

# Delivering enterprise software documentation on a wiki

Australasian Online Documentation and Content Conference (AODC)  
20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2009, Melbourne

Introduction

Agile development

Workflow and tracking

Structure and chaos

Release management

Steering wiki development

**Introduction**

**Agile development**

**Workflow and tracking**

**Structure and chaos**

**Release management**

**Steering wiki development**

## ■ Sarah Maddox

- Technical writer at Atlassian
- 10 years technical writing
- 9 years software development


## ■ Wiki


- Software that allows you to edit a web page and publish the updated page immediately
- Many brands: Confluence, TWiki, MediaWiki, etc

## ■ Confluence wiki

- Enterprise wiki from Atlassian

- Ooo-er and Aaah

 A challenge presented when using a wiki for technical documentation

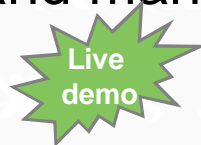
 One of the ways to tackle the “ooo-er” moment

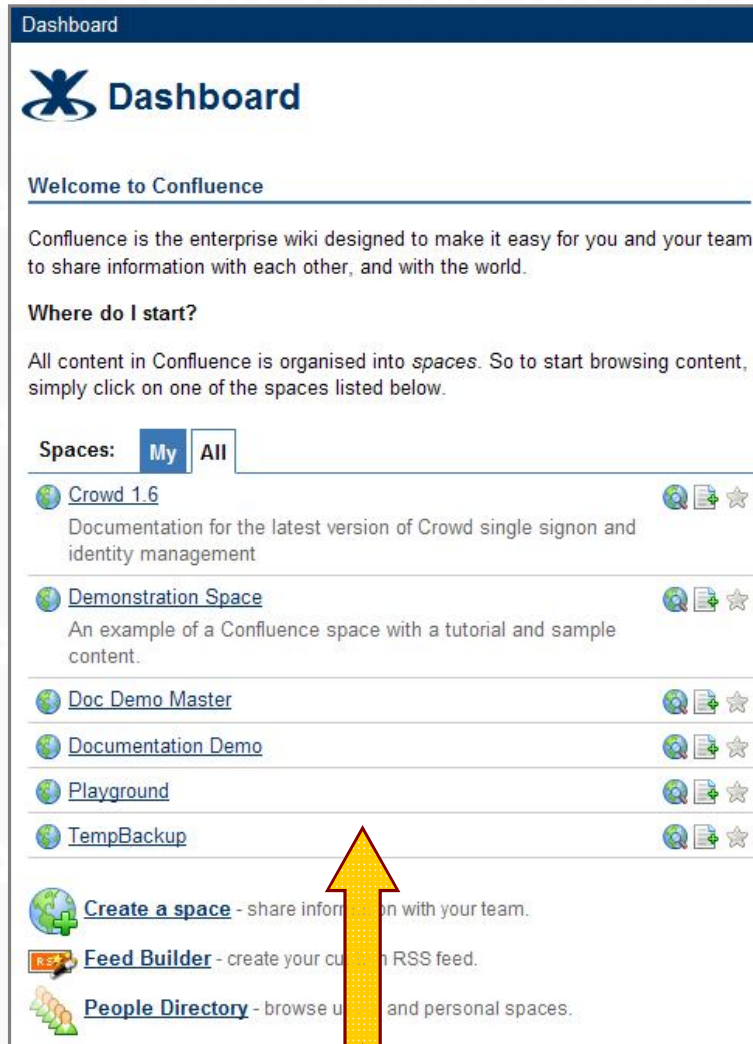
- Plugin

- Extends the core functionality of the wiki
- Similar to an add-on for your browser

- Space

- A logical collection of pages in Confluence
- Configurable and managed independently within a wiki site
- See example





Dashboard

## Dashboard

Welcome to Confluence

Confluence is the enterprise wiki designed to make it easy for you and your team to share information with each other, and with the world.

**Where do I start?**

All content in Confluence is organised into *spaces*. So to start browsing content, simply click on one of the spaces listed below.

Spaces: **My** All

- [Crowd 1.6](#)  
Documentation for the latest version of Crowd single signon and identity management
- [Demonstration Space](#)  
An example of a Confluence space with a tutorial and sample content.
- [Doc Demo Master](#)
- [Documentation Demo](#)
- [Playground](#)
- [TempBackup](#)

[Create a space](#) - share information with your team.

[Feed Builder](#) - create your custom RSS feed.

[People Directory](#) - browse users and personal spaces.

A list of spaces on my Confluence dashboard



A hierarchical page structure in a space

A page



Dashboard > Crowd 1.6 > ... > Managing Directories > Using the Directory Browser

## Using the Directory Browser

3 Added by justen.stepka@atlassian.com, last edited by smaddox on May 07, 2008 (view page) show comment

**Crowd 1.6 Documentation**

- [Crowd Administration Guide](#)
- [Getting Started](#)
- [Managing Directories](#)
- [Using the Directory Browser](#)
- [Adding a Directory](#)
- [Configuring an Internal Directory](#)
- [Configuring an LDAP Directory Connector](#)
- [Configuring a Custom Directory Connector](#)
- [Configuring a Delegated Authentication Directory](#)
- [Configuring Caching for an LDAP Directory](#)

**About Directories**

Crowd supports an unlimited number of user directories.

- Internal to Crowd.
- Connected to Crowd via an LDAP connector (e.g. ...)
- A Crowd internal directory for user/group/role management
- Connected via a custom directory connector (e.g. ...)

Once you have **defined** a directory in Crowd, you can **map** the directory, for all applications that are mapped to that Crowd Administration Console or via the application, depending on the application.

You can even map multiple directories to an application.

**Introduction**

**Agile development**

**Workflow and tracking**

**Structure and chaos**

**Release management**

**Steering wiki development**



Why is a wiki useful in an agile environment?

“We have come to value...

- Responding to change over following a plan
- Customer collaboration over contract negotiation
- Individuals and interactions over processes and tools
- Working software over comprehensive documentation”



➤ But that’s off topic

*Phew*

➤ You may find some answers in a [blog post](#) or [two](#)

<http://tinyurl.com/8n7pvz>

<http://tinyurl.com/a5ntwl>

Agile Manifesto and Principles:  
<http://agilemanifesto.org/>



**Introduction**



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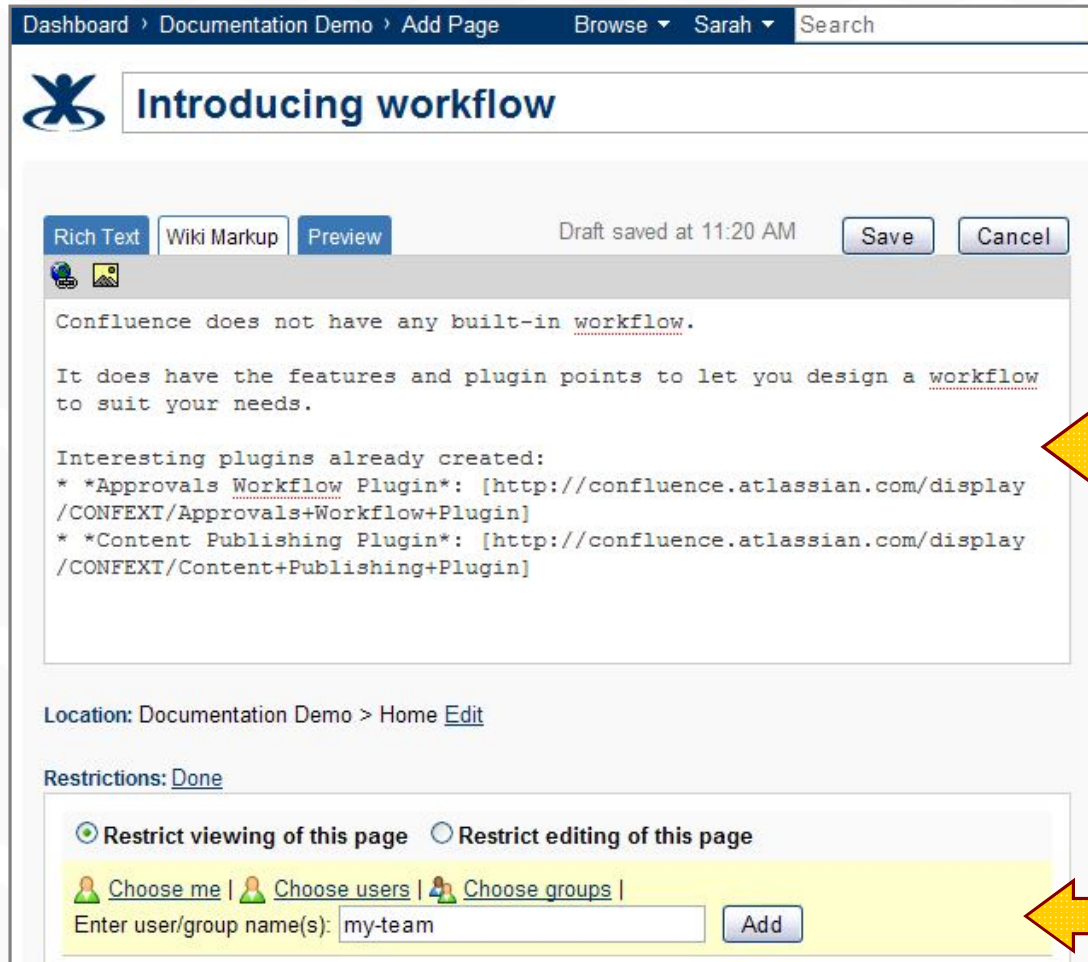
**Steering wiki development**

- Create, review and publish a page
- Track the page history  Live demo
  - View all versions of the page
  - Revert to a previous version of a page
  - View a “diff”
- Set permissions
- Monitor via RSS and “watches”
- Look at some real-life comments  Real stuff



- Create a page with restricted permissions

These procedures are based on core Confluence functionality. There are alternatives that make use of plugins.



Dashboard > Documentation Demo > Add Page    Browse ▾    Sarah ▾    Search

## Introducing workflow

Rich Text   Wiki Markup   Preview    Draft saved at 11:20 AM    Save    Cancel

Confluence does not have any built-in workflow.

It does have the features and plugin points to let you design a workflow to suit your needs.

Interesting plugins already created:

- \* Approvals Workflow Plugin: [http://confluence.atlassian.com/display/CONFEXT/Approvals+Workflow+Plugin]
- \* Content Publishing Plugin: [http://confluence.atlassian.com/display/CONFEXT/Content+Publishing+Plugin]

Location: Documentation Demo > Home [Edit](#)

Restrictions: [Done](#)

Restrict viewing of this page    Restrict editing of this page

[Choose me](#) | [Choose users](#) | [Choose groups](#) |

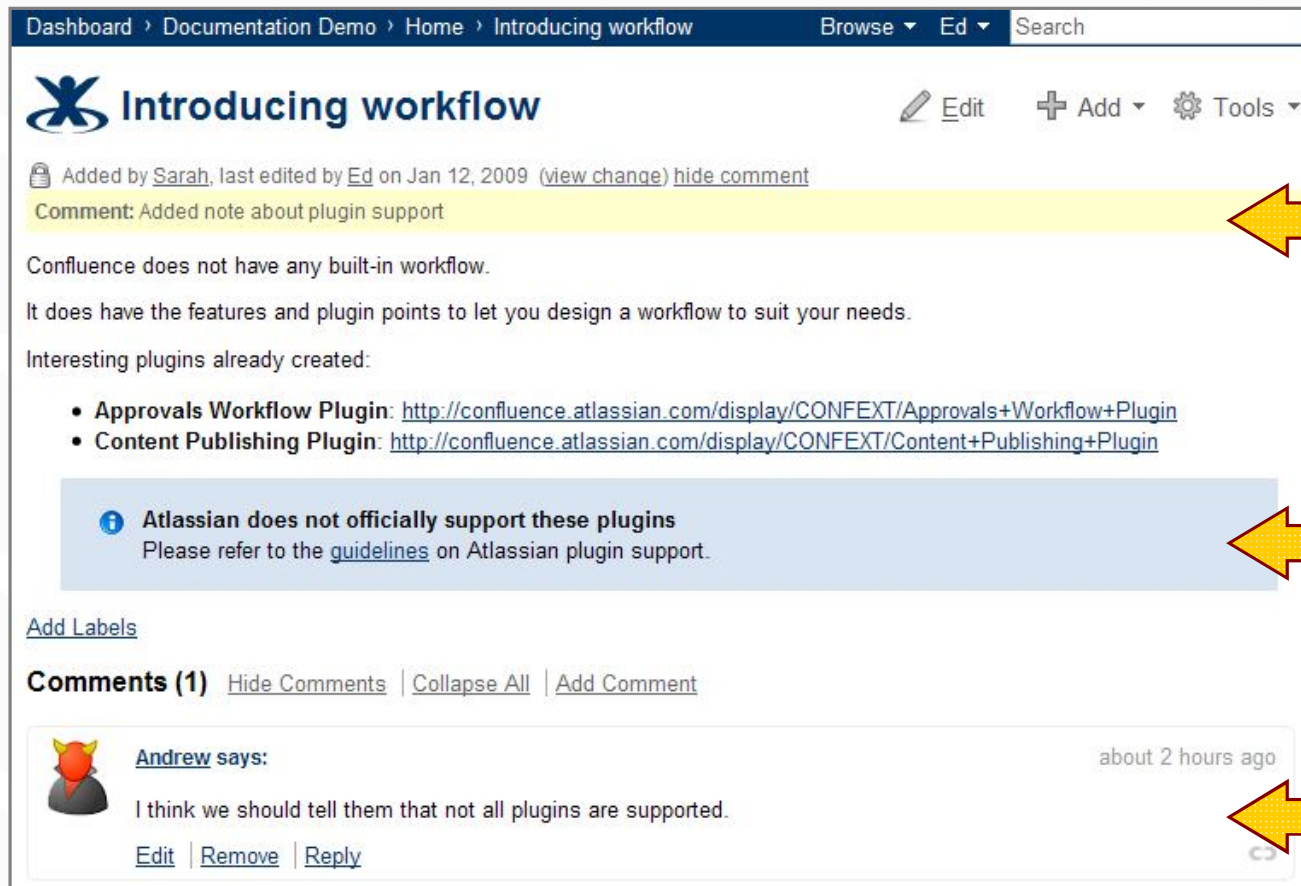
Enter user/group name(s):     Add

← Add your page content

← Restrict viewing to group(s) or user(s)

- Review via comments and updates
- Unhide when ready to publish

Our new wiki page lists two third-party workflow plugins  
More about plugins later



The screenshot shows a Confluence page titled "Introducing workflow". The page content includes a comment from Sarah, a main text block, a list of plugins, a warning box, and a comment from Andrew. Annotations with yellow arrows point to these elements:

- A comment about an update made (pointing to Sarah's comment)
- Page updated by a reviewer (pointing to the warning box)
- A comment from a reviewer (pointing to Andrew's comment)

A comment about an update made

Page updated by a reviewer

A comment from a reviewer

- Track the page history, revert and view a “diff”

Live demo



Dashboard > Documentation Demo > Home > Introducing workflow > Information > Page History Browse Sarah Search

**Introducing workflow** View Add Tools

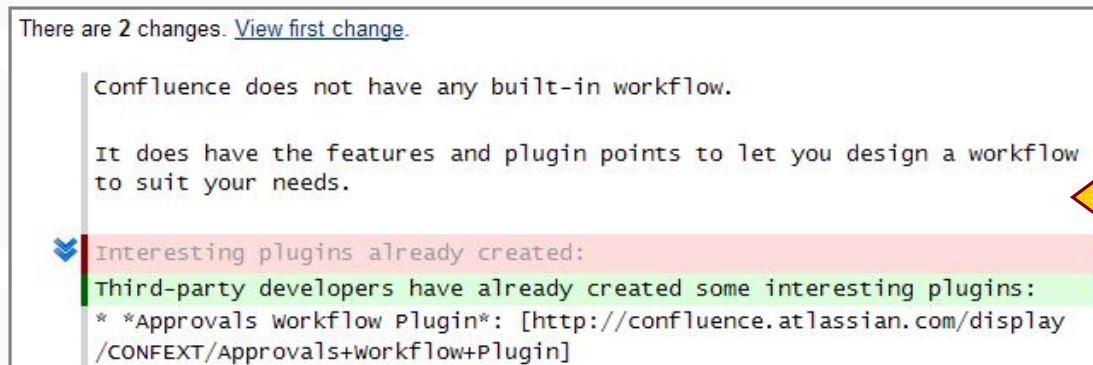
Compare selected versions

Version	Date	Changed By	Operations
<input type="checkbox"/> CURRENT (v. 3)	Jan 14, 2009 14:46	<a href="#">Sarah</a> : Minor rewording	
<input type="checkbox"/> v. 2	Jan 12, 2009 13:38	<a href="#">Ed</a> : Added note about plugin support	<a href="#">Restore this version</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> v. 1	Jan 12, 2009 11:56	<a href="#">Sarah</a>	<a href="#">Restore this version</a>

<< [Return to Page Information](#)

Page history shows all updates

Revert to a previous version if necessary



There are 2 changes. [View first change.](#)

```
Confluence does not have any built-in workflow.

It does have the features and plugin points to let you design a workflow
to suit your needs.

Interesting plugins already created:
Third-party developers have already created some interesting plugins:
* *Approvals workflow Plugin*: [http://confluence.atlassian.com/display/CONFEXT/Approvals+workflow+Plugin]
```

See the differences between two versions



## ■ Set permissions

Can I control the edit rights on my documents?

Attachments | Bookmarks | Mail | Advanced | Activity | Space Admin

### Groups

These are the permissions currently assigned to groups for this space.

	View	Pages				News		Comments		Attachments		Mail	Space	
		Create	Export	Restrict	Remove	Create	Remove	Create	Remove	Create	Remove	Remove	Export	Admin
confluence-users	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
my-team	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Edit Permissions

### Individual Users

These are the permissions currently assigned to individual users for this space.

	View	Pages				News		Comments		Attachments		Mail	Space	
		Create	Export	Restrict	Remove	Create	Remove	Create	Remove	Create	Remove	Remove	Export	Admin
Administrator (admin)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Edit Permissions

### Anonymous Access

When a user is using Confluence while not logged in, they are using it anonymously.  
For example: Enabling anonymous 'commenting' permission, allows non-logged-in users to make comments in this space.

	View	Pages				News		Comments		Attachments		Mail	Space	
		Create	Export	Restrict	Remove	Create	Remove	Create	Remove	Create	Remove	Remove	Export	Admin
Anonymous	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

Space permissions apply to all content in a space and are quite granular

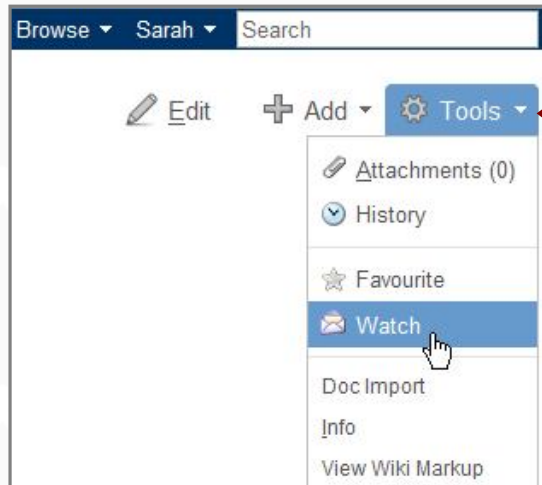
You might allow your team full edit and admin rights while others can only add comments

Global permissions apply across the entire site (not shown here)  
Page-level restrictions apply to a single page (not shown here)

000-er

How do I know that the content has changed?

## ■ Monitor via RSS and “watches”



Watch a page or a space



Build an RSS feed from one or more spaces

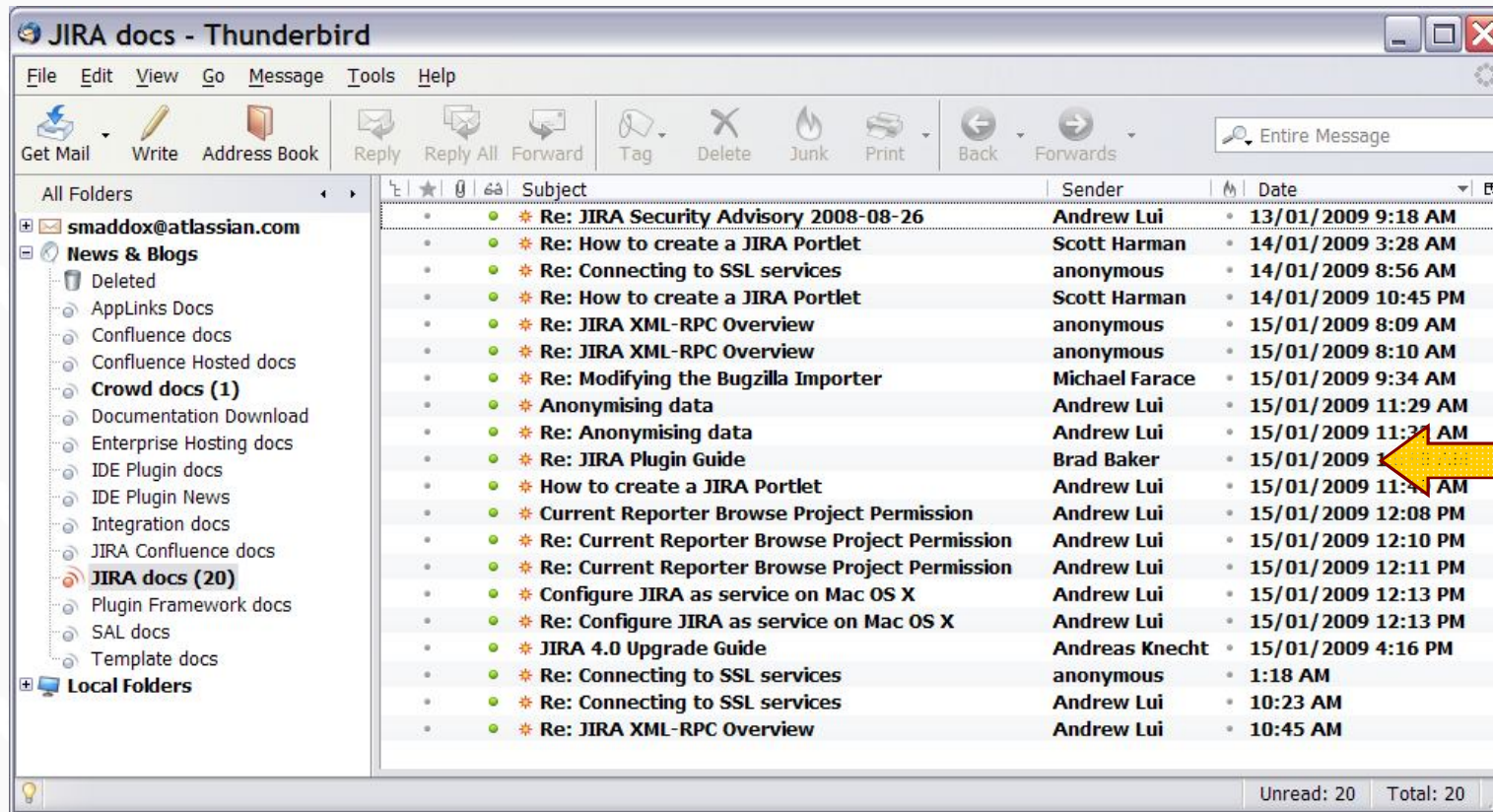
“Watches” go to your email address

RSS readers abound, like Thunderbird (email) and Sage (Firefox add-on)



Aaah

- RSS feed displayed in Thunderbird



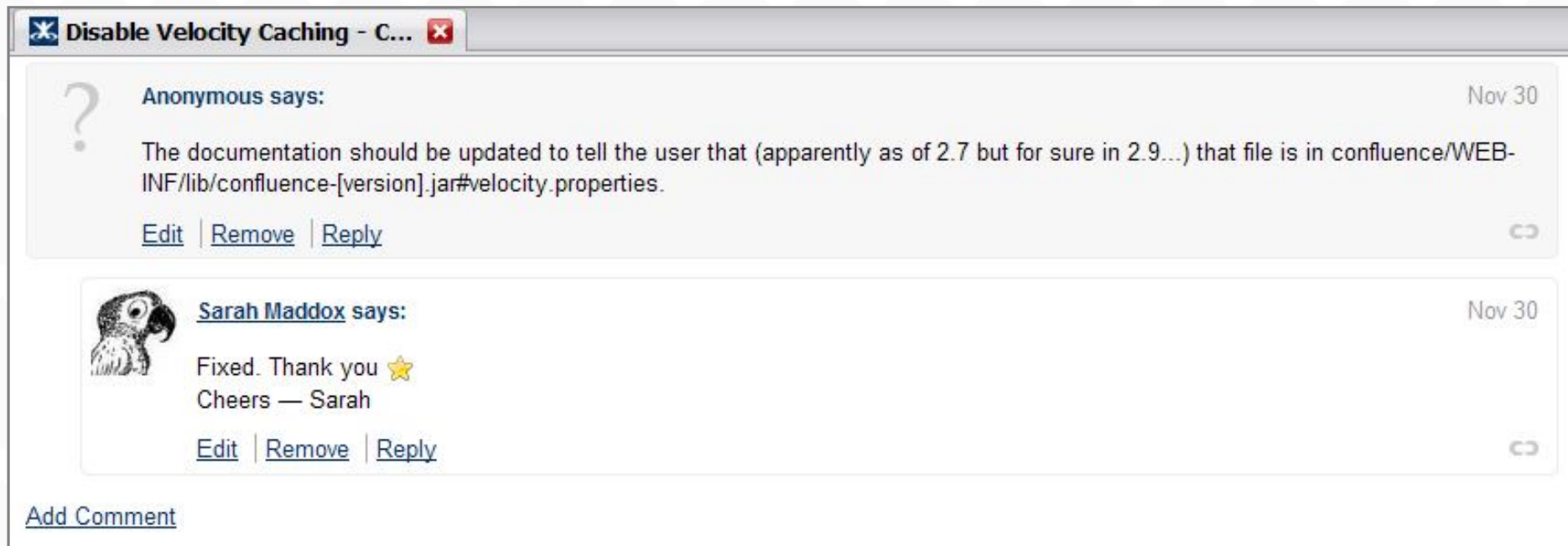
An easy way to manage the wiki page updates and comments

- Look at some real-life comments

Some customer comments are short, to the point and directly related to the documentation





Real stuff



Disable Velocity Caching - C... x

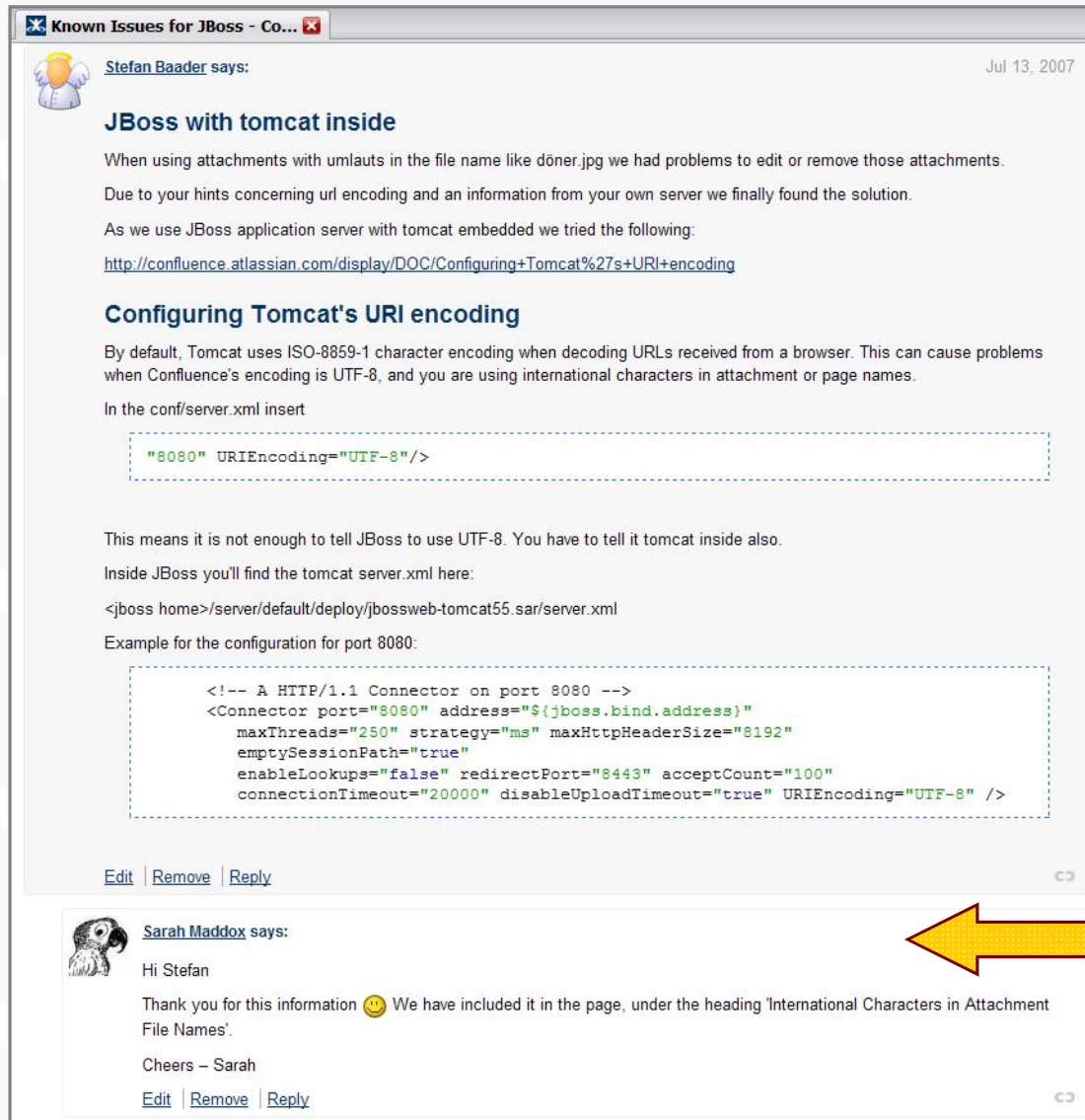
? Anonymous says: Nov 30  
The documentation should be updated to tell the user that (apparently as of 2.7 but for sure in 2.9...) that file is in confluence/WEB-INF/lib/confluence-[version].jar#velocity.properties.  
[Edit](#) | [Remove](#) | [Reply](#)

 Sarah Maddox says: Nov 30  
Fixed. Thank you   
Cheers — Sarah  
[Edit](#) | [Remove](#) | [Reply](#)

[Add Comment](#)



Real stuff



**Known Issues for JBoss - Co...**

**Stefan Baader** says: Jul 13, 2007

### JBoss with tomcat inside

When using attachments with umlauts in the file name like döner.jpg we had problems to edit or remove those attachments. Due to your hints concerning url encoding and an information from your own server we finally found the solution. As we use JBoss application server with tomcat embedded we tried the following:

<http://confluence.atlassian.com/display/DOC/Configuring+Tomcat%27s+URI+encoding>

### Configuring Tomcat's URI encoding

By default, Tomcat uses ISO-8859-1 character encoding when decoding URLs received from a browser. This can cause problems when Confluence's encoding is UTF-8, and you are using international characters in attachment or page names.

In the conf/server.xml insert

```
"8080" URIEncoding="UTF-8"/>
```

This means it is not enough to tell JBoss to use UTF-8. You have to tell it tomcat inside also.

Inside JBoss you'll find the tomcat server.xml here:

```
<jboss home>/server/default/deploy/jbossweb-tomcat55.sar/server.xml
```

Example for the configuration for port 8080:

```
<!-- A HTTP/1.1 Connector on port 8080 -->
<Connector port="8080" address="{jboss.bind.address}"
  maxThreads="250" strategy="ms" maxHttpHeaderSize="8192"
  emptySessionPath="true"
  enableLookups="false" redirectPort="8443" acceptCount="100"
  connectionTimeout="20000" disableUploadTimeout="true" URIEncoding="UTF-8" />
```

[Edit](#) | [Remove](#) | [Reply](#)

**Sarah Maddox** says:

Hi Stefan

Thank you for this information 😊 We have included it in the page, under the heading 'International Characters in Attachment File Names'.

Cheers – Sarah

[Edit](#) | [Remove](#) | [Reply](#)

Some customer comments are full of hard-won and relevant information, which can be copied into the documentation

*“Hi Stefan*

*Thank you for this information. We have included it in the page, under the heading ‘International Characters in Attachment File Names’.*

*Cheers - Sarah”*






**Confluence 2.10 Release Not...**

**Nathan Guetta** says: yesterday at 04:17:27  
Hi Sarah,  
Why didn't you integrate one of your client called Dailymotion in the video widgets ? We're very disappointed here at DM, we thought the love was mutual ! 😞  
[Edit](#) | [Remove](#) | [Reply](#)

**Bill Arconati [Atlassian]** says: Nathan, looks like a great opportunity. We've logged the request in JIRA. yesterday at 11:56:25  
You ca...

**Jens Schumacher** says: Hi Nathan, Dailymotion was actually on my list of services to support, but yesterday at 17:27:53  
due...

**Sarah Maddox** says: yesterday at 17:31:09  
 Hallo Nathan  
As you can see from the quick responses from other Atlassians above, the love is mutual 😊 I'm just adding my thanks to you for making this comment.  
Cheers — Sarah  
[Edit](#) | [Remove](#) | [Reply](#)

**Nathan Guetta** says:  
We're starting to feel the LOVE guys ! 😊  
If you need any help on the integration side, don't hesitate to contact me.  
[Edit](#) | [Remove](#) | [Reply](#)

[Add Comment](#)



Turning disappointment into LUV



*“We’re starting to feel the LOVE guys! If you need any help on the integration side, don’t hesitate to contact me.”*

**Introduction**




**Agile development**

**Workflow and tracking**

**Structure and chaos**

**Release management**

**Steering wiki development**

- Table of contents within a page
- Left-hand navigation bar showing pages in space 
- Index of documentation versions
- Page ordering 
- Content re-use 

000-er

I can embrace the chaos, but...  
Help!

Aaah

## ■ Table of contents within a page

On this page:

- [Features of LDAP Caching in Crowd](#)
- [Supported LDAP Directories](#)
- [Configuring the Cache](#)
  - [Setting the Maximum Number of Elements in Memory](#)
  - [Setting the Polling Interval for Cache Updates](#)
- [Relaxed DN Standardisation](#)

### Features of LDAP Caching in Crowd

Where the LDAP directory supports it, Crowd will keep an up-to-date cache of directory. Use of the cache should improve performance particularly in director




Use the {toc} or {toc-zone} macro to build a linked list of headings within a page

Highlights of this release:

- [Single Sign-On to Google Apps](#)
- [Connector for Apple Open Directory](#)
- [Plugin Framework 2.0 and API](#)
- [Other Improvements and Bug-Fixes](#)
- [Complete List of Improvements and Fixes](#)

Responding to your feedback:  
★ 45 votes satisfied

Keep logging your [votes and issues](#). They help us decide what needs doing!

 **DOWNLOAD**  
latest version

**Upgrading to Crowd 1.5**

You can download Crowd from the [Atlassian website](#). If upgrading from a previous version, please read the [Crowd 1.5 Upgrade Notes](#).

### Highlights of Crowd 1.5

**1** **Single Sign-On to Google Apps**

- Crowd now supports single sign-on (SSO) to [Google Apps](#).
- Users can log in to Google Apps using their corporate username and password.



Limit the heading levels in the TOC for a sophisticated effect, such as the “Highlights of this release:”

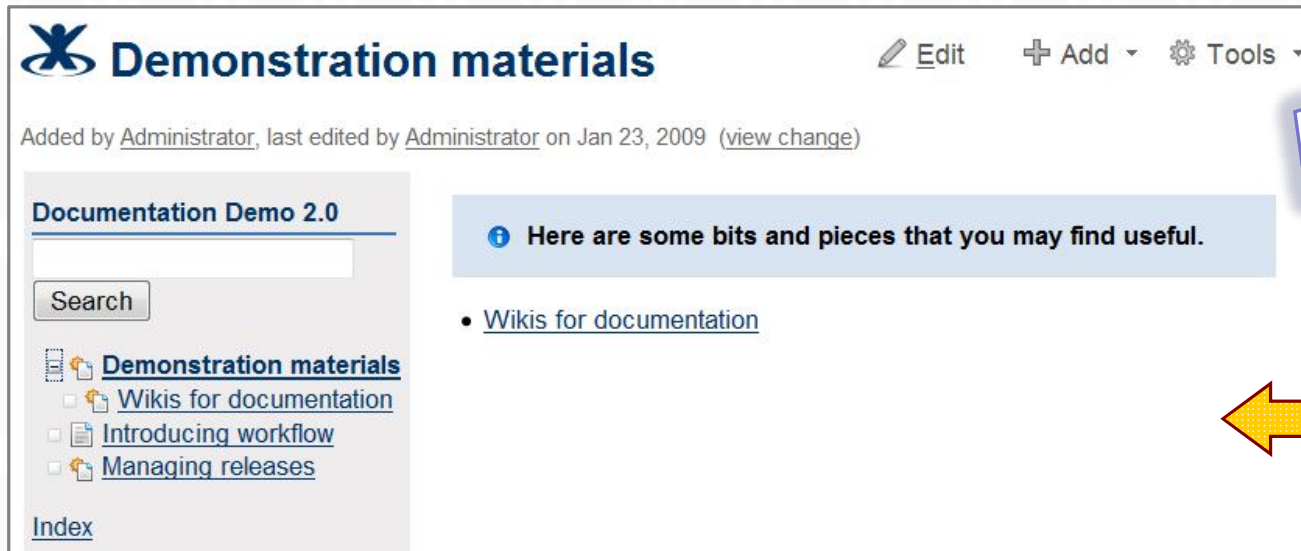
```
{toc:minLevel=2|maxLevel=2}
```








Live demo

- Administrator edits the space layout
- Left-hand navigation bar shows pages in space







**Demonstration materials**  Edit  Add  Tools


Added by [Administrator](#), last edited by [Administrator](#) on Jan 23, 2009 ([view change](#))

**Documentation Demo 2.0**

Search

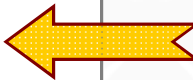
-  [Demonstration materials](#)
-  [Wikis for documentation](#)
-  [Introducing workflow](#)
-  [Managing releases](#)

[Index](#)

 Here are some bits and pieces that you may find useful.

- [Wikis for documentation](#)

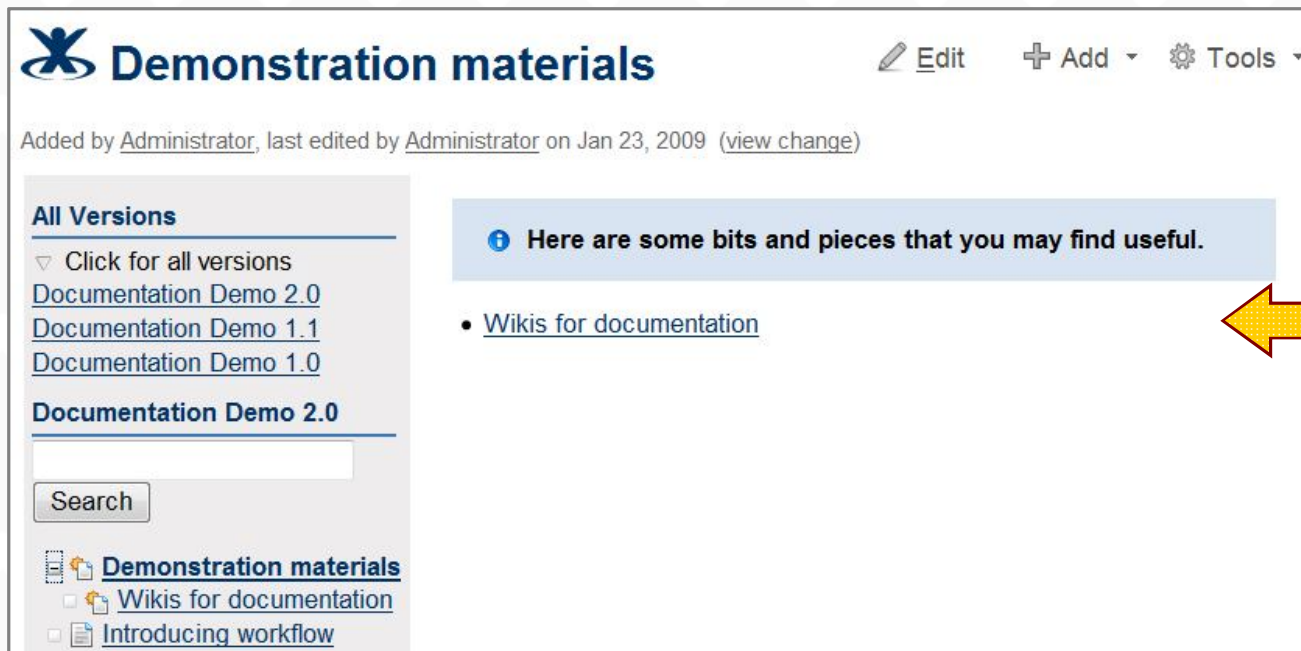
Aaah



Dynamic table of contents on the left shows all pages under the “Home” page in the space (configurable)

Aaah

- Documentation version index
- Using spaces as version control mechanism



The screenshot shows a Confluence page titled "Demonstration materials". At the top right, there are "Edit", "Add", and "Tools" buttons. Below the title, it says "Added by Administrator, last edited by Administrator on Jan 23, 2009 (view change)". On the left side, there is a sidebar with the heading "All Versions" and a list of links: "Click for all versions", "Documentation Demo 2.0", "Documentation Demo 1.1", and "Documentation Demo 1.0". Below this is a search box and a "Search" button. At the bottom of the sidebar, there are links for "Demonstration materials", "Wikis for documentation", and "Introducing workflow". In the main content area, there is a blue expandable section with the text "Here are some bits and pieces that you may find useful." and a bullet point: "Wikis for documentation". A yellow arrow points from the text "Expandable section at top of left-hand panel shows documentation versions" to the blue section. Another dashed box contains the text "More later about using spaces for version control".

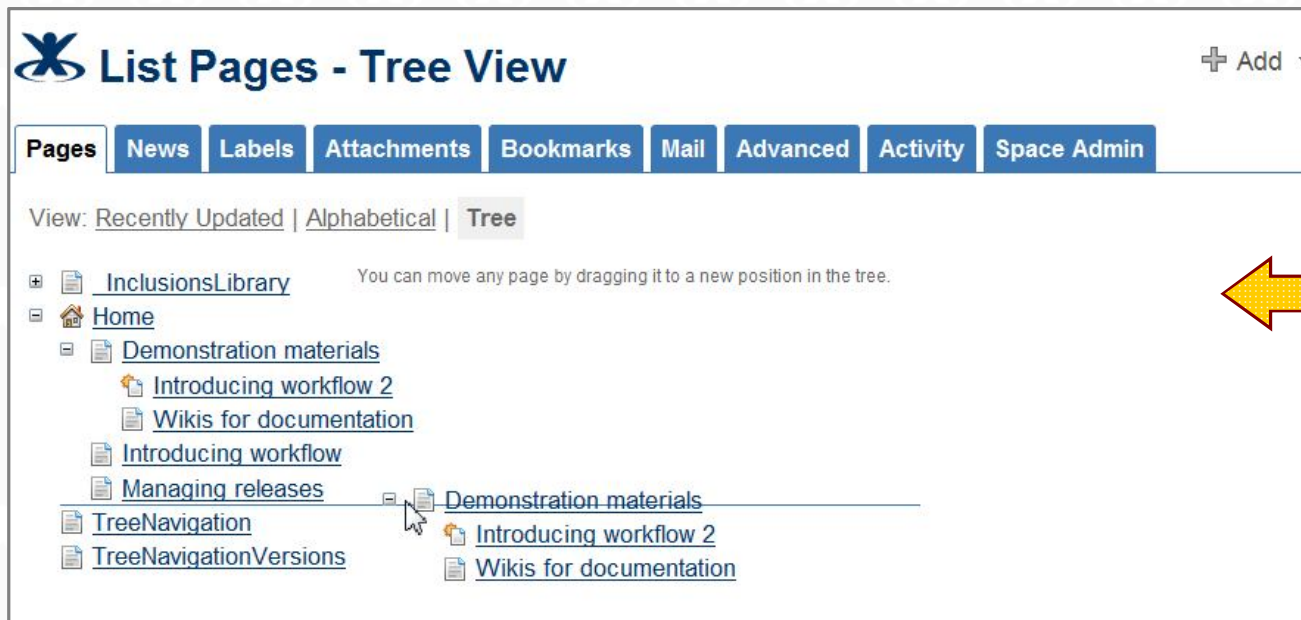
Expandable section at top of left-hand panel shows documentation versions

More later about using spaces for version control

- Page ordering

Live demo

Aaah



**List Pages - Tree View** + Add ▾

Pages News Labels Attachments Bookmarks Mail Advanced Activity Space Admin

View: Recently Updated | Alphabetical | **Tree**

[\\_InclusionsLibrary](#) You can move any page by dragging it to a new position in the tree.

[Home](#)

- [Demonstration materials](#)
  - [Introducing workflow 2](#)
  - [Wikis for documentation](#)
- [Introducing workflow](#)
- [Managing releases](#)
- [TreeNavigation](#)
- [TreeNavigationVersions](#)

[Demonstration materials](#)

- [Introducing workflow 2](#)
- [Wikis for documentation](#)

Drag and drop a page or a page tree to a different location

- Content re-use is alive and well in wikis
- Confluence provides the following macros:
  - {excerpt} – Define a re-usable chunk
  - {excerpt-include} – Copy the re-usable chunk into another page
  - {include} – Copy the entire contents of one page into another page
- Re-use content within one space or across spaces
- Some blog posts (full URLs are in your handouts):
  - [Content re-use on a wiki](http://tinyurl.com/576su6) – <http://tinyurl.com/576su6>
  - [Cross-application plugins](http://tinyurl.com/amypce) – <http://tinyurl.com/amypce>
  - [About the Atlassian Integration Guide](http://tinyurl.com/69ea57) – <http://tinyurl.com/69ea57>

 Live demo

## ■ The {excerpt} macro

```
{excerpt}
```

There are people who don't like cheese. Someone even felt brave enough to ask, "[Is it weird to not like cheese?<http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20090420185638AAihrmR>]" While we may quarrel with the split infinitive, we have to applaud the transparency and bravery shown by this internaut.

```
{excerpt}
```



 **Page with re-usable excerpt**  Edit  Add  Tools

Added by [Administrator](#), last edited by [Administrator](#) on Apr 23, 2009 ([view change](#))

I like cheese!

There are people who don't like cheese. Someone even felt brave enough to ask, "[Is it weird to not like cheese?](#)" While we may quarrel with the split infinitive, we have to applaud the transparency and bravery shown by this internaut.

[Add Labels](#)

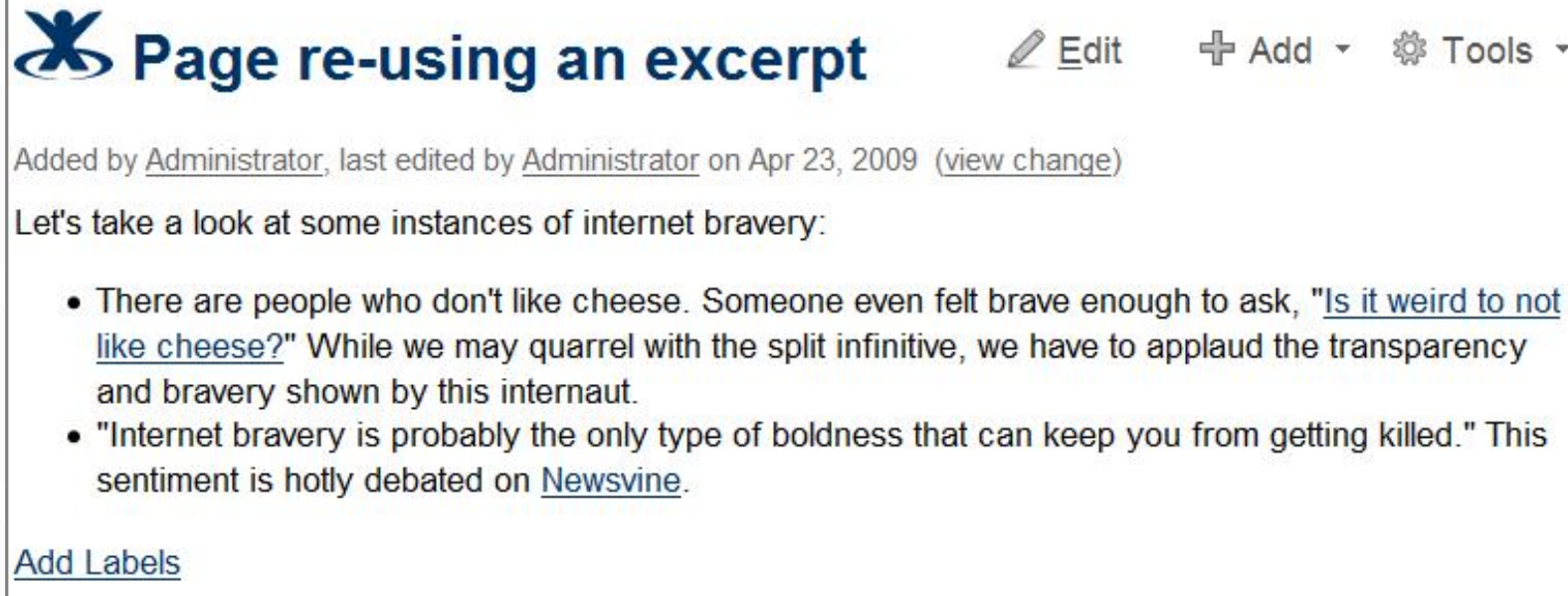







Live demo

## ■ The {excerpt-include} macro

\* `{excerpt-include:Page with re-usable excerpt|nopanel=true}`



The screenshot shows a Confluence page header with the title "Page re-using an excerpt" and navigation options: "Edit", "Add", and "Tools". Below the header, it indicates the page was added by an administrator on April 23, 2009. The main content of the page reads: "Let's take a look at some instances of internet bravery:" followed by a bulleted list of two examples of internet bravery. The first example discusses someone asking "Is it weird to not like cheese?" and the second discusses internet bravery being a type of boldness. At the bottom of the page content, there is a link for "Add Labels".

**Page re-using an excerpt**  [Edit](#)  [Add](#)  [Tools](#)

Added by [Administrator](#), last edited by [Administrator](#) on Apr 23, 2009 ([view change](#))

Let's take a look at some instances of internet bravery:

- There are people who don't like cheese. Someone even felt brave enough to ask, "[Is it weird to not like cheese?](#)" While we may quarrel with the split infinitive, we have to applaud the transparency and bravery shown by this internaut.
- "Internet bravery is probably the only type of boldness that can keep you from getting killed." This sentiment is hotly debated on [Newsvine](#).

[Add Labels](#)

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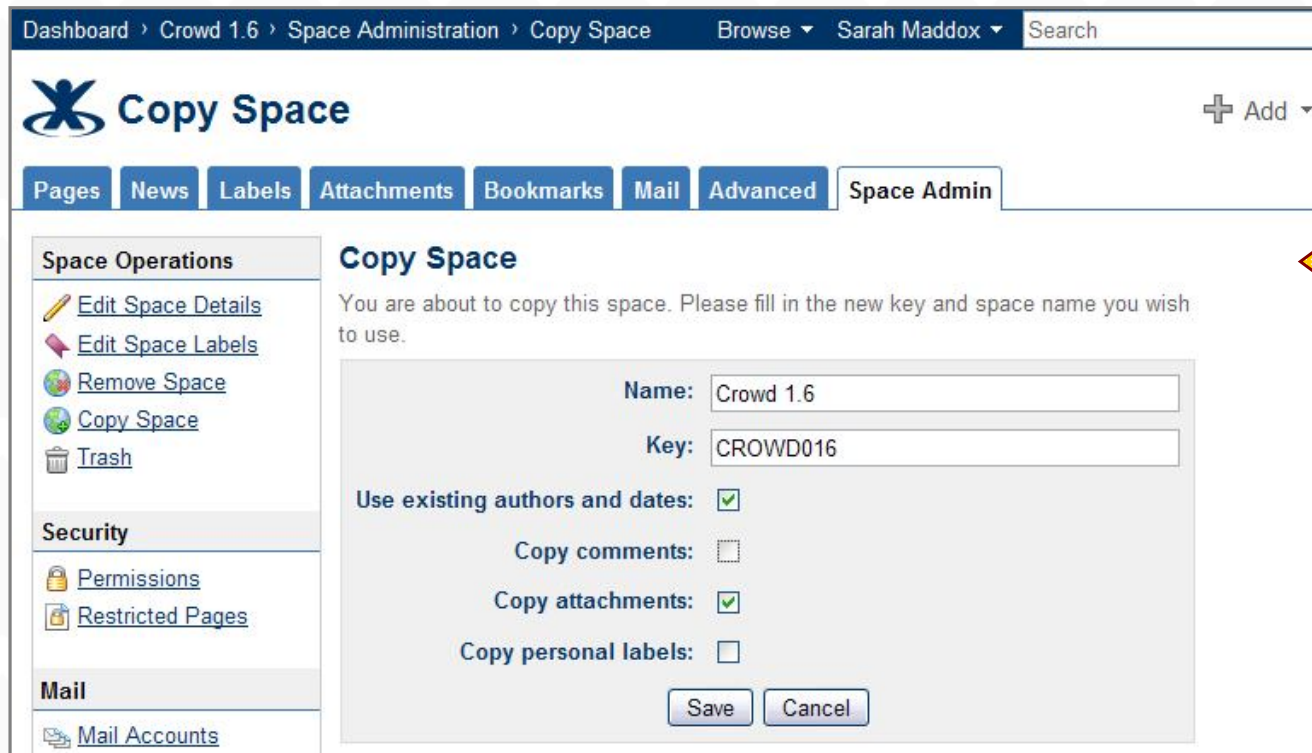




- Leading up to release date
  - Work in the “live” space
  - New --- Create new pages with restricted permissions
  - Updates --- Copy existing pages and restrict viewing
  - Follow the usual draft and review procedure
- Close to release date
  - Copy space to create snapshot of current release ...
- On release date
  - Unhide new pages
  - Update content of existing pages
  - Export new release to PDF, HTML and XML ...

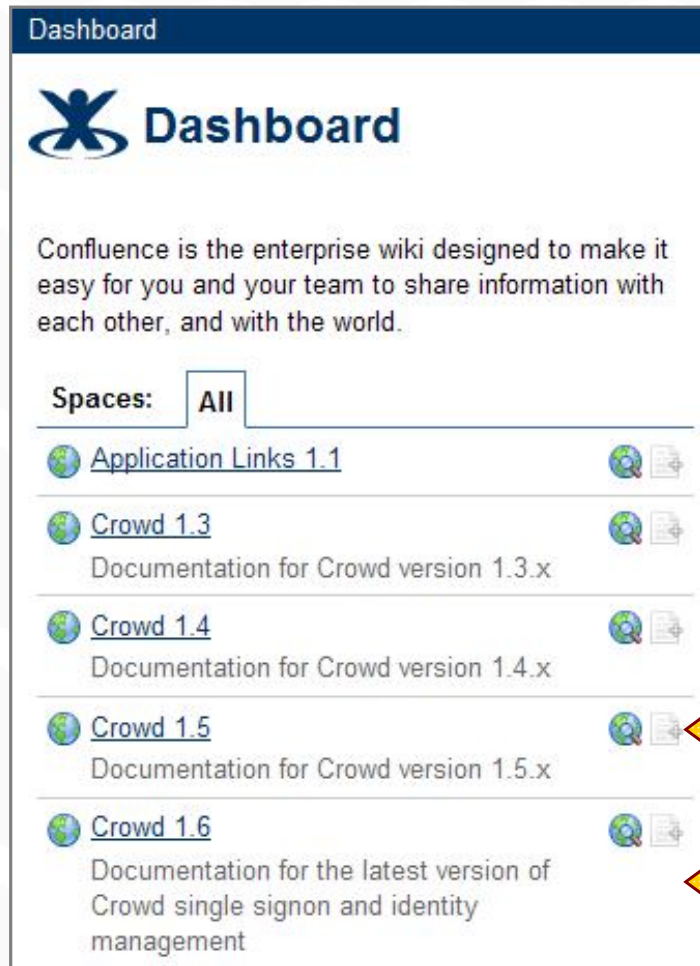
- Copy space to create snapshot of current release

The Copy space plugin is not officially supported  
More about plugins later



“Copy Space” option appears in Space Admin once the plugin is installed

## List of spaces on Dashboard



Example comes from Atlassian's documentation wiki at <http://confluence.atlassian.com>

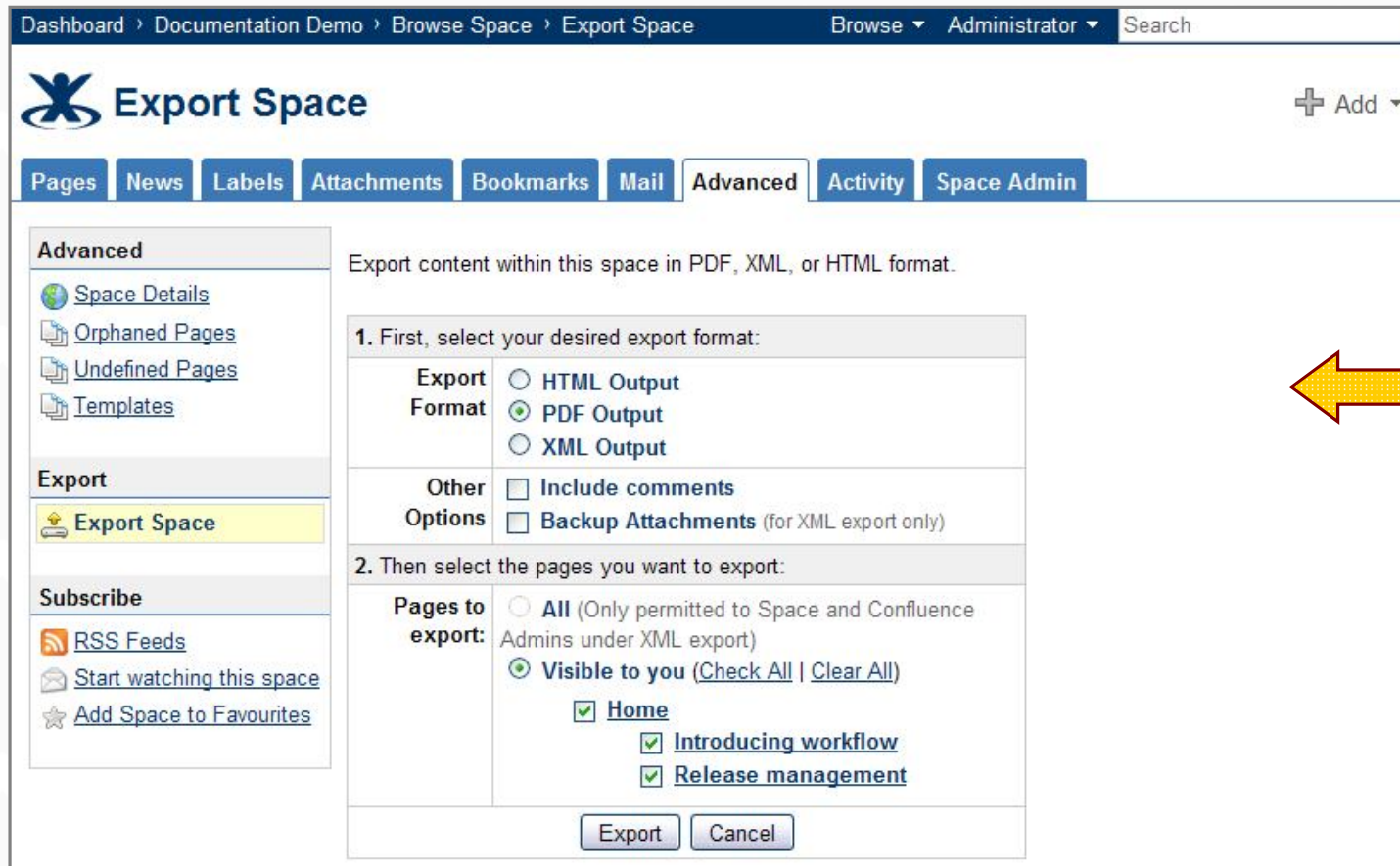


Archive spaces, e.g. CROWD015



CROWD space contains current release

- Export major releases to PDF, HTML and XML



“Export Space” option is available based on space permissions



- Supply the downloadable documentation on the wiki

Example comes from Atlassian's documentation wiki at <http://confluence.atlassian.com>



Dashboard > Documentation > Atlassian Documentation

Browse Sarah Maddox Search

## Download the Crowd documentation

View Add Tools

[Add Attachment](#) | [Download All](#)

Name	Size	Creator (Last Modifier)	Creation Date	Last Mod. Date	Comment
 <a href="#">CROWD-1-6-20081217-PDF.pdf</a>	9.29 MB	<a href="#">Dave O'Flynn</a> (modified by <a href="#">Sarah Maddox</a> )	Dec 18, 2008	Jan 12, 2009	Crowd 1.6 documentation (PDF)
 <a href="#">CROWD-1-6-20081218-HTML.zip</a>	16.22 MB	<a href="#">Dave O'Flynn</a> (modified by <a href="#">Sarah Maddox</a> )	Dec 18, 2008	Jan 12, 2009	Crowd 1.6 documentation (HTML)
 <a href="#">CROWD-1-6-20081218-XML.zip</a>	19.53 MB	<a href="#">Dave O'Flynn</a> (modified by <a href="#">Sarah Maddox</a> )	Dec 18, 2008	Jan 12, 2009	Crowd 1.6 documentation (XML from Confluence 2.10)
 <a href="#">CROWD-1-5-20080904-PDF.pdf</a>	7.24 MB	<a href="#">Sarah Maddox</a> (modified by <a href="#">Sarah Maddox</a> )	Sep 04, 2008	Sep 05, 2008	Crowd 1.5 documentation

Useful for customers who are behind a firewall or using an earlier version of the product

**Introduction**

**Agile development**

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**Release management**

**Steering wiki development**

- How to make your voice heard
- Plugins
- Core wiki functionality
- DITA and DocBook conversions



- Plugins extend the core functionality of the wiki
- Similar to add-ons for your browser
- Developed by Atlassian or third party
- Installed into Confluence by an administrator
- Many – see the [Confluence Extension](#) pages at the link below

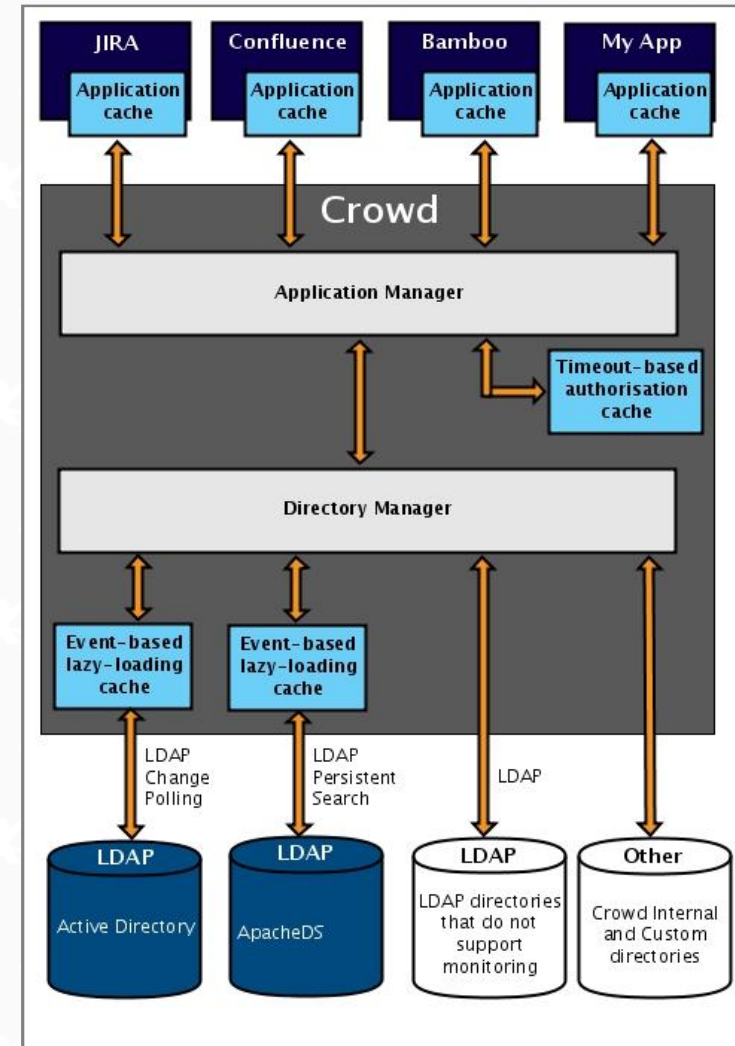
How can you make your voice heard in plugin development?

Try out the plugins. Tell the developers what you want.

Visit the Confluence plugin page at:

<http://confluence.atlassian.com/display/CONFEXT/Plugin+Index>

- [Copy Space plugin](#) – already mentioned
- [Gliffy plugin](#) for diagrams:
  - A commercial plugin which we use in the documentation
  - Drawn on the web page
  - Editable by others, just like a wiki page
  - Displays as a JPEG image



## ■ Already achieved in Confluence:

- Copy Space plugin
- Page ordering
- Pagetree macro bundled with Confluence

## ■ Still to be done in Confluence:

- Bundling and support of Copy Space plugin
- PDF exports
- Version-specific links to help files

Developers are human too ;) Give them praise and “aah”s. Then tell them what you want.

How can you make your voice heard about Confluence in particular?

Use and abuse the wiki.

Raise and vote for issues at:

<http://jira.atlassian.com/browse/CONF/>

## ■ DITA to Confluence conversion

- Open source project and asking for contributors
- DITA2wiki converts from DITA to wiki markup
- Not yet from wiki to DITA

## ■ Confluence to DocBook conversion

- Proprietary solution developed as a Confluence plugin
- Scroll Wiki Exporter
- Wiki to DocBook and PDF

How can you make your voice heard?

DITA2wiki project on SourceForge:  
<http://sourceforge.net/projects/dita2wiki/>

Scroll Wiki Exporter:  
<http://www.scrollyourwiki.com>

- Come up and ask me anything you like
- I have a demo Confluence wiki on my notebook
- Addresses:
  - Email at [sarah@atlassian.com](mailto:sarah@atlassian.com)
  - Blog at <http://ffeathers.wordpress.com>
  - Atlassian at <http://www.atlassian.com>
  - Documentation wiki at <http://confluence.atlassian.com>

**So, the take aways are?**

- 1) Confluence works out of the box for technical documentation.
- 2) Help us to steer wiki development the way we want it to go.