Firefox Enterprise Support Release
Product Presentation Proposal v0.4

Contents

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David Tenser	13/12/11	*For support concerns*

Background

In June 2011, after public discussions on the impact of Mozilla's rapid release programme for developing Firefox, and especially the impact on users who are deploying Firefox in managed enviornments, the Mozilla Enterprise Working Group[1] (EWG) was established to work with enterprise users on gathering their requirements.

On September 21st 2011, the EWG produced the Extended Support proposal[2], tenatively named "Firefox ESR". And after several weeks of consultation, on 2nd December, Kev Needham reported that Mozilla would implement the Extended Support proposal.

Product marketing's input has been factored into the proposal and several are listed as assumptions here; this document proposes details of implementing Firefox ESR from a marketing standpoint.

Risk Mitigations

A number of risks around Firefox ESR were identified; these approaches reached wide agreement and are assumed to be decisions:

1. The product is expected to be secure, but will have less resource committed to it than the GA release of Firefox. Consequently, there is risk to Firefox' reputation on security from releasing this product.
2. As browser development accelerates, legacy versions will not be supported by important web services (e.g. Gmail). Users on Firefox ESR will need to understand the difference between the product they are using and the GA version. This is not considered an imminent threat.
3. It's a structural weakness for Mozilla that the Firefox user base is fragmented across versions of the product. For the general browsing population, this needs consolidation; any such fragmentation caused by Firefox ESR should be predicatable and managed.
4. Resources are finite, and there is a need to grow a community around Firefox ESR; to gain support amongst users, and to help collect requirements in future.

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1 https://wiki.mozilla.org/Enterprise
2 https://wiki.mozilla.org/Enterprise/Firefox/ExtendedSupport:Proposal

Marketing of the Product

PR

The release of Firefox ESR will be announced and can expect to receive widespread coverage in the trade press: the expecation should be that coverage will be positive. The name of the product will need to be memorable and distinguishable from Firefox for the audience.

Beyond that, announcements concerning Firefox EST are expected to be conducted on list, the only exceptions would be for the contingencies of special crisis communications or a particular opportunity (e.g. a massive scale deployment).

Web Presentation

The presentation of Firefox ESR should be in line with Enterprise software. It should have a different look and feel to Mozilla's consumer-facing pages.

Discovery

Firefox ESR should not be directly promoted on any consumer-facing Mozilla.org page. The product should be discoverable through the search function and through navigation on Mozilla.org. However, there is no search function on Mozilla.org/firefox. It is recommended that an FAQ page is added to the Releases section on Mozilla.org/firefox and linked from the Releases menu. This page can address many of the other issues that impacted Firefox through rapid release[3] as well as containing positioning statements and links to Firefox ESR's own page on Mozilla.org.

Mozilla.org/firefox "Releases" Menu

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3   https://wiki.mozilla.org/RapidRelease/ImpactAssessment

ESR Landing Page Flow

Firefox ESR should be hosted on a page that looks and feels more like a project page; i.e. the user should feel that they are expected to have a degree of technical proficiency. The build itself, for example, could be hosted on an ftp server.

The user experience should correspond to:

0. Discovery of Firefox ESR (through Google, Mozilla.org, links on social media etc.)

1. Page validates usage of ESR - the ESR landing page, which should be the link which is exclusively circulated, should validate with the user that this is the product that they want, and link back prominently to mozilla.org/firefox. The page should also, however, position Firefox ESR competitively as the best combination of a modern browser with long-term support - (there is a clear competitive stance to be taken against both Chrome's enterprise offering and IE's lag, or requirement to upgrade operating platform). Lastly, the page should link back to the general Firefox build.

2. The page should make it clear that anyone deploying Firefox ESR is expected to join the enterprise@mozilla.org mailing list and at least monitor for announcements[4]. Given Mozilla's licensing policy, this will not be mandatory, but will be strongly encouraged. The user who does not wish to register will have to make an explicit choice to click through a warning.

3. The user will be routed to mailman to sign up for the enterprise list.

4. The user is presented with an FAQ on using and deploying Firefox ESR; this will contain the link to the current build, and the Enterprise wiki and other resources (ideally, community driven). The SUMO team would engage directly with the EWG to determine the most approapriate way to support Firefox ESR users.
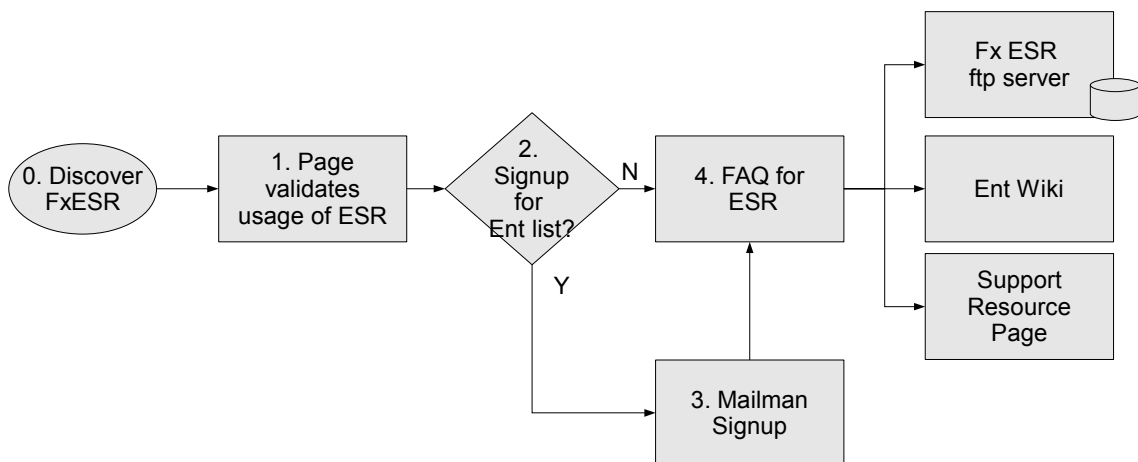

Illustration of user flow

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4   For discussion: should there be a participation list and a specific "announcement" list? Or should all users be expected to be subscribed to announce@mozilla.org ?

Branding

The product will be "Mozilla Firefox" with some designation of the status of this build. The initial response to the EWG was

Branding and naming: There is also considerable scope for confusion of Firefox. ESR will need a different name than simply "Mozilla Firefox", but a more inclusive identity than "enterprise" - much of the demand for this product will be public sector and the cybercafes in emerging markets. We do not expect to invest in a new brand (i.e. invest in a new trademark asset) and naming should probably be almost entirely concerned with approachability (i.e. defining the use case of the product).

There was general agreement on this point, that the product should be called "Mozilla Firefox ____" where the appended designator identified the specific use case in the most approachable and localisable manner. Naming, however, can easily be controversial. Currently, Firefox ESR is widely used within the EWG. The only suggestions to change the name would be to adopt something more applicable (both "extended support" is questionable) or something more widely understood outside of Mozilla. "LTS" (long term support) is generally considered to have too specific a connotation in relation to Ubuntu; "LTM" (long term maintenance) may equally be appropriate.

Of those possibilities (ESR, LTS, LTM), none appear to be in frequent use to designate anything else in the technology field, although ESR is the name open source commentator Eric Raymond uses online, and LTS and LTM are abbreviations occasionally used in chat ("laughing to [my]self").

Localisation

While Firefox ESR should ship in as many locales as desired, the discovery experience should probably be restricted to as many locales as have specific mailing lists: default is, then, English-only. If Firefox ESR is able to attract a community of, say, predominantly Portugueuse speakers who are prepared to run Portugueuse list for announcements etc., then the landing page experience may also be localised.

Positioning and Differentiating

Firefox ESR is relatively easily positioned for deployment in managed enviornments which want a modern web browser.

Firefox ESR should be presented to deployment groups as the best choice for their organisations' needs. A formal value proposition document needs to be produced, but obvious points of difference over competitors will be:

- reputation for security, time to patch
- modern browser, with no commercial driver for platform adoption
- community-lead project

Contributor Outreach

Presentation and publicity around the project should invoke a sense of community: that this is being driven based on the needs of identified people, and that we need people to contribute, if only in terms of their feedback on lists.

Revision History

Authors	Version	Comments
Patrick Finch and Laura Mesa	0.1	No previous version
Patrick Finch	0.2	Updated with comments from Kev Needham
Patrick Finch	0.3	Updated with comments from David Tenser
Patrick Finch	0.4	Updated with comments from JP Rosevear