

Luna

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Introduction

How it all begun

First things first, before we jump on to Luna: how did we got here? Well... I, Yannick, am a developer at FluxBB. I still am, but I do not like all decisions the team makes there. For example, the jump to Laravel, it's a great platform, but no one had any experience with it, and well... it slowed down development of FluxBB 2, and it was already slow. On top of that, we're not allowed to make much changes to FluxBB 1.5 (the current branch). So basically, development is standing still for the public.

Timeline in a nutshell

ModernBB 1.6 however had to give all improvements that were made to FluxBB 1.5 to the 1.4 core, ranks had been removed but it turns out to be a beloved feature, since 1.4 is downloaded more than 1.5 in recent months. Meanwhile, we are planning a ModernBB 1.7 at the end of 2015, but that's not where this file is about.

Anyway, I didn't stop there. Instead I took the codebase I had of ModernBB 1.6 and started creating ModernBB 2, initially, it was supposed to power my own forums, but later on, I started ModernBB.be and launched it as a program (only 1.6 was finished by then). When ModernBB 2 started developing, it got fast. We managed to deliver ModernBB 2.0 one and a half month after its first beta. It contained a brand new UI and a lot of new features.

Not much later, we released ModernBB 2.1. It contained a new frontend design and improved a lot of thing on the Backstage. It really was a polishing release. But we were proud of it. Once again a month later, we released ModernBB 2.2 which once again improved on more areas. The front-end designs were modernized, the Backstage further improved, we introduced a proper responsive design, a brand new profile interface, etc. After 2.2.0, 2 maintenance releases followed fixing together 110 issues.

Meanwhile we started planning ModernBB 3. This is supposed to become a big release: 1-click update support, improved and new management features, WYSIWYG editor, improved parser, and a lot more. It is an ambitious release, but not as ambitious as Luna. Well, I would say: "Welcome", because we're starting from scratch. Realy.

About codenames

We've got a nice list of codenames already, for every version: 1.6, 2.0, 2.1, 2.2, , Luna and Vanellope, that is respectively: Blythe, Zoe, Zoe, Zoe, Odd, Luna and Vanellope. Just for fun: where do those names come from?

Version	Name	Origin
1.6	Blythe	Hasbro's Littlest Pet Shop, don't ask me how this name got into here, I don't know either. Perhaps it could have something to do with the person that suggested it, and only later explained where it came from...
2.0/2.1/2.2	Zoe	Character from Belgian W817 series. We kept hanging on this codename because the documentation system didn't allow us something else without publishing 3 times the same information.
3	Odd	As in "odd and even", ModernBB 3 you know... I added this sentence because it looked stupid that all codenames had a long explanation, except this one.
1.0	Luna	You know that big sphere that circles around the Earth? Well. That's this one. For the bronies around here, go ahead: Princess Luna. And of course, our Windows XP fans, the default XP theme is also called "Luna", I stick with the name of the moon, however.
1.1	Vanellope	Vanellope von Sweetz is a character from the Disney animation film Wreck-It Ralph, some might know here better as "the Glitch".

As you can see, we don't have a scheme that we follow for code names... It's just random. One comes from a kid series, the other from a movie, the other one is a moon, and the other one just a word to describe the version number.

What's Luna

May the adventure begin (and why)

So... what is Luna? Well, you could say it's the 4th major ModernBB version, but it's not. In fact, we are ditching the ModernBB brand and resetting the version number to 1. So Luna is version 1 of this software project, that for now stays known as "Luna", since a lack of a better name than the codename.

And that, right there, is a major project. I never did something as large as this. So it is going to be an adventure. And we've got good reasons to make this adventure. When start this adventure? Well, depends on it? How long did you need to read this document until this point? Take the current time minus the duration of this and you are there, that's when this adventure started. This document will work as an introduction to the plans we have for our community. You might wonder now: why should we need those plans? Well:

- ModernBB is based on code from FluxBB which is based on code from PunBB, a 10 year old project and since then (2003), there have been no modernization in this code. In theory, we still support old technologies like PHP 4.4 (instead our current requirement of 5.1).
- ModernBB contains a lot of garbage from FluxBB, for example: there are 2 systems that handle logins, one for normal accounts, one for account that are made before PunBB 1.3. And that's just on example.
- Our license is holding us back. GPLv3 is one heck of garbage too, also something we got from FluxBB. Luna will be developed under the MIT license, this will give us more freedom to do whatever we want to do. It's also something you guys might actually read.
- The FluxBB code is a little bit of a mess. For example: we have no idea how, or why, the pagination function actually works. This needs refinement.
- Modern technology will also allow us to create a plugin system, something that is priority for Luna.

That are some of the important stuff we like to point out. More has yet to come!

Wait, what am I actually reading here?

O yes, I might have explained this earlier in this file. However, better late than never! The document you are reading right now is our introduction of Luna to the community. It won't only describe what we are planning, it will also be our guide trough development of Luna and

give you a little introduction to Vanellope. So, you might find changed versions of this document later on the documentation at modernbb.be.

This document will also describe our priorities and vision. Not only from Luna, but also everything beyond that. The features we are planning for Luna, and which we are not planning. Yeah, be ready to read a lot. Of course, you can also read our blog as soon as we have some news about Luna.

Also, this is very early development information. And this might change in the future. Also, we might not even achieve our goal. There is still a chance that Luna will be just an update for ModernBB 3 and be called ModernBB 4, and not a rewrite. However, our ambition is to rewrite the source and let's hope that this will happen.

Lifecycle of Luna

Ha, you made it, welcome to our actually planning. In this chapter, you will read everything about preparing development, development itself, test releases, planned features, final release and updates. So, straight to the point: let's get started.

Development stages

For Luna, we are planning a relative long development cycle. It will take a while before we have rewritten everything. That's why not everything we have will be in the final release. Anyway, we have planned some stages before we hit this final release. Let me describe them for you:

- **Dev** is the name we give to development versions, they are very unstable releases and of course, the first once to be released with Luna.
- **Alphas** are actually just development releases, however, those version are considered to be a little bit more stable than the usual dev releases, despite having a dev-version. We are planning an unknown amount of alpha releases, one every 2 weeks min.
- **Betas** are the less unstable bit still not stable releases. Those will be the first version we will actually "advertise". Just like alphas, we will release every 2 weeks a beta release, again for an unknown amount of time. Our latest beta will be feature-complete. When we have hit that stage, we will tell.
- **Release Candidates** are the final stages before final. We will release max. 4 RCs, 1 every week. The final release will follow 1 week after the latest RC.

So, that is development stages in a nutshell. In theory, "dev" will take longer than any other stage in development. They become shorter and shorter, actually.

Dev stage: when rewriting begins

Like we said, dev is our first stage. During this stage, we have a couple of main focus points for development, and they are kind of obvious:

- **A forum system** should be available with support for creating categories, forums, topics, posts and comments.
- **Accounts** should be available as well, containing all of the stuff a user need. Not just the profile, but also the settings for his or her account. We want to get a fancy name for this. With of course, registration and login options.

- **Backstage**, which will not contain all features of our current version, since not all options will be available anyway.
- **Plugin system** however, this will be very premature. If not completely unusable. However, the most important thing should be done.
- **A design** for both the front-end and Backstage. They might look familiar, since we do not plan to change the default look of, at least the Backstage, Luna. However, the front-end has a higher chance on getting a new design.
- **A decent file structure** is very important. We can't make a mess here. No further comments on this one, it's even more obvious than all other things we note in this list.
- **WYSIWYG and parser**, and this might jump out of this list as not so obvious. Why the heck will we concentrate on a WYSIWYG editor and the parser in the pre-alpha stage? Well... because it would become a mess otherwise. To be fair, our current implementation of TinyMCE isn't as good as it could be.
- **Install and upgrade** scripts will be included as well. We want Luna to be as easily in installation as ModernBB 3, if not easier. We don't want the same mess we have now with FluxBB 2, where no one knows how to install it and a long manual is required to get to it, only to get errors.

And, well, that's where it stops. If all those basic points have been done. We're finished for our dev stage. And that's pretty good news. If this happens, alpha 1 will be released, and a fast release cycle will start. With from this point on, every 2 weeks a new release. Everything I described above should be done on 3 or 4 months, I think. I'm not a good guesser on time schedules. Reminding you of the fact that I'm alone, there are no other developers on this project then me. It might also be obvious that there won't be a public release. Of course, development happens on GitHub and so, you can download our nightly.

Alpha stage: features, features and features

From this point on, you should be excited. When we hit this stage, we have a basic forum system. From here on, we will start working on features, customization, enhanced design and more. We will extend the basic system we have with less obvious, but still obvious, features for a forum.

While I do not put an exact number on it, I hope that we never reach the milestone of 10 alphas. I personally hope for 6. So, that should be 12 weeks. Should be enough for the basic stuff to get working. From this point here on we will be focusing on a couple of new points on our schedule:

- **Management features**, and I like to define them as back-up, reset, refresh, maintenance and more of this kind of features.
- Improved **design**, of course, an empty Backstage and front-end require less design than a full one.
- **Search** should be made possible from this point on too.
- **Styles** should also be something that has to be done here.
- Our **plugin system** should start to be fully operational from this point on too.
- Luna should, just like older versions, also be **translatable** and that's what we also should do in this stage of development. Earlier versions are fixed English only.
- We should also get the **1-click update installer** ready by now.
- Other features, we hope to bring most of the features we had in ModernBB 3.xx into Luna. However, not all of them will make it to this stage, nor the final.

Beta stage: semi-stable

If you weren't excited as soon as we hit the alpha stage, you might want to get excited at this point. Because right here, we are getting closer and closer with the minute. In fact, the major features have been done and only small improvements to the system we already had will be done on this point. Where we had 6 alpha releases, I hope to have 5 beta releases, 2 weeks between each. Making it 10 weeks total.

There really isn't anything I can tell you right now about this stage. Minor features will be added and that's it. We will, of course, start with our bug hunt here too. But most of that will be left for RC. This stage will end with a feature-freeze.

RC stage: getting stable

And if you weren't excited at the beta stage, then you really should be excited now. Because it is almost reality. At this point, no new features will be added and it is bug hunting for the rest of my life. At least, the 4 weeks of the RC stage, max. We plan maximum 4 release candidates before we move to stable. And if we hit 4, it is very likely that our final release will be a copy of Luna 1.0 RC 4 with another version number (1.0.0 in this case).

By this, you can be certain that your themes and plugins will not break in the final release when they are fine here. While it's a good idea to start working on this, doing so in the beta stage is an even better idea. You might want to do this by now.

Final release

The final release, which should be version 1.0, will be released one week after the last Release Candidate. If the last RC is found to be stable enough, it will be the same version

as this RC. From here on, major development on this branch ends and this release is the result of a code-freeze.

Patches and updates

Compared to the current ModernBB 1 and 2 series, we will launch patches and updates more often.

Patches

Minor releases which will fix some bugs. These releases will bump the x.x.1. Let us be clear: it might happen that we won't release a 1.0.1 version. Why? Well, if there aren't too much bugs in Luna, we will move on the Vanellope and so Vanellope would become the first update for Luna.

Updates

Updates are all other version bumps. The first one to hit Luna will be Vanellope (version 1.1). Updates will contain new features. We will go with every version number: 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9 and then 2.0, and we start again: 2.1, 2.2, etc. So 2.0 might be an update as big as 1.1.

Guessed roadmap

Version	Date	Stage
1.0-dev.0	Winter 2014	Dev – start development
1.0-dev.xxx	14 June 2014	Alpha 1
1.0-dev.xxx	28 June 2014	Alpha 2
1.0-dev.xxx	12 July 2014	Alpha 3
1.0-dev.xxx	26 July 2014	Alpha 4
1.0-dev.xxx	9 August 2014	Alpha 5
1.0-dev.xxx	16 August 2014	Alpha 6
1.0-beta.1	30 August 2014	Beta 1
1.0-beta.2	13 September 2014	Beta 2
1.0-beta.3	27 September 2014	Beta 3
1.0-beta.4	11 November 2014	Beta 4
1.0-beta.5	25 November 2014	Beta 5
1.0-rc.1	1 December 2014	Release Candidate 1
1.0- rc.2	8 December 2014	Release Candidate 2
1.0- rc.3	15 December 2014	Release Candidate 3
1.0- rc.4	22 December 2014	Release Candidate 4
1.0	29 December 2014	Final
1.1	6-13 January 2015	Patch

Development

We will start developing Luna somewhere in January 2014. However, a lot of preparations have to be made, and it won't be structured the same as ModernBB 3 and earlier have been. This is what will change.

Components

First of all, let me tell you what components Luna will be made of. Those will be mostly similar to the once you know from ModernBB 3.

Bootstrap 3.2

Luna will rely on the design framework of Bootstrap. Version 3.2 to be exact. In the alpha stage, we will include a development release of Bootstrap version 3.2 or higher. Of course, we want Luna to be released with the most recent versions of Bootstrap, so while development will initially begin with Bootstrap 3.2, through the development, this might be updated to Bootstrap 3.3/3.5/4.0 or whatever comes next. Unless that is in the Release Candidate stage, then Bootstrap (and this counts for every other component) will be updated in Vanellope if it is a minor or major update and not a patch.

jQuery 2.1

We will also use jQuery (Bootstrap needs this too, but still). While we do not plan this to be used in Luna itself for other reasons than Bootstrap features, this is also a great thing for developers, which know that the jQuery library is in the installation and can easily use it. Since we use jQuery 2, we will not support Internet Explorer 8 and lower. Which means that Windows XP users will have bad luck. However, Luna will be released a while after EOL of XP, so I don't see any problem. While we will start development with jQuery 2.1, this might later evolve into 2.2/2.5/3.0 or whatever comes next.

TinyMCE 4.0

TinyMCE is a new package that has been introduced in ModernBB 3. And just like then, we will keep using it in Luna. In fact, it will become part of the core, rather than being an extra package. So, if you want to use this package in an extension, it's where you need it: inside. Of course, this might turn into a newer version of TinyMCE, for example, version 4.1. Depends on what's available by then.

Structure

So, let me show you our basic structure, this isn't completed yet.

```
modernbb/  
├── backstage/  
│   └── style/  
├── cache/  
├── img/  
├── include/  
│   ├── bootstrap/  
│   ├── jquery/  
│   └── tinymce/  
├── lang/  
│   └── English/  
├── plugins/  
└── styles/
```

Theoretical functioning

Jumping to a from the ground up rebuild project will be a massive step. In fact, it won't be possible to upgrade from ModernBB 3 to Luna. Instead, it will be more like a migration. Mainly because a lot of features from Luna will be called differently or won't be available in the final 1.0 release.

Installation

The installation process should exist out of 3 simple steps.

- 1 Connecting with the database
- 2 Creating the first user
- 3 Creating your forum

Those won't be displayed on 1 single page like it is right now. It will be more like a wizard that you are used to on Windows, for example. It won't be any more complicated to set up a new installation than it is right now, and now it is very simple compared to some other forum software.

Upgrading

Like I said before, it won't be possible to upgrade from ModernBB 3.xx to Luna. So this won't be an option for whoever want to do this. This is for Luna 1.0 to Vanellope 1.1 or later for example. Upgrading can be done in 2 different ways.

Launching the update from the Backstage

This will be the recommended way of updating. The Backstage will contain a feature that downloads, unzips and installs up update automatically. At the end, the only thing that need to be done is clicking a button to update the database. It will be as simple as that.

Replacing the files trough FTP

Another possibility will be for you to download Luna from our website, unzip it and then upload it through FTP to your server, the next time you reload your forum, ModernBB will ask you to click on a button so the update process can begin.

Migrating

Migrating will only be possible from ModernBB 3. So if you want your ModernBB 2 forum to become a Luna-forum, you are going to need to upgrade to ModernBB 3 first. Now, it won't

be possible either to update 3 to Luna. Instead, it will only migrate forums, categories, topics, posts, users and basic settings. Migration is actually part of the installer. And so, it will ask you if you want to install or migrate. Migration start with the same step as installation:

- 1 Connecting with the database
- 2 Migrating your forum

And that's it. Migration might not be available in Luna and might be added later on in Vanellope, just to get the big issues out of the way. However, a migration tool will be in development during Luna's development.

Front-end

After installing, migrating or updating, you will find yourself on the front-end. Just like the good old Backstage, we plan to give this part of Luna a fancy name too. You can divide the front-end in 3 big parts:

- **Header:** contains the menu, title, announcement, and other notifications (like updates, etc.)
- **Content:** this section depends on what you are doing. The index will display all categories and forums. The forum index displays all topics. And the topic view displays the posts and comments on that. Then there are the settings pages, they have content depending on where it is used for: profile, settings or help.
- **Footer:** this shows contextual buttons (moderation buttons), the Luna copyrights and version and... that's it.

For structure of the front-end, not much is going to change. Only some missing features in the original 1.0.

Backstage

The Backstage will return in Luna, of course. Backstage will maintain its position as the main settings-change-tool. We will mostly maintain the current structure and design. However, we do consider to change the menu to a vertical menu instead of the current horizontal menu to make the current feature list a little bit more accessible.

Marketing and pricing

Well, yes. Luna will be marketed and priced. After all, we are something everyone can use!

Marketing

We'll try to extend our community seriously. Not only for a larger community, but also for more developers.

Pricing

This might be an unexpected point in this paper. Pricing? For Luna? Well yes, because everything has its price. What will you have to pay for Luna? A lot.

1. Happiness
2. Attitude
3. Ask for support on ModernBB.be if you have any questions
4. 0 Euro/Dollar/Pound/Yen/Bitcoin/whatever currency you are using

So while Luna is theoretical free of charge, we like you to join the community. This is called "aggressive pricing", awesome, isn't it?

Donations

Also, we're not against donations, in fact, it would be very nice if you would donate to us, because that means that we can do our job even better: remember that the developers are working on Luna during their free time. It's not required, but we do recommend it.

Will you get anything special if you donate to Luna? Well, if you do consider a honorable mention on our site as special, yes. This is only for donations of 5 euro and larger.

Ads on ModernBB.be

Sponsors are nice people, and well, we do accept offers to display your logo as a "sponsored by" logo, on our front-page, on the top. And bottom. And "Sponsors" page. And perhaps even the footer of every page (we're not out of that yet). I'm not going to put a price tag on this, only a time-tag: 1 year. For the price, we can talk...

Developers

Join the team, if you like

Becoming a team developer

Good news, since April 2013, we're on a search for enthusiast developers that would like to join the team! This would be very helpful since Luna will be a big project and I can use some helping hands (or whatever you like to code with, I don't want to put any conclusions on the table). As a developer, you will get an awesome "Developer" status on the forums and are supposed to help us manage the forum. However, you're main concern is the Luna core, of course.

When you would want to quit, you get a "Former developer" status on the forums, which does nothing, but shine.

Becoming a moderator

We would also like to have 1 or 2 more moderators on our forums, they'll get the same permissions as developers, however, they do not work on the primary code. However, you are supposed to help with support.

Becoming a member

Since we're an open source project, actually, everyone can become a developer. So normal members too, however, they cannot take tickets and so, only create pull request. But any help is welcome.

Luna Project