

HCL Connections Roadmap, Embracing Openness, Modernization, and Usability

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Connections challenges



Complex (and dated) UI

Fragile – results in too many regressions
Design issues that we call “working as designed”
Hard for end-users to adopt



Closed system

ATOM/XML APIs
Jquery based Engagement Center
Hard for you (and us) to customize and extend



Quality

Process changes to catch regressions
Better UI designs needed in some places
Hard for you to get fixes on time

HCL Connections **AHA Idea Portal**

<https://hclsw.co/connections-ideas>

Feature development with customer input

Evaluate enhancement requests
alongside roadmap priorities

How can we **Improve it**

- ☐ Work through years of Great Ideas
- ☐ Engage with Connections Users
- ☐ Missing features are not always ERs!
- ☐ Be Available and Responsive



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Every feature we build should have direct customer input

Become a sponsor customer

Helps us build the software
you need

Meet **regularly** with HCL teams

Share your requirements & feedback

Be willing to look at work in progress

Why participate?

Direct input to engineering

Early visibility of upcoming changes

Present and discuss plans, designs,
prototypes and work in progress

Listen to and act on feedback

Why?

Grounds HCL team in real customer
requirements

Energizes and empowers the team

HCL Connections 8.0 CR9

- Fixes!
- Upgrade MongoDB 5 to MongoDB 7
- Distribution via to MyHCL Software
- Support Domino Leap with CNX
- Support Windows 2022 Server

HCL Connections 8.0 CR10

- Fixes
- Communities Application Sync Renaming
- Recently Visited Typeahead Support
- Mobile Highlights Widget Enablement

Where are we heading?



More open

Your collaboration ecosystem

Simpler to extend and integrate



More modern

Today's programming models

Extend to digital workplace



More usable

Improved user and developer experience

Drive adoption with modern UIs

2025+ Roadmap

2024

Mongo DB update

Accessibility (high contrast, screen reader)

More fixes

2025

Modernized API

More Collaboration integration

Highlights improvements

Ongoing quality focus

Engagement Center v2 powered by DX

DPTK & ICXT support

EAA compliance

Later

More Engagement Center v2 capabilities

New UIs using Modernized API

More APIs in the Modernized API

Community management APIs and UI

Open event bus

Share CNX events to / from Teams and others

Ongoing agile delivery, several times per year, fixes in latest version

Improving the User Experience



What We've Heard

"It's a powerful tool, but it doesn't feel user-friendly without training."

"The UI feels very heavy and not modern."

"Too many clicks"

Key Pain Points

Outdated & Complex UI – Cluttered screens, inconsistent styling

Navigation Challenges – Hard to find features, confusing flows

Sluggish Performance – Especially with large content or older browsers

UI Modernization in 8.0 CR10

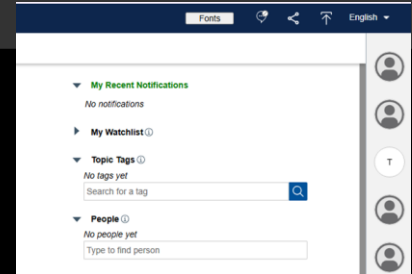
What Changed?

- Simplified and improved font-related CSS rules
- Removed unnecessary CSS rules and consolidated the remaining rules.
- Significantly reduced the use of `!important` in font CSS rules.

What are the Benefits?

- Reduce regressions related to font size, color, styling. Make font-related updates easier and less risky in the future
- Customizer font-related changes more straightforward and simple
- Improved Performance

```
#notificationPanelTitle span:first-of-type  
{  
    color: green;  
}
```



```
.lotusForum .hentry h1.lotusHeading  
{  
    font-size: 60px;  
    font-family: fantasy;  
    font-weight: 100;  
    color: green;  
}
```



UI Modernization Roadmap

People power your business.
Connections powers your people.

Now

Next

Planned

- Simplified font CSS rules. Fewer regressions. Simpler Customizer rules
- Wiki layout and usability improvements
- Business Card consistency
- Font selector simplification
- Font and layout consistency throughout all apps
- Usability improvements and modernization throughout Connections apps

Modernizing Connections integration with new APIs



Build an OpenAPI compliant API for key CNX functions

All new features to be API first

Introduce a powerful, extensible API gateway

Meaningful new APIs that enable key functionality to be accessed programmatically

Starting with Community management

- Top ideas - Restore deleted Folders in Community; Mark Community as Inactive/Read; Notifying All Community Members about content, Move content from one community into another, Accept or reject membership request for moderated community in Orient Me, Highlights Improvements...

Then progress through Connections apps, in popularity order

Using new APIs to enable CNX and Customers to build new UIs.

Applications such as Leap, Powerapp etc will be able to access CNX data to more easily integrate into your wider digital workplace.

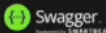
What does New APIs do better?



Feature	Old APIs (ATOM-based)	New APIs (OpenAPI 3.x compliant)
Granularity	Overly granular, heavyweight	Less granular, simpler, higher-level services
Compatibility	Not greatly compatible with modern UI frameworks	Designed for modern development approaches, compatible with JSON
Documentation	Outdated	Very descriptive documentation, ready-to-use test sandboxes (Swagger/OpenAPI)
Developer Support	Limited, dated	Strong developer support, tooling, and community resources
API Platform Role	N/A	Platform-agnostic, containerized, API proxying (ATOM to JSON conversion), reusable
Maintenance/Updates	Legacy code	Modern platform independent of legacy code NEW FEATURES features can be introduced quickly

Modernizing Connections integration with new APIs



Swagger
OPENAPI SPECIFICATION

Explore

HCL Connections Blogs API

1.0.0 QAS 3.0

[/blogs.yaml](#)

Servers

http://pegasus.cnx.cwp.pnp-hcl.com:9081

Authorize

Blogs

Operations related to blog management

GET

/blogs/{blogId}

/blogs/homepage/api/blogs/{blogId}

PUT

/blogs/{blogId}

/blogs/homepage/api/blogs/{blogId}

DELETE

/blogs/{blogId}

/blogs/homepage/api/blogs/{blogId}

GET

/blogs

/blogs/homepage/api/blogs

POST

/blogs

/blogs/homepage/api/blogs

HCL Connections

Suchen

Gesamter Inhalt

Meine Blogs | Öffentliche Blogs | Meine Aktualisierungen | Administration

Problem: Jenkins CI pipeline is failing to launch Selenium tests during testing.

The error message indicates that Chrome failed to start, and the system couldn't find a necessary file ("DevToolsActivePort file"). This usually means there's an issue with how Chrome is being launched or configured within the test environment.

Details:

- The user initially suspected their code changes were the cause, but the problem persists even after reverting to a minimal change (a change to the README file).
- The specific error occurs during an automated test run, where Selenium is attempting to launch Chrome.
- Here's the relevant part of the error log:


```
[14:42:38] [local] - Selenium standalone server started at http://127.0.0.1:4444/wd/hub
[14:42:38] [remote] - unknown error: Chrome failed to start: crashed.
(unknown error: DevToolsActivePort file doesn't exist)
(The process started from chrome location /usr/bin/google-chrome is no longer running, so ChromiumDriver is assuming Chrome has crashed.)
```

Link to the failing build: Jenkins Build #9

Build #9	Build #10	Build #11	Build #12	Build #13	Build #14	Build #15	Build #16	Build #17	Build #18	Build #19	Build #20
Failed	Success	Success	Success	Success	Success	Success	Success	Success	Success	Success	Success

Kommentar hinzufügen | Bearbeiten | Weitere Aktionen ▼

Kommentare (1)

Amy Jones

kommentierte Heute 13:32

The Jenkins CI pipeline failures were caused by an unexpected Chrome version update within the chrome-headless-node18:114 Docker image. The Dockerfile was set to pull google-chrome-stable, which recently updated from Chrome 114 to 134, causing incompatibility with the pipeline's test setup.

Here is a breakdown:

- * Problem: Chrome failing to start in the Docker container during tests, with a "DevToolsActivePort file does not exist" error.
- * Root Cause: The chrome-headless-node18:114 Docker image was pulling the latest google-chrome-stable, which changed the Chrome version from 114 to 134, breaking compatibility.
- * Short-term Solution: The older, working version of the chrome-headless-node18:114 image was restored in Artifactory, and the Jenkins agent's Docker image cache was cleared to ensure the correct image was used.
- * Long-term Solution: Pin the specific Chrome version in the Dockerfile to prevent future unintended updates. Also, investigate making E2E tests more resilient to browser version changes.

This issue highlights the importance of pinning dependencies in Docker images to ensure consistent and reproducible builds. A Jira ticket (CWPS-1452) has been created to track the resolution.

Driving user adoption with Engagement Center v2



We love Engagement Center

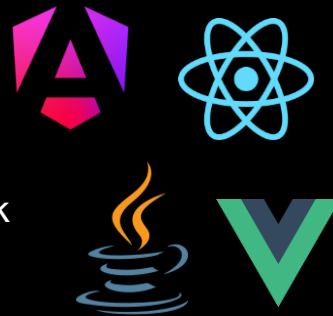
- Increases Connections adoption and communication
- Drag and drop authoring is a snap
- Improves employee intranet experiences

But we need to modernize it

- Update from JQuery – an increasingly rare skill
- Limited integration capability beyond Connections data

Introducing Engagement Center v2, powered by DX WebEngine

- Much more powerful application integration capabilities
- Much more open development options, using up to date frameworks & skills
- New lightweight WebEngine architecture, deployed to Connections Component Pack
- **Will enable you to deliver richer workplaces, faster**



What does CECv2 do better?



CEC v1	CEC v2
Built on jQuery (legacy frontend)	Built on modern web technologies (Web Components, APIs)
Limited layout and customization	Flexible, drag-and-drop, customizable pages
Non-compliant accessibility (WCAG)	Designed for full accessibility compliance (WCAG 2.1+)
Basic iFrame integrations with DX and other apps	Native embedding and direct integration with Connections and external content
Siloed authentication for extensions	Unified authentication and authorization (SSO-ready)
Difficult to scale and update (monolithic)	Microservices/Kubernetes-native deployment with Component Pack
Static user experiences	Dynamic, responsive, and mobile-friendly UI

Driving user adoption with Engagement Center v2



Published Site Edit Mode: ON

Connect@Engage

Executive Product Management Marketing

Quick Nav for everything else...

EngageLinkedInFeed (Specified)

Edit Actions

Engage @ Socials (#engageug) Configure

Andrew Manby
1st • Senior Product Management & Strategy Leader...
4w • Edited •

For years, Engage User Group has been an institution and an invaluable user group event that fosters energetic conversations and adoption of the #HCLDigitalSolutions portfolio. It's #039;ll be there and can't wait for it to begin. #dominoforever A Big Thank You to Kris De Bisschop and Tom, who are picking up the torch from Theo Heselmans.

Engage User Group
345 followers
4w •

Thank you to our Diamond sponsor for your support of Engage:
HCLSoftware

#engageug #NEW Our agenda has been published, take a look and get registered!

ENGAGE May 19 - 21

HCL

HCL Connections Roadmap - Embracing Openness, Modernization, and Usability

Amy Jones1 7 May 2025

Embracing Openness, Modernization, and Usability. Join us for an in-depth look at the future of HCL Connections as we share our roadmap and vision for the platform.
Discover how we are making Connections more open, modern, and intuitive to meet evolving customer needs.
Learn about upcoming features, enhancements, and initiatives designed to drive collaboration, simplify workflows, and improve usability across organizations.

Trevor Tallackson **David Strachan**
HCLSoftware HCLSoftware

Continued Support for ICXT and DPTK add-ons

They will remain a chargeable add-on, as at present

Open sourcing may still happen, but it does not provide the support customers want

We will continue to provide support, so that existing customers can continue to use them

DPTK Pseudonymization in Activity Stream

Ensuring proper handling of @mentions as part of automated PII removal processes.

Aligning with existing DPTK workflows and eliminating the need for manual intervention.

Making Connections **accessible to all**

About 1 in 6 people have some form of disability ([source: WHO](#))

Accessibility matters to everyone, not just as a matter of compliance

In the EU it is also required by the European Accessibility Act

Our approach

Extensive testing of every feature, function, screen to identify gaps ✓

Categorize, prioritize and assign issues ✓

Fix issues, starting with the most accessed applications 🕒

Deliver fixes incrementally 🕒

By June 2025 we will have addressed the most used parts of Connections



HCL Connections **Survey**

<https://hclsw.co/connections-survey>

We want **need** your feedback!



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Believe what we ship, not what we say

2024

Mongo DB update

Accessibility (high
contrast, screen
reader)

More fixes

2025 *Starting with CR10*

Modernized API

More Collaboration
integration

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