From TrainedMonkey™ to Google SoC Mentor

(How to become an OOo developer
and
what to do to make the path smoother)

by
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Agenda

- My path

- Difficulties

- Build Developer Community

- Attract and keep developers

From TrainedMonkey™ ...

- Education

- FOSS projects

- Position inside the OpenOffice.org community

Education

- Engineer of Technical Cybernetics – University of Žilina (Slovakia)

- Diploma in Journalism – University of Fribourg (Switzerland)

- Bachelor's Degree in International Relations – University of Geneva (Switzerland)

- Master's Degree in International Law – Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva (Switzerland)

FOSS Projects

- libwpd (http://libwpd.sourceforge.net/)

- libwpg (http://sourceforge.net/projects/libwpg)

- AbiWord (http://www.abisource.com/)

- OpenOffice.org (http://www.openoffice.org)

OpenOffice.org developer

- WordPerfect™ import filter maintainer

- Alternative Java SDKs
  - IBM
  - BEA Systems

- Miscellaneous build fixes

...to SoC mentor (1)

- Humble beginnings – libwpd

- Windows® version of wpd2sxw

- WriterPerfect for Windows® – installer maintainer

- Diving into C++

- libwpd maintainer

...to SoC mentor (2)

- ooo-build and WriterPerfect

- NeoOffice/J and WordPerfect™ import filter

- CWS *libwpdupgrade*

- OpenOffice.org WordPerfect™ import filter maintainer

- CWS *morejava*

- Google Summer of Code 2006 mentor

Difficulties & annoyances

- Reputation of OpenOffice.org among other functionally similar FOSS applications

- Complexity and "weirdness" of the source tree and build system

- Time consuming, unclear and sometimes bureaucratic integration procedures.

OpenOffice.org project's reputation

- "OpenOffice.org is *de facto* Sun corporate shop!"

- JCA - "They want to steal my copyright!"

- "To push innovation through is nearly impossible!"

Contributor Statistics

Developer Group	Build		Code		Documentation		Image		Other		Template		Total	
Bureau Cornavin	21	0.19%	93	0.09%	2	0.02%	0	0.00%	9	0.05%	0	0.00%	125	0.07%
Debian	209	1.85%	89	0.09%	1	0.01%	0	0.00%	97	0.57%	0	0.00%	396	0.23%
IndT	1	0.01%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	6	0.04%	0	0.00%	7	0.00%
Individual	693	6.14%	1945	1.96%	98	1.20%	195	0.69%	719	4.25%	976	13.88%	4626	2.70%
Mandrake	3	0.03%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4	0.02%	0	0.00%	7	0.00%
Novell	161	1.43%	1619	1.63%	1	0.01%	788	2.78%	90	0.53%	0	0.00%	2659	1.55%
Propylon	1	0.01%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	0.00%
RedHat	364	3.23%	1800	1.81%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	105	0.62%	0	0.00%	2269	1.33%
Sun	9820	87.03%	93244	93.76%	8075	98.75%	27326	96.53%	15889	93.83%	6058	86.12%	160412	93.71%
Unknown	10	0.09%	659	0.66%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	15	0.09%	0	0.00%	684	0.40%
Total	11283		99451		8177		28309		16934		7034		171188	
		6.59%		58.09%		4.78%		16.54%		9.89%		4.11%		

1st position	2nd position	3rd position	4th position

Developer community

- The goal:
  15% of community contributions

- Community will not generate spontaneously

- Needs a deliberate effort to be built!

Community building

- Marketing the project versus marketing the product

- Making it fun to hack on OpenOffice.org and passing the message to others

- Example of Miguel de Icaza and Nat Friedman

Large source tree

- Increase the **modularity** of the source code!

- One OpenOffice.org build can take a day or more on mainstream hardware

- A lot of precious hacking time is lost while building

- Answers:

  - Improving the build process

  - Modularization, modularization,...

- Did I forget to say "modularization"?

An opportunity to learn

- **Institutionalized peer code review !!!**
- Non-linear learning curve and discouraging size of the source tree
  - QA is excellent for finding errors, but ...
  - Code review is helping to prevent errors, improve the code's quality and improve both peers' coding skills
- A need to "coach" new developers, help them before they get discouraged and build a great relationship with them.
  - Example of ooo-build

Bureaucratic process

- Some **structure** is **necessary** for a project of this size

- For a developer contributing in one's free **time**, wasting **time** is a major drawback

- A benevolent contributor does not benefit from **informal links** that can exist in Hamburg offices

- Towards **community** iTeam members

Questions and stoning session

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."
Revelation 2 : 7