

Openproject - Scrum plugin

September 3, 2014 / Gavin Jackson

agile

backlogs

management

open source

openproject

scrum

Having recently completed the Certified ScrumMaster qualification (by the excellent guys at www.axisagile.com.au) I was keen to start using Scrum at work. Having recently installed Openproject I thought I should try out the Scrum (backlogs) plugin.

It's a bit confusing to get up and running with, so I thought I should share some of my experiences.

The first thing to note is that it simply maps scrum onto the existing openproject framework. Product Backlog Items and Tasks map to existing work package types (which are user definable).

Backlogs themselves are achieved by using the project versioning facility, for each backlog you have in a project, you create a new version. This is done in the project settings -> versions area.

Once you have one or more project versions, you will see them pop up in the backlogs section.

The screenshot shows the OpenProject interface with the 'Backlogs' section selected. The interface displays four distinct backlog views:

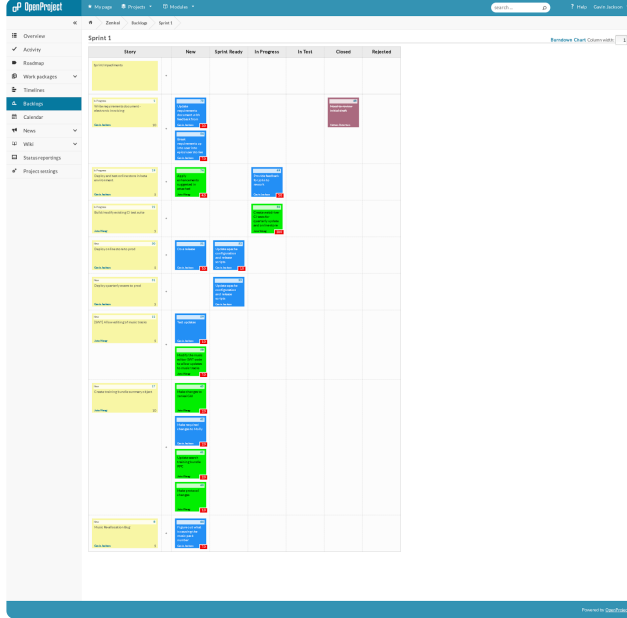
- Zenkal Product Backlog** (2014-09-02): A list of tasks including bugs, epics, and user stories, such as 'Bug: [SWT] Payment commit screen not showing up for zero-dollar transactions' and 'Epic: Internationalization'.
- System Administration Backlog** (2014-08-03): A list of support tasks, including 'Support: Renew Webrec License' and 'Support: Configure and test Microsoft System Centre'.
- Urgent Bug Backlog** (2014-09-03): A single entry: 'Bug: BTM licenses not showing up on class locator (or being granted access to club resources)'.
- Sprint 1** (2014-09-03): A list of phases and user stories for a sprint, such as 'Phase: Write requirements document - electronic invoicing' and 'User Story: [SWT] Allow editing of music tracks'.

Backlogs View

The backlogs view allows you to quickly create, order and transfer tasks between your backlogs. You can see here that I have four backlogs for my projects: the traditional Product and Sprint Backlogs (that are used for the actual scrum workflow), and two additional ones to deal with ad-hoc sysadmin and urgent bugs that need to be addressed immediately.

This view allows us to easily enter user points for estimation during sprint planning.

I created an extra state called "Sprint Ready" which means that the user story has been fleshed out with a problem definition and acceptance criteria.



Task Board

Selecting the task view allows us to easily add work tasks and assign them to users. Estimation for these tasks is done in hours.

I still haven't figured out how the burndown charts get created (it will probably become more obvious as I use the product more).

They pop out a bit and reuse the wiki functionality to provide additional documentation about the sprint (such as velocity, definition of done etc).

In future versions it would be nice to bake these into the plugin (and provide metrics and reports - to determine team velocity based on previous sprints).

The user story export facility requires the user to create a template in yaml (they should really have some defaults!). Modules -> Administration -> Export Card Configs.

I used the following YAML definition to create cards for my physical task board (2 pages per page A4 portrait):

```
group1:
  has_border: false
  height: 100

  rows:
  row1:
    height: 50
    priority: 1

  columns:
  id:
    has_label: false
    min_font_size: 10
    max_font_size: 20
    font_size: 20
    font_style: bold
    text_align: left
    minimum_lines: 2
    render_if_empty: false
    width: 10%
  due_date:
    has_label: false
    font_size: 15
    font_style: italic
    minimum_lines: 2
    render_if_empty: false
    width: 20%

  subject:
    has_label: false
    font_size: 15
    font_style: italic
    minimum_lines: 2
    render_if_empty: false
    width: 70%

  row2:
    priority: 2

  columns:
  status:
    has_label: true
    indented: true
    font_size: 15
    font_style: normal
    minimum_lines: 1
    render_if_empty: true

group2:
  has_border: true

  rows:
```

```
row1:  
height: 80  
priority: 2  
  
columns:  
description:  
has_label: true  
indented: false  
font_size: 15  
font_style: normal  
minimum_lines: 1  
render_if_empty: true
```

```
row2:  
priority: 2
```

```
columns:  
status:  
has_label: true  
font_size: 15  
font_style: normal  
minimum_lines: 1  
render_if_empty: true
```

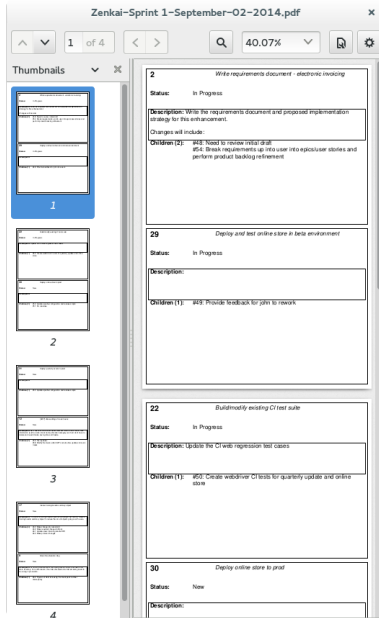
```
row2:  
priority: 2
```

```
columns:  
custom_field_name:  
has_label: true  
font_size: 15  
minimum_lines: 1
```

```
group3:
```

```
rows:  
row1:  
height: 100  
priority: 2
```

```
columns:  
children:  
has_label: true  
has_count: true  
indented: true  
font_size: 15  
font_style: normal  
minimum_lines: 1  
render_if_empty: false
```



This is what the card export looks like (when using the YAML above)

Another thing I noticed was a lack of aggregation for sub projects - meaning that User Stories and Tasks did not seem to be aggregating correctly within the parent. I fixed this by flattening the whole project into one (which for our size was practical, but I could imagine others being frustrated by this). This might just be a bug or lack of understanding on my behalf - please comment below if you have figured this out!

So in a nutshell, it provides a pretty lightweight framework for managing scrum - it gets the basics right, although it could do with a bit more polish (and end user documentation!).

Downloaded from <https://www.gavinj.net/post/openproject-scrum-plugin>

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