

Where does Debian fit in?



Steve McIntyre <93sam@debian.org>
Debian Project Leader

25th July 2009



Debian in 1993

- Ian Murdock announces to the world his brand-new Linux release
 - built from scratch
 - inspired by, but not based on, SLS
 - sleek and slim, but extensively documented
 - easy installation
- Not many other distros...



And in 2009?

- 1029 developers
- 26,000+ binary packages (i386 sid)
- Dozens (hundreds?) of derived distributions
- Releasing (roughly) every 2 years
- LOTS of other distros...



Quotes (1)

- “You're going to fill up your talk using quotes from lots of people?”
 - Jonathan McDowell



Quotes (2)

- “Conservative – due to its support for many processor architectures, newest technologies are not always included; slow release cycle (one stable release every 1-3 years); discussions on developer mailing lists and blogs can be uncultured at times”
 - distrowatch.com



Quotes (3)

- “Why does Debian always seem to be on the verge of imploding?”
 - anon
- “The best and most stable Linux distribution I've ever used.”
 - User feedback



Big differences?

- Differences in user requirements
 - Data centre vs laptop
- Differences in experiences
 - Everything works, *except...*
- Differing levels of user:
 - Developer vs new user
- The Universal Operating System?

Teams – good and bad



- Many are working well
- Many aren't... :-)
- Teams survey
- Situation changes, but things still stay the same
- Always looking for more people for core teams!



New maintainers

- Adam Barratt | Adriaan Peeters | Alexander Gerasiov | Andrew Lee
- Arthur Loiret | Asheesh Laroia | Barry deFreese | Behan Webster
- Bradley Smith | Bruno Kleinert | Carsten Hey | Chris Lamb | Daniel Gillmor
- Evgeni Golov | Francisco García Claramonte | Giridhar Appaji Nag Y
- Gregory Colpart | Ian Beckwith | Jan Dittberner | Jan Wagner
- Jelmer Vernooij | Joachim Reichel | Jon Dowland | Jonny Lamb
- Julian Andres Klode | Laurent Bigonville | LI Daobing | Ludovico Gardenghi
- Manuel Prinz | Martin Meredith | Michael Casadevall | Michael Prokop
- Patrick Matthäi | Patrick Schoenfeld | Patryk Cisek | Philipp Benner
- Philipp Huebner | Raphael Geissert | Rene Mayorga | Samuel Thibault
- Sandro Tosi | Sebastian Harl | Sonnenburg Soeren | Stig Sandbeck Mathisen
- Sylvestre Ledru | Timo Jyrinki | Tobias Grimm | Xavier Lüthi | Xavier Oswald
- Ying-Chun Liu

What should I do to help Debian? (1)



- Go and dive in, don't be scared!
- See which teams are asking for help
- Teams that need help often won't have told people that help is needed
- Find whatever interests you
- Think about working on core stuff too!

What should I do to help Debian? (2)



- Think about new packages before working on them:
 - Do we *really* need another web server / music player / calculator?
 - Will anybody else maintain it after you get bored?
 - Too much crap in the archive...



Innovating

- Are we doing enough cool new stuff?
 - Maybe?
- Should we be waiting for other distros to do the cool new stuff?
 - Hell no!



Negative energy

- Lots of bikeshedding
 - why?
- Lots of people saying “no” to new ideas
 - “we've always done it this way”



Positive energy

- Try saying “**YES**” instead!
- See how it works out



Play well with others

- Work with other people in Debian
- Work with users
- Work with upstreams
- Work with (*gasp*) other distros
- Work with everybody
 - Share the code, share the love!



Questions?

Any more ideas?

- What else should we do?
- Debian is indeed not in any danger of dying any time soon
- BUT... let's try and keep it fun -
- More fun leads to more people
- More people leads to more fun

Slides © 2009 Steve McIntyre <93sam@debian.org>

Released under GPL v2 at <http://www.einval.com/~steve/talks/Debconf9-fitin/>