

## Summary of Community Retrospective on Jakarta EE 8 Release

The Jakarta EE Steering Committee has completed a retrospective on the Jakarta EE 8 release, including solicitation of input from contributors to specifications, implementers of specifications, users of specifications and those observing from the outside.

The goal of the retrospective was to collect feedback on the Jakarta EE 8 delivery process that can be turned into action items to improve our delivery of subsequent releases, enabling as much of the community to participate as possible.

See the following for direct input collected during this process:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1E7uHGyvJDH0fimxxdHwHtC6iZIC9wwEBfWLRiIVQs80/edit>

### Areas that Went Well

Once all legal hurdles were cleared, excellent progress.

Press and analyst coverage was excellent.

Livestream and Code One announcements went well. Livestream was an enormous success...exceeded expectations. The Marketing Committee retrospective documents the metrics. "JakartaOne was in my opinion a valuable effort in the marketing and evolution of Jakarta EE."

### Areas for Improvement

#### Spec Process and Release Management

From the outside Jakarta EE 8 appeared almost entirely Oracle driven until the very end and it is not clear why. For Jakarta EE 9+, more parties should be engaged visibly moving it forward including Oracle, IBM, Red Hat, Payara, Tomitribe and the community at large. That will accelerate the process and make people feel more collective ownership than they do today.

We need a place on the jakarta.ee website where Specification Committee processes, including the operations doc and checklist, can be clearly documented and updated. A github repo specification-committee was created, intended for publishing on <https://jakarta.ee/committee/specification/>, but it never materialized.

For example, for the Servlet spec, the process was rather chaotic as too many committers were working on the release without coordination with specleads or community. Some "Insider"

contributors knew more what was going on and bypassed good process in the hurry to get things done quickly (but acted in good faith).

With the pointers provided, one community member was unable to actually start contributing as a total outsider. We should define proper instructions on how to start contributing now that the release has been done.

It must be possible to get a release out the door with fewer meetings. It was critical for this release, but prolonged use of this technique will contribute to people feeling in the dark on the release process.

The spec process still has some “chicken and egg” problems where for example, URLs to release artifacts need referencing before the artifacts exist.

Ownership of the Spec pages on the jakarta.ee website needs to be managed on a go-forward basis, ideally by Spec leads/representatives.

We need to reduce the amount of duplicated release status information on web pages and issues. Need to select particular status pages and formats.

### Communications

We need to communicate what we are doing/progress more. Within the Working Group, we are involved in all the meetings and consume all the mailing lists, and here seems to be an abundance of communication. But for those who are not a member of these forums, it is mostly dead silent.

We need to review the approach to Jakarta EE Update calls

- Frequency of these calls
- Speakers and topics for these calls
- Low attendance and struggle to get speakers from the Working Group

“I struggle why the Jakarta Update calls have a seemingly low attendance. I find the content valuable since it was/is the main source to get up-to-speed asap with the status of Jakarta EE’s evolution.”

Engagement via social media was uneven across all members, with some Strategic members ensuring their official channels were supportive, while others did not. This amplification by the respective social media teams from members has a significant impact on overall reach. Need more even engagement via social media from all Strategic members.

There was limited engagement with members’ respective AR/PR outreach, and participation with Eclipse Foundation’s AR/PR activities. Need more ongoing engagement and support.

## Organization

We need to work on further clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee, Specification Committee, EE4J PMC, and Jakarta EE Platform Project.

## Other/General

We need to understand the outside view of the box we (Jakarta EE/Eclipse Foundation) live in - perspectives such as:

- Average programmers asking me why Jakarta EE 8 is a “success” if it lacks any new features compared to Java EE 8, needed for years since Java EE 8.
- Jakarta EE is not driven by “the community” but mostly by a dozen people from even fewer vendors (mostly Oracle).
- Jakarta EE still has pre-assigned spec leads and committers in place still instead of democratically elected ones
- Jakarta EE has projects in incubation state
- Jakarta EE has published empty documents
- The Jakarta EE TCK is only under control of few people due to its complexity and monolith structure.

Outside the box, many doubt any actual value of that release for others than vendors. Hence we should improve four things for Jakarta EE 9:

- (a) Release Early, Release Often. The community wants one release per year \*at least\*.
- (b) Future release must be driven by features, and those features must be of actual value to the end user.
- (c) Do not contain unfinished things like empty docs (be really done with things you pretend to have finished).
- (d) Do no whitewash the status but always tell the naked truth (people will wait if they trust in you).

There is no clear roadmap defined for the evolution of Jakarta EE yet. For outsiders, there seems to be a burning need for clarification on delivery of new features and release cycle, and even how MicroProfile is impacted by this because of the shared Specifications. The javax renaming needs to be solved asap, or at least a decision must be made on how. The feedback I personally receive regarding this topic pains me, because it often floats between annoyance and misunderstanding, which feels like it is hurting the trust and appealingness of the platform for outsiders and newcomers.

Consider process rules to strongly discourage (or prohibit) compatibility certification requests that contain exceptions and/or incomplete challenges.

## Recommended Follow-up Actions

The following are actions the Steering Committee will adopt in response to retrospective feedback.

- 1) Proactive communication of CY2020 Jakarta EE Working Group Program Plan
  - a) This plan itself addresses much of the feedback above
  - b) Recommend sharing it now
  - c) Share budgets when confirmed/approved
- 2) Proactive communication of the Jakarta EE 9 release plan
  - a) Addresses some feedback on near term issues (e.g. move to jakarta namespace)
  - b) Should be placed in context of post Jakarta EE 9 goals
  - c) Participate in Jakarta EE update call on Nov 13 (planned)
  - d) Share when approved by Steering Committee
- 3) Proactive communication of significant Jakarta EE initiatives in general
  - a) Build into any significant planning event
- 4) Review approach to Jakarta EE Update calls as suggested above
  - a) Request Eclipse Foundation staff to drive review
- 5) Communication from Specification Committee on plan for addressing retrospective findings above
  - a) After appropriate review and consensus