

## Pacifica and CoCoMo - A Good Thing for FMS Developers?

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We all know that Adobe is pushing out new products and services at an insane rate these days. Apart from announcing Share at **MAX in Chicago** there were two other products which caught my attention and which are very exciting and a bit scary at the same time: **Pacifica** and **CoCoMo**.

Let me summarize what I know so far about these two products/services and then tell you why I think some of it is a little scary.

### Pacifica

- A service for developers to integrate high-quality voice, messaging and presence into Adobe Flash and Flex applications.
- Version 1 will support high-quality voice chat, text messaging, presence, NAT (Network Address Translation)/firewall traversal, AJAX (Asynchronous JavaScript and XML)/HTML support and Flash/Flex capabilities.
- Future planned features include video chat, peer-to-peer support, Adobe AIR support and PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network) access capabilities.

Sounds like FMS on steroids but as it's a service there's a likelihood that the serverside won't be scriptable. But that's just my initial thought on it. The features are of course jaw dropping: peer to peer VoIP in Flex/Flash/AIR. Wow.

### CoCoMo

- 'CoCoMo is a service for integrating real-time collaboration such as screen sharing and whiteboarding into applications'
- It is built on top of Adobe Connect (formerly Breeze). Connect itself will see an update with an entirely rebuilt Flex based UI.
- APIs for real time data messaging, real time AV (audio, video) streaming, presence, permissions, and real-time file publishing and collaboration

Again this sounds a lot like FMS's features - on top of which Connect was built of course. According to a post by Brian Lesser on the Flash Media List Pacifica will be an add-on to the Flash Player, similar to the current Connect Player. The major breaking news here is that it will go peer to peer at some stage. That's huge huge huge. We'll be able to build a Skype clone in Flex or Flash and integrate it tightly with our own applications.

CoCoMo appears to be a bunch of components which essentially allow you to build your own flavour of Connect, using the Connect back end. All this is really exciting but here my concern: where does this leave FMS and where will it fit in? There also seems to be a significant overlap in terms of features between Pacifica and CoCoMo although the peer to peer aspect may be enough of a differentiator even if audio, video, presence and so on will be supported by both services.

It is clear that many applications that we may build in FMS today will be built on top of Pacifica or CoCoMo. Will that make FMS obsolete for anything but pushing video? Will Adobe discourage us from using FMS for certain applications and why have they chosen to build CoCoMo on top of Connect and not FMS?

Nigel Pegg of Adobe seems to have had heavy involvement in the CoCoMo development - and he used to be heavily involved with the initial FCS components. Could this be a

sign that resources are being shifted away from FMS?

Last but not least, is it a clever move by Adobe to move more and more into the hosted services sector or should they stay out of it and concentrate on selling software and servers?

We all know that Breeze essentially competed (and under its new Connect name still does) with applications which FMS developers could and do develop - minus the screensharing feature of course which to this day has never made it to FMS unless you hack around it. I do have to ask the question: should Adobe really develop, promote and sell a service such as CoCoMo or should they leave the component development to us developers? Where should the line be drawn? Would a decent Connect API not be enough? Or couldn't FMS fulfill all these requirements - it's what Connect uses under the hood, isn't it? Will people like myself be competing with Adobe on yet another front or is this a polite hint to re-orientate ourselves? Do tell.

Looking at the announced FMS3 features I can see no new components and no hint of AS3 support on the server side. Instead there's a lot of talk about the new video codec, increased security features and RTMPE - most of which is directly related to video delivery rather than collaboration. Makes you think doesn't it? Could we see FMS move towards the platform to push video to AMP, the web and custom players while CoCoMo takes the slot of collaborative applications and Pacifica taking the web conferencing slot?

I'm sure it will all make more sense once we find out more and I really don't mind on top of what I build my products - but an Adobe hosted service and a dependency on their back end does not feel as sexy as having my own FMS box to mess with. and even less so if my components will be inferior to what's Adobe about to release.

And one last thing: I have had to work with Connect's web admin API in the past and I can only hope that this new service has seen an overhaul and comes with more detailed docs than the old one - it was not pretty.

Ok so at this stage I know too little about both Pacifica and CoCoMo to be certain what the future of FMS development may hold. Many of the announced features are mouth watering yet they leave a slightly bitter after taste too. What's everyone else's take on this?