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Qt Extended Review

11th March 2009

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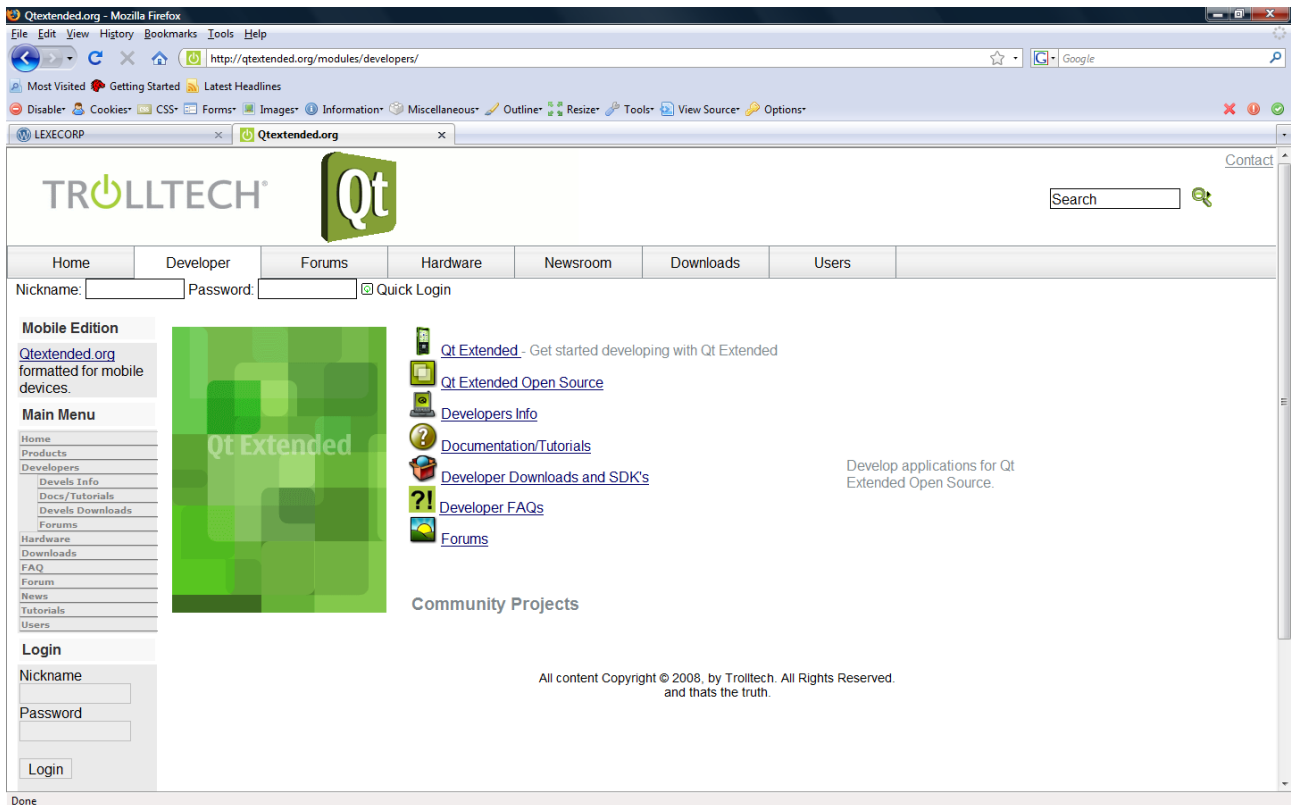
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Finding Qt Extended on-line

“Qt Extended” does appear at the top of a Google search, as

<http://qtextended.org/modules/devices/> (or <http://qtopia.net/modules/devices/>)



The now parent site (QtSoftware.com/) reassures me that this is correct

[Qt Labs Blogs » Qtextended.org!\(October 02, 2008\)](#)

“rebranding of Qtopia to Qt Extended, comes a new url - Qtextended.org!”



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Reporting Site Issues

QtExtended.org has many dead links and missing documents. The links are now changed or gone (from the parent site) whilst the documents 'may' be found at QtSoftware.com

If one wishes to “Contact” someone about this, the result is

Sorry, you don't have sufficient rights to access this area.

Menus and Navigational support

As a new visitor I (and maybe others) prefer to rapidly work through any menu options to get some measure of a site.

In so doing I can see that the site is quite extensive. But this is not a site with much “guidance” and we can compare to a sibling site later.

Dead Links

Almost immediately from the “Products” menu, a rather vital “Qt Extended” entry (pointing to QtSoftware.com) is a dead link.

Choose “Products” as I the user (and a new arrival) would like to know what Qt Extended is

I choose “Qt extended”

<http://trolltech.com/products/device-creation/qt-extended/qt-extended>

and

We're sorry, but that page doesn't exist...

Which is on the same page as

More Information:

Sales Inquiry: [Sales](#)

Maybe not good if trying to make sales, but maybe LGPL is its future!

Likewise the Developers menu option (no doubt developers are the main audience) has a dead “Qt Extended Overview” link.



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Self Definition

I actually found that wikipedia does a better job of stating what Qt Extended is

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qtopia>

though the best definition comes from an external document on QtSoftware.com that I found much later (qt-extended-4.4-whitepaper).

Navigation and Underlying Mechanism

With some uncertainty as to where I am and whether I am missing anything, I do find that QtExtended runs on Linux and the page implies that one needs one of the phones shown, and that there are “device profiles for several devices”.

But I'm thrown from the Developers section to the Hardware section, which closes the developers menu on the left. If intentional, it is confusing for a new arrival who is trying to understand what QtExtended actually is.

Looking at the Qt extended home at <http://qtextended.org/modules/devices/>

I note that it uses a CMS www.runcms.org

A CMS is a great way to go. I use WordPress. I also note that the main qtsoftware site uses Plone.

Having found this location and top level, clicking on the “Trolltech” banner takes one to

<http://www.qtsoftware.com/>

There are still some identity issues (or at least enough to confuse a reader)

One note is that the domains do seem to be in transition (though not surprising when one considers recent events)

OLD URL	qtopia.net
CURRENT:	qtextended.org
AND EXTERNAL:	qtsoftware.com

The [Qt Extended 4.4 Documentation](#) (aka [Qt Extended Docs Index](#)) is also worth a further look



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Developer Documentation and Tutorials

Qt Extended API Documentation

[Qt Extended 4.4 Documentation](#)

[Developer HOWTOS](#)

[Developer FAQs](#)

[Developer Tutorials](#)

[Licensing Info](#)

It is odd is that a user may, and no doubt would, from the above menu, select the 1st option first (yes I mean that) which then takes one to the Qt extended 4.4 doc.

However, this level then becomes a new “top level”, where the “Home” option will not return a user to this now lost higher level! And there was much useful introductory material there – HOWTOs, FAQs, etc!

It is not a big issue, but a new user arriving at a site will already be confused. Add to that the lack of “site guidance” and it seems unwise.

Site validity and versions

The local [Qt Extended 4.4 Documentation](#)

indicates version and ownership as

Qt Extended 4.4.1
Copyright © 2008 Trolltech

But at <http://doc.trolltech.com/>

<http://doc.trolltech.com/qtextended4.4/>

Qt Extended 4.4.3
Copyright © 2009 Nokia

I find this a little disconcerting! 4.4.3 is the final release (was delivered March 5th 2009 and is



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presently available as qt-extended-opensource-src-4.4.3.tar.gz) but a fresh arrival will not know this, nor will they expect a top copy to be elsewhere.

Site Future

If this site is to be maintained for 1 year, then these issues will be pertinent to someone!

Foreign Language

I am a little surprised that the site is only in English!

Why?

If one considers the markets (but not necessarily the developers) by reviewing some mixed 2008 and 2009 statistics.

- Mobile market 'number one' is China with 540.5 million subscribers (wireless users)
- Second is the U.S. with 260.5 million
- Third is India with 250.9 million (soon to be second)
- And of note, 105 million mobile subscribers in Japan

There are also a lot of Asian developers (and significantly Japanese) who are potentially more capable of targeting the Chinese market, so maybe a Japanese language site option would have been wise.

One might also note that Nokia has sold most of its N series phones into China!

I later spotted (on the Qt Software site) some Chinese - Mainland and Taiwan - targeted QtExtended webinars at the end of 2008.

It was good to see that the parent site qtsoftware.com does have Japanese pages amongst others. But again some issues (maybe out of scope, but I felt they were important)

Switching between languages causes failures

We're sorry, but there seems to be an error...

The error has been logged as entry number 1236238818.650.777673953768.

If you need to report this to the site administration, please include this entry number in your message.

Opening both English and Japanese pages

One can't at the same time, as the browser tries to cache the language setting, and some items display in a different language on the same page.

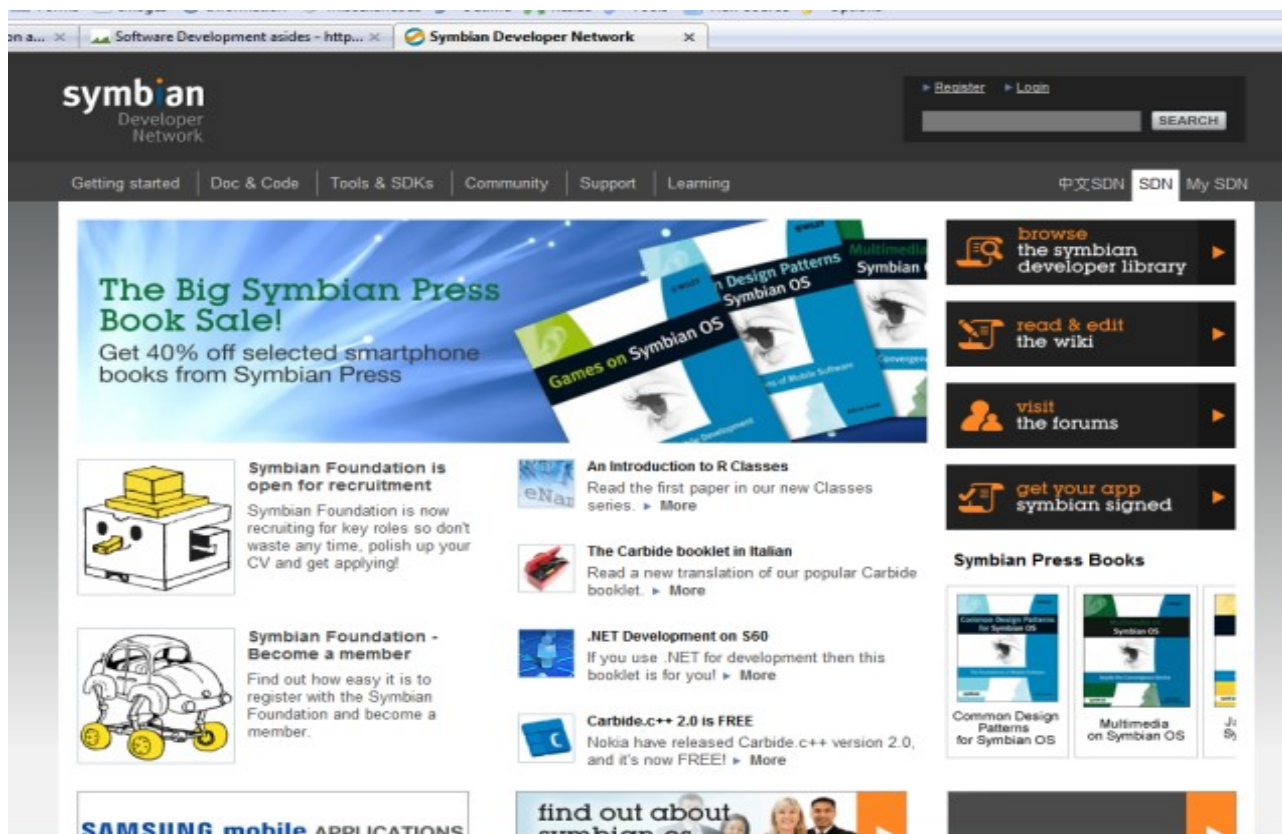
Proof reading

some of the words are truncated (for example, Library should be ライブラリ But only shows ライブラ). Best done by a native speaker with ICT skills!

Look and feel

The site does not look like it belongs to a tier one company such as Nokia

And by direct example, I suggest Nokia's Symbian Developer network (SDN) where the intended audience is also no doubt primarily developers.





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Image might not be everything, but SDN would also impress managers, investors (which might equate to managers making purchasing decisions), and of course strategic policy makers!

Is it a fair comparison?

SDN also addresses a complete mobile platform (Qt Extended is now just another software layer, but our site addresses embedded Linux as well, so I think we are comparing apples with like)

Symbian is also a peer company (Nokia sibling).

So yes, I think it is. And in that case, I think the absence of Qt Extended 'professional web design' might be damning! SDN is fun, top right shows the use of action verbs (to guide the visitor), and with clever use of page real estate (there's a lot and all accessible from the entry point!)

CONTENT

I'll try to be selective

Qt Extended (Developer Resources)

<http://qtextended.org/doc/qtextended4.4/index.html>

This area is well structured and well laid out – it is what a focused developer wishes to find.

It could be more visual, and I'm thinking of Sun's Java image mapping for core features, amongst others.

Sadly, even from the first link “Product Guide, What's new?”

Qt Extended Release Notes

[What's New in Qt for Embedded Linux 4.4?](#)

it leaves the reader asking

“is Qt Extended (Qtopia) Qt for Embedded linux?”

And will leave the less persistent user high and dry.



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The next entry, *Product Guide – Functional Descriptions*

Is a long index that seems less than inviting!

Third Option, Tutorials

“Creating a new application”

the steps appear like notes from a programmer!

Thoughts: as an entry point for a first time arrival, this could be more “friendly”. In terms of visual style and written presentation.

By means of a fresh example I might proffer

http://wiki.forum.nokia.com/index.php/Getting_started_with_Qt_for_S60

By comparison, it is detailed but both colourful and easy reading. Lots of cross links to fill in the information that one might also need to know. A reference to a zip of the code. Lots of links to related entries. And with syntax highlighting, no extraneous code header information or comments, and relevant entries juxtaposed for easy reading.

This might be the way to present to a reader!

I would wish to discover what sort of authoring arrangements are in place at

<http://www.forum.nokia.com/>

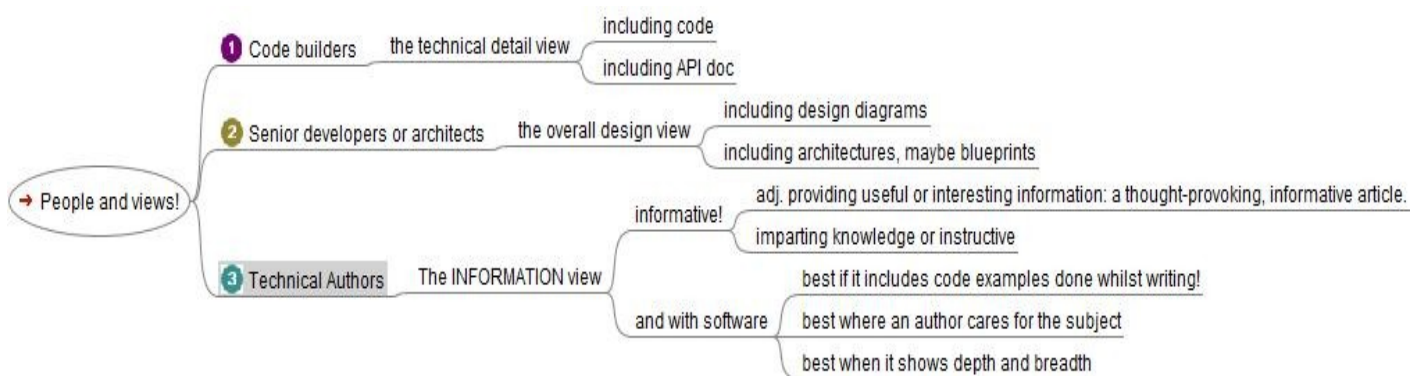
I might even refer to an old example from the Python world!

<http://www.devshed.com/c/a/Python/PyQT-Getting-Started/>

Maybe before I get bogged down, I would like to ask

What should we try to emulate when presenting information?

I did a quick mind map to help me think about it (apologies, I have not printed this to see if it is legible in hard copy)



And by good example, one might also visit another Tier 1 company

IBM's developerWorks

http://www.ibm.com/developerworks/java/library/j-pg02179.html?S_TACT=105AGX02&S_CMP=EDU

I think that should suffice for now.

The Whitepapers

Having struggled to find the Whitepapers on Qt Extended

another “We're sorry, but that page doesn't exist...” “

Google was once again my friend, and the following whitepaper is very good

www.qtsoftware.com/files/pdf/qt-extended-4.4-whitepaper

The introduction tells me exactly where Qt Extended is positioned (I suggest this should have made it to the website doc!).

And as PDF 1.3 it is safe for most readers.

I was pleased with the document, and a little (lot) surprised to find a Qt Extended Feature Map that should equally and by all rights be in the web pages.

Maybe with hyperlinked image mapping!



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Again what I thought is the White paper home within the pdf

<http://trolltech.com/products/qt/learnmore/whitepapers>

is a redirection to Qt at <http://www.qtsoftware.com/products>

Actually I did find a lot more docs at the parent site

<http://www.qtsoftware.com/files/pdf>

So I am left confused as to the organisation of these two sites



Conclusions

Qt Extended suffers from the same issues that most established products do – legacy information and scale. The latter makes it harder to deal with the former. The on-line presence could help with explaining what QtExtended is (and it was hidden away in a whitepaper). And an explanation early on that Qt Extended (Qtopia) Core is now Qt Embedded (from QtSoftware.com).

That said, it does seem as if there are a range of issues that might need to be addressed. Assuming that the product does indeed need to be supported for another year, it left me with many more questions.

Questions regarding control and management

- Has a level of investment been decided if a 1 year support plan is in place
- Who controls QtExtended content (QtExtended.org) versus Qt product content (QtSoftware.com), and who is effectively separating the two? Obviously QtExtended.org has been cut adrift, at least I base that on document versions listed on-line.
- What are the work priorities and plan (requirements, areas of responsibility, time frames,...)? If there is one, then this might allow a tidy up to commence

Questions regarding extent of work (image, structural and content issues) if any is envisaged

- Web design – it can look better. But if it was cut loose then...
- Site navigation – it can be improved, but again...
- It seems wise to have a single top copy production version delivered to the Qt Extended site (as seen with version information earlier)
- The lack of languages is no doubt also out of scope, but the issues mentioned are no doubt in scope for QtSoftware.com!
- Dead links should be resolved
- Missing files to be restored or links updated
- Content has room for being upgraded - time, money and technologies permitting. I have presented some good examples from a sister company that are worth emulating.