Integrating LibreOffice Online in Alfresco

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Agenda

- Use case: why did we integrate LibreOffice Online in Alfresco ?

- Problems to solve

- Difficulties we had

- Our answers
  - Zoom: the LibreOffice Online monitoring capabilities

- Feedback

- Future steps

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- Provides collaborative tools that users need

- Helps organizations to keep control of the data

- Develop collaboration and access to information

Open Source software

Use case: context

- Alfresco: ECM, mainly used to store and classify documents, and follow their life cycle

- Organizations use it as:

  - As a document collaboration and workflow tool

  - As a basis for specific software (electronic signature, administrative acts management...)

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- Alfresco editing process: a little complicated
  - Many steps: check-out, download, local editing, upload, check-in
    - Sometimes even more: phone call to the person who locks the document 2 months ago, waiting for check-in done, check-out, and so on

- People prefer to edit files directly in LibreOffice
  - Sometimes using a old LibreOffice extension:
    - check out a document, Webdav editing, check in

- Problems:
  - teleworking: no extension to install
  - File locking: only one person can edit the document at the same time

Specification

- Online and collaborative editing of MSO / ODF documents

- Everybody should be able to edit a document when he wants

- Nothing to install on the desktop

Solution

- Collabora Online integrated in Alfresco

- Complete the (pending) prototype connector developed by Magenta (Danish company)

- We analyzed:
  - What is to be done to release a first version ?
  - Costs ?

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Partners

Collabora Productivity

Jeci

atol Conseils & Développements

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Main tasks

- File locking management

- Versions management

- Better UI (integration into Alfresco)

- Features to add: download, print

- Fix the display of the list of the editing users

Main difficulties

- Prevent others from deleting a document currently edited by Collabora Online ?

  – Alfresco uses a locking mechanism (check out/in)

    • Do we need to use it during an online editing session ?

- Do we need to keep all versions sent by Collabora Online ?

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Our answers

- Focus on one of them
  - Based on the interesting monitoring capability of LibreOffice Online
  - Allowing our connector to know when users enter and leave a editing session
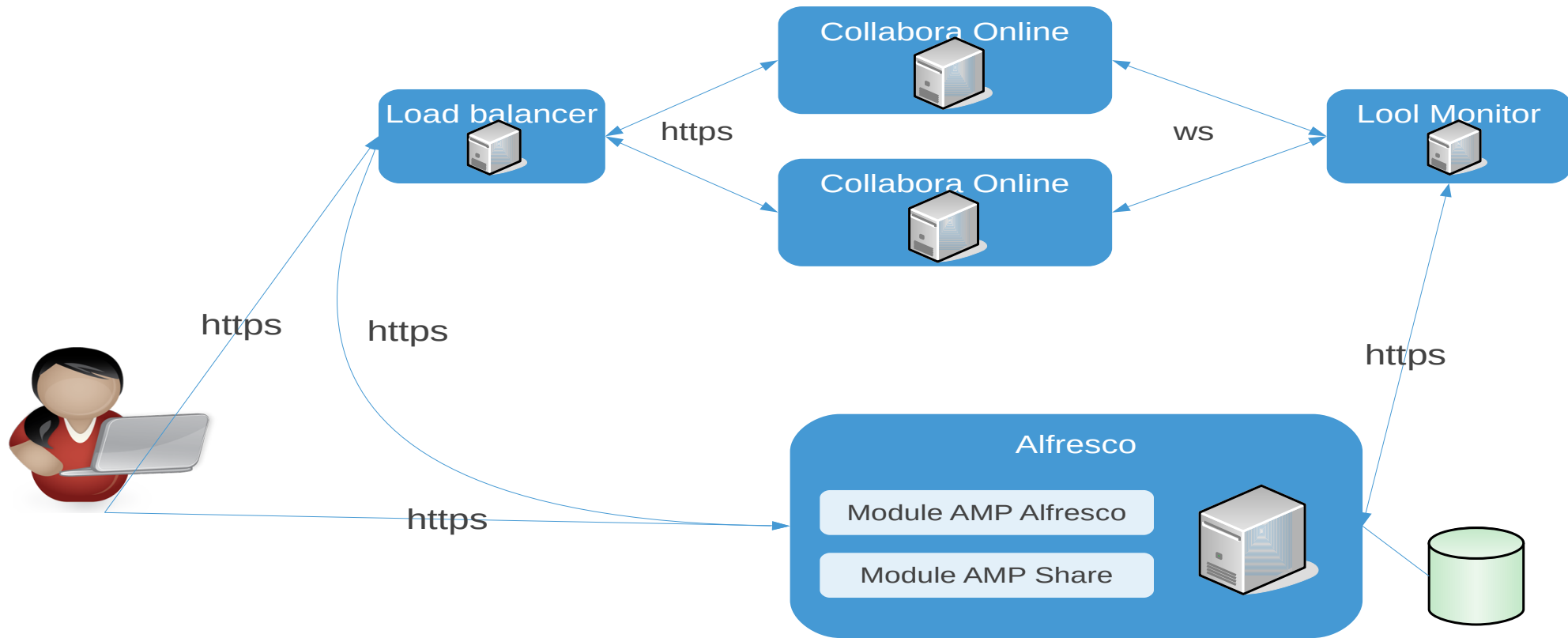
Locking management (1)

- What we chose to do:
  - No check out because of difficulties to edit such a file by different users
  - During a session, removing UI choices allowing users to delete, move, upload a new version, check out

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Locking management (2)

- By monitoring the session
  - A metadata is set on the edited file to indicate a current session

- An Alfresco plugin
  - Removes some UI choices when this metadata is set
  - Displays a message: "ongoing session"

- The metadata is removed when the last user leaves the online session

Architecture

Collabora Online

Load balancer

https

Collabora Online

Lool Monitor

ws

https

https

https

Alfresco

Module AMP Alfresco

Module AMP Share

https

Details

- Loolmonitor: python, systemd service

- Alfresco modules: Java

- https://github.com/ArawaFr

LOOL monitoring

- Great collaboration with Collabora

- Collabora made some changes on the monitoring capabilities for our project

- One patch on LibreOffice Online from Arawa :-)

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Feedback

- Many tests done by users

- Good feedback

- First step: limited deployment (200 users)

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Future steps

- Display of the revision history
- Save As implementation
- Alfresco previews based on Collabora Online
- Widget: list of the current online sessions
- Display of the number of editing users on the Alfresco detail page

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Questions ?

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