

## Request for what?

The documents in which these protocols are described are called RFC-s (Request For Comments) and they are subject to a complicated process of drafting, reviewing becoming a proposal and ultimately hoping to be a standard. . . . The funny thing is we have a simple process of writing the RFC, discussing it on our mailing lists, adapting the RFCs, the PMC approves them and we use the RFC as a reference to determine whether an implementation is complete. . . . So, I implemented a very simple xml tool to write up RFCs which forced people to focus on the content, not on the layout.

The IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force) uses a system for specifying internet protocols. The documents in which these protocols are described are called RFC-s (Request For Comments) and they are subject to a complicated process of drafting, reviewing becoming a proposal and ultimately hoping to be a standard.

Earlier tonight there was a discussion about RFC-s in the Xaraya group. We use a RFC system in the group as well. Specifying the way we want to code up cool modules in the system are documented in a rigorous XML format which doesn't leave much room for freedom. No layout, no design, just content. The funny thing is we have a simple process of writing the RFC, discussing it on our mailing lists, adapting the RFCs, the PMC approves them and we use the RFC as a reference to determine whether an implementation is complete. Simple yet effective it would seem.

Nope.

In 5 months we have written just over 35 RFCs, that is, reserved the numbers. The content is mostly lacking and comments on the RFC must be begged for almost. Is the solution to make the process more complicated? Better tools? Allow RFCs to be "designed" so they are more attractive for people to read?

My own belief, was just the opposite, based on the assumption that we wanted to create code, not RFCs. So, I implemented a very simple xml tool to write up RFCs which forced people to focus on the content, not on the layout. It seems I need to rethink a bit.