[Photo Novel] Guided tour of Mobilizon

« OK, so, what is Mobilizon? How can this free and federated tool help me to progressively do without Facebook for my groups, pages and events? And where do I go to get started, where do I sign up? »

Let’s answer these questions with a lot of pictures, and (relatively) few words.

- la version française originale de cet article est ici sur ce blog ;
- Read here an introductory article describing the history, current features and future plans for Mobilizon.

This is Rôse, the mascot of Môbilizon

Conceived and designed by David Revoy (the author-illustrator of Pepper and Carott, who has just self published albums of his webcomic), Rôse represents the people for whom we designed Mobilizon.
Meet Rôle, Mobilizon’s mascot. 
Illustration: David Revoy (CC-By)

A fennec whose wicks recall the star of a compass rose, Rôle is autonomous, voluntary and lives in a beautiful but arid, sometimes hostile landscape. Rôle needs to get together with her fellow fennecs beings to organize and mobilize themselves around actions that can change her world, one grain of sand at a time.

If you don’t recognize yourself in Rôle, don’t panic: Mobilizon might still work for you! However, this service might surprise and confuse. You won’t find any ads, influencers, or the hobby where we watch the lives of our loved ones staged like a reality TV show.
To better understand our intentions and the choices behind Mobilizon, you can visit joinmobilizon.org (short version), or read our lengthy introductory article on the Framablog (detailed version).

Our photo novel: Rôse Mobilize

Rôse discovers an event on Mobilizon

Rôse feels that the hyper-consumerist society in which we live is destroying the planet. One day, on one of her usual social media platform, Rôse comes across a link to an event called « More trees, less ads! » The title amuses and challenges her, so she clicks.
About this event

Let's hide the advertising-monitoring screens!

Screens that monitor us

These screens pollute our city, our public spaces and our brains.
Not the worst thing is that they observe us and take notes.
Indeed, the sensors integrated into these advertising screens try to measure our feelings and our reactions to the advertisements that are shown.

Turn your back to the ad (with an umbrella)

We're not sure that it's hide-and-seek to hide these advertising screens.
On the other hand, nothing prevents you from standing in front of these screens with the largest umbrella in your collection, to darken the idea to the sensors.
These moments of human advertising blockage are often a time of proximity where you can speak to passers-by that you are protecting their privacy.

An ad block in a tweet

The idea of this event is to challenge people passing by in the public space. To incite them to contribute to the action, you can offer them to hold the umbrella for a few minutes in exchange for a平方米!
We have many umbrellas to distribute throughout the day, hopefully passers-by will play the game.

Location
Brighton Station
Mon, Feb 1, 2023
See map

Date and time
On Sat, Mar 7, 2023 from 4:00 AM to 12:00 AM

Organized by
The Centralia Project
@the_centralia_project

Website
contributephoto.org

These events may interest you

Móbilizón
She arrives on a website she has never seen before which seems to be called « Mobilizon ». She is invited to go and hide an advertising videoscreen by standing in front of it with an umbrella. She learns that those screens are not only polluting our public spaces with images that capture our attention, but they are also equipped with cameras and sensors that analyze the number of passers-by, their reactions, etc.

She would like to participate in the event presented but doesn’t want to create a new account on yet another site. Rôse decides to participate « anonymously » in the event.

You do not need an account to participate in an event published on Mobilizon: the site simply asks Rôse to confirm her participation by email. That’s OK, she already has a « trash » email address that she uses for her online shopping, and unfamiliar sites that may resell her contact information.
A few days later, Róże goes to the event site and meets the group of ContribUtopists. They invite her to exchange a quarter of an hour of her time, blocking the advertising screen with an umbrella, for a tree cutting that she could plant at home. Róże loves the idea and spends the morning sympathizing with the ContribUtopists.

**Róże registers on Mobilizon**

Benedict, the group’s organiser, explains to Róże that these screens work like Facebook: they impose advertising in our lives while capturing our behaviors and data. He advises Róże to go to mobilizon.org to find out for herself about the alternative that the ContribUtopists have chosen.
Róse is convinced, she wants to try Mobilizon. She understands she needs to find an instance, i.e. a Mobilizon website that will host her account and data. She tells herself that if she has to entrust her data, she wants to find a trusted host. So she goes to the « about » page of several Mobilizon instances to see how these hosts present themselves and what their rules are.
Ròse has found her instance, and off she goes. She suspects that she is not going to leave Facebook overnight, but thinks that she can start by registering on Mobilizon, even if it means having to publish the links to the Mobilizon events and groups she wants to promote on Facebook.
Rôse wants to join a group

Once her account is confirmed and her profile complete (finally a site that doesn’t require acres profile information!) Rôse goes to the ContribUtopists page to join the group.
Unfortunately, the « join the group » button does not work and is grayed out. Obviously, you can’t ask to join a group, you have to be invited. When Różė looks into the matter, she realizes that it’s just a matter of time before this feature is added to the site.

She looks for ways to get invited to the ContribUtopists group and sees that there is a post « Join the ContribUtopists! » on the group’s page. These posts look a bit like a blog.
She follows the instructions and goes to the page of the event she attended and adds a comment reminding everyone who she is and asking to be invited to the group.
The surprise birthday of Rôse’s mother

Rôse’s mother’s birthday is coming up. Narcisse Boréal, her dad, asks her daughter how to organize a surprise party without using Facebook, so as not to blow the whistle. Rôse, the family geek, explains to her dad how to create an account on Mobilizon.
Narcisse creates an event to invite family and friends to his partner’s surprise birthday party. It’s a fairly short form, and the options are self-explanatory.
Update event Iris's birthday!

**General information**

**Title**

Iris's birthday

**Starts on**

12:00 AM

**Ends on**

9:00 PM

**Description**

Israel will be the one to announce he's 12 very important turns! Let's celebrate!

The cake tasting and the opening of the gifts will take place at 5.30 pm!

😊 Self-management 😊

Please come well something to eat and drink!

Join the fun!

Possible to add an event to:

Website (URL)

**Organizers**

Receita Rebeca @receita.rebeca

**Who can view this event and participate**

🌟 Visible everywhere on the web (public)

**Public comment moderation**

Allow all comments from logged-in users

Cancel event if all except for attendees

**Status**

Update event
Rôte goes to her Mobilizon instance, but does not see the event created by her father. She realizes that he has registered on another Mobilizon website, another instance. Fortunately, these instances are federated: using the search bar of her instance, Rôte can find the event that her father has created on his instance.

Rôte compartmentalizes family and activism

Rôte hesitates to register for her father’s event. She doesn’t want her family to see that she used this account for her activism within the ContribUtopists! So she decides to go to her account settings to create a new profile.
Róse registers for her dad’s event with this new profile, which she will use only for family events.
She takes the opportunity to share the event with a few family members and then exports the event to add the date to her online calendar.
Rôse mobilizes for the ContribUtopists

In her notifications, Rôse notices that the ContribUtopists have read her message and invited her to join the group. She goes back to her activist profile to accept the invitation.

In the group, she sees a new discussion about the lessons learned from the previous event and the group’s next initiative.
After a few weeks, Rôse’s involvement and commitment did not go unnoticed. Benedict, the administrator of the ContribUtopists group on Mobilizon, decides to promote Rôse as moderator of the group.
Rôse makes collective intelligence work!

Becoming a moderator will allow Rôse to organize the next ContribUtopists event. She creates a draft of the event « Another Collage on the Wall » to discuss it with the group.
However, Różé does not know how to best describe the event. She decides to make collective intelligence work for her and create a collaborative writing pad. On Mobilizon, this is done in two clicks, from the group’s Resources space.
The group worked well, the text is great. Róse just has to put it in the Another Collage on the Wall event description and publish it!
Another collage on the wall

By @the_contributopists

Because the street belongs to everyone, it also belongs to all of us!

Let’s take the opportunity to embellish it! To make it political! To make it militant!
We have to stick together! Whether you simply want to embellish the walls with your drawings or spread a progressive and inclusive message, or even just come and see: join the happy team!

Location
Tower of London
Tower Hill (London)
Show map

Date and time
On Thursday, November 5, 2020 from 6:00 PM to 11:00 PM

Organized by
The ContribUtopists
@the_contributopists

Comments
Prologue: Fennecs don’t fall far from the burrow

A few days later, Rôse goes to the event. What a joy to see so many people registered! Suddenly, as she was reading the comments of the event, Rôse utters a little cry of surprise:
Several members of her family registered for the Another Collage on the Wall event, without knowing that it was Róża who had organized it! There’s even her father asking to join the ContribUtopists.

With a smile, Róża thinks that she will have to show them how to create several profiles on Mobilizon, if they are interested.
Mobilizon.org, our gateway to Mobilizon

Not everyone is like Rôse and everyone will have their own way of approaching Mobilizon: some will want to sign up right away, others will want to understand the political concepts behind the digital tool, and yet others will want to know how it works.

That’s why we created Mobilizon.org: it’s THE site to remember and share, which will direct you to

- Mobilizon discovery tools, including a demo instance;
- our selection of instances (including the one we host, for French-speakers only), hosted by organizations that have been friendly enough to launch this federation together;
- a community index of instances, which will fill up as we go along;
- help tools and mutual aid to document and exchange tips for Mobilizon.
It took time and hard work to create all these tools. Our small association (35 members, 10 employees) is financed almost exclusively by donations. If you would like to support this work and encourage us to continue, you can do so by making a donation, which is tax deductible for French taxpayers.

Support Framasoft

Another way to support our actions is to take them over, use them and make them known. From now on, it is up to you to get together, organize and mobilize... with Mobilizon!

Get started on Mobilizon.org
Mobilizon. Your events. Your groups. Your data.

Mobilizon is our free-libre and federated tool to free events and groups from the clutches of Facebook. After two years of work, today we are releasing the first version of this software, along with a whole series of tools so that you can quickly get started.

- la version française originale de cet article est ici sur ce blog;
- Discover how Mobilizon works in pictures, with our use case examples

Delayed because of pandemic

Announced almost two years ago on the Framablog (FR), Mobilizon was born of our need to offer a solid alternative to Facebook to friends who organize climate walks, LGBT+ association organisations and new educational workshops with that platform’s limited options.

The success of our fundraising campaign (spring 2019) reinforced our belief that there was great demand for such an alternative. To this end, we worked with designers to understand the expectations of activists who use Facebook to gather and organize.
We planned to launch the first version (the « v1 ») of Mobilizon this summer. Life, however, has other plans. A global pandemic and a French quarantine induced a rush on the online collaboration services our small association offers. Our entire team, including the developer who carries the Mobilizon project on his shoulders, put their activities on hold to contribute to the collective effort.

However, the stakes behind Mobilizon are high. In our opinion, to be successful, Mobilizon must be:

- **Emancipatory.** It is a software that we want to be free, federated and separate from the attention economy.
- **Practical.** Mobilizon is above all a tool for managing your events, your profiles and your groups.
- **Welcoming.** We have created and incorporated tools explaining how to use its features, to find your Mobilizon instance or even how to install it yourself.
Building the freedoms that Facebook denies us

Federate to foster diversity

There is not one but several Mobilizons. By going to Mobilizon.org you will find a selection of instances: websites created by those who have installed Mobilizon software on their server. Each of these instances offers you the same service, but from a different host.

Multiplying Mobilizon instances is healthier for the Internet as it avoids the formation of web giants. Decentralizing usage over multiple Mobilizon instances prevents the creation of huge datasets that could be exploited for surveillance or mass manipulation.

It is also healthier for you: it allows you to find your host, the one whose management, terms of use, business model, moderation charter, etc. match your
values.

Each of these Mobilizon instances can federate with others, as well as interacting with them. For example, if the « UniMobilized » and « MobilizedSports » instances are federated, UniMobilized user Camille will be able to register for the karate course her teacher has created on the MobilizedSports instance.

![An event on Mobilizon](image)

**A software that respects your freedoms**

Mobilizon is a free-libre software, so it respects your freedoms. This means for example, that its source code, the « recipe » that allows one to concoct Mobilizon, is made public for transparency’s sake. People who know how to code are free to browse the source code as they wish, to see for themselves whether there are hidden features (spoiler alert: there aren’t!).

Moreover, the culture of free-libre software is a community-driven culture of contribution. Mobilizon should therefore be seen as a digital commons, that everyone can use and to which everyone can contribute. Your remarks, feedback,
skills (in translation, tests, explanations, code, etc.) will be considered as contributions to the common project.

Finally, if the direction given to the Mobilizon code does not suit you, you are completely free to create your own team and « fork » the software. Thus, several governances and directions can be given to the same initial project, which is a strong defence against any monopolization.

![Illustration: David Revoy (CC-By)](image)

**Saving your attention from the economy**

The truth is, Mobilizon may feel confusing. Where most platforms gamble on your user experience and flatter your ego to better capture your attention and data, Mobilizon is a tool. It is not a hobby where you can scroll endlessly, simply a service to organize your events and groups.

*Mobilizon is designed to not monopolize your attention: no infinite scrolling, no running to check likes and new friends.*
Mobilizon makes it futile to inflate the number of participants in your event or the number of members in your group. When each account can create an infinite number of profiles, the numbers displayed by the membership counters are no longer an influencer’s badge.

Mobilizon is designed so that you can follow the news of a group, but not of an individual: it is impossible to follow a single profile. In Mobilizon, profiles have no « wall », « thread » or « story »: only groups can publish posts. The goal is to get rid of the self-promotional reflexes where we stage our lives to be the person at the center of our followers. With Mobilizon, it is not the ego but the collective that counts.

Finally, if there is no ability to like a comment or a message in a group discussion, it keeps the exchanges informative. This prevents the common exchange from turning into a dialogue-duel where you have to keep and save face.

In fact... we have to stop comparing Mobilizon to a free-libre Facebook clone. If user engagement is the new oil the giants of the web drill for, Mobilizon is an attempt, at our small level, of a tool designed for attentional sobriety.
A service for your events, your profiles, your groups.

Mobilizon allows you to register for events

On Mobilizon instances you can find many events published by organizers: date, location (geographical or online), description... The event form gives you quick access to essential information, as well as the ability to register, add the event to
your calendar or share it.

The search bar will give you results that match your keywords, your location or a specific time. This search is done within the events on the Mobilizon website you are browsing, but also across all events on other Mobilizon websites to which yours is linked, or « federated ».

When the organizers allow it, you can participate anonymously in an event: no need to log in a Mobilizon account, only a confirmation email will be required!

![Image](image.png)

*illustration : David Revoy (CC-By)*

**One account, one instance, several profiles**

If you wish to participate more actively in events and groups (or even organize them yourself), you will need to create an account on one of the existing Mobilizon instances.

Before signing up, remember to find out about the instance you are interested in (starting with its « about » page). By looking at who administers this instance,
their content moderation policy, their business model, who they choose to federate with or not, etc., you will know if the governance they apply to their Mobilizon website is right for you.

A single account will allow you to create as many profiles as you want. Note that multiple profiles are not a cyber security measure (which should be provided by other tools and practices). It is a social partitioning tool, allowing you to display different facets of yourself depending on the social groups you are involved with.

This will allow you, for example, to reserve one profile to register for family birthdays and another for work-related conferences, or to distinguish between groups related to your hobbies and those where you organize your activist activities.

In the left column you can see that this is Róse’s second profile.

**Groups to discuss and organize**

Currently, you must wait until you have been invited into a Mobilizon group.
before selecting one of your profiles to join. You can also create and organize your own group to invite whoever you want and define roles (and therefore permissions) of the new members of the group you administer.

In Mobilizon, groups have a public page where you can display a short presentation of the group, upcoming events and the latest posts published.

In the group members’ area, members can (depending on their permission level) start and participate in discussions, create new events and public messages or add new resources (link to a collaborative writing pad, online survey, etc.) in the group resources page.

A group page as seen by one of the members of this group
Mobilizon.org, the site to share

To help you find your way around and choose your instance, we designed Mobilizon.org. It’s a site that will guide you on your first steps, whether you want to get some info, test Mobilizon, find your instance, learn more, or contribute to Mobilizon’s future.

There you will find links to our facilitation tools, in French and English, such as:

- Our demo instance, which allows you to test Mobilizon with full impunity because all data is deleted every day;
- The site JoinMobilizon.org which briefly presents the Mobilizon software and tool;
- The complete documentation of Mobilizon, to teach you how to use it or how to install it on a server;
- Our selection of instances federated together (including ours, open only to French-speakers, on mobilizon.fr), hosted by partners who have kindly agreed to jumpstart this Mobilizon federation with us;
- A more complete index of the publicly available instances;
- Our forum to contribute to the community around Mobilizon software;
- Our translation platform for multilingual people who want to contribute;
- The git repository for people who want to contribute to the code.
Mobilizon, a common contributor

Meet Rôse, Mobilizon’s mascot.

From the very start, Mobilizon has been a collective adventure. Framasoft would
first of all like to thank and congratulate the developer, an employee of the association, who has devoted nearly two years of his professional life to making this tool a reality.

Of course our thanks also go to all the members, volunteers and employees, who contributed to the project, as well as to Marie-Cécile Godwin (conception, UX design), Geoffrey Dorne (graphic & UI design) and David Revoy (illustrations).

Finally, we would like to thank all the people who believed in this project and supported it through their sharing, their attention and their money, especially during the fundraising that helped finance this first version.

In the coming months, **Framasoft is eager to see the creation of a community that will take over the Mobilizon code** and, in the long term, take charge of its maintenance. This will be done according to good will and over time, but we hope that this new chick will one day be strong enough from your contributions to leave the nest of our association.

In the meantime, we are going to be very attentive to your feedback, your corrections and your desires on the evolutions to be brought to this tool. We also have a few ideas on our side and we have no doubt that Mobilizon will grow in the coming months.

**Support Framasoft**

This work can be acheived thanks to the support and donations that finance our association. Donations represent 95% of our income and give us our freedom of action. As Framasoft is recognized as being in the public interest, a donation of 100 € from a French taxpayer will, after deduction, be reduced to 34 €.

In the meantime, it is now up to you to mobilize to make Mobilizon known!

**Get started on Mobilizon.org**
Sepia Search : our search engine to promote PeerTube

Today we are opening a new door on PeerTube, making it easier to discover videos that are published in a federation that is growing every day.

PeerTube is the alternative we are developing so that everyone can emancipate their videos from YouTube and the likes. Except that unlike YouTube, PeerTube is not a single platform.

PeerTube is a software that specialists can install on a server to create multiple video platforms (called « instances »), which can be linked together within a federation.

Opening the door on a diverse federation

The problem with federation is that it is much more varied and complex than a one-website platform. It’s all well and good to decentralize to prevent the creation of new web giants, but where’s the front door?

Do we really need to explain the notion of instance? Insist on the need to find one’s own and therefore to learn about the federation policies of each instance? ... to someone who simply asks :

But... I just wanted to watch videos!

The solution would be to create a search engine for all the videos published through PeerTube.

If you open a single gateway to the federation, then the structure that holds the keys to that gate gets great powers. They get the power to decide what will be accepted (or rejected) in the search directory. They get the power to record who searched for what, when, from where. And they get the power to intervene in the order and display of the results.

It is on such power mechanisms that Google has built its monopoly. Obviously, at
Framasoft, we do not seek to be in a position of power... and even less to follow Google’s (bad) example! Nevertheless, we want to show the emancipating potential of this software which allows to reclaim the means to stream videos.

We therefore take the responsibility of opening Sepia Search, our gateway to videos and videomakers on PeerTube. It’s a door we open while limiting as much as possible the power we’d get, to keep respecting your attention as well as your browsing.

Presenting PeerTube without monopolizing attention

In the federation universe, the « fediverse », there are many PeerTube instances where people can sign up and create as many channels as they want, channels where they can upload their videos.

Our goal with Sepia Search is not to present all of this content. We simply want to show you the space of autonomy that PeerTube opens up, respecting the values of transparency, openness and freedom that we have been defending for more than 16 years.
Here is Sepia, PeerTube’s mascot – Illustration CC-By David Revoy

**A publicly auditable indexing tool (transparency)**

Behind Sepia Search, there are two softwares.

The first one is the engine: it is the software where you enter a search, it compares this search with the list of contents in its directory, and then gives the matching results.

The second one is the bodywork, the chassis: it is the software that will present the search bar, receive the request you typed, and show you the results, specifying in orange where you will go when you click on « Go and watch this video ». 
The source code, the « recipe » of each of these softwares, is transparent. We publish it on our software forge. Anyone who is able to read this code can do so, and determine if there are tools to cheat with the results display, or others to spy on your behavior.

We already know that these codes are ethical and do not spy on you. We have a good reason: as stated in our TOS, we are really, really not interested in your data!

**An *a posteriori* moderated search engine (openness)**

Not all PeerTube instances will be referenced on Sepia Search. This search engine will be based on the list of instances we maintain at instances.joinpeertube.org.

We recently announced a change in the indexing policy for this list, to align with the policy for all of the services we offer:

- Compliance with French law
- Compliance with our Terms and Conditions of Use
- Respect of our moderation policy (FR only, for now)

Thus, if we are notified of an instance where contents explicitly condone terrorism or promote historical revisionism, we will remove it from the index (non-compliance with French laws, which we insist on in our TOS). Such removal will eliminate all videos hosted by that instance from the search results.

On the other hand, if one or more people come to abuse the time of our moderators with inappropriate and abusive reports, their word will be discredited and ignored (as indicated in our moderation policy (FR)).

This moderation, which we hope will be as light as possible, will allow us to limit the results offered by Sepia Search to videomakers who upload original content and to channels (or even instances) that contribute to emancipate.
A reproducible tool, adaptable to your conditions (freedom)

It may sound paradoxical to talk about openness in order to detail the conditions under which we close Sepia Search to certain content (especially illegal content).

However, at Framasoft, we believe in the paradox of tolerance, and therefore that openness can only be maintained if the limits of this openness are honestly defined and defended.

We are aware that this is a point of view we get from our French culture (or even
from Western European culture). It may, for example, shock people from a North American culture (where unconditional Free Speech is a cultural norm) or from « official » Chinese culture (where, currently, the government sets strict limits on freedom of expression).

We don’t want to impose our culture, nor do we want to deny it. This is why we made sure, legally and technically, that everyone is free to set and host their own instance list, indexing engine and search site, by copying and adapting what we have created.

Sepia Search is just our gateway to PeerTube. This site aims to introduce you to the emancipatory PeerTube we work for, with our culture, activism and subjectivity.

Expecting an actor to do everything, all by theirself, is in fact a reflex of submission to the internet of platforms. It is up to you to take the power (and responsibilities) by hosting your search engine, set up according to your culture, your indexing policy and your values!

Illustration CC-By David Revoy
What Sepia Search can do for you

If we’ve done a good work, Sepia Search will allow you to discover videos and therefore channels (or even PeerTube instances) that will interest you!

The Sepia Search site has been designed to inform you while respecting your attention:

- The results will be the same for everyone, based only on your search (and the language of your browser’s language), and absolutely not pre-sorted according to a profile (because there is no profiling, here!);
- The results are presented in a clear and detailed way, to avoid the attention war leading to clickbait thumbnails and all caps over-the-top titles;
- Search filters give you the power to sort the results out and display those you really want;
- If you want to see a video from the results, Sepia Search will redirect you directly to the instance where it is hosted (since we have no interest in locking you into the search engine’s website). This is a way to help anyone experience and understand the notion of federation.
The 2 first results when you type « Talk » in.

The search engine that runs Sepia Search is a free « libre » software, which means that it is open to modifications and adaptations. More advanced uses (through what is called an API) will very quickly allow even more emancipation.

For example, Internet users using Firefox will be able to add Sepia Search to the list of search engines in their browser directly from the site. Likewise, our engine (or another installation of the same engine) will be a tool for extensions that notify you when a YouTube video is also available on PeerTube, and will probably contribute to their efficiency.

**A Community Funded Tool**

Sepia Search is an additional and necessary step in the roadmap to PeerTube v3, for which a crowdfunding is still underway.
Being able to search for videos in the federation was in high demand, which is why we made it the first step in our roadmap. Prior to PeerTube v2.3, when using the search bar for an instance, results were limited to the videos in the federation bubble of that instance.

Thanks to your donations which have funded our work, we released version 2.3 of PeerTube at the end of July. Since then, the same search can now display results from all PeerTube instances listed in a « Search PeerTube » search engine, including the one we provide.

However, the usage surveys conducted by Marie-Cécile (the designer who has been working with us on this roadmap to improve PeerTube) and the feedback we have received from you has made us realize that this was not enough: we also needed a specific web site to promote this search engine.

Click to try SepiaSearch

Your donations fund our freedom of action: we understood the need, so we announced in mid-August that we were going to rearrange our workload and free some time up to fulfill the need, which we felt was a priority. This is how Sepia Search was born.

**Last stop before the live!**

There is now one big straight line on our roadmap to PeerTube v3: implementing live, peer-to-peer video streaming! As we announced, this will be a first
implementation of this feature, and it will be very spartan (no chat module, no filters, no emoticons).

Illustration CC-By David Revoy

At the time of writing, nearly 1,000 people have funded €42,000 of the €60,000 needed to fully develop this v3. While the world is facing a pandemic, we did not find it decent to condition these developments to your donations. Whether we collect the €60,000 or not, we will produce this v3, even if we have to do it on our own funds (which we did for the v2).

We still hope that some of you will share our values and our approach, and that by talking about this project as widely as possible, we will manage to raise this sum (and not to overstretch our budget for next year!).

To support PeerTube, please consider sharing the roadmap page where anyone can make a donation!
Learn more

- Find videos on Sepia Search
- Learn more about PeerTube
- Support the roadmap to v3

Learn even more (experts)

- Our PeerTube documentation
- Our instances index, moderated according to
  - Our TOS
  - Our moderation policy (FR)
- Search engine source code (complete with the web client)
- Instances index source codex
  - Create your own instance list for the index
- PeerTube source code

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Our plans for PeerTube v3: progressive fundraising, live streaming coming next fall

Today, we are publishing the roadmap for the next six months of PeerTube’s development. With your help, we want to continue improving on this software that allows individuals, structures and collectives to emancipate from YouTube’s chokehold and regain power over how their videos are hosted.

Just like all the other information regarding PeerTube, this article is directly published in both French and English so that you can share it beyond the language barrier, and so that French speakers are not the only ones promoting, supporting and funding software that has been translated into 16 languages, and is used all around the world.
Creating the world after with PeerTube

From YouTube channels to Facebook lives, as well as Amazon-Twitch, Instagram, Snapchat and Tiktok videos, the web giants’ tools are made with the same political ideology in mind: surveillance capitalism. Their goal is simple: get your attention in to study your behaviors, file them and improve their targeted advertising. Their method is effective: offering as much software comfort and immediate gratification as possible, in order to make you abandon your control over your tool, so that they can invade and fill your available human brain time.

As such, these tools are perfectly adapted for people who have no issue with a society based on over-consumption, and who trust multi-billionaire companies (and therefore the « market ») to decide what will or will not be shown on our screens (like with Tiktok, which moderates the videos and accounts of users they deem too ugly, fat or poor).

At Framasoft, we’re on the other side, the one that wants to see a contribution-based society arise.

Connected even when isolated. Illustration CC-By-SA association LILA

The pandemic we are currently going through has been a good opportunity for us
to question what we are doing and what we want to do: we thought about our role in this vaunted « world after ». More than ever, we believe that our place is close to those people who make efforts and contribute to a more human, more resilient and more respectful society. And we believe that PeerTube is a tool that can be of use to the people who defend this vision of society.

Because it is free and federated, and as such efforts have to be made to share power and responsibilities, because it democratizes online video hosting, because it empowers academies and allows previously marginalized communities to show themselves and exist... We are convinced that PeerTube is a tool that we must strengthen so that it can even better serve those who participate in this contribution society.

QueerMotion is a French-speaking PeerTube instance hosted by and for queer creators.
The « Roadmap » shows up on JoinPeertube.org

We just released a roadmap describing our intentions for the next six months of PeerTube’s development, which will lead to its third version, a « v3 ». These six months will be split between 4 steps, and each step will focus on a specific part of PeerTube. The idea behind this v3 really is to strengthen what’s already there, based on the feedback we got from instance hosters, video creators and viewers.

Step 1
€10,000

Global search
(June)

- Throughout the fediverse
- Facilitate index creation
- Announcements
- WIP to improve UX/UI

We are aware that searching for videos on a PeerTube instance can be frustrating for viewers who just want to get access to content without having to wonder who’s federated with who. For the first step of this roadmap, we will create a globalized video index to make it easier to search for content throughout the whole federation. This index will be made so that it can be easily reproduced and configured so that anyone can offer their own index, with its own eligibility rules. We hope to see indexes with no adult content, others with only content from instances dedicated to videogames, and so on.
If each version of PeerTube has brought its share of moderation tools, we are aware that those features are essential for the teams that administer instances, manage their federation bubble and moderate the content hosted there. For the 2nd step of development, we will dedicate a month to developing and improving moderation tools. From reports monitoring to fighting spam, without forgetting moderation history: our list is already quite full and we will prioritize it depending on the feedback we got.

- Feedback on reports
- Facilitating moderation
- Sharing blacklists (spam)
- WIP to improve UX/UI
During the third step of the roadmap, we want to improve on the **ergonomy and display of Peertube’s video playlists**. The goal is to allow video creators to more easily embed playlists into their websites as well as their social media threads.

In addition, we want to make it easier to contribute to PeerTube’s code. To this end, we will **improve the plugins system** that allows for the addition of new features to PeerTube without having to access the code itself. We want to create a video annotation tool by ourselves. This will allow us to better understand how to facilitate and highlight the work made by those who contribute to PeerTube by creating plugins.

**PeerTube v3 : going live !**

The 4th and final step of this roadmap will be dedicated to the development of a new, highly anticipated feature: **live peer-to-peer video streaming**. We ran some tests, we know that this is a big undertaking, but we are confident that we can do it.

But be careful, with a single full-time developer on this project, we will not program the « twitch-killer » that’s as fun as « insta lives » in just two months. If you were expecting live chat modules, funny animated gifs when Karen42 makes a donation or hearts and thumbs ups popping up all over your screen, you’re going to be very disappointed!
It is now a matter of laying the foundations for live peer-to-peer streaming. By using the « HLS » video player implemented in PeerTube version 1.3, we believe we can have live streaming with one minute of difference (or 30 seconds in optimal cases) between the video creator and the viewers. In return for this slight delay, the stream load will be able to be shared between all the devices that will be displaying the stream.

As such, this first implementation of PeerTube live streaming will be minimalist, and will probably require some effort (such as using the free software OBS to capture your audio and video streams). Nevertheless, this would be the beginning of a revolutionary tool: no need for Amazon-Twitch’s huge datacenters to stream live videos to a large amount of people, peer-to-peer will let us democratize live stream hosting!

On top of those 4 steps of development, all throughout those six months, we intend to do in-depth work regarding PeerTube’s user experience. We have chosen not to announce anything specific on this subject, to let those who will work on these matters all the freedom they need to improve PeerTube in the way they deem the most relevant.

Progressive fundraising for no-condition development

Before the pandemic, we considered starting a crowdfunding to get the € 60,000 we need for those 6 months of work dedicated to PeerTube v3. Today, as France is getting out of quarantine and as we can barely fathom the awful human and material consequences this crisis will have for many people, this does not seem
appropriate to us.

However, PeerTube v3 seems even more important to us when we imagine a world where we might need to stay at home, broadcast live classes and conferences remotely, or stream an event live. We feel like we need to develop it, that we have to. Imposing a condition stating « if we do not get our 60,000€, then there will not be a v3 » here, would be a lie, marketing manipulation: this is not the kind of relation we want to maintain with you.

![Sepia, PeerTube’s mascot, as they’re watching a « Can a digital tool be apolitical? » debate video (allegory)](image)

CC-By David Revoy, re-framed by us.

Nevertheless, we will still need to find those 60,000€. Here at Framasoft, we commit to developing PeerTube v3, even if we need to take money from the donations made to the association to support all the projects we undertake, and therefore from our 2020 budget.

At the same time, we have placed a donation button dedicated to the PeerTube project on the roadmap’s page, as well as a bar indicating where we are regarding the funds for this project. This is far less exciting than the stretch goals and the countdown of traditional crowdfundings, where people are incited to donate before a deadline, so that they do not forget and move on to something else...

Yet this is also much closer to our reality: we will make improvements, because we believe that this tool is a necessary one. This is why we are willing to take the
risk to put a bad strain on our 2020 budget. We know that we can trust you to contribute to funding PeerTube if you share our enthusiasm and if you have the means for it.

Study CC-By David Revoy. We thank him dearly for illustrating this roadmap. Click to find the final original drawings.

Get further away from marketing, get closer to you

Off we go towards six months of development. On the Framablog, we will share our progress on the various steps of development as well as the finances when we will publish PeerTube’s v3, planned for November 2020. Until then, if you want to follow each step of the development, you can subscribe to the PeerTube newsletter (sent in French and in English), whose information is archived on the news page on JoinPeertube.org, and relayed by JoinPeertube’s Mastodon and Twitter accounts.
« Another » world cannot be built using surveillance capitalism’s tools.

Making it easier to access content, sharing power and responsibilities, opening up to contributions, generalizing live broadcasting thanks to peer-to-peer... PeerTube’s v3 aims to consolidate it as an alternative to Google-Youtube and Facebook-Live that is more and more convivial.

A case of force majeure has encouraged us to go even further away from traditional marketing ploys regarding fundraising: in concrete terms, our 2020 budget is in your hands. More than ever, we will need your help to actively follow and share this roadmap, make it known around you and outside of the French-speaking world.

In the end, we have decided to believe in PeerTube and to believe in you.

To go further

- Discover PeerTube’s v3 roadmap
- Support PeerTube’s development
- Follow PeerTube’s news:
  - The Newsletter
  - On Mastodon
  - On Twitter
- Talk about PeerTube on our forum
- Share this post in French
Federating Mobilizon: one more step towards de-facebooked events

There is a new development to our future alternative to Facebook: different Mobilizon installs can now federate with each other.

Why is that important? Why is this a key element? How can this make Mobilizon a fundamentally emancipatory tool? We will try to explain all this below.

This article is a part of « Contributopia’s travel journals ». From October to December of 2019, we will assess our many (donations-founded) actions, which are tax-deductible for French taxpayers. Donate here if you can.

If you are not (yet) familiar with our Mobilizon project....

Mobilizon was born from our desire to offer an alternative to Facebook events for marches to protect our climate and other citizen gatherings. Once the first version completed (by summer 2020 if all goes well!), Mobilizon will be a software that groups, structures or collectives can install on their server, to create their own event platform website. Who can do the most can do the least: if Mobilizon is designed to organize a large pacifist march, it will be easy to manage the birthday of the youngest one ☺️!
Click to download the summary of the interviews and job to be done (pdf in French, only)

We worked with designers to have a strong vision for the software. Interviewing activists at various levels of civil society has allowed us to better design Mobilizon. It should not only serve as an alternative to Facebook events, but also to Facebook groups (to gather, communicate together, organize) and Facebook pages (to publish a presentation, however brief, of its collective, its place, its association... and organized events).

We also understood that Mobilizon had to move away from the Facebook-style social features that exploit our ego and motor the attention economy. In the
Mobilizon we designed, there are no likes, incentives to create the narrative of your life on a wall, and no echo chambers to these frustrating dialogues where everyone shouts and no one listens.

In June 2019, we presented this project, asking you to finance it if you wanted us to develop it. With more than €58,000 raised, it’s obvious that you shared our enthusiasm for Mobilizon! In October 2019, we released a first beta version, with basic functionalities. We want to show, in all transparency, the evolution of Mobilizon’s development, with an always-up-to-date demo on test.mobilizon.org.
A new step forward: Mobilizon is now federated!

The federation is one of the most important aspects of the Mobilizon software. It is already good that University X can install Mobilizon on its servers, and create its instance of Mobilizon (let’s call it « MobilizedCollege.net »). But if Jaimie has created their account on UniMobilize.org, the body of their union, how can they register to the « March for Student Loans Awareness » event that was published on MobilizedCollege.net?

Integrating the ActivityPub protocol into the Mobilizon software allows each installation of each instance of the Mobilizon software to talk and federate with each other. Thus, in our example, MobilizedCollege.net and UniMobilize.org can choose to federate, i.e. share their information and interact together.

Mobilizon federated, illustrated by David Revoy (CC-By)

Rather than creating a giant platform with a single entrance door (facebook.com, meetup.com, etc.), we create a diversity of entrance doors that can be linked together, while keeping each one its own specificity. Since the second beta update, Mobilizon has made it possible to federate events, comments and participations. Most of the future features we will add in the coming months will also be federated, when appropriate.
For people who administer an instance, there is an interface to manage which instances you are subscribed to and which instances have subscribed to you.

You can already see the effects of this federation on our demo instance test.mobilizon.org. Note that the events there are fake (made for tests purposes), so if you try and install a Mobilizon instance on your server, it is better not to federate with this demo instance!

**Other new features of the last two months**

These last two months of development have mainly been devoted to the Federation aspect of Mobilizon. However, other improvements have also been made to the software.

One of the most visible is the addition of comments below events. Right now, this tool is basic: you can comment on an event, and respond to a comment. It is not intended to be a social tool (with likes, etc.), just a practical one.
Click on the comments to see the event « Mobilizon Launching Party »

Many addresses sources (to geolocate the address you type when entering the event location) have also been added to Mobilizon. We are currently thinking about how to improve this point without overloading our friends in the free-libre community such as OpenStreetMap. Today, we are still relying on OSM’s Nominatim server, pending the delivery of our own server!

Many bugs have been fixed since the October beta release. These corrections, combined with many practical and aesthetic improvements, are partly due to your feedback and contributions on our forum: thank you! If you have any comments about Mobilizon, if you spot anything on test.mobilizon.org, feel free to create a topic on our forum, the only place where we read all your feedback.

The road is long, but the path is set

Let’s be clear: Mobilizon is not (yet) ready to host your groups and events. We are already seeing pioneers who are tinkering with an installation on their servers (congratulations and thanks to you), it’s cool, really... But until we have released version 1, please consider that the software is not ready.
Also, there is no point in suggesting new features, we will not be able to add anything to what was planned during the fundraising last June. We would like to, but we simply do not have the human resources to meet all expectations. Our small non-profit manages many projects, and we must accept our limits to achieve our goals without burning out.

Click to join our forum, and give us your feedback on Mobilizon

For the next few months, the path is set:

- Process your feedback from this beta version and get some rest by the end of the year
- Work on pages and groups (with messaging, moderation, organizational tools) in the first quarter of 2020;
- Have time for patches, possible delays and finishes that stabilize and document the software, for its release planned before the summer of 2020.

**Framasoft remains Mobilized, see you this summer!**

Adding federation functionality to Mobilizon is a key step. We will continue to keep you informed of such progress on this blog, and to demonstrate it on the test.mobilizon.org website.

In the meantime, we hope that this new milestone will inspire you as much as we do on the future of Mobilizon, do not hesitate to give us your feedback on our forum and see you in June 2020... to Mobilize together!

Have a look at Contributopia’s travel journals and discover more articles and actions made possible by your donations. If you like what you just read, please think of supporting us, as your donations are the only thing that allow us to go on. As Framasoft is a public interest organization, the real cost of a 100 € donation from a French taxpayer is only of 34 €.

Support Framasoft

Header illustration: CC-By David Revoy

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**PeerTube has worked twice as hard to free your videos from**
YouTube !

Thanks to your donations, we have been developing a software to free us all from YouTube & Co for a year. Why have we gone much further than the first release, (crowdfunded in the spring of 2018), you might ask? Well, that’s because we sincerely believe in the emancipatory power of PeerTube.

This article is a part of « Contributopia’s travel journals ». From October to December of 2019, we will assess our many (donations-founded) actions, which are tax-deductible for French taxpayers. Donate here if you can.

La version originale (en Français) de cet article est à lire ici.

Federation and instances to avoid creating a new tech giant

PeerTube’s aim is to create an emancipatory alternative to centralized platforms a la YouTube. In a centralized service, you sign-up with a single address, and each and every of your actions, videos and data are gathered on a single huge computer. For example, Google’s, that hosts YouTube (to be precise, they are server farms rather than huge computers, but on a symbolic level it is the same thing!).

PeerTube is a software. It can be installed on a server by anyone possessing the appropriate skills; say, for the sake of argument, Bernadette, College X and
karate club Y. This is called an instance, i.e. a PeerTube host. In concrete terms, hosting an instance creates a website (let’s say, BernadetTube.fr, CollegeTube.org or KarateTube.net) on which you can watch videos and sign-up, so you can interact or upload your own content.

These instances can chose to follow each other (this is called federating). For example, if the head of IT services of College X would like KarateTube videos to appear on CollegeTube, all she has to do is federate with KarateTube. KarateTube’s videos will remain on its server but students who are used to watching videos from CollegeTube will be able to see them.

In this case, BernadetTube stays isolated, but CollegeTube and KarateTube are federated. Rather than creating a single gigantic platform, PeerTube allows for the creation of a multitude of small, diverse, and interconnected platforms.

One year of work to let PeerTube mature

In May of 2018, we started a crowdfunding for PeerTube’s development. Many people decided to give a chance to a software that allows the creation and federation of video platforms. In October of 2018, we « turned in our homework assignment » as they say, when we released the first version of PeerTube.

We could have stopped once our promises were fulfilled, and let the community develop this free/libre software on its own. Instead, we decided to use a part of the donations we receive for everything we do (thank you!) to make PeerTube’s main developer job durable. As a Framasoft employee, he also contributed to other free/libre softwares such as Framacalc-Ethercalc and Mobilizon.

Nevertheless, during the past year, his main mission was to improve on PeerTube. He was able to rely on a growing community of contributors, and no one was idle! In one year, PeerTube was enriched with, amongst other things:
meet Sepia, PeerTube’s new mascot, by David Revoy (CC-By)

- moderation tools for instance administrators
- a watch history
- videos automatically start at the time code you stopped at (provided you are logged-in)
- notifications (new comments, videos or subscriptions, mentions, etc.)
- playlists (including a « watch later » one, which is now a feature by default on all accounts)
- a system where videos require manual approval by administrators before posting them
- an easier federation management for instance administrators
- a gradual betterment of UI (for example, it is now easier to make the difference between a channel and an account, to see thumbnails or to find a video in your video library)
- audio files management when uploading them: PeerTube will turn them into videos
- the interface is now translated into 25 languages!

**Small bonuses make all the difference!**

We will now highlight 3 features that we particularly like, as they offer more freedom, comfort and control to PeerTube’s users. Considering more control is not part of the business models of mainstream platforms (greetings, Youtube,
Vimeo and Facebook videos!), these three features offer PeerTube’s users a unique experience.

**Sharing a video clip**

When you share a video link, most platforms offer a « start at » option, which makes the video begin at 53 seconds if what you would like to share starts at 54 seconds.

We simply added a « stop at » option. It might seem silly (and really, it is) but considering YouTube’s job in the attention economy is to capture yours to sell it to Fanta, it is obviously unimaginable for them to let you stop videos!

France, 2015: YouTubers are mainstreaming. Fanta sponsors the 1st Video City Paris convention, so much so that it became some kind of giant ad for this Coca-Cola Company product.

If in a given videos, you only care about 3 sentences between 1:23 and 1:47, you can single them out, share or keep this clip for yourself (e.g. in your liked videos playlist or any other playlist). This feature allows for may uses: zapping, educative content, etc. We at Framasoft find that so much potentials lies in this idea!

**Plug-in system**

Every administrator and user wishes to see the software fulfill their needs. As Framasoft cannot (and does not want to) develop every feature that could be hoped for, we have from the start of the project planned on creating a plug-in and
add-on system you can install to customize your PeerTube experience.

Once again, we can see that centralized platforms have locked us up in such a standardized experience that it’s hard imagining that a concept as old as this could be such a breath of fresh, free air. And yet!

Now, this system allows each administrator to create specific plug-ins depending on their needs. They may install on their instance extensions created by other people as well. For example, it is now possible to install community created graphical themes to change the instance visual interface. You could also imagine plug-ins to sort videos in reverse alphabetical order, or to add a Tipee, Paypal or Patreon button below videos!

PeerTube taking off, by David Revoy.

**New video player**

Offering a new type of video player (for nerds: based on HLS technology) is a risky endeavor for a tool as new and interconnected as PeerTube. Considering PeerTube’s young age (it is barely starting to make a name for itself and to be adopted around the world), this could cause incompatibility issues and very problematic differences in versions.

However, we have decided we would introduce it experimentally, starting last summer. Indeed, this new video player is promising: it is faster, has less bugs, makes it easier to change video definition and makes their load fluider (still using
peer-to-peer technology). In return, it requires updating some elements (moving to ffmpeg 4.1) and to re-encode some videos.

This new video player has been met with a great deal of enthusiasm, and broadens PeerTube’s future (live streaming, for example, is out of question using the current player). This is why we want to take the time to make it PeerTube’s player by default, which will require work to help current hosts in this transition.

**V2 is even more federation-focused**

The PeerTube version we are releasing today already includes all these improvements, and many more! This « v2 », as they say, aims to make it easier for instance administrators to federate. They will for example be able to automatically follow instances that follow them, or to follow instances visible on our JoinPeerTube public register.

This new PeerTube version also aims to help the public chose the perfect instance match. To return to the subject of Bernadette, College X and Karate club Y, let’s now add a new audience member: Camille.

Camille doesn’t know a thing about servers or whatever, but he wants to create an account to follow PeerTube channels, or even upload his own videos... And he has a hard time understanding what this is all about! How could he possibly know that BernadetTube is only maintained by Bernadette and that if anything were to happen to her, she could stop administrating it overnight? How can he see that CollegeTube refuses to federate with instances that display sensitive content, even properly flagged and blurred? Where can he learn that KarateTube will favor videos in German, and that support will only be provided in this language?
Once the instance set up, admins will have to configure it, by answering some questions...

When Bernadette, the head of College X IT services, and Karate club Y’s resident nerd will have updated PeerTube with this v2, they will have to fill in a form to better introduce their instance. The goal here is to clearly state:

- the instance main categories
- what languages the admins and the moderation team speak
- the instance code of conduct
- the moderation policy (who moderates, policy regarding sensitive contents, etc.)
- who is behind this instance (an individual? an organization?)
- why did the admin(s) set up this instance
- how long do the admin(s) plan on maintaining this instance for?
- how do the admin(s) plan on funding their PeerTube server?
- information about the hardware of the server

Camille will be able to find all these information on the « about » page of each PeerTube instance (which will now also display new statistics), on the sign-up page… as well as on the joinpeertube.org register!

**JoinPeertube.org is where you get your bearings!**

With over 100,000 videos and 20,000 accounts, it is safe to say that PeerTube has become popularized. It was high time we revamped joinpeertube.org so as to turn it into a front door to these videos, hosts and the federation.

With the help of UI/UX professionals, we have imagined and shaped two user flows to using JoinPeertube.org: one for people who want to watch videos (and maybe sign-up), and another one for video makers who need a trustworthy host for their videos.

Click to discover the new JoinPeertube.org
Both of these paths may lead you to the register of public instances. You can sort them according to your preferences so as to find the one that meets your needs. This selecting is made possible by the answers given to the form mentioned earlier, which allows admins to better introduce their instance and to explain the project behind it to potential users. That being said the best solution is to have a look by your own means (as a side note, we find the site much prettier now!)...

Please note that PeerTube now has its own documentation website, meant for both admins (to ease the software installation, maintenance and administration) or for regular users (whether it be for signing-up, managing your playlists or uploading videos).

The future of PeerTube is still YOU!

It would be impossible to name everyone who has contributed to the code, funding, design, translation, documentation, illustration and promotion of PeerTube... but the least we can do is to express our gratitude!

After one year of development and maturation of the project, we are putting a lot of thoughts into its future. People have different wishes, you guys have given us a lot of ideas. All of the feedback we are receiving from you, particularly on the dedicated section to PeerTube on our forum (the best place for your suggestions!) is invaluable to us.

Nowadays, we are imagining new improvements (to the interface, user experience, search engine, plug-in system), important tools, (mobile apps, videos about PeerTube), as well as new, powerful features. **Would you like to easily remix online videos from your PeerTube account? to do livestreams? So do we!** And we need your support for that!

We are allowed to have all types of dreams and aspirations for PeerTube, but what is sure is that making come true will have a cost. The year we have spent developing PeerTube was funded in part by what was left of the June 2018 crowdfunding, but mostly by regular donations we receive for all of our projects. We will probably launch a new crowdfunding campaign just for PeerTube v3 in 2020.

In the meantime, feel free to help PeerTube grow, to promote instances and
videos you like, and to congratulate the whole community for how far we have come with this v2!

Have a look at Contributopia’s travel journals and discover more articles and actions made possible by your donations. If you like what you just read, please think of supporting us, as your donations are the only thing that allow us to go on. As Framasoft is a public interest organization, the real cost of a 100 € donation from a French taxpayer is only of 34 €.

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Header illustration: CC-By David Revoy

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**Mobilizon : lifting the veil on the beta release**

Mobilizon is an alternative to Facebook groups and events. After a successful crowdfunding, it is time we gave you a taste of this software and updated you on its progress.

This article is a part of « Contributopia’s travel journals ». From October to December of 2019, we will assess our many (donations-founded) actions, which are tax-deductible for French taxpayers. Donate here if you can.

*La version originale (en Français) de cet article est à lire ici.*

**An eagerly awaited alternative to Facebook events**

During the Spring of 2019, we launched our Mobilizon crowdfunding, to fund a free/libre software allowing communities to liberate themselves from Facebook
events, groups and pages.

This crowdfunding’s aim was to produce Mobilizon and to know how far you all wanted us to go with this project. Over one thousand people funded this project, and we are very pleased to see how enthusiastic you all were: evidently, many of us are tired of Facebook’s walled garden around our events!

Thank you all for the success of this crowdfunding!

Today, we are keeping a promise we made during the campaign: sharing Mobilizon’s progress with you. We decided to showcase it to you as soon as possible, even though most features are not developed yet. This is precisely what a beta is: some things are still rough around the edges, the paint is fresh, not everything is in place (yet)... but you can still get a clear picture of what we have achieved and how much work still remains to be done.

A beta release to lay the foundations

Mobilizon’s aim is to create a free/libre software allowing communities to create their own spaces to publish event.

Here is everything you can do with Mobilizon:
- **Sign up** with your email and a password, then log in;
- Receive email notifications;
- Create and manage **several identities from the same account**;
  - to compartmentalize your events;
  - Every identity consists of an ID, a public name (name, nickname, username, etc.) an avatar and a bio
- Create, edit or delete **events**;
  - From the identity you used to create said event;
  - You can create, keep, edit (and delete) draft events;
  - You can manually approve (or refuse) attendance requests.
  - You can easily share by mail or on your social medias;
  - You can add events to your calendar.
- Register for an event by choosing one of your identities;
- Report problematic content to the instance[^2] **moderation**;
- Manage reports of problematic content

[Image: Mobilizon, illustrated by David Revoy – License: CC-By 4.0]

We are very enthusiastic about the ability to use different identities. Under the same account, you can compartmentalize several aspects of your social life: one identity for sports, one for family gatherings, another one for activism, etc.

This is the sort of tool Facebook & Co will never offer, as they have a vested interest in gathering every aspects of our social lives under a single, and therefore advertiser-friendly, profile... Thus, it always brings us great joy to
realize that when we distance ourselves from these platforms model, we can imagine user-friendly, emancipatory tools.

Better yet, you can have a look by yourself...

**test.mobilizon.org: discover the software and its features**

Wait up before you organize a *Last Party Before Armageddon* on test.mobilizon.org: it is only a **demo site**! Feel free to use it however you want, to click at will: there will be no consequences as **every account, event etc. will be automatically deleted every 48 hours.**
Click on the screenshot to go and visit the demo of Mobilizon!

One of our promises while we were mapping out Mobilizon’s development was to create a tool by and for people, so we worked with UI/UX designers... we hope you like the result!

We have made room on our forum for your feedback. However, we will probably not be able to answer to requests pertaining to new features, as we already have much to do!
The way is already mapped out: we are Mobilized!

In the next few months, we will publish regular updates of this beta release, and show you its progress. This way, we will have time to observe and hear your feedback, up until the first fully functional release of Mobilizon, which is planned for the first semester of 2020.

Depending on your level of expertise, you may look under the hood and read Mobilizon’s source code. Nevertheless, we do not recommend installing Mobilizon on your server before we take care of its federated features.

As Mobilizon is not (yet) federated, it is not (yet) possible, for example, to register to a Framaparty posted on Framasoft’s Mobilizon instance from an account created on a UnitedUni instance, hosted by your college. Both the federated aspect and the ability to register to an event anonymously are being developed right now. We will introduce you to them when we keep you updated on the software again, around December.

With the federation features coming next december, compass roses will multiply!
Illustration: David Revoy – License: CC-By 4.0

During 1st semester of 2020, we will publish the first stable release of Mobilizon. We will implement moderation tools as well as collaborative ones (groups,
organizational spaces, private messages). We will be in touch with pioneer installers and users (the latest have probably used their pals’ servers). We will be working on technical documentation too.

**We keep our promises, starting now**

We at Framasoft cannot wait to see as many people as possible free themselves for Facebook events, and use Mobilizon to organize, say, an advocacy group or a Climate March.

However, we might have to wait a bit before closing down all these Facebook groups that structure part of our lives. Meanwhile, we hope this demo will show the potential of a software meant to gather, organize and mobilize... people who are trying to make the world a better place.

Have a look at Contributopia’s travel journals and discover more articles and actions made possible by your donations. If you like what you just read, please think of supporting us, as your donations are the only thing that allow us to go on. As Framasoft is a public interest organization, the real cost of a 100 € donation from a French taxpayer is only of 34 €.

Support Framasoft

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**Notes**

[1] **Federation**: If my college hosts my email, and yet I can communicate with a gmail (hosted by Google), it is because they speak the same language: they are federated. The federation, here, refers to the use of a common language (a « protocol ») to be able to connect. Capacities do not rely on a single player (e.g.: Facebook for WhatsApp, Google for YouTube, etc), but rather on a multitude of companies, organizations, collectives, institutions, or even private individuals, required they posess the appropriate skills. This provides more resilience and independance to these networks, and makes them harder to control as well. Thus, in the case of Mobilizon, different instances[2] of the software (on the servers of a
college, collective or organization such as Framasoft, for example) will be able to synchronize the data made public (events, messages, groups, etc.).

[2] Instance: an instance is one hosted installation of a federated software. This software is therefore located on a server, under the responsibility of the people who administer this server (the hosts). Each host can choose whether to connect or not its instance with others, and therefore whether or not to grant access to the information shared on said instance to its members. For example, framapiaf.org, mamot.fr and miaou.drycat.fr are three Mastodon instances (respectively from the hosts Framasoft, La Quadrature du Net and Drycat). As these 3 instances are federated, their members can communicate with each other. In the same vein, two -or even two thousand- Mobilizon instances can be connected and share events.

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Let’s De-frama-tify the Internet!

Wait up before you yell at us! but yeah, we are here to announce the gradual closing down, spanning several years, of some services from the De-google-ify Internet campaign. We want to achieve this goal in a spirit of cooperation, so that we can focus on more decentralization and efficiency for people who are aiming to make a positive change in the world, no matter how small.

This article is quite long. Our complex thinking can’t be reduced to a tweetable soundbite. We recommend you read this article from start to finish, but you will find its key points at the end. And the original French blogpost is here.

What’s going on?

We’ve said it time and time again: Framasoft is -and wishes to remain- a human scale organization, a team of enthusiasts DIY-ing their way through changing the world, one byte at a time. Our organization is made of 9 employees and about
thirty members and every year, 700 to 800 volunteers help us (whether it be for one hour or throughout the year). Over 4000 patrons fund our projects (thank you <3), and every month, hundreds of thousands people benefit from those.

Yet Framasoft is more than all of this: dozens of blog articles, around a hundred of meetings, conferences & workshops every year, a publishing house for free-libre books, lots of responds to the requests of many media outlets and a collaborative directory of free-libre solutions. We currently develop two important softwares (PeerTube and Mobilizon), and we are working on so many cool partnerships and collaborative projects that we’re going to need three months to introduce you to all of them... (See y’all in October !)

Our pal JCFrog teasing us a bit

One thing is for sure: we, at Framasoft, hold our not-for-profit status close to our hearts. We don’t want to become start-up nor replace Google. We want to preserve our identity without burning ourselves out (we’ll touch on that some more in the following weeks, as we have sometimes overworked ourselves in the past), and keep on experimenting with new things. If we want to achieve all of these goals, we have to reduce our (heavy) workload.

Why are we closing down some services?

From the start, we advertized the De-google-ify Internet project as an experiment, a proof of concept, which was set to stop at the end of 2017. What we had not foreseen was that the discourse about current web centralization (which only
nerds like us cared about in 2014) would generate such enthusiasm, and that as a consequence, so many expectations would be placed on us. In plain English: De-google-ify Internet, and all of the services that come with it, was not meant to centralize so many users, nor to lock them up in frama-stuffs that would last to infinity (and beyond).

Apart from our « just for kicks » projects (Framatroll and Framadsense: still love you, fam), there are 38 services on the De-goole-ify Internet servers. That’s a lot. Like, seriously, a lot. This means 35 different softwares (each with its own update pace, active or dormant communities, etc.), written in 11 programming languages (and 5 types of databases), shared on 83 servers and virtual machines, all in need of monitoring, updating, adjusting, backing-up, debugging, promotion and support integration... It’s a lots of care and pampering, in the same vein as keeping hotel rooms visited by thousands of individuals every month.

Actually, even we can’t keep up with the list of the services we offer -_-‘...

Well, some services barely work anymore (Tonton Roger). Other started as experiments that we couldn’t carry on with (Framastory, Framaslides). Some services have such a large technical debt that even when we spent several days of development in them, we are only delaying their inevitable collapse (Framacalc). Other services could, left to their own devices, grow forever, limitless, which is unsustainable (Framasite, Framabag, Framabin, etc.). When you are as known as
Framasoft in the French-speaking community (Framalink, Framapic), some service are extremely work-intensive in order to prevent and fight misuse. And don’t get us started on federated social medias (Framapiaf, Framasphere): they require a lot of moderation, and would operate much more fluidly had we not welcomed so many users.

And to top it all off... this is no healthy functioning! We all know how handy it is to be able to say « if you want alternative solutions, just look at Framastuffs! ». It is very reassuring to find everything in the same place, under the same name... We are aware of this phenomenon, and that’s why we decided to use « frama », in a way not dissimilar to a brand -though that is frankly not our cup of tea. Except internet centralization is unhealthy.

Internet centralization is risky, too. Not only was it not meant to become so centralized, but also putting all of our data in the same basket is just how you centralize power in the hands of hosts system administrators. Besides, this is precisely the slippery slope from which Google and Facebook emerged.

Therefore, de-frama-tifying is on the agenda.

**Decentralization is one more click away**

Let’s take time to exploit one of the great perks of free softwares over proprietary softwares. When (totally random example) Google burries its umpteenth project, the code is usually proprietary: Google deprives us from the freedom to take this code over and install it on our servers.
On the contrary, free softwares allow anyone to take the reigns. For example, Framapic doesn’t belong to Framasoft: everyone is legally entitled to install the Lutim software somewhere on their server and let anyone they see fit benefit from it... Actually, this spirit of decentralization is the reason why we have worked with self hosting-easing tools (like Yunohost), as well as with CHATONS (collective of independant, transparent, open, neutral and ethical hosters).

Our goal with this early announcements (concerning, for example, Framapic) is twofold. 
Firstly, we hope this will incentivize many hosts to open their Lutim instances, aka the same service (looking at you, fellow CHATONS). Secondly, this gives us time to pick hosting offers and to display them on the Framapic landing page, redirecting you in one click to the same service, except with a different host. All of this will be implemented as soon as we announce Framapic’s close down (one year before it actually happens).

**So, what happens next?**

Smoothly, and over two years! at the very least. (Might take longer if we stumble on our keyboards and sprain our phalanxes! You never know until you know).

Now that we can all catch our breath, reassured that free and ethical services are SWAG, it is (high) time we start transitionning from the « everything Framasoft » instinct. Less frama services means all of you can explore elsewhere. It’s kinda as if we said:

> Our digital CSA is at full capacity, but we are not leaving you with an empty basket: our network of CSAs and other network members will be delighted to welcome you.

We are laying the groundwork for y’all. In a spirit of transparency, you can download this spreadsheet [FR] that shows in detail our estimated closing down schedule. And if you prefer to have a general look, here is our we plan this closing down:
To be maintained

These services are here to stay!

Migration to "Free Culture"

To be restricted

Beginning of 2021
We're still pondering over it

Mid-2021
We're still pondering over it

To be gradually closed

September 2019
October 2019

October 2019
Beginning of 2020
Mid-2020

Beginning of 2020
Mid-2020
Beginning of 2021

Beginning of 2020
End of 2020
Mid-2021

Beginning of 2020
Beginning of 2021
End of 2021

CC BY - Malware
If we take a closer look, there’s a similar pattern for each service involved:

0. First things first, we announce today our plan to close down some of our services, allowing everyone to see clearly what’s happening, and to self-manage so as to fill in for this or that service. During all the following months we will attempt, as much as can be, to make the job of migrating towards other service providers easier.

1. Then, we announce on each concerned service that it will be first restricted, then closed down (1rst column). We will display on the landing page a link to hand-picked alternative hosts (same software or similar one).

2. Afterwards, we limit the service use (2nd column). The goal here is to close the door to newcomers (they won’t be able to create a new account, a new calc, or to upload a new file). We will advise them on alternatives solutions, all the while giving existing users time to migrate their account and personal data if they still up on our services.

3. At last, we close down the service whenever possible (last column on the board) or we make it invisible when maintaining a certain amount of continuity is necessary (e.g. existing frama.link will still redirect to the right web address).

**We are not closing down everything, and certainly not now (save for one)**

Framastory and Framanews pose a lot of technical issues, forcing us to act quickly. They will be the first services impacted. They will be restricted at the start of 2020, and closed down a semester later. For all of the other services we talked about earlier, restrictions will only start during summer 2020 (even summer 2021 for some), and the first closing downs will not happen before 2021 – in some cases, not before 2022!

Simply put, the only exceptions to this rule will be the service we won’t close down, (Framadate, Framapads and MyPads, Framavoxx, Framagenda, Framatalk, the collaborative Framindmap, Framacarte), as well as those we are just moving to our « free-libre culture » project (Framagames and Framinetest). This includes Framadrive, which now has been on limited access for a while because of how popular it became, with 5000 accounts created. This is the limit we had set from
the start, and we intend on keeping things that way.

And then, there’s Framabee, aka good old Tonton Roger, our meta search engine that no longer quite works. Some might say we should just finish it off, other would prefer for the landing page to state « killed by Google » . Indeed, no matter how much we hacked, Google & Co received too many queries from us and started refusing them en masse... which proves further that centralizing uses, even here at Framasoft, just won’t cut it! We’ll let Tonton Roger retire early: next month, we’ll wave him goodbye and gift him a pair of slippers.

That night when we came up with the brilliant idea of picking 3 different domain names for the same search engine
Spring cleaning so we can move forwards together

We have learnt a lot. The “de-google-ify” campaign showed us that users don’t have to follow the « the client is king » model, or to behave like Karen « I wanna speak to the manager » Von Soccer Mom. Yall have gracefully dealt with weekend server crashes (our system administrators don’t have to work on weekends), slightly less fancy-looking tools, and limitations on service use so as to give space for other users... In short: there is room in our lives for hand-crafted digital tech, aka small techs, in the most noble sense of the term.

Everything we have learnt since 2014 leads us to think we need a change. Clearly, we don’t want to let people (i.e. y’all!) high and dry, or give you the impression that free culture and softwares is an unkept promise. Quite the opposite: we were happy to introduce you to FLOSS solutions and to help you take them on (thanks for your efforts!). Your trust in and craving for ethical digital tools are precious: we don’t want to make anyone lose their mojo, only to take you all one step further.
And by the way, we are taking the time to do something GAFAMs & Co have never cared to do: announcing way ahead of time our closing down plans and helping our users in the road towards de-google-ifying. We are getting rid of what no longer sparks joy, putting some order in the tools and experiment we have accumulated over the years in our backpacks. This will give space and availability for what’s next.

PeerTube and Mobilizon are proof of our desire to move away from the « just-like-Google-but-with-ethics » software model. Starting this October and spanning three months, we will be reviewing our « Contributopia » roadmap, and y’all will
see that there is a lot to talk about. You’ll discover many more projects we hadn’t seen at the bottom of our digital backpack.

We are very excited for the next steps, as we have many announcements and contribution stories to share... see you in mid-October, we can’t wait!

One year to offer you a new proposition

Drawing on what we learnt from De-google-ify Internet, we sense that it’s possible to build a new, simpler, and handier offer for a range of services, both for users and hosts.
Through observing your uses of those services and listening to your expectations, we (along with many other people!) believe that Nextcloud, rich in many applications, is one way to go. We believe this software could fulfill most of the needs of people trying to change the world.

You can do a lot with Nextcloud

We’re giving ourselves a year to contribute (once again) to this software, stir in it,
experiment with buddies and offer you a new proposition, which hopefully will make de-google-ifiying even easier... just like de-frama-tifying!

**Key points:**

- We refuse to become the « default » solution and to monopolize your uses and attention (that’s how we empowered GAFAM & Co)
- 38 services, it’s way too complex for you to adopt and for us to host
- We wish to stay an organization of a human scale, and retain our human warmth... a sort of digital CSA;
- We propose to take the next step towards data decentralization:
  - By gradually closing-down some frama-services so their landing-pages can become gateways to other hosters
  - By taking the time to offer a new simpler range of services for users (through a single sign-on account for example)