

Meeting Point:
14.11.2008
8:30 - 16:00
TIS innovation park

South Tyrol Free Software CONFERENCE

Sponsor:



1006.org



Partner:

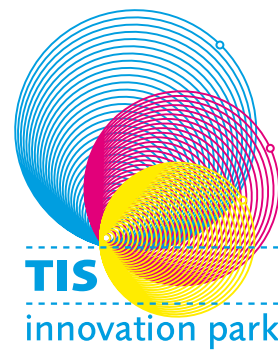


South Tyrol Free Software Conference

FREE SOFTWARE: FOR INNOVATIVE BUSINESS!

Program

14.11.2008



Program

08:30 **Registration**

09:00 **Opening**
TIS innovation park (Italy)

09:20 **Franz Schöpf**
Autonomous Province of Bolzano-Bozen - South Tyrol (Italy), Head of Office for Innovation, R&D
"Innovation in South Tyrol"

10:00 **Oliver Diedrich**
Heise Zeitschriften Verlag (Germany), Senior editor Linux and Open Source
"Open Source Usage in the Enterprise"

10:40 **Coffee break**

11:00 **SFSaward2008**
Linux User Group Bolzano-Bozen-Bulsan

11:20 **Simon Phipps**
SUN Microsystems (USA), Chief Open Source Officer and Director Open Technologies Practice
"The Third Wave of Open Source: Changing the Computer Market For Good"

12:00 **Richard Schwerdtfeger**
IBM (USA), Accessibility Architecture and Strategy for IBM Software
"Advancing Web Accessibility - Today and Tomorrow"

12:40 **Lunch break - Buffet**

14:00 **Stormy Peters**
Gnome Foundation (USA), Executive Director
"GNOME, free and open source computing for the future"

14:40 **Josh Berkus**
PostgreSQL Project (USA), Core Team
"Free Software and the Future of Database Technology"

15:20 **Walter Bender**
Sugar Labs (USA), Founder
"The Sugar platform: learning through collaboration, discovery and reflection"

16:00 **Conclusions**

Moderation: **Patrick Ohnewein**
Simultaneous translation service: Italian-German-English



Oliver Diedrich

Heise Zeitschriften Verlag (Germany)

Short biography

Born in 1963, Oliver Diedrich is a senior editor at c't magazine, where he is responsible for Linux, open source and related issues. He is also editor-in-chief of the online publication „heise open“ which is focused on enterprise usage of open source software. Since 1998, he has been watching the rise of Linux from a hacker's toy to a platform for mission-critical applications and the evolution of open source solutions from the playground into data centers. Before he began working at Heise Zeitschriften Verlag, he was a researcher in the neurophysiologic foundations of emotions.

Open Source Usage in the Enterprise

There are many different reasons why enterprises use open source software. Based on several case studies, I will outline some of these reasons.

Cost savings. DB Systems, the IT service provider of the Deutsche Bahn (German Railroads), decided already in 2003 to use Linux as a strategic IT platform. The switch from Solaris machines to x86 servers with Linux saved about half of the costs for hardware and licenses which account for 40 percent of the total costs.

Flexibility. In order to build a flexible SOA architecture without any vendor lock-in, Union Investment decided to use only software components that comply to open standards. The result: a complex enterprise application integration infrastructure built with open source components which delivers the needed flexibility.

Control. Software in airplanes must be supported for 30 years and more. No software vendor guarantees the availability of his development tools for such a long period. Airbus therefore founded TOPCASED, a project devoted to the development of an open source toolkit for the development of critical applications and systems.

Security. The Nordrheinische Ärzteversorgung implemented a smartcard authentication system based on open source, because its security needs could not be fulfilled by any ready-made solution in the market.



Simon Phipps

SUN Microsystems (USA)

Short biography

Technology futurist Simon Phipps is a well-known computer industry insider and commentator and as well as having a widely-read weblog he speaks frequently at industry events on technology trends and futures. At various times he has programmed mainframes, Windows and on the Web. Currently the Chief Open Source Officer at Sun Microsystems, Inc., he was previously involved in OSI standards in the 80s, in the earliest commercial collaborative conferencing software in the early 90s, in introducing Java and XML to IBM and most recently with Sun's launching Sun's blogging site, blogs.sun.com. He lives in the UK, is based at Sun's Menlo Park campus in California and can be contacted via <http://www.webmink.net>.

The Third Wave of Open Source: Changing the Computer Market For Good

As companies like Sun Microsystems adjust their business strategies to fully embrace Free/Open Source Software (FOSS) as a customer-facing reality rather than just as a development methodology, it is clear we've entered a new phase with FOSS. This talk considers the emerging Adoption-Led approach to software entering the enterprise and reflects on the opportunities and challenges this creates.



Richard Schwerdtfeger

IBM (USA)

Short biography

Richard Schwerdtfeger is a Distinguished Engineer, the Software Group Accessibility Strategist and Architect, chair of the IBM Accessibility Architecture Review Board, and a Master Inventor. His responsibilities include overall accessibility architecture and strategy for IBM Software Group. Richard participates in numerous W3C standards efforts including HTML, WAI Protocols and Formats, Ubiquitous Web, and previously the User Agent Accessibility Guidelines. Richard chairs the W3C WAI-ARIA accessibility effort for Web 2.0 applications as well as OASIS and IMS GLC Access for All standards efforts. Richard joined IBM at the Watson Research Center in 1993 where he helped design and develop IBM Screen Reader/2. He, later, led numerous accessibility efforts at IBM, including: the collaboration with Sun on Java accessibility where he co-architected the Java Accessibility API and the IBM Self Voicing Kit for Java; the Web Accessibility Gateway for seniors; the IAccessible2 strategy; and the Linux accessibility strategy.

Advancing Web Accessibility – Today and Tomorrow

In the early days of the web we could depend on web content being static documents. Today's web content dynamically interactive, collaborative, and often an aggregated from autonomously created resources. IBM has been a key driver behind the advancements in Web accessibility to address this transformation. Our strategy for success is deeply rooted in the use of open architectures, standards, source code, and communities. This presentation will cover IBM's efforts to make Web 2.0 applications accessible. It will introduce participants to WAI-ARIA, the advancements in Web browsers to support it, and new efforts underway to personalize the web to address the accessibility of mashups. The presentation will cover a critical need for next generation tooling to aid developers and testers in producing accessibility of Rich Internet Web Applications compliant with emerging Web standards such as Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0.



Stormy Peters

Gnome Foundation (USA)

Short biography

Stormy Peters is Executive Director of the GNOME Foundation. She joined the GNOME Foundation from OpenLogic where she set up their OpenLogic Expert Community. Previously, Stormy worked at Hewlett-Packard (HP) where she founded and managed the Open Source Program Office that is responsible for HP's open source strategy, policy and business practices. Stormy joined HP as a software engineer after graduating from Rice University with a B.A. in Computer Science.

Stormy is a frequent keynote speaker on business aspects of Open Source Software at major conferences such as the Open Source Business Conference and the O'Reilly conferences, as well as government organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union. Stormy is involved in GNOME and free and open source software because it is changing the world and the community is full of smart, passionate people!

GNOME, free and open source computing for the future

The GNOME project provides a free and open source desktop, accessible to all. Today this desktop is providing the foundation for the desktop of the future, whether it be a web device or a mobile device or a computing platform designed just for children. Working with its core values like accessibility, internationalization and developer-friendly, the GNOME community is working effectively with its contributors and users as well as the companies and other organizations in the industry. Come learn what GNOME is planning for the future and how you can be a part of the GNOME community and help develop free and open source technologies that are building our future.



Josh Berkus

PostgreSQL Project (USA)

Short biography

Josh Berkus has been involved with open source since 1998 and databases since 1994. He's currently on the PostgreSQL Project Core Team, and is involved with Software in the Public Interest, the Open Source Initiative, JasperSoft, OSCON, and multiple open source projects. His database experience includes PostgreSQL, Greenplum, Oracle, SQLite, MySQL and Microsoft SQL Server.

Free Software and the Future of Database Technology

After a decade of stagnation, the database world is changing rapidly. Not only have free SQL databases emerged to challenge Oracle, IBM and Microsoft, but the database market is proliferating into numerous specialized databases, including distributed, memory, column-store, streaming, clustered, embedded, and document-based. Most of this burst of innovation is free software.

Josh Berkus, based on his long experience of the database market, will discuss what these trends mean for businesses which innovate on, or simply rely on, databases. He will present a few very brief case studies of businesses which have used their access to free database technology to outpace their competitors.



Walter Bender

Sugar Labs (USA)

Short biography

Walter Bender is the founder of Sugar Labs, a non-profit foundation that serves as a support base for the community of educators and software developers who are extending the Sugar user interface. Sugar is designed to enhance the primary educational experience by emphasizing collaboration and expression. Prior to that, Bender was president for software and content of the One Laptop per Child association, where he developed and deployed technologies that are revolutionizing how the world's children engage in learning. Before taking a leave of absence from MIT, Bender was executive director of the MIT Media Laboratory.

The Sugar platform: learning through collaboration, discovery, and reflection

The Sugar learning platform invents a new way for computers to be used for education. It provides a simple yet powerful means of engaging children in learning that is opened up by computing and the Internet. Sugar, which promotes collaborative learning through rich-media expression is part of an effort to provide an opportunity for a quality education to every child (it is already used by more than 500000 children). Sugar Labs is a non-profit foundation whose mission is to produce, distribute, and support the use of Sugar. Available under the GPL, Sugar is free to anyone who wants to use or extend it.

Sugar promotes collaboration, reflection, and discovery: (1) The interface always shows the presence of other learners--collaboration is a first-order experience. Students and teachers dialog, support and critique each other, and share ideas. (2) Sugar uses a „Journal“ to record each learner's activity. It is a place for reflection and assessment of progress. (3) Sugar accommodates a users with different levels of skill in reading, language, and computing. It is easy to approach, yet it doesn't put an upper bound on personal expression. They are free to reshape, reinvent, and reapply both software and content into powerful learning activities.

Sugar has been ported to all of the major GNU/Linux distributions, hence it is now possible to run Sugar on almost any computer hardware. LiveCD and LiveUSB versions are also available, making it easy to „test drive“ Sugar in a classroom or school computer lab.

In this talk, I will introduce the Sugar learning platform - how it transforms learning in and out of the classroom and how it is being used. I will also discuss the ways in which the culture of FLOSS has influenced the development and deployment of Sugar.

What is Free Software?

Until the 1970s software and source codes were freely available to users. Since the mid-1970s software has been increasingly coded using machine-readable language, which is almost unintelligible for humans. Freely available software has then been gradually replaced by proprietary software, i.e. software owned by a proprietor. However, since the mid-eighties a sort of countermovement, against this practice, has formed, leading to the development, production and distribution of free software. Today free software users are well aware of its meaning and vision. Free software, also known as Open-Source-Software, is seen not only as a way to consciously return to the very first software development methods, but also as an alternative to proprietary software. This type of software has become gradually established as a term to express a specific notion.

Free Software is free to the fourth power!

Richard Stallman and the Free Software Foundation (FSF) established that software can be considered free if users are granted at least the following four principles of freedom:

- Freedom 0, the freedom to run the program for any purpose;
- Freedom 1, the freedom to understand and study how the program works and adapt it to one's needs;
- Freedom 2, the freedom to copy and redistribute the program;
- Freedom 3, the freedom to improve the program and release the improvements to the public.

Whenever these freedoms are restricted or the terms established not complied with, software is defined as proprietary or non-free.

Free Software does not mean free of charge!

The term "free" as used in Free Software does not always mean free of charge. Richard Stallman has often explained the principle of freedom with the following example: „Free software is a matter of liberty, not price. Free as in free speech, not as in free beer". Let us be clear: talking about Free Software means referring to freedom, not to price. The idea behind the "free" notion goes hand in hand with free access. Thus, Free Software must be considered different from Freeware, i.e. the truly free of charge item of the software industry.

What Free Software offers

Free Software offers freedom, security and reliability in the long-run. But this is not all. Free Software offers many more advantages. Free software is inexpensive. Free Software is stable, it features minimal incidence of errors and low virus vulnerability.

Free Software has the potential to grow, it offers strategic advantages, it represents a possibility of equality and, above all, it offers everybody the chance to have a free knowledge plus.

Economic advantages

Free Software is a new chance for local markets.

The ever-growing demand to install Free Software has originated a growing demand for software experts and assistance service providers in the field of Free Software. In this sense, Free Software fosters and strengthens local IT markets. Furthermore, Free Software supports those involved in software development, because this means making their know-how available to the local market and enabling them to establish themselves in the community as experts in software solutions that are relevant to their context. Several service providers and development experts have already become aware of these economic possibilities that are linked to the dissemination of Free Software. However, Free Software is not just a catalyst for the local economy, in that it also favours an increase in investments by big IT companies, e.g. IBM, Sun Microsystems, Novell, HP and others.

Free Software increases competition

Free Software has been in the public domain for a long time. In France, there are plans to install Free Software in one million computers of the public administration, so as to cut in half the public spending increased by licence rights. For the local governments of big cities, such as Munich and Bern, the issue of autonomy from software producers has become crucial. The Regional Authorities in South Tyrol (northern Italy) have recently planned to introduce OpenOffice.org as the standard software for the computers of all its regional offices. Thus, all those opting for Free Software will contribute to greater competition and reduce the risk of the formation of a monopoly.

Free Software increases company profitability

More and more companies are choosing to install Free Software, among other things, for obvious economic reasons. Furthermore, reducing licence expenses also favours the establishment of new companies. But this is not all. The purchase cost advantage is not the only reason that makes the use of Free Software interesting for companies and institutions, such as schools and universities. Free Software offers even more economic advantages. For example, Free Software can be copied and installed in a great number of computers, whereas proprietary software often requires one licence for every single computer. Against this background, Free Software fosters and favours the development of new work arrangements, such as, for instance, working from home.

Free Software offers an advantage over purchase costs.

Usually, the first and more evident reason behind the use of Free Software by private subjects, companies and institutions is the considerable advantage over purchase costs. Free Software has no licence costs and in almost every case it is available free of charge - if downloaded from the Internet or copied on a CD. It is worth emphasising that in this context "free" is not necessarily equal to free of charge. Free Software can also be sold, not just be given for free. After all, Free Software needs to be installed and configured. Similarly, assistance, maintenance, training for users and appropriate disposal may be necessary.

Strategic advantages

The economic advantages and the qualitative aspects mentioned earlier provide a clear framework, which can be helpful to determine whether certain software is suitable for a company. However, there are also strategic aspects that are worth considering, as they play an important role.

Free Software guarantees autonomy from producers.

Free Software attempts to avoid being dependent on producers, thus preventing the so-called "lock-in-effect" with high costs and consequent dependence on specific products. Furthermore, the open source code and the strong orientation towards accessible standards make it impossible for a producer to generate dependence by setting particular standards. Such advantages are particularly evident with GNU/Linux. Since it can be run on standard hardware, companies do not receive any indication of a need to employ proprietary hardware when choosing GNU/Linux. This translates into a real possibility to choose among several options in a strongly competition-based market.

Free Software guarantees autonomy in support and assistance services.

Free Software offers greater flexibility and autonomy also in choosing support and assistance services. Companies and individual users are not forced to choose specific providers of these services. Obviously, users can decide to purchase these services from a different provider at any time. In case Free Software is installed within the framework of a contract with a local service provider, the latter shall also be in charge of making sure there are no difficulties while using the program. The same applies to support services.

Free Software guarantees autonomy through standard compliance.

Free Software also guarantees greater autonomy for users through compliance with standards. On the one hand, such compliance is guaranteed by a widespread distribu-

tion, which is platform-independent. On the other hand, there is a strong orientation towards standards. Furthermore, in principle, all Free Software interfaces come with documentation. In fact, standard compliance is present in proprietary software as well, but it is particularly evident in Free Software.

Free Software guarantees the possibility of making changes or adjustments on the whole range of functions.

The availability of the source code in Free Software stands as a kind of insurance. The source code has fundamental importance whenever producers decide to interrupt software development or stop support services. In that case, companies can contract other IT providers or they themselves may take on the software development and management process. This way, companies do not depend on producers to deal with changes or adjustments on functions.

Free Software also guarantees long-life purchases.

In case of obsolescence of one of its products, or in case of development of a new version, Free Software and, in particular, operating systems and server applications generally guarantee an automatic and free-of-charge update, which can be compatible with existing versions. With Free Software it is also possible to maintain programs together with a current situation of version control.

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