

Debian and DebConf10

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Contents



What is Debian?

The Universal OS

But that's not what you wanted to know... you want to know how it's different.



Technical Strengths

- Huge archive of packages
- Most packages available on all of its 12 released architectures and some unreleased ones as well
- All packages meet unusually rigorous policy and QA requirements
 - <http://www.debian.org/doc/debian-policy> for many of the details



Technical Strengths

- Debian does not step on your manual configuration changes
- Stable releases are high-quality and unchanging, but kept secure
- Bleeding edge is surprisingly usable for informed and savvy users
- Intermediate options exist for appropriate use cases



Licensing advantages

- Debian has clear free software guidelines (DFSG)
 - `main`: Free software, “Debian” proper
 - `contrib`: Free software requiring non-Free dependencies
 - `non-free`: Non-Free but distributable software
- Clear separation allows flexibility for users
- Debian still provides easy integration of firmware and other proprietary hardware support bits



Community nature

- Not a commercial organization, though corporations do pay some contributors
- No one legal entity; Debian is a global collection of people
- Project infrastructure and certain other expenses paid for by donations, but no participants are paid by Debian
- Donations by US and some EU taxpayers may be tax-deductible via associated nonprofits



Community nature

- Decisions are mostly made through discussion and consensus, with occasional voting
- Tries to do things the right way, even if it takes longer
- No single person or company can force decisions; but everyone can go and do things.



Latest release: Lenny 5.0 in February 2009

What Lenny accomplished:

- Support for a total of twelve architectures
 - Alpha, AMD64, ARM, EABI ARM, HP PA-RISC, Intex x86 and IA-64, MIPS big and little endian, PowerPC, IBM S/390, and SPARC
- Support for storage devices and netbooks
- Build tools for Emdebian
- Software updates (KDE 3.5.10, GNOME 2.22.2, OpenOffice 2.4.1, and many more!)
- Full support for NTFS filesystems
- Improvements in System Security
- Support for translated package descriptions

See <http://wiki.debian.org/NewInLenny>



Next release: Squeeze 6.0

List of goals to achieve with Squeeze

- Multiarch: Allow users to install binaries for several architectures on a single machine.
- kFreeBSD: Debian 6.0 Squeeze should be the first Debian release shipping with a non-Linux kernel.
- Boot performance: Using a minimal shell with an advanced init script management system, should make booting Debian even faster.
- Package quality: Encourage the use of tools to improve our packages' quality.
- Removal of obsolete libs: It's time to get rid of old and unneeded libraries.
- IPv6/LFS: Further support for IPv6 and large files.
- New source package format: Build all packages using dpkg source format 3.0 (quilt).

See <http://wiki.debian.org/SqueezeReleaseGoals>



Interesting subprojects and infrastructure

- Build daemons: autobuilding packages on all 12 architectures, plus some.
- Development machines: chroots to all releases, all archs
- snapshot.debian.net: Full history of all packages
- Package tracking system
- bugs.debian.org: Custom bug tracking system, **not** bugzilla
- volatile.debian.org
- backports.org



Where is Debian used?

Debian is used in...

- Fortune 500 corporations
- Universities
- Startups
- Nonprofits
- NYLUG!
- Everywhere!

Derivatives

Debian is a great base to derive from. Examples:

- Ubuntu
- Eee PC
- Maemo
- Knoppix



How is Debian organized?

Debian is a **bottom-up** organization

- The Debian Project Leader (DPL) is elected by the developers
- Secretary and Technical Committee appointed by the DPL
- Teams are mostly joined by volunteering
- Developers go through a “new-maintainer” process. NM team consists of volunteers

Since Debian is essentially a flat organization, getting involved is easy (if not straightforward).



Debian Developers

Debian Developers

- Upload rights to **all** packages
- Voting rights for DPL and other general resolutions
- Access to project machines

Debian Maintainers

- Upload **their** designated packages

All others

- Join teams, contribute code, translate, document
- Take part in policy discussions
- Contribute to Planet Debian, mailing lists, news
- Anything not listed above



Getting involved in Debian

Since Debian is a mostly a flat organization, it's not hard to get involved:

- Find something you'd like to do. And do it!
 - Teams don't require being a DD
 - Alioth guest accounts get access to most team VCSs
- New Maintainer process vets new developers
 - NM is much quicker than a few years ago, but...
 - You can have a major impact without being a Developer
 - For example, join a team...
- Useful websites
 - <http://www.debian.org/devel/join/>
 - <http://www.debian.org/devel/join/newmaint>



Short overview of Debian teams

Infrastructure or packaging teams:

- Perl, Python, (your language of choice) team
- Games team, X Strike Force, TeX Task Force
- Debian-installer, Release team, Quality Assurance
- Ftpmaster, Security

There are also subprojects...

- Debian Live
- Debian Med, Debian Science
- Debian Edu

Far too many to list! See <http://wiki.debian.org/Teams>

Joining a team is a great way to get involved in Debian



DebConf: the annual, international Debian developer's conference

- Taken place annually since 2000
- DebConf0 and DebConf1 in Bordeaux as an add-on to the Libre Software Meeting
- DebConf2 in Toronto, the first independent conference
- Sponsorship has increased since then
- Most attendees can get full or partial sponsorship to attend



What goes on at a DebConf?

DebConf proper (second week)

- Peer-reviewed talks
- Birds of a feather meetings (BOFs)
- Planning, development
- Teaching

DebCamp (first week)

- One week small-group intensive development session
- Debian teams can meet and work together
- The final planning phase of DebConf proper

Debian Day (one day)

- Introduce Debian and Free Software to the community
- Targeted towards individuals, companies, non-profits, government...
- Advertised and public invited



Why does DebConf happen?

- Our sponsors get enough value from DebConf development work and planning to continue sponsoring year after year
- It's an immense amount of fun

Social events:

- Day trip
- Wine and cheese party
- "Formal" dinner



Current DebConf resources

- Stable (but completely ad-hoc!) leadership team
- Ownership of video team equipment
- Recurring sponsors
- Permanently-sponsored servers for conference management system and streaming



DebConf10 New York City History



- Bid begun in August 2008, one day before the DebConf10 intro presentations
- August through February, we prepared our bid
- February 22: decision meeting, a noble battle with Boston (and Quito and Venezuela)
- March through July, help with DebConf9 in Spain
- August through now, planning for next summer



Our plans

- Working with faculty in the Columbia University Computer Science department
- Using Engineering school (SEAS) facilities, but not yet formally associated with SEAS
- Accommodation for non-locals in CU dorms

To be decided:

- Day trip?
- Conference dinner?
- Other social activities?



Specifics

- June 13 to 26 or July 11 to 24 (tentative)
- Registration opens January
- Attending talks is free
- No registration deadline if you aren't looking for sponsorships
- Mixture of CS department rooms, SEAS rooms, plus classrooms as time gets closer.
- YOU can come



Who is DebConf targeted at?

- Current contributors and developers
- People who would like to be more involved in Debian
- Companies, organizations, governments that use Debian
- Anyone who would like to attend or help



What can you do to help?

- Attend
- Volunteer - all DebConfs rely on local volunteers knowledgeable of the area
 - Columbia students and faculty especially useful.
- Become an organizer
 - Help coordinate food, transportation, day trip, dinner, activities, Debian Day..
- Sponsoring...



Sponsorship

DebConf depends on its sponsorships, especially local sponsors

- Sponsor employees to attend
- Sponsor employees to give talks
- Provide hardware - servers, wireless APs, switches, cables, ...
- Monetary donations
 - All this great collaboration isn't cheap!
 - Even more true in NYC
 - Only possible via the generosity of organizations with an interest in Debian's success



This is too complex!

- No, it's not
- DebConf is nothing like a normal conference, but...
- There are no rules, only things we haven't done yet

If you're interested in helping out, remember

- A flat organization means that it's easy to get in deep
- You are looking at the people who can answer all questions



Contact us

DebianNYC

- Debian Socials every six to eight weeks
- #debian-nyc on irc.debian.org (irc.oftc.net)
- <http://lists.vireo.org/cgi-bin/mailman/listinfo/debiannyc>
- Occasional development events/bug squashing parties

DebConf10

- #debconf-nyc on irc.debian.org
- debconf10-localteam@lists.debconf.org
- <http://wiki.debconf.org/wiki/DebConf10>
- <http://debconf10.debconf.org/>
- Come to a Debian-NYC social event
- Here, after the meeting.

