank Go Links

Group Homepage **Development** Development.Groupspace.org Logged in as **aarontam** my groups | logout

Groupspace.org
My Groups
Development

Group Options

- My Settings
- Member List
- Calendar
- Links
- FAQ
- Library
- Bulk Subscribe
- Email Options
- Meeting Areas
- ▶Homepage

<< hide options

Meeting Areas

Create new meeting area group image file here

- General**
(15 posts since 09/25) | Info ⓘ
This is the general development area. Feel free to post any questions or comments you may have. Also, feel free to posit suggestions and advice for the layout. [Edit this description]
- New Meeting Area**
(7 posts in last 2 hours) | Info ⓘ
- Testing New Name**
(9 posts in last 3 days) | Info ⓘ
- New Marea**
(2 posts in last 23 min) | Info ⓘ

[more]

Announcements [Add Announcement]

[06/24/05 12:05PM] by **aarontam**
Action: [Edit] [Delete]
This is a test announcement. There will be many more announcements in the future.

[more]

Group Members

Online (3)

- aarontam ▲
- newmanb
- todd ▼

Chat

aarontam joins the chat.

aarontam says to all: hi!

todd says to all: hi hows it going?

newmanb says to all: pretty good.

Start Chatting

hide chat >>

Groupspace.org demo v0.6

Done Internet

start about:blank - Microso...

2:43 PM

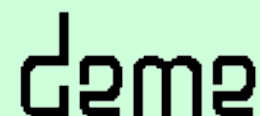


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deme