Healthy CDDs
Strategies for building a Custom Debian Distribution

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Debian Conference 8

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Structure

1 History

2 Development
   - Measures for development
   - Growth of Metapackages
   - Activity of members

3 Comparison of CDDs
   - Graphing activity
   - Conclusion
There is a laptop open
Who are the others?

- **Debian Junior** (2000)
- **Debian Med** (2002)
- **Debian Edu (SkoleLinux)** (2002)

- DebConf 3 Oslo “Custom Debian Distributions”
- **Debian** Accessibility (2003)
- **Debian** Desktop (2003)
- **Debian** Lex (2003)
- **Debian** Nonprofit (2003)
- **Debian GIS** (2004)
- **DebiChem** (2004)
- **Debian** Enterprise (2007)
Considering some numbers ...

- Number of users?
  - Popularity contest?
  - Specific software has usually low popcon numbers
  - Usage of metapackages might give some hints but popcon works bad for these - the “content” is not actually used

- Number of developers
  - Number of Vcs commits → not every CDD uses common Vcs
  - Number of mailing list subscribers → people tend to stay subscribed
Signal, noise, artefacts

- Not only SPAM is noise
- (Un)subscribe
- Debian Junior list peak in October 2003:
  - Replacement for Abiword: LyX? Openoffice? → 43 postings
  - Philosophy (was Re: Replacement for Abiword: LyX? Openoffice?) → 33 postings
  - Future replacement for Abiword: Tux Writer? → 3 postings
  - 79 postings about specific topic out of 89 non-SPAM
- Intended and unintended robots
  - December 2005: 92 messages by gentoo-w+help@gentoo.org about subscription status to debian-desktop@lists.debian.org
  - Messages by Debian Installer, bugzilla-skolelinux, Archive Administrator, ...
Dependency of metapackages

- Technical output - number of metapackages and their dependencies
- Probably good measure
- Hard to obtain because not everything is in Vcs
- Querying snapshot.debian.net possible but really time consuming
Selected metapackages of Debian Med

Number of dependencies of selected Debian Med metapackages

- Microbiology
- Imaging
- Practice

Graph showing the number of dependencies for different years (2002 to 2008) with categories Microbiology, Imaging, and Practice.
Number of subscribers?

debian-enterprise mailing list traffic and/or members

traffic/month

members

traffic/month

members

Activity of communication measure

- Intensity and quality of communication
- Every CDD has a mailing list
- Who are the active posters (except robots)
- Influence of SPAM, noise, flames, etc. is reduced
- Mind the run-over-by-bus factor
Top 10 posters on debian-med@lists.debian.org

- Andreas.Tille
- Charles.Plessy
- David.Paleino
- Karsten.Hilbert
- Nelson.A..de.Oliveira
- Steffen.Moeller
- Michael.Hanke
- Daniel.Leidert
- Elizabeth.Barham
- Tobias.Toedter
Top 10 posters on debian-edu@lists.debian.org
Top 10 posters on debian-jr@lists.debian.org
Top 10 posters on debian-desktop@lists.debian.org

- Gustavo.Franco
- Luis.Matos
- Luis.M
- Matthew.A..Nicholson
- Yves.Alexis.Perez
- Fathi.Boudra
- Andre.Luiz.Rodrigues.Ferreira
- Mario.Fux
- Michael.Banck
- Christoffer.Sawicki
Top 10 posters on *debian-lex@lists.debian.org*

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Successfull SPAM protection: in 2008 this list gathered only SPAM

Peak in November 2007:

- Debian-Lex Rebirth? 23
- Debian-Lex Rebirth? - wiki 8
- Rebirth 1
- Rebirth of Debian-lex 2

Good example for “vanished leader”
Top 10 posters on debian-nonprofit@lists.debian.org
Top 10 posters on debian-enterprise@lists.debian.org

2007
Guido.Guenther
wanderlust
Torsten.Werner
David.Moreno.Garza
Jean.Philippe.Blais
Noèl.Köthe
Nahalingam.N..Kanakavel
Christian.Grassi
qbggm343

2008

2007

2008
Most CDDs depend from single person

- Debian Edu has a really healthy crew
- Debian Med has at least run-over-by-bus factor two
- Others seem to depend from single person
- Need of better management
This talk is available at
http://people.debian.org/~tille/talks/
Andreas Tille <tille@debian.org>