Tails - Feature #8061
Feature # 10491 (Confirmed): Redesign the network configuration and startup

Customize "Proxy is refusing connections" error messages in Tor Browser and remove the "Tor is not ready" popup

10/11/2014 07:09 AM - tchou

<table>
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<th>Start date:</th>
<th>10/11/2014</th>
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Description
When you start TorBrowser before Tor is ready, there is a "Tor is not ready" pop-up, that ask to confirm if we want to start IceWeasel.

I feel we could remove it, because:
- it can lead to misunderstanding, like thinking that it could be a problem using TorBrowser without Tor ready
- there is a notification about Tor connection

Related issues:
Related to Tails - Bug #12269: "Tor is not ready" should not pop up when open... Resolved 02/27/2017
Related to Tails - Feature #14544: Spend software developer time on smallish ... In Progress 08/31/2018
Related to Tails - Bug #16473: "Tor is not ready. Start Tor Browser anyway?" ... Resolved 02/19/2019
Related to Tails - Feature #17330: Enable "bridge mode" by default Confirmed
Related to Tails - Feature #14534: Improve UX when Wi-Fi is not working Confirmed 12/29/2017

History
#1 - 11/01/2014 03:58 PM - sajolida
- Parent task set to #7437

For me this should be considered as a subtask of #7437. I don't see a good reason to treat this urgently rather than start working on #7438.

#2 - 11/01/2014 08:27 PM - intrigeri
- Subject changed from Remove "Tor is not ready pop-up" when lunching IceWeasel to Remove "Tor is not ready pop-up" when launching IceWeasel

#3 - 11/01/2014 08:28 PM - intrigeri
- Subject changed from Remove "Tor is not ready pop-up" when lunching IceWeasel to Remove "Tor is not ready" popup when launching the Tor Browser

#4 - 11/01/2014 08:30 PM - intrigeri
- Category set to 176

#5 - 11/07/2014 02:51 PM - intrigeri
sajolida wrote:

For me this should be considered as a subtask of #7437. I don't see a good reason to treat this urgently rather than start working on #7438.

I tend to agree.

02/20/2020
What makes me doubt is:

- #7438 will be dealt with by totally different people than those who could address this problem, so it's not as if fixing this one will "steal" time from those who "should" instead focus on #7438;
- sometimes, making incremental progress is good to fight our tendency to postpone easy things until the big, hard thing is done;
- if we agree that this change is desirable, then I think it's a trivial thing to do.

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I'd like to hear what sajolida now thinks. No emergency.

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First of all, I think that this is low priority. What is the sense of opening Tor Browser before Tor is ready? I can only think about browsing the LAN and we're about to move this to a dedicated browser. So we anyway have to find a way of explaining to the user that this browser is useless until Tor is started. Which is a process that happens in the background until we have #7437.

I'm also wondering about what kind of experience people who will be opening Tor Browser will receive until Tor is ready. At the moment the error message is "The proxy server is refusing connections", which I think is hard to relate to Tor if you don't know what's going on.

So, unless we are able to change this error message to something saying "Tor is not ready", I think that doing this right now would create more problems than it solves.

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First of all, I think that this is low priority.

Agreed.

What is the sense of opening Tor Browser before Tor is ready? I can only think about browsing the LAN and we're about to move this to a dedicated browser.

Reading the doc while being offline?

So we anyway have to find a way of explaining to the user that this browser is useless until Tor is started.

I think we're already doing that with the "Time sync in progress" notification, so the current browser popup seems to be a duplicate to me, so I don't think it would need to be replaced if we remove it.

I'm also wondering about what kind of experience people who will be opening Tor Browser will receive until Tor is ready. At the moment the error
message is "The proxy server is refusing connections", which I think is hard to relate to Tor if you don't know what's going on.

... unless one has read the "Time sync in progress" (or whatever it's called) notification, and is then waiting for the "Tor is ready" message.

So, unless we are able to change this error message to something saying "Tor is not ready", I think that doing this right now would create more problems than it solves.

With the extra info I'm providing above, I beg to disagree.

#9 - 12/17/2014 05:12 PM - intrigeri
- Assignee set to sajolida
- QA Check set to Info Needed

#10 - 12/18/2014 05:10 PM - sajolida

Reading the doc while being offline?

I forgot about this one, thanks.

... unless one has read the "Time sync in progress" (or whatever it's called) notification, and is then waiting for the "Tor is ready" message.

The big difference here is that the desktop notification are "out of the way" and disappear on their own quickly. While the current warning when you open the browser is "on your way" even if you didn't pay attention to the desktop notifications.

With the extra info I'm providing above, I beg to disagree.

I fail to see which problem is fixed by removing that warning (the two bullet points in the description of this tickets are not "problems" to me). But I'm convinced that the "proxy" error until Tor is ready will confuse people who didn't pay attention to the desktop notification. But I have no proof of that, so I'm ok to try and see.

If it was possible change the "proxy" error message to something related to Tor, then I would find that actually as good as and more elegant than the current solution.
The big difference here is that the desktop notification are "out of the way" and disappear on their own quickly. While the current warning when you open the browser is "on your way" even if you didn't pay attention to the desktop notifications.

ACK. Not sure it's an advantage, but you have guessed this :) 

With the extra info I'm providing above, I beg to disagree.

I fail to see which problem is fixed by removing that warning (the two bullet points in the description of this tickets are not "problems" to me). But I'm convinced that the "proxy" error until Tor is ready will confuse people who didn't pay attention to the desktop notification.

OK, I'll leave it at that. On this one I'll trust your intuition more than mine :) 

But I have no proof of that, so I'm ok to try and see.

If it was possible change the "proxy" error message to something related to Tor, then I would find that actually as good as and more elegant than the current solution.

Indeed. I'd love it if someone investigated that option a bit before we implement what this ticket suggests.

In some Tor Browser (31.2.0esr-4.x-1 branch) source tree, I see:

```
browser/locales/en-US/chrome/overrides/appstrings.properties:proxyConnectFailure=Firefox is configured to use a proxy server that is refusing connections.
browser/locales/en-US/chrome/overrides/netError.dtd:<!ENTITY proxyConnectFailure.title "The proxy server is refusing connections"> 
```

Possibly we can ship our own overrides file somewhere and change the strings. Then we need to have our own version translated, and integrate it within l10n system etc. It would be worth thinking if this strings change would be better done in Tor Browser; perhaps their usecase makes this error have a different meaning than in ours.

Once properly split into subtasks, this could be a nice set of "Easy" tickets.
#13 - 12/30/2014 03:58 PM - sajolida
- Type of work changed from Discuss to Research

#14 - 01/04/2015 05:31 PM - BitingBird
- Category deleted (176)
- Affected tool set to Browser

#15 - 01/13/2015 02:17 PM - intrigeri
Note that if one starts Tor Browser once (e.g. by clicking on a link in a notification message), they get this popup, and if one clicks another link (e.g. the "Tails documentation" one) later, then one gets the same popup again.

#16 - 02/27/2017 12:02 PM - intrigeri
- Related to Bug #12269: "Tor is not ready" should not pop up when opening local documentation added

#17 - 06/30/2017 08:59 AM - Anonymous
- Description updated

#18 - 06/30/2017 09:18 AM - Anonymous
- Parent task deleted (#7437)

#19 - 06/30/2017 09:18 AM - Anonymous
- Parent task set to #10491

#20 - 05/05/2018 03:36 PM - sajolida
- Related to Feature #9473: Improve "Unable to connect" error message from Tor Browser when accessing server on the LAN added

#21 - 05/05/2018 03:40 PM - sajolida
During the user testing of the Additional Software beta, 4 out of 5 participants (everybody who started Tor Browser while still being offline) clicked through this popup and ended up on the "Unable to connect" screen of Firefox (#9473), which lead to more confusion.

Conclusion: as of now this popup is not helpful for beginners to understand that they are still offline.

#22 - 05/05/2018 03:42 PM - sajolida
- Related to Feature #14544: Spend software developer time on smallish UX improvements added

#23 - 01/23/2019 12:01 PM - sajolida
- Subject changed from Remove "Tor is not ready" popup when launching the Tor Browser to Remove "Tor is not ready" popup when launching the Tor Browser and instead customize the Tor Browser error message

#24 - 01/23/2019 12:02 PM - sajolida
- Subject changed from Remove "Tor is not ready" popup when launching the Tor Browser and instead customize the Tor Browser error message to Customize the Tor Browser error message and remove the "Tor is not ready" popup

#25 - 01/23/2019 12:02 PM - sajolida
- Subject changed from Customize the Tor Browser error message and remove the "Tor is not ready" popup to Customize "Proxy server" error message in Tor Browser and remove the "Tor is not ready" popup
We learned from the Additional Software usability testing that this notification is not even useful at preventing people from going into confusing connectivity troubles while still being offline. So yeah, the only solution is just-in-time help and displaying useful information when failing to connect to a website.

The error message in Tor Browser could instead be:

```
Tor is not ready
----------------
Tor Browser is configured to only connect to websites through the Tor network.
Tor takes some time to start after you connected to the network.
1. Verify that you are connected to a Wi-Fi, wired, or mobile broadband connection.
   The status of your network connection is displayed in the system menu in the top-right corner of the desktop.
   Open the system menu to choose a Wi-Fi or mobile broadband network or check your network cable.
   If no Wi-Fi networks are listed in the system menu, your Wi-Fi interface might not work in Tails and you might need to use a USB Wi-Fi adapter.
   See our documentation about connecting to a network: https://tails.boum.org/doc/anonymous_internet/network_manager/.
2. Verify that Tor is started.
   The status of your connection to the Tor network is indicated by an onion-shaped icon in the top navigation bar.
```
Wait until Tor has started and the onion-shaped icon is full: https://tails.boum.org/doc/anonymous_internet/tor_status/tor-connected.png.

See our documentation about viewing the status and circuits of Tor: https://tails.boum.org/doc/anonymous_internet/tor_status/.

3. If Tor takes more than several minutes to start, your network might be censored and prevent you from connecting to Tor.

Try to connect to Tor using Tor bridges to circumvent the censorship.

See our documentation about using Tor bridges: https://tails.boum.org/doc/first_steps/startup_options/bridge_mode/.

The last bullet points should be changed once we have #17330.

#34 - 12/11/2019 03:27 PM - sajolida
- Related to Feature #14534: Improve UX when Wi-Fi is not working added