

Why I'm a Debian Developer

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What is Debian?

- Linux distribution started in 1993 by Ian Murdock
- Volunteer run - no controlling corporate interest
- All Free software
- Strong commitment to the right technical solution
- Over 43000 packages included



Things based on Debian

- Cumulus (network switch OS)
- LiMux (Munich)
- Raspbian
- Ubuntu



Who am I?

- Linux user since 1995
- Debian user since 1999
- Debian developer since 2000
- Worn many hats over the years:
 - ▶ Developer
 - ▶ Sysadmin
 - ▶ Network admin
 - ▶ Law student



Why try Debian?

- Complete convert to packaging
- Had account on someone else's Debian box
- Unimpressed by downtime during upgrade for Red Hat
- Debian's impressive package list appealing - too many poor RPMs out there
- Community nature appealed; strong commitment to technically correct solutions and flexibility



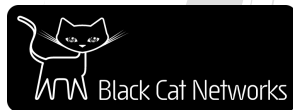
Black Cat Networks

- Small ISP (initially just web hosting)
- Entirely run on Debian
- Internal deployments done as Debian packages
- Extended Debian installer for automated RAID installs
- At one point responsible for registration of Debian domains



Becoming a Debian Developer

- Strong belief in upstreaming
- Wanted to give back
- Black Cat had various external dependencies (e.g. Perl modules)
- Didn't want to maintain local deltas when unnecessary
- Good business



3PAR (now Hewlett Packard Enterprise)

- High end storage device
- Multiple nodes (x86 based)
- All running Debian (+ custom kernel + extra userspace)
- Free nature of Debian significant advantage
- Incredibly powerful from a development environment PoV



- Embedded ARM device (PXA255)
- Too small for Debian proper
- Only got involved because of my Debian experience
- Very different environment to 3PAR

- Annual Debian conference
- Moves around the world; local teams produce bids to host future instances
- Fantastic way to meet lots of people active in the project
- Lots of useful information about what's happening
- Helps build community cohesiveness
- Not just DDs

Staying involved

- Maintaining fewer packages post-ISP
- Ended up single-handedly dealing with the keyring for a while
- Regular attendance of DebConf
- On-and-off active in New Maintainer process
- User both on co-located/virtual machines and work/home desktops



Conclusion

- Learnt a lot from participation in Debian
- Lots of different areas to contribute to
- Go-to distribution whether for a desktop, server or embedded device
- Still a believer in Linux distributions (even for containers)
- DFSG great from a commercial point of view
- Maturing community continues to strive for correct technical solutions

