Collaboration with Ubuntu
from the Debian point of view

Stefano Zacchiroli
zack@debian.org

Debian Project Leader

13 May 2010
Ubuntu Developer Summit for version 10.10
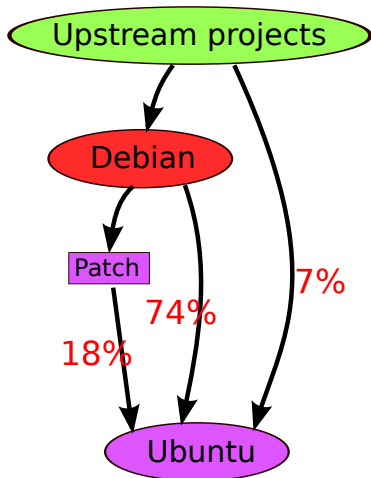Brussels, Belgium

Debian and Ubuntu

Debian

- since 1993
- purely volunteer project
- strong values: free software, Social Contract
- $\approx$ 1'000 members (DDs) world-wide
- do-ocratic, democratic, public decision making

Ubuntu

- started in 2004 by Canonical
- original (technical) staff: mostly Debian developers
- historically: main/universe, corporate/community
- Debian-based, periodic fork-merge model

Work flow between Debian and Ubuntu

data for main + universe

- rationale: universe is a selling point

Debian → Ubuntu

- not just "pull"
- some "push" too: feed back to Debian

Debian ↔ Ubuntu *collaboration*

- some bug reports fed back to Debian
- some Ubuntu changes fed back to Debian
- some early testing of big changes (e.g. gcc)
- mixed teams: tons!

▸ pkg-games	≈ 500 src pkgs	▸ security	via vendor-sec
▸ pkg-java	ML for LP bugs	▸ pkg-freevo, pkg-mono, pkg-perl	
▸ DPMT / PAPT	Python mod/apps	▸ APT stack	porcelain
▸ d-i	win-win generalization	▸ live-helper, nginx, . . .	
▸ dpkg	idem	▸ PAM	
▸ X strike force		▸ . . .	

- nice trend: Ubuntu devs become DM/DD

lesson learned / to learn: Debian welcomes Ubuntu contributions

. . . but we can collaborate *more*!

Why should we?

Ubuntu interests

- pushing back changes eases merges
- Debian maintainers are experts; can improve (universe) quality
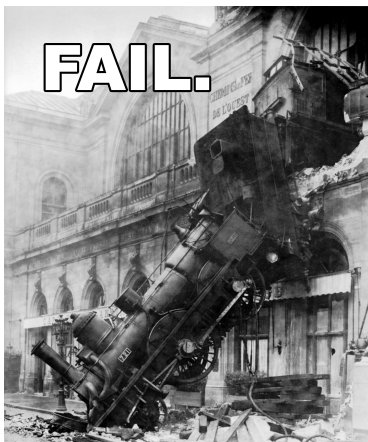- that's the essence of "be collaborative" in FOSS

Debian interests

- Ubuntu has more users, i.e. more feedback
  - ▸ Ubuntu reaches out (future) contributors we don't
- cooperate with derivatives

Mutual interests

- discuss big changes together
- improving free software is what matter most, right?

when Ubuntu is a bad downstream
e.g.:

- LP bugs are not triaged/forwarded
- DDs don't like to special case Ubuntu: they *wait for* bugs
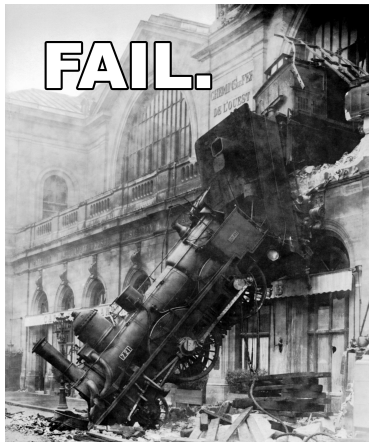- still, DDs do care about "their" Ubuntu packages

no special casing: same complaints for others

FAIL. i.e. stuff the Debian community does not appreciate

when Canonical is a bad upstream
e.g.:

- stuff hard to de-brand
- low interest in packaging Canonical SW in Debian
- unresponsiveness (e.g. close to Ubuntu releases)

no special casing: same complaints for others

Interacting with Debian: pitfalls

It's not only your fault, we know.

"Sometimes" it is difficult to interact with Debian

- unresponsiveness → abandoned package
- unresponsiveness → no time (we're volunteers...)
- "go to hell" answers → bad heritage, not representative
  - ▸ 1'000 DDs, no one true "Debian-Ubuntu" perspective

your turn:

> *what does Ubuntu does not appreciate*
> *in interacting with Debian?*

Thanks!

for inviting Debian people at UDS
and for sponsoring DebConf10,
we hope to see you there

Questions?

Stefano Zacchiroli
zack@debian.org
http://upsilon.cc/zack