

Giving Back

Contributing to Debian and the New Maintainer Process



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Session 3: The New Maintainer Process

So you maintain a
couple packages, fix
bugs in your
sleep, and now you want to be
a
DD...

(or maybe you just want a l337
@debian.org email)

What It Is

- in the beginning, all you had to do was email
- process that one has to go through to become a Debian Developer
- basically a “weeding out” process to make sure that those who are given accounts are:
 - trustworthy
 - competent
 - dedicated
 - verbose?
 - reform, we'll touch on this later

Benefits of Being a Debian Developer

- a cool you@debian.org email address
- getting recognized for the work you've done
- being able to make your own uploads
- an account on every developer machine
 - better access to machines of different architectures for testing

The Center of the Universe

<http://www.debian.org/devel/join/newmaint>

Mailing Lists

- debian-newmaint
 - not necessary to be on it, but it can be useful
 - application manager reports will be sent here
 - also the place to e.g. ask for a new AM if yours is unresponsive for long periods of time
 - discussions about reforming the process also happen here

Before You Dive In

- Make sure that you really want this. The process isn't short. It takes a lot of time, a lot of it waiting.
- Realize that the process isn't perfect. It was designed when the project was a lot smaller, and it hasn't scaled well.
 - It's being reformed, but that change is slow and you probably don't want to wait for it to change first.
 - But, when you make it through you can contribute your own ideas for making it better!

Important Documents

- http://www.debian.org/social_contract
 - you agree with it, or why do you want to be a developer?
- <http://www.debian.org/doc/debian-policy>
- <http://www.debian.org/doc/developers-reference>
- at least know where to find what you need later
- also, make sure you're not insanely hosed

Getting a GPG Key

- you *need* one to go through the process
- create it if you don't have it
 - `gpg --gen-key`
 - 1024 bits is fine
- get it signed by a debian developer!
 - verifies your identity to the project
 - this shouldn't be a problem around here
- upload the public key to a keyserver
 - e.g. `pgp.mit.edu`
- use it properly
 - <http://www.gnupg.org/gph/en/manual.html>

Finding an Advocate

- if you've gotten this far, chances are you've worked with some developers in the project
- possibilities include:
 - a sponsor
 - a teammate
 - anyone else who knows what you've done for Debian
- they must send a signed mail with some background in order for you to enter the pool to be assigned an application manager

Application Manager Assignment

- Front Desk makes sure that you've made contributions to Debian
 - packaging, documentation, translations, QA, etc.
- Front Desk assigns an AM (Application Manager)
 - a current DD who has volunteered to process applicants
- make sure to sign all mails sent to your AM!

Part 1: ID Check

- quick and painless if you've already had your ID signed
 - which you should have done before you applied

Part 2: Philosophy and Procedures

- consists of two parts
 - philosophy
 - procedures
 - creative, no?
- what exactly is asked depends on the AM
- often based on templates
 - <http://alioth.debian.org/projects/nm-templates>

Part 2 Continued:

Philosophy

- questions about the social contract and DFSG
 - making sure you know Debian's views
 - analyzing licenses against the DFSG
 - sometimes questions are asked about current events in the Debian community – your position on a license issue being discussed, etc.

Part 2 Continued: Procedures

- what to do when certain situations come up in Debian!
- you must agree to follow the DMUP
 - <http://www.debian.org/devel/dmup>
 - don't use Debian developer machines to host your pr0n collection
- other examples:
 - using the BTS, what to do with security bugs
 - the Debian release process
 - i18n and l10n

Completing This Section...

- it goes a lot faster if you just sit down and make yourself do it
- the internets can help you
- don't be afraid to ask for help if you're not sure and can't find the answer to a question

Part 3: Tasks and Skills

- zomg you actually have to do stuff!
- you'll probably be asked to show the bug reports that you've filed to your AM, better yet if they have patches
- showing that you know how to write a manpage, other documentation tasks
- knowledge of the packaging system
- fixing an RC bug
- QA stuff

zomg you're done!

- well, almost
- next steps:
 - Application Manager checks your packages and tells you whats wrong with them
 - you fix the problems
 - AM writes your recommendation and submits it to FD and the DAM
 - hopefully it's a good one
 - FD checks your app
 - DAM checks app
 - sometimes they'll call you if you look like a script kiddy or something like that
 - DAM creates your account and puts your key in the keyring

Now You Really Are Done

- Congrats, you made it!
- Pat yourself on the back.
- Celebrate with a beer.
 - (but only if you're 21)
- Go make Debian more awesome.

The End

(and they lived happily
ever after, just like those
Disney movies you
watched when you were
six)