Final Report

Contents

Welcome Message

DebConf is the annual Debian Developer's Conference, bringing developers, contributors and users together for the benefit of our community. It's awe-inspiring to see so many people passionate about Debian and the Debian community. We have several teams that work hard for an entire year to make Debconf happen. Our reward is a week of hacking, talks, socializing and community enrichment, that provides essential face-to-face interactions to support Debian.

I was honored to share my adopted hometown of Portland, OR, USA for the fifteenth annual Debian Conference (and my tenth anniversary of Debian involvement!) on August 23–31, 2014, at Portland State University downtown. The city is vibrant, colorful, tech-savvy and a fantastic place for technophiles who love green space and the big blue room (outside) and was a perfect host city for DebConf attendees.

Acknowledging multiple concerns of an ever-changing DebCamp and DebConf style (including being able to sacrifice 2 full weeks from work), we organized the conference to include 2 full weekends and a full week, interspersing scheduled time for hacking on software with talks, tracks, BoFs and social activities. Our goal was to have innovation go from the BoF gatherings straight to hack time where the team could implement their ideas and discussions. It was largely successful, although some developers had difficulties with scheduled hack time. We march forward with all of this in mind!

This change from the normal schedule contributed to the very laid-back and technical air for which both DebConf and Portland are consistently renowned. The diversity of our community was exemplified by the wide-ranging full talk schedule, and the numerous ad-hoc sessions that were scheduled during the breaks. And, as always, the ever present "hallway track" gave everyone a chance to share ideas. Most of the talks and many of the ad-hoc sessions are recorded and available to view over and over thanks to our fantastic video team! All can watch, enjoy, and participate, even if they couldn't make it to Portland for the conference itself.

We also introduced a new conference-wide Code of Conduct in line with social expectations of technical gatherings. As always, we're proud to offer a safe


Portland at night

and open environment for all attendees, and the conference Code of Conduct simply reinforced our commitment to the Debian Diversity Statement and our community's Code of Conduct.

On behalf of the full organizing team, thank you to everyone who came to Portland, or visited us through the video feeds. Your presence, your talks, your participation, your ideas, your contributions, your enthusiasm, in short, *you*, are why we do this year after year. To all of our virtual and on-the ground volunteers and staff members, thank you for your devotion to providing the best technical conference available. And, thank you to the hard working video and networking teams who rose once again to the challenge and provided live streaming videos of *THREE* simultaneous talk rooms, and had most videos ready for download within a day. You people are fantastic!

And, of course, thank you to our sponsors. Your generosity is the very foundation for DebConf. Without you, our conference wouldn't be possible. With your support, DebConf14 was able to successfully bring over 300 developers, contributors and users together. Onwards and upwards!

Patty Langasek

Words from the Debian Project Leader
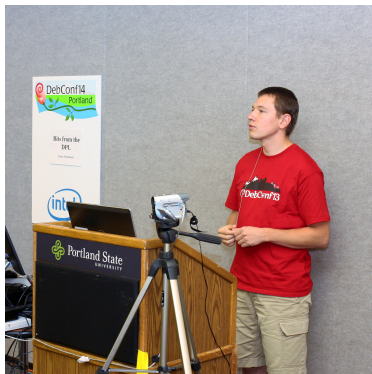
Lucas Nussbaum, Debian Project Leader

Debian is a fully distributed project. Contributors are spread over the world, and interact on a daily basis via many mailing lists and IRC channels. The typical Debian team gathers people from various geographical locations and very different cultures who often have been working together for a long time before they first meet in person.

In such a distributed setting, difficult social interactions are unavoidable. Debian is often pointed at for its flamewars and rather vocal development community. There's surely space for improvement, but what most people don't realize is that we are actually doing great when one looks at the context and the constraints. How many other organizations gather so many volunteer contributors, from various cultures, in a very flat structure, towards achieving common goals?

Debian contributors have long understood the central contribution of DebConf to the success of Debian. Each year, Debian geeks from all over the world look forward to that event, and for many of them, including myself, DebConf is simply unmissable. DebConf is so important because it feels like it exists in a suspended

reality: a reality where Debian enthusiasts, who during the year fight hard to find free time slots to work on Debian, can finally do so 24×7.

From the outside, DebConf could be seen as a hacking event. But it is actually primarily a social event. It enables Debian contributors to put faces to names (and nicknames), meet with each other, talk about future ideas and design plans, strengthen the ties within the Debian community, and smooth grudges that arise when communicating only over the Internet.

DebConf14 has met the very high standard that all DebConf attendees expect from a DebConf. Of course, every single DebConf has distinguishing traits which make it unique and memorable to its attendees, and DebConf14 was no different in that regard, especially due to its location. Hosting DebConf at Portland was a perfect match: Portland's slogan, *"Keep Portland Weird"*, could very well apply to Debian. And the local population, including farmers and the numerous microbreweries, share the same love for their products as Debian package maintainers.

All this has been made possible by more people than could possibly be listed here. From the organizing team to the speakers, from participants to sponsors, from locals to remote team members, and to everyone else whom I forgot to mention: thank you all. I hope you will enjoy reading this report to remember (if you attended) or try to imagine (if you did not) what DebConf14 has been. See you next year!

Lucas Nussbaum

DebConf14 attendees

DebConf14 | Portland, Oregon, United States of America | August 23–31, 2014

The Purpose of DebConf

Establishing trust in a face-to-face meeting

DebConf started as a small meeting on the sidelines of another free and open software conference more than a decade ago, to become the large event that it is today. A team of volunteers works throughout the year finishing the administrative aspects of the previous conference and preparing everything for the next.

However, the work of the organizers would be wasted if not for the conference attendees. It is they who ensure the success of DebConf, which benefits Debian in so many ways throughout the year. Namely, enabling face-to-face interactions between attendees, broadcasting talks live on the Internet and delivering them on archives for future viewing, providing rooms and other shared spaces where attendees and their teams can work without interruptions on Debian.

It is important to recognize the long-term benefits for project contributors that even brief moments of face-to-face interactions have, like improving communication between project members and creating bonds of trust and friendship. A short meeting, or even an informal discussion during a meal, can help to find a solution to issues that could take a long time to resolve using mailing lists.

With this in mind, each year we set aside some of the DebConf budget to provide travel bursaries to project members whose presence is important to the conference, and who would not be able to attend using their own resources—it is not only the recipients of the bursaries who benefit, but ultimately the Debian project.

DebConf talks and discussions are important opportunities to raise new proposals for development, to inform other contributors about technical advances they can build on in their own work, and, last but not least, to manage the wide cooperation required for each new Debian release.

At the beginning of a technical presentation

Apart from being important in setting the agenda for those attending DebConf, the talks and other sessions are also watched by many other people around the world. There are contributors, who for some reason could not attend the conference. Others are Debian and Linux enthusiasts who want to know more about what Debian is

and how it works. Plus, those watching talks live have the opportunity to submit their own questions to the DebConf speakers via IRC.

Anyone visiting DebConf hacklabs—spaces reserved for the activity of hacking—will find people engrossed in work on Debian, some silently by themselves, others peering at computer screens in pairs, and others arguing about the technical details of a design. DebConf is an oasis for those who need to find uninterrupted time to work on Debian in their regular schedule.

Two other benefits from DebConf are worth pointing out here. First, coming to DebConf motivates Debian contributors. Many attendees find that their enthusiasm for working on Debian is renewed, so the impact of the conference continues long after its end. Secondly, DebConf motivates the local community in the region where the conference is held. Some people attend DebConf because it happens close to them, without having previously worked on Debian at all, and then end up becoming Debian Developers.

DebConf, with all these benefits, is only possible due to the financial support given by our sponsors. The benefits the conference produces are much greater than the amount spent and certainly they go far beyond the conference venue. The greatness of Project Debian and its contributors are the real proof that DebConf is worth each cent.

Hacking in the big blue room

Talks

While face-to-face meetings and individual hacking time are more pronounced at DebConf than at some other tech conferences, the main talks are nevertheless a very important part of the conference. This is further underlined by the fact that remote participation has been traditionally an important part of the conference and attending talks via video live stream is the primary way to do so. All official talks are accessible as live streams and their recordings can be downloaded for viewing during or shortly after the conference.

The talks at DebConf are of a wide variety of topics (some of them bundled into tracks) and DebConf14 was no exception. Organization, selection, and scheduling of the talks and similar events are done by the talks team.

Linus Torvalds in the Q&A
session

Prof. Coleman giving the
keynote on Anonymous

Highlights

It is hard to single out individual sessions from the fantastic DebConf program.
Some highlights stand out nevertheless:

Keynote on Anonymous by Prof. Gabriella Coleman This year's keynote had
the rare feature of being both by a former DebConf main organizer and the
leading worldwide academic expert on an important contemporary political and
sociological issue: the history of Anonymous, the decentralized and highly fluid
hacker and hacktivist collective. As Wolfe Chair in Scientific and Technological
Literacy at McGill University, Toronto, Prof. Gabriella Coleman has followed
Anonymous and its various splinter groups and offshoots since nearly the begin-
ning and gave a fascinating speech on how Anonymous was born, how it evolved
and forked into various groups with varying political and technological agendas.

Q&A with Linus Torvalds Linus Torvalds gives no talks, and usually only attends
LCA (Linux Conference Australia) and the Kernel Summit. As a Portland resident,
however, he could be convinced to participate to DebConf by holding an evening
Q&A session. There were so many questions on various topics that the originally
planned 45 minute session overran by more than 30 minutes.

Plenary talk by Stefano Zacchiroli As a former Debian Project Leader, Stefano
Zacchiroli talked about "Debian in the Dark Ages of Free Software". He explained
how, even though Free and Open Source Software is vastly successful in general
and the Debian distribution is doing well in particular, the rise of web services,
where proprietary code (usually JavaScript) is executed on the user's machine

is a huge problem. His speech set the tone for related discussions during the conference week.

Release Team status update plenary   On the final day of the conference, Julien Cristau gave a talk on behalf of the release team, updating the attendees on the status of the next Debian release and what changes the release team has implemented for this release and plans for the future.

Schedule Structure

In some important ways the DebConf schedule was different from earlier editions of the conference:

Concurrent Sessions   The number of concurrent talks was increased from two to three. However, usually at least one informal session (BoF, see below) was scheduled in one of the three talk rooms. Further, a last-minute BoF track was established in one of the hacklabs by the attendees for sessions not requiring a projector.

Plenaries   The sessions on the first and last day of DebConf were keynote-type plenaries, i.e. had nothing concurrent scheduled against them. For the plenaries, a big auditorium hosting up to 400 people was used.

Hacking time and ad-hoc sessions   For the first time, some morning or after-noon slots were reserved for hacking time and had no official main sessions scheduled. This allowed for either concentrated, uninterrupted work sessions or a break from the intense conference schedule. Nevertheless, ad-hoc sessions

Satisfied audience at the end of a talk

could be self-scheduled by attendees on the previous day at the earliest during those times. This allowed to discuss things which might have only come up or for which interest was registered during DebConf itself.

Types of Talks

One of DebConf's distinctive features is its wide variety of session types. At DebConf14 these ranged from keynotes for all attendees to informal sessions:

Plenaries The opening and closing ceremonies, the keynotes on the first day, as well as the plenary Q&A session with Linus Torvalds on Thursday, the lightning talks, and release team talk on the last day were plenaries in the ballroom auditorium. No other sessions were scheduled at the same time to allow all attendees of the conference to attend.

Main talks The main talks consisted of the accepted talk proposals and took place concurrently in three different rooms during the main session slots. The DebConf video team recorded all main talks and made them available as live streams on the Internet. Typically, they had only one speaker, although some sessions had several.

Lightning Talks and Live Demos Lightning talks are quick 5 minute presentations about a single topic. As it is a convenient way for the audience to learn about various things in a short time, the lightning talks were held in the plenary auditorium this year. The live demos are similar in that several live demos fit in one session slot—they had a time limit of 20 minutes (but not everybody used up the whole time). In those demos, the participants ran a live demonstration of some particular project or aspect they wanted to show, which can potentially be very instructive to the audience.

BoFs "Birds of a Feather" meetings are informal gatherings of people sharing a common interest with an emphasis on attendee participation (although nobody is forced to participate if they just want to watch and listen). Usually the session organizer introduced the session with a small presentation, after (or during) which a lengthy discussion ensues.

Ad-hoc sessions Ad-hoc sessions were not those not scheduled prior to the beginning of DebConf. Typically, they were BoFs announced by people who realized during DebConf that they share a common goal and/or should have

Technical discussion during a BoF

a more focused discussion in a larger group than just during the face-to-face "hallway track". Some prepared talks which were too late for the Call for Papers deadline were also scheduled during the ad-hoc sessions.

Tracks

Similar to previous DebConfs, thematically related talks were assigned to specific tracks. The tracks were identified by clear trends in the submitted talks and highlight the participants' interest in a particular topics.

The consecutive scheduling of sessions belonging to the same track allowed for interested people to easily follow the whole track and facilitated discussions between the various presenters and participants.

Some of the tracks at DebConf14 were "Cloud", "Validation and Continuous Integration", "Security", and "Packaging and Tools".

Call for Papers and Selection Process

The Call for Papers was published on June 8, and the deadline was one month later. After two weeks and due to a slow start in talk submissions, a first set of talks were accepted and announced, resulting in an uptake of submissions. Further reminders were sent throughout the Call for Papers period. The last reminder was sent three days before the deadline, which resulted in a surge (around 30%) of last-minute submissions.

Overall, 115 submissions were received by the deadline, compared to around 85 available talk slots. This required the downselection of submissions and consequently some proposals had to be rejected. In a first round, each member of the talks selection team marked those talks they thought should not be accepted or needed some discussion before being accepted. All talks not marked by

at least one member were accepted immediately. Afterwards, the proposals considered problematic by some members were discussed and decided upon in an online team meeting.

Talks Teams

The talks team consists of three distinct, but overlapping sub-teams. Their tasks were selecting and scheduling talks and sessions.

Talks selection   The talks selection team's task is to send out the call for papers (CfP) and to review the submissions after the deadline. They followed a selection policy, which is described below.

Talks scheduling   After the accepted talks were chosen, they had to be put on the schedule. Scheduling involved two challenges: (i) estimating which talks will be attended by how many people, as three different room sizes were available and (ii) estimating which talks might be interesting to the same set of people, so less people have to choose between two talks they would like to see.

Ad-Hoc sessions scheduling   Finally, during DebConf, ad-hoc sessions were possible during the allocated hacking time slots and for gaps in the schedule. Those sessions were self-scheduled by the attendees on a wiki, but they were organised and put on the official schedule by the ad-hoc sessions scheduling team.

Michael Banck

Meeting the Technical Committee

Video Team

The video team live-streams DebConf sessions over the Internet to remote participants. The sessions are also recorded, transcoded, and published in the Debian Meetings Archive[1].

The equipment was entirely operated by volunteers from amongst the conference attendees. Video was edited live during the session, for both the stream and the recording. This allowed for timely publishing of recordings, as there was very little manual post-production work.

Capturing the presentation with the "confidence monitor"

As a first for DebConf, all three session and BoF rooms had video coverage. However, not all sessions were recorded. Some BoF and ad-hoc sessions were not scheduled long enough in advance to secure a volunteer team. Additionally, a small number of BoFs limited participation to the room, to encourage participants to speak openly about personal experiences.

Preparation and Equipment

The video team ran a separate private network to stream digital video (DV) from cameras and frame-grabbers to director's mixing desks (running dvswitch[2]). From there to stream encoders, and eventually out to the DebConf stream relay network on the Internet.

On Thursday, before the conference, the networking team laid cable to set up the private network, linking all session rooms to the servers in the NOC.

All equipment involved in the video system, except the servers, was configured in advance and only had to be connected up. On Friday, we set up three rooms with cameras, microphones, mixers, PA systems, and data projectors.

Each room received two high quality cameras for tracking the speaker and anyone asking questions from the audience. A third, lower quality camera was used for wide-angle audience shots.

Each lectern had a "confidence monitor" showing the image being projected on the screen during the talk. They had switch-boxes allowing the presenter to set up their laptop's video output without projecting it, before the start of the talk. Between talks, the projectors were switched to show sponsor loops and upcoming talk schedules. Anything projected was captured by a frame-grabber, allowing it to be included in the video stream.

---

[1] http://meetings-archive.debian.net/pub/debian-meetings/
[2] http://dvswitch.alioth.debian.org/

The video team preparing for a plenary talk

For sound, each room was equipped with a wireless headset microphone for the main presenter and a wireless hand-held microphone for a second presenter and audience questions. A pair of wired "ambiance" microphones gave the video a less sterile sound. They also caught some questions and audience discussion from people who did not wait for a hand-held microphone to be brought to them.

As only three complete sets of room equipment were available, we moved video and sound equipment from a talk room to the ballroom for the plenary sessions on Saturday. Later, we moved it back, in time for the following day's sessions. This was repeated at the end of the conference, for the Linus Torvalds Q&A and the closing ceremony.

Somewhat unusually for DebConf, there were three separate stream systems. Carl, who provided the equipment for DebConf14, had an Amazon EC2 based streaming system, using Flumotion. Without any relays in Europe some remote viewers there had difficulty streaming across the Atlantic reliably. As a remedy we brought up the traditional DebConf streams up during the first day of the conference, using DebConf's international, volunteer-provided stream relay network. This provided two streams, a low-bandwidth Ogg Vorbis stream served by Icecast[3], and a high-quality WebM stream served by cubemap[4].

Outcome

The core video team was (as always) quite small, and relied on casual volunteers to man equipment during the conference. Without an online sign up system (as we've had at previous DebConfs), it was hard to know who should be where when. But there were always just enough people to step up and make things

---

[3]http://icecast.org/
[4]http://git.sesse.net/?p=cubemap

work. This was well demonstrated during the closing ceremony, when the whole team went up to the stage to be thanked—and two people from the audience stepped up to take over the equipment that had been left unattended.

For the first time at DebConf, we used the Veyepar system[5] to perform the video post-processing and reviewing. Veyepar offers volunteers a web interface to review recorded video. They determine the start and end points of each video, and check the quality of the recording. Scripts running on the servers take these cut-points and encode the original DV files into WebM, for publishing. The WebM files were then checked into the git-annex repository on the meetings-archive master, and automatically mirrored to public mirrors.

About half of the videos were processed and released without issue. The remainder needed further editing, mostly due to quality problems. They were published over the course of the following four weeks.

During the conference, we recorded 1,151 GiB of DV footage. After cutting and editing 87 videos were produced and published in the archive[6], adding up to over 60 hours of video.

Future of the Video Team

Carl demonstrated a prototype FPGA board for HDMI2USB[7], which he hopes will soon replace the TwinPact100 frame-grabbers that are currently used for capturing VGA to DV over firewire. That way we hope to have higher resolution, entirely digital screen capture at DebConf15.

Carl Karsten, Stefano Rivera

---

[5] https://github.com/CarlFK/veyepar
[6] http://meetings-archive.debian.net/pub/debian-meetings/2014/debconf14/
[7] https://github.com/timvideos/HDMI2USB

Recording a talk and live editing the video stream

Attendee Impressions

Tianon[8]

I was given the opportunity to attend DebConf in Portland this year, and I must say that it took me entirely by surprise (as a first-time attendee).

Most conferences have several strong talk tracks and you end up spending a lot of time sitting in talks wondering when they'll be over. At DebConf, there's an entirely different dynamic, with a strong focus on what they like to call "the hallway track" (which this year has taken place a lot in the hacklabs, too). Everyone here wants to either talk about building cool stuff, or sit down and actually build some cool stuff. A large number of the talks are just launchpads for informal Q&As or actual hack sessions.

By coming, I've learned a lot about the Debian community and how it operates as a whole, and managed to meet a lot of very interesting and cool people (not to mention getting a bunch of them to sign my GPG key, which is also nice).

Hopefully I'll be able to attend more DebConfs in the future, because I've had a great time!

Lunar[9]

DebConf14 was a very productive time for reproducible builds.

On August 26, I held first a talk about the current state, and later a smaller discussion about how to move forward.

I must admit I was nervous before doing the talk as there hadn't been that much progress since the talk at FOSDEM'14. But it went well, and reception was beyond my hopes. There has been no pushback on the suggested solution on defining a canonical path where packages must be built. A couple of members of the Debian technical committee who attended the talk showed support and interest which was a good sign.

The evening discussion was attended by 20 people. The main objective was to define the framework in which we could consider Debian package reproducible. We agreed that the time of the latest entry in 'debian/changelog' was a sane source if binary packages needed to embed timestamps. We realized that using '.changes' files as the input of a rebuild process would be both impractical and abusing their intended meaning. So we started sketching the content of '.buildinfo' files which would be stored by the archive and would contain everything needed to perform a rebuild.

---

[8]`http://deb.li/jOTG`
[9]`http://deb.li/3DcPM`

We also discussed the choice of a canonical build path, the current set of patches that were used for the previous rebuild experiments, a post-processing addition to debhelper called "dh_strip_nondeterminism", and sbuild support.

What is pretty amazing is the amount of work that was done in the following days leveraging on the discussion: the '.buildinfo' format has been specified, and reviewed; there were patches written and submitted for stable file order in control and data archives, deterministic headers, removing non-determistic data from static libraries, getting a stable order in the generated control fields in Python packages, generating the '.buildinfo' file; new tools to help all along the process were also written; discussions with upstream authors to fix problematic situations were started; and in general a lot of great work was done to allow us to make a lot of progress. Congrats to everybody involved!

We are now performing another archive-wide rebuild using the new set of patches and assumptions through Jenkins.

Juliana Louback[10]

I have to say networking was the highlight of the Debconf for me. Before attending, I had only been in contact with 3 people that were at the conference, and those 3 had been virtual contacts, I didn't really know them. So on my first day I spent quite some time shyly peeking at people's name tags, trying to recognize someone I had 'met' over email or IRC. But with 300 or so people at the conference, I was unsuccessful.

So I finally gave up on that strategy and walked up to a random person, stuck out my hand and said, "Hi. My name is Juliana. This is my first Debconf. What's your name and what do you do for Debian?" This may not be according to

[10]http://deb.li/BF0y

Constructive technical discussions in a friendly atmosphere

protocol, but it worked for me. I got to meet lots of people that way, met some Debian contributos from my home country (Brazil), some from my current city (NYC), and yet others that had similar interests as I do who I might work with in the near future.

For example, I love Machine Learning, I'm currently beginning my graduate studies on that track. Several Debian contributors offered to introduce me to a well known Machine Learning researcher and Debian contributor who is in New York. Others had tried out my JSCommunicator project, and had lots of suggestions for new features and fixes, or wanted to know more about the project and WebRTC in general. Also, not everyone there was a super experienced Debian contributor or user, there were a lot of newbies like me.

I got to do a quick 20-min presentation and demo of the work I had done on JSCommunicator during Google Summer of Code. That was nerve-wracking, but not half as painful as I expected. My mentor, Daniel Pocock, had wisely suggested that when confronted with a question I didn't know how to answer, I should redirect the question to the audience, as chances are there is someone there that knows the answer; and even if not, it will at least spark a good discussion.

Jonathan McDowell[11]

This year DebConf was held in Portland, OR. This is a city I've been to many times before, and enjoy, but I hadn't spent any time wandering around its city centre as a pedestrian. I was pleased that the location was super easy to get to and from the airport via public transportation, all of the evening social events were within reasonable walking distance (I'll tend to default to walking when possible) and the talk venue/accommodation were close to each other and various eating and drinking options, additionally Portland also managed to produce some excellent weather.

This year the conference format was a bit different; previous years have had a week long DebCamp before the week of the conference itself. This year went for a 9 day talk schedule (Saturday → Sunday) with various gaps of hacking time interspersed. I've found it hard to justify a full two weeks away in the past, so this setup worked a lot better from my viewpoint. Also I rarely go to DebConf with a predetermined list of things to do; the stuff I work on naturally falls out of talks I attend and informal discussions I have. Having hack time throughout the conference helped me avoid feeling I was having to trade off hacking vs talks.

---

[11]http://deb.li/3TVG4

Naturally enough a lot of my involvement at DebConf was around OpenPGP. Gunnar and I spent a fair bit of time getting Daniel up to speed with the keyring-maint team. We finally set a hard timeframe for freeing Debian of older 1024 bit keys. I was introduced to the Gnuk, which is a particularly interesting piece of open specification hardware with a completely Free software stack on top if it that implements the OpenPGP smartcard spec.

These are the sort of things that really benefit from the face time that DebConf offers to the Debian project. I've said it before, but I think it's worth saying again: Debian is a bit like a huge telecommuting organization and it's my opinion that any such organization should try and ensure its members actually spend some time together on a regular basis. It improves the ability to work remotely an amazing lot if you can actually put a face to the entity you're emailing/IRCing and have some sort of idea where they're coming from because you've spent some time with them, whether that's in talks or over dinner or just casual hallway chats.

For once I also found myself considering alternative employment while at DebConf and it was incredibly useful to be able to have various conversations with both old friends and people who were there with an eye on recruitment. I'd like to thank all those whose ears I bent about the subject. I would also like to thank the many people involved with the organization of DebConf; I've been on the periphery a few times over the years and it's given me a glimpse into the amount of hard work all of the volunteers (be they global team, local organizing team, video team or just random volunteers) put into making DebConf one of my must-attend yearly conferences. To anyone involved in Debian that hasn't attended, I strongly urge them to do so - I'll see you all next year at DebConf15 in Heidelberg!

Keysigning party

Elizabeth K. Joseph[12]

I've been a Debian user since 2002 and got my first package into Debian in 2006. Though I continued to maintain a couple packages through the years, my open source interests (and career) have expanded significantly so that I now spend much more time with Ubuntu and OpenStack than anything else. Still, when I learned that DebConf14 would only be quick plane flight away from home I was eager for the opportunity to attend.

Thursday was particularly interesting to me because they were doing most of the Debian Validation & Continuous Integration discussions then. Given my day job on the OpenStack Infrastructure team, it seemed to be a great place to meet other folks who are interested in CI and see where our team could support Debian's initiatives.

An interesting question was what kinds of integration tests people wanted, various ideas were covered, including package sets (collections of related packages) and how to inject "dirty" data into systems to test in more real world like situations. Someone also mentioned doing tests on more real systems rather than in chrooted environments.

Discussion touched upon having a Gerrit-like workflow that had packages submitted for review and testing prior to landing in the archive. This led to my having some interesting conversations with the drivers of Gerrit efforts in Debian. There was also discussion about notification to developers when their packages run afoul of the testing infrastructure, either themselves or as part of a dependency chain, including questions like who wants the notifications and how to make them useful and not overwhelming.

---

[12]http://deb.li/LB3V

Playing ping-pong at the cheese and wine party

It's really exciting to see more effort being spent on testing in Debian, and open source projects in general. This has long been the space of companies doing private, internal testing of open source products they use and reporting results back to projects in the form of patches and bug reports. Having the projects themselves provide QA is a huge step for the maturity of open source, and I believe will lead to even more success for projects as we move into the future.

Joachim "nomeata" Breitner[13]

I mostly enjoyed this year's DebConf. I must admit that I did not come very prepared: I had neither something urgent to hack on, nor important things to discuss with the other attendees, so in a way I had a slow start. I also felt a bit out of touch with the project, both personally and technically: In previous DebConfs, I had more interest in many different corners of the project, and also came with more naive enthusiasm. After more than 10 years in the project, I see a few things more realistic and also more relaxed, and don't react on "Wouldn't it be cool to have crazy idea" very easily any more. And then I mostly focus on Haskell packaging (and related tooling, which sometimes is also relevant and useful to others) these days, which is not very interesting to most others.

But in the end I did get to do some useful hacking, heard a few interesting talks and even got a bit excited: I created a new tool to schedule binNMUs for Haskell packages which is quite generic (configured by just a regular expression), so that it can and will be used by the OCaml team as well, and who knows who else will start using hash-based virtual ABI packages in the future.

Unsurprisingly, I also held a talk on Haskell and Debian. I talked a bit too long and we had too little time for discussion, but in any case not all discussion would have fitted in 45 minutes. The question of which packages from Hackage should be added to Debian and which not is still undecided. I guess the better our tooling gets, the more easily we can support more and more packages.

I am quite excited by and supportive of Enrico's agenda to remove boilerplate data from the debian/ directories and relying on autodebianization tools. We have such a tool for Haskell package, cabal-debian, but it is unofficial, i.e. neither created by us nor fully endorsed. I want to change that, so I got in touch with the upstream maintainer and we want to get it into shape for producing perfect Debian packages, if the upstream provided meta data is perfect. I'd like to see the Debian Haskell Group follow Enrico's plan to its extreme conclusion, and this way drive innovation in Debian in general.

---

[13]http://deb.li/310cg

Besides all the technical program I enjoyed the obligatory games of Mao and Werewolves. I also got to dance! On Saturday night, I found a small but welcoming Swing-In-The-Park event where I could dance a few steps of Lindy Hop. And on Tuesday night, Vagrant Cascadian took us (well, three of us) to a blues dancing night, which I greatly enjoyed.

Ana Guerrero López[14]

DebConf14 has been amazing, it has been great to be back after missing it for two years. Thanks a lot to everybody who helped to make it real. On my side, I helped a bit in the talks team.

During DebConf14, I got the opportunity to discuss with Rene Mayorga about the MIA work-flow and we also got some feedback in the MIA BoF. We have plenty of ideas to implement and we're aiming to improve things during this next year.

This summer has been also 10 years since I started contributing to Debian. It's hard to believe. Ten years ago I barely knew where to start helping and now I have an endless TODO list of things I would like to do. And always during DebConf this list seems to grow ten times faster than usual. Thankfully, also motivation increases a lot :)

Julien Cristau[15]

As usual the conference was a blur, with lots of talks, lots of new people, and lots of old friends. The organizers tried to do something different this year, with a longer conference (9 days instead of a week) and some dedicated hack time, instead of a pre-DebConf "DebCamp" week. That worked quite well for me, as it meant the schedule was not quite so full with talks, and even though I didn't really get any hacking done, it felt a bit more relaxed and allowed some more hallway track discussions.

On the talks side, the keynotes from Zack and Biella provided some interesting thoughts. Some nice progress was made on making package builds reproducible. I gave two talks: an introduction to salt, and a report on the Debian jessie release progress.

And as usual all talks were streamed live and recorded, and many are already available thanks to the awesome DebConf video team.

---

[14]http://deb.li/3iXKN
[15]http://deb.li/wBw2

Antonio Terceiro[16]

This year I wasn't able to attend the full DebConf, I arrived at Portland on Tuesday, the fourth day of the conference. Even though I would have preferred to arrive earlier, the loss was alleviated by the work of the amazing DebConf video team. I was able to follow remotely most of the sessions I would have attended if I had been there already.

As I say to everyone, DebConf is for sure the best conference I have ever attended. The technical and philosophical discussions that take place in talks, BoF sessions or even unplanned ad-hoc gathering are deep. The hacking moments where you have a chance to pair with fellow developers, with whom you usually only have contact remotely via IRC or email, are precious.

That is all great. But definitively, catching up with old friends, and making new ones, is what makes DebConf so special. Meeting old friends again after so much time is always a pleasure and new friendships will already start with a powerful bond, which is being part of the Debian community.

Despite all of the discussions, being in the audience for several talks, other social interactions and whatnot, during this DebConf I have managed to do quite some useful work. I gave a talk where I discussed past, present, and future of debci and the Debian Continuous Integration project. During the talk I mentioned that the Ruby team had worked on a way to automate running their package test suites against the installed packages; then, right after the talk I was glad to discover that the Perl team is also working on a similar tool for their packages. We agreed that they would send me a whitelist of packages in which we could just call that tool and have it do The Right Thing, so putting together Ruby and Perl packages, we would have CI testing for more than 3,000 packages for free!

During a few days I have mentored Lucas Kanashiro, who also attended DebConf, on writing a patch to add support for email notifications in debci so maintainers can be pro-actively notified of status changes (pass/fail, fail/pass) in their packages. I have also started hacking on the support for distributed workers, based on the initial work by Martin Pitt.

I had some discussion with Christian Hofstaedtler about making Rubygems install to $HOME by default when the user is not root. We discussed a few implementation options, and while I don't have a solution yet, we have a better understanding of the potential pitfalls. I was also able to make Redmine work with the Rails 4 stack we currently have in unstable/testing. Finally, I gave a lighting talk on Noosfero, a platform for social networking websites I am upstream for.

---

[16]http://deb.li/ixFE0

Venue

Our conference was hosted at Portland State University (PSU) by the Summer Housing and Conferencing staff. All of our events took place in the "Smith Memorial Student Union" building, located at the Southern end of campus, right on the Park Blocks, a six-block, traffic-free park structure. Given that we enjoyed fantastic weather throughout the conference, the park became an integral part of our conference and many team meetings and discussions took place on the benches and the lawns.

Smith Memorial Student Union

Inside the Smith building, we provided our attendees with a "quiet hacklab" on the second floor, and another hacklab plus 4 conference rooms on the third. The rooms were of different size. The auditorium, which we only used for plenary events, could host 400 people, whereas the three smaller rooms were suited for 120, 50 and 25. We also had access to a long balcony overlooking the Park Blocks, which became a secluded favorite spot for many throughout the week, especially during the Portland Farmer's Market on Saturdays, when one could enjoy the view of all the buzzing about downstairs, while working on a project or chatting away.


Stefano Zacchiroli presenting in the ballroom

We set up our registration and information desk in the hallway between those rooms, which became a popular meeting spot for discussions in the hallway track.

The conference venue had to be vacated each night at 9:30 p.m. Those who sought to work more would head to "The Broadway" building, where evening hacking and social activities took place. This building was also the dormitory for most of our attendees. Others chose to head into town, or continue discussions at The Rogue, the campus bar. Food was served in the "Ondine" building about two blocks away from the building, which also served as dormitory and social space for some after hours.

Martin F. Krafft
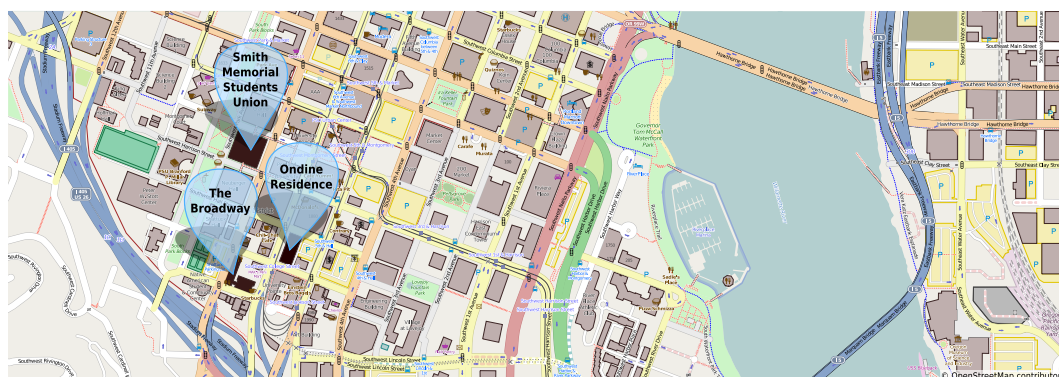
DebConf14 took place in the south west part of the Portland State University campus. This image is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0[17].

Food

Food for all attendees was provided by the university cafeteria buffet-style, and no-one had to attend sessions or enter the night with a gnawing stomach. The selection was basic, but the cafeteria was generally well populated with conference attendees mingling with other folks staying at the university.

For the first time in the history of our conference brunch was served on weekend days instead of the usual separate breakfast and lunch. Even though we had no real concept of weekends during DebConf14, this was a welcome break in the routine.

As DebConf took place very close to the city center of Portland, there were also ample alternative food places around, and it wasn't uncommon to encounter groups of Debian people mid-town venturing to or from a restaurant they had scouted out or which had been recommended by others on our mailing list.

Having been referred to as the vegan capital, several even chose to sample meals made without animals or their products, and feedback was generally positive.

Aside from the cafeteria and restaurants, nearby food carts serving international foods were also popular destinations, including a coffee cart where we had negotiated free coffees for attendees.

Food buffet in the university cafeteria

---

[17]http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/

Farmer's market outside the conference venue

Last but not least, on Saturday mornings, the campus right outside the conference venue was taken over by the Portland Farmer's Market, where local produce could be bought and DebConfers stocked up on fruits or tried the various hand-made offerings for breakfast and lunch.

So the possibilities were diverse, and even if you missed the (rather early) cafeteria times or chose to finish a discussion or work on a task, the local campus bar The Rogue served pub food until midnight, an option that became increasingly popular throughout the week.

Martin F. Krafft

The Cheese and Wine Party

Our tenth "Cheese and Wine party", the traditional smelly gathering of DebConf participants, was held in the offices of "Puppet Labs", one of the conference sponsors, on the evening of August 25.

The party is mostly dedicated to the tasting of wine and cheese that participants have brought from their homes and we had the chance to once again taste a great variety of foods and beverages from all around the world.

But it is not just about food and drinks: the informal setting eases participants into activities and conversations they otherwise might not have been part of, and helps integrate newcomers into the Debian social circle. This year, we were even able to put board games and a ping-pong table to good use!

Nicolas Dandrimont

Tasting cheese

Playing a card game

Free Time Activities

In organizing DebConf, two of our goals are to program a high-quality schedule of presentations and events, and to provide the facilities for our attendees to self-organize other events and activities. Such self-organized events begin with ad-hoc, collaborative sessions in the rooms we provide, and range on to cultural exchange, games and sports, sight-seeing, and hardware workshops, using the infrastructure we provide to coordinate.

At DebConf14, our attendees made full use of the spacious university setting, the beautiful park right outside the venue, and the social spaces in the dormitories.

Even though the university's gym and fitness centre were closed for maintenance, groups organised themselves to go climbing, play squash and soccer, or rent bicycles. We provided early-morning yoga sessions (at an additional fee), which were very popular. And runners convened to explore the neighbourhood before the conference days began.

Two groups met to join local dancing clubs, learning and engaging in Lindy Hop and Blues dancing throughout the week, or convened to explore markets, shops, museums, and the famous Powell's City of Books. Cars were rented and beaches visited, and on Sunday mornings, local churches celebrated their services with some of us present. When Portland offered a free concert with fireworks on Thursday down by the river, a large number of conference t-shirts could be spotted in the crowd.

We organised a long-running game designed for participants to identify other people, board and card games could frequently be seen, and as the night approached, speciality games including Mao, Werewolf, and D&D drew dozens of participants.

The university's local pub "The Rogue" had an unusually high influx of chatty groups for this time of the year, and this is where the conversations from talks and discussion sessions continued until midnight—when an exodus began and many would find themselves reconvening at the night pub, singing Karaoke or continuing their discussions, while sipping local beers and wines.

And finally, DebConf would not be DebConf if our attendees didn't use the opportunity to meet before or stay after, for individually organised travel. This year, this included trips to nearby beaches, hikes, multi-day camping expeditions, and a flooding of Seattle post-conference, unorganized, but dubbed DebConf14.2.

Martin F. Krafft

Day Trip

It is a long-standing tradition for DebConf to include in its timetable one day on which to take a break from the hectic pace of talks, BoFs and hacking. Some people choose their own activities for the day, but many choose to join the official daytrip. This year, there were two main options: an early-morning hike and a tour with a slightly more leisurely departure time. The common destination for both options was Multnomah Falls.

The hikers left the venue at 8:00 a.m. and arrived at the Multnomah Falls after a short bus ride. Four groups were formed to accommodate the different walking speeds and off we went on the "Wahkeena Falls Loop Hike", a 470 m climb over approximately 8 km, along a reasonably well-prepared path in the woods. Wahkeena Falls was our destination, a beautiful water world right at the spring of the river, and after some frolicking, we completed the loop and got back on the coach to meet with the other groups at the lunch spot.

For the other daytrip attendees, coaches were arranged to leave PSU at 9:30 a.m. Half the coaches went first to Vista House and then to Multnomah Falls, the other half went first to Multnomah Falls and then to Vista House. Both options included a lunch stop at Rooster Rock State Park.

At Vista House, there is indeed a view to be had. Vista House is located on top of a cliff overlooking the Columbia River. It hosts a large viewing area, some educational exhibits, and a gift and snack shop.

Lunch was held at Rooster Rock State Park. PSU's catering service provided bag lunches for the daytrip attendees. There was also the opportunity to swim in the Columbia River, which several people took. The river is quite shallow there for quite a way across, thanks to a large sandbank, so it was possible to walk quite some distance into the water while still standing comfortably.

Lunching in Rooster Rock State Park

There was much to see at Multnomah Falls: the flora, the fauna, the waterfall... Some people elected to hike all the way to the top of the falls, where they found more opportunities to swim. Others remained at the first bridge across the falls.

Multnomah Falls

The coaches returned everybody to the PSU dorms in the afternoon with plenty of time to change and get ready for the conference dinner at Punch Bowl Social that evening. Dinner was a taco extravaganza with karaoke, bowling, ping-pong (or table tennis), competitive Pac Man, lounging on the deck and shuffleboard. Bringing everyone together for fantastic food and superb fun, Punch Bowl Social allowed everyone to wrap up their fun-filled day and get back to the grind (or whatever we call it) of DebConf on Thursday morning.
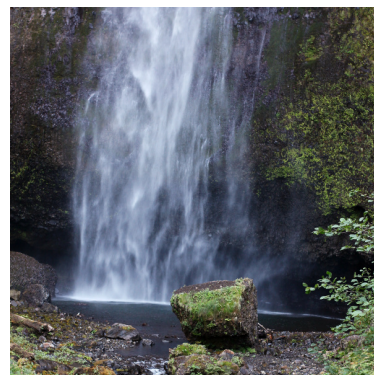
Nattie Mayer-Hutchings, Martin F. Krafft, Patty Langasek

Network

General

Portland State University provided their existing wired and wireless network, that was shared across the entire campus, including housing. No additional circuits were installed for the conference.

We were concerned about potential issues (as has happened so many times at DebConf before), so we had spare equipment and plans in case problems would show. Fortunately it worked and we didn't need to scramble to get fixes into place.

Uplink

The network was IPv4-only. A casual speed test revealed 638 Mbps download and 268 Mbps upload speeds. The IPs provided via DHCP were public IP addresses (i.e. non-RFC1918) but were in-bound filtered from the Internet. The only filtering we noticed in the out-bound direction was port 25 being blocked.

Wired Network

Each room at the Smith Memorial Student Union building had at least one 100 Mbps port connecting it to Portland State University's network. Ten 48-port

switches were brought to the conference (mostly Cisco Catalyst 3560s), and installed in the Data Center room and the two hacklabs. No advanced features of these switches were used. Additional cabling was installed between the talk rooms, including the Ballroom, and the Data Center. This cabling was used to isolate the Video Team's network with 1 Gbps ports on an internal network.

PSU's wired network provided DHCPv4 leases with public IP addresses. We were told that inbound traffic was firewalled. This caused some difficulty for video streaming, our webm repeater (cubemap) connects to the source, rather than having the source connect to it. We worked around the problem, by hosting a repeater on a server in the Portland State University Computer Science Department's network that was not firewalled.

Wireless Network

Portland State University had a policy that we couldn't run our own wireless network. The University's wireless network had a captive portal that required registration via email every 24 hours. The same wireless network was available throughout the Smith Memorial Student Union building, the housing, and the surrounding parks.

To make things easier, Kees set up a special email address that people could use on the captive portal registration, which automated responding to the authentication email. This meant, for each attendee, the process of daily authentication was reduced to filling out the form (30 seconds), rather than also having to wait for an email to reply to (10 minutes). This also solved the problem where some ISPs were not accepting the emails that PSU was generating.

Unlike the wired connections that PSU provided, the wireless network provided DHCPv4 leases with private IP addresses.

As a backup plan, in case PSU's wireless wasn't robust enough, we had brought twenty-four Motorola/Symbol Access Point radio modules and a single controller. Luckily the wireless network was sufficient. The equipment would have made use of the PoE switches.

Local Servers and Network Configuration

Unlike past DebConfs, the only servers that were set up were for use by the Video Team. The local team provided a 1U chassis with about an 8 year old Xeon and 8 GB RAM, as well as a new desktop PC with Intel i7-4790K and 32 GB RAM (which took many hours to solve UEFI boot issues!).

The 1U server was used for storage and as a gateway for the video network. It had two 1 TiB SATA drives configured in a RAID1 set, and received regular backups of all recorded video via rsync. This storage was served via NFSv3 to

the i7 desktop. The storage server ran a DHCP server for the private Video Team network, and NATed outgoing traffic. It also run a CUPS server, for the printer in the NOC that was on the Video Team network. The webm video streaming required a cubemap server for outside cubemap master relay to connect to, this ran on the storage server, too. The i7 desktop PC ran three VLC instances, encoding webm video streams in real time.

Both machines were used for after hours, preliminary encoding of recorded video. The storage server proved to be reliable, despite its age. The i7 desktop occasionally powered off, uncommanded. This was never debugged, but didn't cause too much trouble, either.

Talk Rooms

The video team had a dedicated network, custom cables were run from the NOC to each talk room and connected to an 8-port Gigabit Ethernet switch.
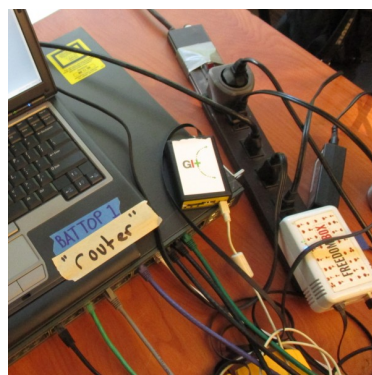
Hacklabs

When arranging the layout of the hacklabs, access to power was the primary concern. Most people used the wireless network and for the few using cabled access, it was easier to route network cable to the table rather than power.

Rather than arrange tables in the middle of the room, we created "peninsulas" of two tables sticking out from the walls where power outlets were present and then ran power strips to the middle. Most tables had North American outlet power strips, but for one table in each lab we provided a more universal power strip that supported many standards. The Europeans tended to use those tables and appreciated not needing to use adapters.

Hacklab infrastructure

One thing that might have been nice is to go to a computer recycling center and get a bunch of laptop power cables, the "mickey mouse" to wall outlet part of the cable to give to attendees that needed it. We'll pursue this idea at future conferences.

At the head of each set of tables (by the wall) we placed a network switch, and provided a few short cables for people to use.

For the third-floor hacklab, there was a single port turned on. We plugged an 8-port Gigabit Ethernet switch into that, and connected the other switches. Most of the power in the room was on the opposite wall, so we ran a custom length

cable above the drop ceiling to the other side, and connected the switches on that side in a star pattern.

For the second floor hacklab, the promised port was not turned on until a few days into the conference. People therefore mostly used wireless. A local student set up a laptop to provide wired access to those without wireless cards by bridging to a static wireless connection. After the port was turned on, cable was run, and several tables were connected to the wired network.

One interesting thing to note was that contacting the Campus networking team was usually pretty difficult and it made things easier that a couple of local students happened to know people in that organization and knew what IRC channel they used. That sped up communication greatly.

Dorms

The dorms had both wireless and wired ports and attendees had no problems using them. This was very nice as it made communication/coordination easy, particularly on IRC.

Incidents

For the most part, everything ran smoothly with the PSU networks. There were some intermittent problems with wireless connectivity, but they appeared to be isolated cases involving either a specific WAP or a specific client device. These kinds of glitches tended to be solved by either physically moving around, or changing the client device's wireless MAC.

There was an outage for most of one day on the wired network that degraded the effective QoS and caused the Video Team to be unable to copy raw files out to the remote video storage server (outside PSU's network). This was ultimately debugged to being clearly a network path issue inside PSU's network since the outbound path was nearly identical to a remote server from wireless and from wired. Wired had several additional hops before it reached the PSU border gateways. PSU sent staff to our NOC in an attempt to debug it further. Later in the day, a problem was discovered with the "building firewall", and fixed, at which point Video Team network performance returned to what was expected.

A DHCP outage on the Video Team network was eventually determined to be caused by the Video Team's core switch dropping packets. It was a consumer grade store-and-forward gigabit switch, and we swapped it out for a Cisco Catalyst 3560G that had been kept aside. After that, there were no further incidents in the internal network.

Gerald Turner, Kees Cook, Matt Taggart, Stefano Rivera

Registration

Registration to attend DebConf happens in several stages. Once registration opens, people can apply for sponsorship to attend DebConf while registering for the conference through Summit. After the deadline for sponsored registration passes, attendees are still welcome to register, but have to pay for their own accommodation at the venue, or make alternative accommodation arrangements.

Corporate registration (USD 500 in 2014) is intended for organizations who wish to send their employees to attend DebConf. We also offer a *Professional* registration category (USD 200 in 2014), which is aimed at those who wish to contribute financially to DebConf as an individual. Basic registration remains free of charge.

As DebConf approaches, a few weeks before the event, the reconfirmation phase begins. Attendees are required to log in once again to Summit, and indicate that they really do intend to come to DebConf. The initial registration process gives the organizing team an estimate of attendee numbers, while the reconfirmation process gives more precise numbers. This in turn facilitates the process of assigning rooms, arranging catering of meals, and so on.

Finally, in the first few days of DebConf itself, the registration team's work flows into that of the front desk team, and the two teams tend to have a few members in common. Upon arriving at DebConf, attendees are checked in by members of the front desk team, and receive their name badge, and their conference bag, with a t-shirt, materials from sponsors, and information about DebConf itself and the local area.

Checking in at the frontdesk

Registration for DebConf 14 opened on April 26, and the deadline for sponsored registration was May 15. The reconfirmation phase ran from July 4 to July 21. This year, Summit made its DebConf début, replacing Pentabarf, our previous conference management system. Accommodation in PSU dorms was free of charge to sponsored attendees, and USD 23 per person per night in a shared room or USD 46 per night for those who wanted a whole dorm room to themselves. It was also possible for non-sponsored attendees to stay at the nearby University Place Hotel at a discounted rate which was negotiated for the conference.

Nattie Mayer-Hutchings

Budgeting

Budgeting for an event the size of DebConf is a complicated process, particularly given the broad variation in both the incoming sponsorship and the number of attendees each year. But after ten years of running the conference in the present format, we have a good deal of data to help us budget effectively.

With an initial seed of USD 36,000 from Debian's general fund, and relatively low fixed costs for the conference venue, DebConf14 ran a balanced budget at every step of the process and was able to commit travel sponsorship funds early, making it possible for sponsored attendees to make cost-effective travel plans for the benefit of the conference as a whole.

The budgeting, fundraising, bursaries, and accounting teams work together in the year leading up to the conference, balancing the available resources to meet the goals of the conference.

Budget planning and assumptions

The budget for DebConf 2014 was based on the assumption that up to 280 people would attend the conference on any given day with a small amount of fluctuation, for a total of 308 unique attendees. We furthermore assumed that roughly 45% of the participants would request room and board sponsorship, based on the experiences gathered in previous years.

Category	Quantity	Amount [USD]
Conference venue	fixed	27,720
Accommodation (sponsored person-days)	1,365	31,418
Food incl. conference dinner (meals)	3,734	38,126
Travel sponsorship		48,000
Day trip		10,884
Other expenses		12,912
Total		169,060

No further costs were budgeted for personnel or organization, as DebConf is organized by volunteers who graciously donate their time and energy to the running of the conference.

Sponsorship

Our fundraising team reached out to a number of first-time sponsors in the USA, as well as international sponsors, who have steadfastly supported us over the years. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, we broke even well before the conference began.

Combined with the generous support from professional and corporate attendees, as well as merchandise sales, we raised a significant surplus, which will be returned to Debian to be used for funding future Debian Free Software activities.

Final Numbers

While the overall conference attendance numbers were in line with expectations, the ratio of sponsored to non-sponsored attendees was surprisingly low compared to previous editions of the conference. It is not clear why so few people availed themselves of accommodation sponsorship this time, but it did noticeably reduce the conference's expenses compared to the budget.

Sponsored food participation was also lower than planned. We think that the variety and quality of Portland's food offerings (see page 27) are the most reasonable explanations for the low turnout. Fortunately, we had anticipated this possibility and ensured that the cafeteria would only invoice us for actual consumption.

When it was clear that we would be well within budget, we were able to meet popular demand by renting an additional room to be used as a "quiet hacklab", and could also arrange for the plenary conference hall to accomodate a high-profile, last-minute speaker on the second to last night of the conference.

Together with higher than projected income from professional and corporate registration fees, the conference ran a substantial surplus, returning to Debian not only its initial seed of USD 36,000 but also an additional 25 thousand dollars to be used for future events.

The total expenses for the conference amounted to just under USD 147,000 grouped into the following major categories:

Category	Budget [USD]	Expense [USD]
Conference venue	27,720	32,115
Accomodation	31,418	27,740
Food incl. conference dinner	38,126	24,390
Travel sponsorship	48,000	48,091
Day trip	10,884	4,850
Other expenses	12,912	9,670
Total	169,060	146,856

The grand total of income for DebConf14 was just under USD 208,000, divided into the following main categories:

Income Category	Amount [USD]
Debian seed	36,000
Sponsorship and donations	155,500
Professional attendee fees	16,000
Sales of merchandise (t-shirts, cups, stickers, etc.)	390

It is important to run a balanced budget for DebConf each year. It is also important to run a successful conference each year, shielded from the annual variability of incoming sponsorship and conference expenses. DebConf does not always run a balanced budget without reliance on contributions from the Debian general coffers. The surplus from DebConf14 will not only serve as a seed for future conferences, but also help to provide a necessary buffer against future budgeting uncertainty.

Steve Langasek, Martin F. Krafft

DebConf14 in Numbers

As a completely volunteer-run conference, DebConf goes where our community takes us. This gives us the opportunity to make the conference accessible to different demographics year over year, and also provides interesting data about the audience for a DebConf and the mobility of the same.
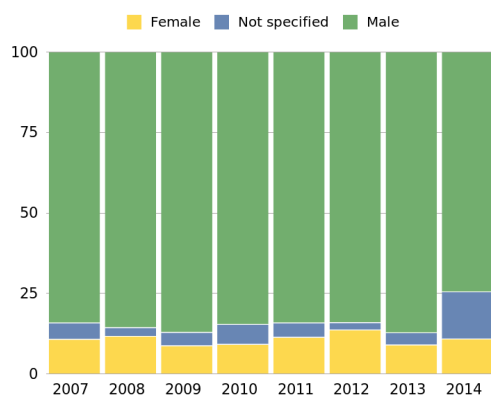

Attendees by year

Attendees by region
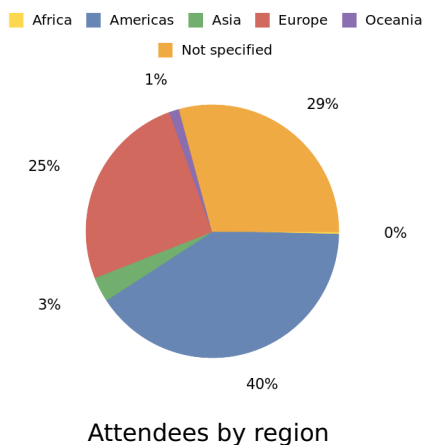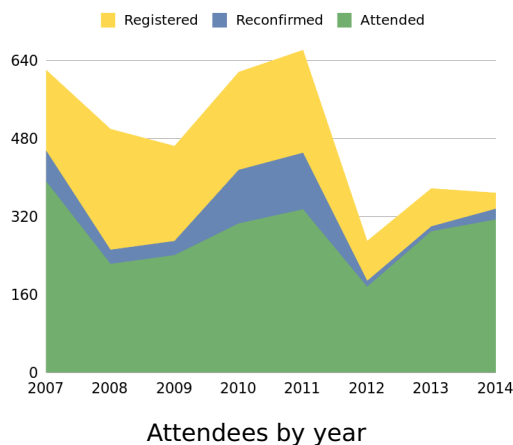
With 314 attendees, DebConf14 was the third-largest Debian conference since 2007, surpassed only by DebConf11 (Banja Luka, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia
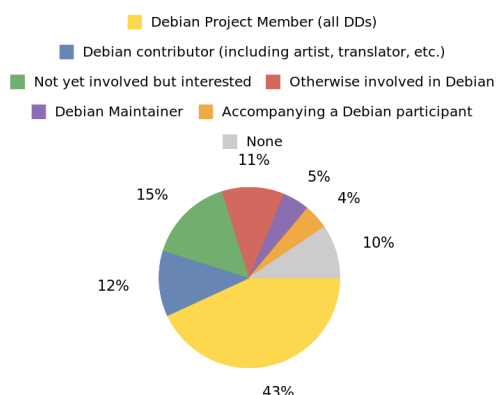
Herzegovina; 335 attendees) and DebConf7 (Edinburgh, Scotland, UK; 392 attendees). It was also the largest DebConf in the Western hemisphere to date, exceeding even DebConf10 in New York (306 attendees). This is particularly surprising because, in spite of the relative difficulty in reaching Portland compared with New York, we saw similar numbers of attendees from overseas: 127 of our attendees were from the Americas, but 80 attendees came from Europe, 10 from Asia, 4 from Oceania, and 1 from Africa, in addition to 92 attendees who did not disclose their country of origin—the high percentage of "unknowns" most likely a reflection of the change to a new conference registration system this year.

This comparatively high turnout may be due to any number of factors, perhaps including Portland's reputation as a Mecca of Free Software; the city's affordability relative to New York; and the overall economic outlook in 2014 vs. 2010.

Overall at least 33 distinct countries were represented at DebConf14, which is in line with previous conferences. The distribution of attendees largely matches the distribution of Debian's developers, with the greatest concentrations in North America and Western Europe.

Attendees by gender

Attendees by role in Debian

Attendees	Country of Origin
104	United States
92	Not specified
23	United Kingdom
18	Germany
14	France
11	Canada
5	Austria, Brazil
4	China
3	Argentina, Australia, Finland, Sweden
2	Greece, Guatemala, India, Japan, Poland
1	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, El Salvador, Italy, Latvia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Romania, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand

Beyond geographic diversity, gender diversity remains an area that the organizers of DebConf track closely. Between the change of conference registration system mentioned above, and the fact that this year non-sponsored attendees were able to book their own accommodation directly with the university rather than going through the conference, it is unsurprising to see that more attendees chose not to disclose their gender than in the past: just under 15% of DebConf14 attendees did not specify a gender when registering. Among those who did specify, 12.7% were women and 87.3% were men. Women were better represented at DebConf14 than at any Debian conference since DebConf7 with the exception of DebConf12, where 14% of attendees identified themselves as women. This shows a general trend towards an improved gender ratio at DebConf over the years.

Of course, it remains the case that women are better represented among those involved in Debian in a non-technical capacity (20%) or not involved in Debian (22%) rather than being Debian Developers or Debian Maintainers (4.7%). This is to be expected given the overall low representation of women in technical roles in the wider Debian project.

In terms of attendees' roles in Debian, 43% of all attendees this year were Debian Developers. 71% of attendees are already involved with Debian, with 14% stating that they are not yet involved in Debian but interested in becoming involved.

Steve Langasek

Credits

Many hands are needed to organize and run a big conference such as DebConf. We are proud of the volunteers, and their outstanding work and dedication to make it all happen. Truth be told, we all know it is not easy to please a group of people with quality standards as high as those of Debian developers, but the DebConf team did it, again!

It is impossible to list everyone who contributed to this success. Despite particular care, we apologize in advance for every name we forgot to mention here.

All the volunteers that just helped during the DebConf, the Chairs, the DebConf core team and all committee and team members, we thank you!

Chairs	Martín Ferrari	Moray Allan
	Tássia Camões	Gunnar Wolf (ex)
	Holger Levsen (ex)	
DebConf14 Team	Steve Langasek	Patty Langasek
	Allison Randal	Benjamin Kerensa
	Gerald Turner	Kees Cook
	Tony Mancill	Matt Taggart
	Matto Marjanovic	
Events Team	Asheesh Laroia	Brandon Murray
	Brian Murray	Casey Kolakowski
	Felipe Augusto van de Wiel	Gerald Turner
	Gunnar Wolf	Judit Foglszinger
	Katheryn Sutter	Kirsten Cook
	Lucas Kanashiro	Nick Murray
	Nicolas Dandrimont	Patty Langasek
	Pietro Monteiro	Sindhu Sundar
	Steve Langasek	Tassia Camões
	Tiago Vaz	Tony Mancill
	Valessio Brito	

Fundraising / Finances Team	Allison Randal	Benjamin Kerensa
	Brian Gupta	Clint Adams
	David Bremner	Eugene Zhukov
	Felipe Augusto van de Wiel	Gaudenz Steinlin
	Giacomo Catenazzi	Holger Levsen
	Kåre Thor Olsen	Kees Cook
	Margarita Manterola	Martin F. Krafft
	Martin Zobel-Helas	Michael Schultheiss
	Moray Allan	Norman García
	Patty Langasek	Philipp Hug
	Raphaël Walther	Steve Langasek
Participant Assistance Team	Allison Randal	Ana Guerrero López
	Bart Massey	Blars Blarson
	Charlene Connor	Eric Dantan Rzewnicki
	Gerald Turner	Giacomo Catenazzi
	Kees Cook	Lisa Baron
	Nattie Mayer-Hutchings	Norman Garcia
	Patty Langasek	Steve Langasek
	Tony Mancill	
Infrastructure Team	Kees Cook	Matt Taggart
	Gerald Turner	Gunnar Wolf
	Holger Levsen	Jörg Jaspert
	Didier Raboud	Giacomo Catenazzi
Content Team	Ana Guerrero López	Daniel Kahn Gillmor
	Gunnar Wolf	Martín Ferrari
	Martin F. Krafft	Michael Banck
	René Mayorga	Tássia Camões
	Tiago Bortoletto Vaz	
Media Representatives	Aigars Mahinovs	Allison Randal
	Benjamin Kerensa	Leandro Gómez
	Martin F. Krafft	Matto Marjanovic
	Neil McGovern	Steve Langasek
	Tony Mancill	Valessio Brito

Video Team	Ben Hutchings	Nattie Mayer-Hutchings
	Eduard Bloch	Tzafrir Cohen
	Peter De Schrijver	Christoph Egger
	Sam Erbs	Judit Foglszinger
	Richard Hartmann	Yishan Jiang
	Carl Karsten	Holger Levsen
	Sven Müller	Joe Rayhawk
	Kurt Roeckx	Stefano Rivera
	Andy Simpkins	Elcaset W
Final Report Typesetting	Ana Carolina Comandulli	Martin F. Krafft
	Michael Banck	Uli Scholler

About Debian

The Debian Project was founded in 1993 by Ian Murdock to be a truly free community project. Since then the project has grown to be one of the largest and most influential open source projects. Thousands of volunteers from all over the world work together to create and maintain Debian software. Available in 70 languages, and supporting a huge range of computer types, Debian calls itself the "universal operating system".

Find more information about Debian at http://www.debian.org/.

Last but not least:
Thank you all for making it possible...

Platinum Sponsor
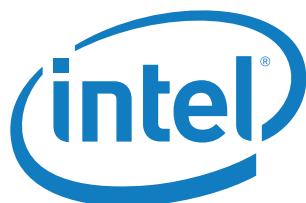
Gold Sponsors

Silver Sponsors

DebConf14 | Portland, Oregon, United States of America | August 23–31, 2014

Bronze Sponsors

Supporters

Infrastructure Sponsors

Media Partners

Copyright

Each author owns the copyright to their individual texts. Some texts were heavily edited and may be considered joint works. The layout is copyrighted by the editors. The report as a whole is licensed under the CC-BY-SA 3.0 license[18].

Trademarks

Pages 45 to 46 of the report consists of a number of logos, reproduced to extend thanks to the sponsors and contributing organizations for their support. The logos and the associated trademarks are the property of the copyright and/or trademark holders. The report license does not apply to the logos themselves, and they are used in the report for informational purposes only. Please note that restrictions may apply to the way a trademark may be represented. To obtain permission to use, modify or redistribute the logos, please contact the respective copyright and/or trademark holders.

Photography Credits

Credit for the photographs used in this report:

Aigars Mahinovs

[18]http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en

All photographs are licensed under the CC-BY-SA 3.0 license[19].

[19]http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en