

Managing middleware maintenance, support and release activities in the EMI project

Wednesday, 10 April 2013 11:00 (15 minutes)

Impact

Software Maintenance, Release and User support activities were important phases in the 5-step yearly EMI software lifecycle. These activities' performances were monitored through Key Performance Indicators and the results fed into a continuous improvement process. In this presentation we provide an overview of the policies and procedures used in EMI to manage these activities, focusing on the achievements and lesson learned. Based on the three years experience a few recommendations are given regarding future post-EMI maintenance, support and release activities.

Summary

The European Middleware Initiative (EMI) is a close collaboration of four major European technology providers: ARC, gLite, UNICORE and dCache. Its main objective is the delivery of a consolidated and harmonized set of components for deployment in EGI, PRACE and other DCIs production environments. We will present the fundamental principles, policies and procedures that guided the Software Maintenance, Release and User Support activities within the EMI project. The objective of this talk is to provide an overview of the achievements and the lesson learned during the project and give recommendations on how maintenance, support and release should be handled in the post-EMI future.

Description

The core mission of EMI is to produce and deliver software. The heterogeneity in scope and purpose, the distributed nature of the development teams, the independent project funding cycles have all contributed to the complex development environment EMI has inherited from ARC, dCache, gLite and UNICORE. Starting from existing services already deployed in production infrastructures, EMI support and maintenance efforts gradually shifted to its new and improved services.

Software Maintenance, Release and User support were fundamental activities that contributed to successful delivery of three EMI major releases and multiple updates providing improved services to the user communities.

The Software Maintenance task was responsible to coordinate the continuous maintenance of the middleware components developed within the project and included in an EMI distribution, preserving at the same time their stability in terms of interface and behavior. The EMI Maintenance organization follows the guidelines of the ISO/IEC 14764:2006 standard, and includes a set of organizational roles to handle maintenance implementation, change management and validation, software release, migration and retirement, support and helpdesk activities and SLA monitoring. The presentation contains also an overview of the Change management and release certification process that lead from the submission of a Request for Change to a certified quality EMI software release.

The User Support task was responsible to coordinate the support, together with EGI, to users of the middleware components developed within the project and included in an EMI distribution. It is organized in three levels, of which only the third one is within the EMI project and provides the most specialized knowledge needed to investigate a reported incident. Many Support Units, corresponding approximately to the products delivered by EMI, are established and registered on the reference support portal.

Primary authors: CRISTINA, Aiftimiei (INFN); CECCANTI, Andrea (INFN)

Co-authors: MEGLIO, Alberto (EMI); ROMBERG, Mathilde (JUELICH)

Presenters: CRISTINA, Aiftimiei (INFN); CECCANTI, Andrea (INFN)

Session Classification: Community Platforms

Track Classification: Community Platforms (Track Lead: P Solagna and M Drescher)