Debconf5

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Final Report

Sixth Annual Debian Conference
Final Report

December 2005

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DebConf: The Power of Community

Andreas Schuldei
main organiser

Debian conferences (DebConfs) serve both as educational and social events and as work meetings. Those goals further an other, the primary one: to inspire people for yet an other year of work on Debian. The main audience of DebConfs are people who work on Debian in some way. In that regard it is unique and even though other conferences might attract larger Debian crowds, DebConfs surpass those in their number and density of developers and other deeply involved people.

Since DebConf3 in Oslo, DebConfs are preceeded by Debcamps. During those "work camps", groups that cooperate via the net during the year have a chance to hack together for some consecutive days and use the proximity for brainstorming, meetings and common work.

"...to inspire people for yet another year of work on Debian."

During the years we have seen different kinds of DebConfs:

DebConf4 took place in a conference hotel where the hotel provided all kinds of services (food, registration, cleaning, information, entertainment, guard duty) and unloaded the organizers from most work during the conference.

DebConf3 was hosted in a university and all those services had to be provided by the organizers. Free housing was available in a gym in 20 minutes walking distance.

DebConf0 and 1 piggy-backed on the Software Livre meeting in Bordeaux and DebConf2 looked like DebConf3 without the services. The only scheduled events were the talks, but bug squashing, talking and partying took place anyway.

Work on DebConf5 started shortly after DebConf4 was done. Without a hotel it would be similar in character to DebConf3 with heavy load for the organizers during the conference. Concerning the preparations preceeding the conference the events feel pretty similar in work load and necessary attention to detail.

There had been some leftover, unclaimed money for travel sponsorship during DebConf4, apparently because people could not make short term arrangements for a trip to Brazil. To give people more time to plan and book cheaper flights, we needed to be able to commit to their travel sponsorship earlier. To be able to do that, we needed money earlier.

So very early (12-9 months before the conference) we started to approach potential sponsors for support. But most were not overly interested yet. Their budget was not ready and apparently they were not willing to plan for sponsorship for our conference ahead of time.

In September we had the first of our monthly IRC meetings, where we diligently went over our todo lists and reported progress or stagnation. We sent out the "Generic Sponsorship Offer" mail to the debian-devel-announce mailing list, anyway, and over the following month about 70 people approached us to request financial support. That was much better then in previous years, but we were also sceptical if we would be able to consider everyone, since the projected travel costs were substantial. To enable as many people as possible to attend, we asked people to pay as much as possible of their travel costs themselves, so that we would be able to spread the support as thin and wide as possible.

In parallel we were looking for a legal umbrella in Finland. We needed a legal entity that could sign contracts, pay bills and do other business for us. We soon found Linux-Aktivaattori, who were willing to work together with us. Having them on board proved to be one of the greater lucky strikes of DebConf5.

Ahead of time the SPI (deputy) treasurer defined a procedure that would regulate the reimbursement of sponsorees from the U.S. banking and cheque payment region. In fact throughout the time we enjoyed good cooperation with SPI when it stored and received sponsorship money, passed money along to the Finnish account when needed and reimbursed the American participants later. This was an encouraging development.

"...several other reporters were present and wrote about DebConf5."

SINCE PRESS WORK HAD BEEN NEGLECTED for DebConf4, a press team was formed that worked both on informing the national press and even published international press releases before and after the event. Other efforts to improve the visibility of Debian included an invitation to Rebecca Sobol from Linux Weekly News (http://lwn.net/) to attend and report from the conference. Not planned in detail, but still very welcome, was that several other reporters were present and wrote about DebConf5.

We estimated to have around 200 participants and that, together with the travel and housing costs, gave us a good idea how much money we would need to keep the "free food, free accommodation" standard that we had set in earlier DebConfs. Originally, the plan had been to have a few big sponsors which would share the load of the projected 100 000 euro equally. Unfortunatly some of the big sponsors were not able to meet our expectations and for a long time it seemed doubtful that we would be able to provide any travel sponsorship at all.

THE WEBSITE WENT PUBLIC in January and shortly after that the registration opened. The Call For Papers was put out and the license for the recordings of the talks got some attention and was modified to meet the Debian Free Software Guidelines. Both for the CFP and the registration of the conference participants we used Comas, a Conference Management System which we would extend in the coming months to satisfy DebConf's special needs.

Once the first people started to plan their trip and heard what we offered as their accomodation for the duration — a dorm, which we could not promise much about, not even beds — we noticed that DebConf4 with its hotel facilities had set standards which we could not offer this year, but that some people expected nevertheless. A surprising amount of about 50 people decided to stay in the nearby (and expensive) Radisson hotel instead of the dorm. Even though we were initially not happy with people leaving the scene of DebConf and perhaps fragmenting the event, this turned out to be very helpful, as the dorm could not by far have housed all the participants that eventually showed up.

AROUND THAT TIME Linux-New-Media offered us sponsorship by publishing a full page advertisement in all its magazines worldwide, which we could use to thank our sponsors. Equipped with that offer we reapproached some of the sponsors that had turned us down so far and contacted also a multitude of new, smaller sponsors. In the process of this we also got in touch with a company that was surprisingly supportive of DebConf and did become our second biggest sponsor. Suddenly we could afford to support everyone that had requested travel sponsorship. Additionally, many of the approached companies agreed to sponsor DebConf with varying sums. Some luck was also involved, for example when a sponsor did their quarterly final budget on a Saturday and we managed to hit the hour-long window of opportunity and got a part of the leftover money. This was also the point in time when we started to send out invitations to participants who needed them to request visas or to impress their bosses.

AS A NOVELTY we wanted to have a Debian Day with a focus towards the general public, press and users. DebConf talks would have been too technical in nature for this audience, so a special program was arranged. It was much broader in scope and even touched very basic topics (like Free Software or Release Management).

The results of the questionnaires from DebConf3 were reinvestigated in order to refine the surveys for this year. The video team started forming and the network administrators had their first IRC meeting, finding that some questions about the network topology still remained open.

AND THEN WE FINALLY STARTED TO SPEND the fortunes we had collected. We paid airfares for some participants, who could not afford to extend the money until they would get reimbursed, ordered cleaning services, insurances, boats for the daytrip, T-shirts and food.

From DebConf3 we knew that catering services were able to adjust the amount of food quite flexibly. In Finland however, the person who could order supplies had gone on vacation and only the cooks and service personel remained. The food order we had placed was from the time when registration had been closed, at the beginning of June (and adjusted upwards shortly afterwards). The number of last-minute participants exceeded considerably those we had made arrangements for and we were unable to increase the volume further. To our rescue came the sleeping times of the participants and the opening hours of the restaurant, which overlapped partly. As a result, the consumed food matched the initial order better than the adjusted one.

IN ORDER TO KEEP TIME unfragemented for the participants and due to restrictions placed by the Computer Science Department's opening hours we decided to parallelize talks. To find those with a minimal overlap in their potential audience we introduced a voting system and optimized the schedule for the minimal number of collisions. This worked reasonably well since no one complained of missing an interesting talk for scheduling reasons.

The event itself went very smoothly and while it was as work-intense and demanding as expected, the people from Linux-Aktivaattori and the other volunteers put in an amazing amount of time and effort to make it a smooth and pleasent experience for everybody.

At the time of writing, work on DebConf6 in Mexico is already underway.

A WORD FROM THE DPL

BRANDEN ROBINSON

Debian Project Leader

The continued growth of the annual conference of Debian developers is further evidence, if any were needed, of the increasing importance of the Debian Project and its impact on the software landscape. Our prominence as standard bearers for the Free Software community is underscored by the increasing diversity of our developer and user communities, the quantity and quality of the talks we present, the breadth of the material covered, and the enthusiasm of our attendees and sponsors.

The diligence and professionalism of our conference organizers continues to impress. DebConf occupies an increasingly important role for us, and if the attendees are the lifeblood of its success, then the organizers are its heart, getting everyone where they need to be.

IN RETROSPECT

ASCHWIN VAN DER WOUDE

chairman, Linux-Aktivaattori

When Linux-Aktivaattori was asked to legally represent DebConf5 in Finland in the end of 2004, we were eager to take on this task. But we also realised this wouldn't be a task to be taken lightly. Not just because of the amount of money involved, but because of the focus and personal effort required from each of us involved.

After deciding to go ahead, we gradually became more involved and noticed we could really help make this a great Debian Conference. In the end we realised how deeply involved we had been, and how our personal sacrifices had helped create a wonderful experience for the participants of DebConf5.

Being involved in organising DebConf gave us a unique insight in what the Debian community is like and how it functions. It was great to be involved in such dynamic and we hope it will continue in one form or another.

Presenting Debian to the Press and Public

Martin-Éric Racine
Debian Day organiser

During the course of planning Debconf5, it occurred to several members of the PR team that holding a public event for corporate, government and individual users would be desirable, as a means of stimulating Free Software adoption in Finland. The idea was to regroup the most accessible talks of the conference into a single day that would be open to anyone interested in learning more about Debian and about Free Software in general.

The media of Finland and abroad were invited to attend via targeted press releases in three different languages. Translations in several more languages were also distributed by Debian developers, a testimony to the Open Source development model's relevance to marketing strategies.

> "Debian is by far the largest operating system currently known to man!"

Debian Day was quite successful, with over 200 visitors attending the talks; among them, a dozen decided to register and attend the rest of the conference to learn more. The two talks that generated the most positive feedback were a presentation about the Spanish administrative region of Extremadura's impressive deployment of over 80,000 Debian workstations, and an other that offered an exhaustive statistical comparative overview of Debian and other free and commercial software distributions, whose conclusion was that, with upwards of 20,000 readily available software products, Debian is by far the largest operating system currently known to man!

Press coverage of the event was excellent: in addition to spotlights in Finnish publications such as DigiToday and Tonnikala, the conference attracted a lot of attention abroad, especially in the Germanic IT press.

> "As someone who visits conferences and workshops regularly, I have to say you guys did a great job. The whole event was very inspiring."
>
> *Artur Skura, Linux Magazine Poland*

Photo by Fabian Fagerholm

Managing DebConf's Information

Gunnar Wolf

My role in DebConf was to set up and administer Comas, a Conference Management System I originally wrote with a Mexican colleague for a Mexican free software conference, CONSOL. Comas is quite an ambitious project, aiming to gather all the needed information for planning and running a conference — any conference.

"...the ultimate stress test..."

While we had set up Comas installations for some different conferences, it was clear from the beginning that DebConf, being such an atypical conference, would be the ultimate stress test — and I found many important tasks that need to be improved for Comas to be used in our upcoming editions. Among them, the most important are:


Photo by Fabian Fagerholm

Allow for greater freedom for specifying which fields are collected for each person. Right now, we had to create a new branch of Comas just to allow for our specific fields.

Integrate a lodging module to Comas (probably based on the work we did for DebConf).

Allow for easier and more flexible reports to be presented to the administrators using the regular front-end, not requiring direct access to the database.

Some information (as much as possible, and as fine-grained as possible) should register when it was last changed. This is important for enforcing the various deadlines we had.

We had a usability problem: Due to design problems, Comas did not integrate seamlessly into the DebConf5's website. Some people got confused and thought they had registered in Comas when they had instead created a new user account on the Drupal-driven website. In the end, they all registered in time in the Comas system — but this is a lesson we will keep in mind for future editions.

Other than this, our system worked just as it was expected. We had a complete, trustable set of data, we know enough about our attendees, and this will surely help us plan better for next year.

Organising the Talks

Tero Kuusela
talks coordinator
vice chairman, Linux-Aktivaattori

Although the task organisation was done on a relatively tight schedule, the coordinator team that was gathered during the last few days of Debcamp consisted of great people who were able to make everything flow quite smoothly. It certainly wouldn't hurt to confirm the talks organiser a bit earlier in the future, though.

There were 53 talks and bofs (directed discussion sessions) scheduled in total, of which three were not held since the speaker was missing. At least one speaker had understood that his talk was not scheduled while it was actually just transformed into a bof. In the second case, two improvised talks were held instead. In the third, people chose to sit in the room doing their own stuff or went to listen to the talk in the other auditorium. Also, one extra bof was organised in the Computer Science Department.

The coordinator team created short lists of rules and tips for the speakers, which were shown to almost all speakers before their first talk in the conference. It's hard to estimate how much this affected the quality of the talks, but hopefully it improved them a bit. Such rules might have been more effective if delivered to the speakers shortly before the conference and then just briefly repeated before their talks.

The coordinators ran around with microphones to help the audio team and showed time signs to the speakers in order to help them manage the time they had left. The signs proved to be very useful, but the microphone caused some trouble since the audience was somewhat uncomfortable with it. Having the speaker repeat all questions would've been nice, but unfortunately not every speaker remembers to do it, even though we tried to remind them in various ways.

One problem was presented by the distance between the CSD — where the talks were held — and the TF restaurant. The time reserved for lunch was not enough for all talk coordinators (and video team people) to walk to the TF and eat.

In general, the cooperation with the staff of the Helsinki University of Technology went very well. Problems were all settled in a manner that was satisfactory to both sides.

The guidance at the CSD wasn't quite sufficient early on, but this was corrected quickly. Hopefully future DebConfs manage to have enough signs all over the place before the conference starts.

One of the good ideas implemented during the conference was giving important announcements to the talk coordinators so they could mention them before every talk. This really seemed to improve the information flow from the organisers to the conference participants. Despite the various small issues experienced during the conference, there was a 2-minute standing ovation for the organisers after the last talk.

Talk Fast Facts

Most popular talk (big auditorium)

Ubuntu Talk by Mark Shuttleworth, 140 attendants

Most popular talk (small auditorium)

The Debian Free Software Guidelines by Matthew Garrett, 48 attendants

Average number of attendants

85 (big) — 24 (small) — 66 (all)

Managing the Video Team

Henning Sprang

video team manager

I came up with the idea to go to DebConf very late and no sooner I was recruited to help in the video team, so I did not really know what to expect when I arrived. I had to figure out the process myself, because none of us had too much experience in doing the video recordings of the talks at DebConf in the scale we tried to achieve.

Another challenge was working with lots of people I had never seen or communicated with before. I had to trust that they would be able to get up at eight in the morning every day, not to mention myself getting up at seven o'clock to be there to help with the daily setup, coordination, answering questions from volunteers and others, and eventually filling gaps in case someone wasn't there for a shift for any reason.

I created a time-slot plan to ensure there was always someone manning the video equipment for each talk. Also, I had to ensure that everyone got a training lesson before doing a job for the first time. Information about available volunteers and the tasks in need of attention always came in the last minute.

"...it was such great fun..."

Working with the plan was the biggest challenge — it took a while to realize what the most appropriate method of creating and publishing the plan was, and keeping everyone up to date. How do you realize people read their mails only three days after you send it...

I believe the team worked very well together, there were some really amazing helping hands showing up at exactly the right times with exactly the right skills that really made this venture succeed as well as it did. At least my impression was that of success because I got lots of very positive feedback. Finally, I am looking forward to work in the video recording management role for the next DebConf, it was such great fun and I want to experience that again!

Technical Notes from the Video Team

Herman Robak

The video team wanted to serve the viewers something that was easy to view and listen to, and that would frustrate them as little as possible. Technically, we wanted to avoid the use of tape, and record to disk instead. The aim was to reduce post-processing as much as possible, so that we could publish videos shortly after recording them. Use of multiple cameras was rejected as too labour-intensive.

Once we got a look at the large auditorium, we were in awe of the multi-camera video system the CSD had in place, and decided to use it. At the opening of Debian Day we were quite far from being ready, so we chose to keep a separate recording of one of the cameras as backup. That came handy, as the recordings from the first couple of days had many problems.

Connecting the speaker's PC to the video mixer proved difficult. We settled for pointing one of the cameras at the projector screen, and the result was better than expected.

Because of the problems during the first few days, we did not manage to process and publish all the videos the same day they were recorded. The backlog grew, and by the end of the week we were running out of storage space. Our setup required copying a lot of video over the network, and that turned out to be a bottleneck.

The video editing workstations were excellent. We only wished they had more disk space. For a large auditorium, the multi-camera video and wireless microphones gave sweet results, once we got familiar with them.

In the small auditorium the simple single camera setup worked well in the much more intimate setting.

Infrastructure by Goodwill

Arto Teräs
chairman, Finnish Linux User Group FLUG

While not being a Debian developer or even active on the mailing lists, I've been a happy user for about five years. I had also met a lot of nice people during DebConfs 0 and 1 in France, so when I heard that DebConf5 is going to be in Finland it felt natural to join the organizing team.

Several major hardware vendors are support members of the Finnish Linux User Group FLUG ry and I'm the chairman of FLUG this year, so I already knew whom I should contact first. The response was quite positive and I didn't have to do much to get promises that we'll get some hardware. Of course my request was much easier to answer than substantial financial sponsorships, which were handled by Andreas Schuldei.

> "...I didn't have to do much to get promises..."

However, there are several caveats. The person who answers sponsorship requests is often someone from the local marketing or sales, not the one who knows the specs or has the actual hardware behind him. Major decisions require contacting someone in a senior position. People in these positions can make bigger decisions but they are also the busiest. Messages are forwarded to other people and get forgotten or misinterpreted along the way.

DebConf is already so large that the common answer "Let's see what we'll have at the demopool by then" is not satisfactory any more. However, it's not a paying customer or otherwise important enough to be very high on the priority list either. Shipping anything else than what's readily available in the demopool is costly for the vendors and demopool contents are very unstable — advance commitments of any specific models of hardware are hard to get.

Also, in the case of DebConf I had sent one particular vendor the specs of what we would need and got a "shouldn't be a problem" answer early in the process. However, when after several reminders I finally got to the person who had two servers reserved for us it turned out that he had never received the list of specs, the hardware was quite different than what we had requested and even the expected delivery date was wrong. The demopool guy was very helpful and was able to find a mainly satisfactory backup solution, but again one reminder for us that very detailed answers and commitments are needed. This wasn't the only case — the conference T-shirt order presented a similar challenge.

The smoothest part was filling in some gaps at the last minute by hardware from my own workplace, a computing center. I knew exactly who to contact, got responses quickly — including specs — and we happened to have just the right kind of equipment available. Being an insider always makes a big difference even compared to very good contacts in another company.

HP and IBM also participated with their local organizations in Finland, providing servers and printers for the event. Intel delivered network switches, wireless access points and laptops for participants who didn't bring their own. Helsinki University of Technology offered a high speed Internet connection from both the lecture halls and the conference internal network. Additional hardware was provided by Nokia, Damicon Kraa and CSC, the Finnish IT center for science.

The servers were brought in for building large software packages, enhancing Debian support for new 64-bit architectures and maintaining critical services of the internal conference network. There was also a separate file server, laptops, editing workstations and A/V equipment for the video team, which recorded all talks.

Debian as a volunteer organization couldn't afford to organize a meeting of this scale without both monetary and hardware support of the sponsors. It's nice to see that both small and large companies see the value of Debian — the only major GNU/Linux distribution developed completely on a non-profit basis.

"The world moves forward by volunteer work!"

SOMEONE MIGHT WONDER why it is important for the sponsors to support events like this. There are many reasons.

Sales: Many Debian developers are or will be in positions in companies where they make or at least influence decisions on hardware purchases; if they know that certain hardware works well in GNU/Linux or that the vendor is Linux-friendly in general, it can be a decisive factor.

Marketing: General visibility, positive media image.

Innovation: Everybody benefits from having a strong independent (non-corporate) GNU/Linux distribution. Even if the sponsor wouldn't use Debian it makes other distros (and even other OS vendors) try harder and/or lower prices — and in the case of Free Software good solutions can be even legally copied to others.

Economies of volunteer work: The world moves forward by volunteer work! Calculating even a modest salary on the hours spent would result in a huge sum, compared to that the sponsorship needed to keep the activity running is tiny.

EXPANDING THE WEB OF TRUST

ANIBAL MONSALVE SALAZAR

keysigning party coordinator

A keysigning party is an event where each participant has the opportunity to check, face to face, the personal ID of all other participants. Also, each participant confirms that their own cryptographic GPG key fingerprint is correctly printed on the hardcopy list prepared by the keysigning party coordinator.

The keysigning party is of significant importance for the Debian Project because it expands the web of trust of each participant. It is very important not only for Debian Developers but for other affiliates of the Project as well, especially people in the New Maintainer process or those with plans to start it at some time in the future. It is a prerequisite to have the GPG key signed by at least one Debian Developer to start the membership process.

The GPG key allows a Debian Developer to vote during the Debian elections each year and to upload packages to the Debian Archive.

The DebConf5 keysigning party was attended by 160 people. A total of 163 people submitted 187 GPG public keys. This keysigning party was so big that it was done on a street in the HUT campus and it took about 2 hours and a half to finish.

PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS

BDALE GARBEE

Open Source & Linux CTO

Hewlett-Packard Company

I thought Debconf this year was a great experience overall. The huge attendance made it difficult to meet everyone, but what I saw clearly at Debconf this year is a strong and vibrant community of amazingly diverse contributors.

The greatest benefit of events like this is that people who know each other only over the Internet get a chance to meet in real life. It's just more productive and effective communicating and working with people for whom you have some cultural context and personal background.

The active involvement of representatives from several Debian derivative distributions at Debconf reinforces the notion that what Debian does and delivers is vitally important, even when the end user doesn't interact directly with Debian. The number and diversity of sponsors this year and the resulting increase in the event budget help indicate just how broad the impact of Debian is, and how enormous the larger community of users of Debian and Debian-derived distributions around the world has become!

It is clear that Debian faces challenges as the project continues to grow. A number of talks at the event this year addressed these challenges, and I left the event greatly encouraged that the Debian community can and will tackle and overcome each of these challenges in one way or another.

REBECCA SOBOL

LWN.net

I think Debconf5 was about what I expected... Interesting talks, people staying up all night and having loud parties. I did not expect the Wednesday day trip, but it was very fun to take a day a off and see the fortress island. The guide that led my group was very good and knew many interesting historical facts.

The food has been very good, especially considering they are cooking for so many people. I really liked the formal dinner with the reindeer and (lingon ?) berries. The HUT campus is a nice place to take long walks after dinner, through the forest and around the coast line.

The weather was hotter than I expected, obviously not something the organizers can control. For more controllable things the conference was very well organized and seemed to run smoothly. I found it both fun and educational.

PHOTO BY FABIAN FAGERHOLM

The day trip guide explains the history of Suomenlinna fortress island.

Subject: Final Report

Fabian Fagerholm
board member, Linux-Aktivaattori

Writing a Final Report for the diverse audience of sponsors, visitors and those who followed the conference through mailing lists, IRC, web sites, press releases and video clips is not an easy task. DebConf5 produced a multitude of statistical information from which interesting patterns can be extracted. Hard facts are available in large quantities, and a large part is already in digital form, ready for processing. On the other hand, the numbers can't express what those who participated, on location or via the net, have experienced. An overwhelming number of personal encounters occurred.

The purpose of this Final Report is to look back, to return in our memories to a time when we didn't know all the things we know now. We must gather at least some of what we have learned and present it to those who are watching and listening.

"...someone's luggage appeared to be on the other side of the world..."

Working with the organiser team in the back office of the reception, trying to grasp the flow of information being generated on-line and during the talks, I had the great fortune to have people coming in to chat all the time. Everyone had a problem needing to be solved: someone's luggage appeared to be on the other side of the world but was finally found a week later in another Finnish city, the video team had worked for hours without eating and needed food, the formal dinner contract was still not signed, and countless other things.

Each and every person required their own special treatment. For some, it was important to get a quick answer. For others, it was more comfortable to sit down in the office, among the piles of paper and conference t-shirts, and feel taken care of. After catching their breath, they were ready to go again.

The reception desk, which was actually a ground-level balcony with a chipboard carefully balanced on the railing, became a place where people would gather to listen to music, to talk and socialize. The people staffing the reception did an amazing job, contributing to the atmosphere.

This report would not have been complete without capturing at least a small glimpse of the spirit of DebConf5. So instead of focusing entirely on demographics, I proposed to write a Final Report that included more words than numbers. The experience shared in this report tells me that everyone has learned a great deal — about each other, and about themselves, but of course also about all the practical things that are involved when organising an event of this scale. In all these, I believe, lies the greatest value for the Debian Project.

My personal attention has been directed towards the workflow, the processes, the communication, the legal arrangements, and the human resources of the conference. I was amazed at how quickly the video team caught on to the notion of thinking at a higher level than merely operating the video equipment would have required. They were clearly a very talented team with just the right people, and the outcome of their work speaks for itself.

To facilitate the needs of that team, Tero Kuusela and I participated in some of their planning meetings. Issues were brought up about the team members working too hard, not sleeping or eating enough. We worked together to improve the process and provide whatever the team needed to do the job. I still remember with a smile the day we finished a meeting and concluded that we were no longer needed; the team had jelled, and the members were now looking after each other. After that, they were unstoppable.

DebConf by Numbers

assembled by
Fabian Fagerholm
based on various data sources

The Comas conference management system allowed visitors to select one of four categories: Debian Developer, non-registered software maintainer, non-maintainer with an interest in Debian, or persons accompanying someone else. Visitors also selected their country when registering. Late registrants and unregistered visitors are not included.

Non-DD Maintainer

10	Finland
9	Germany
5	Argentina
5	United Kingdom
3	Spain
2	Netherlands
2	New Zealand
2	United States
1	Australia
1	Belarus
1	Belgium
1	Bosnia and Herzegovina
1	Brazil
1	Estonia
1	France
1	Israel
1	Italy
1	Mexico
1	Norway
1	Russian Federation
1	Switzerland

Debian Developers

22	Germany
20	United States
19	United Kingdom
13	Finland
7	Spain
6	Japan
5	Sweden
5	France
4	Norway
4	Italy
4	Austria
4	Australia
3	Netherlands
3	Brazil
3	Belgium
2	Switzerland
2	Greece
1	Ukraine
1	Russian Federation
1	Poland
1	New Zealand
1	Mexico
1	Latvia
1	Hong Kong
1	Fiji
1	Denmark

Food

During DebConf5, three meals were available for each registered participant every day. Number of allocated servings for the entire conference:

1450	breakfast
1755	lunch
1760	dinner

Non-maintainer but interested

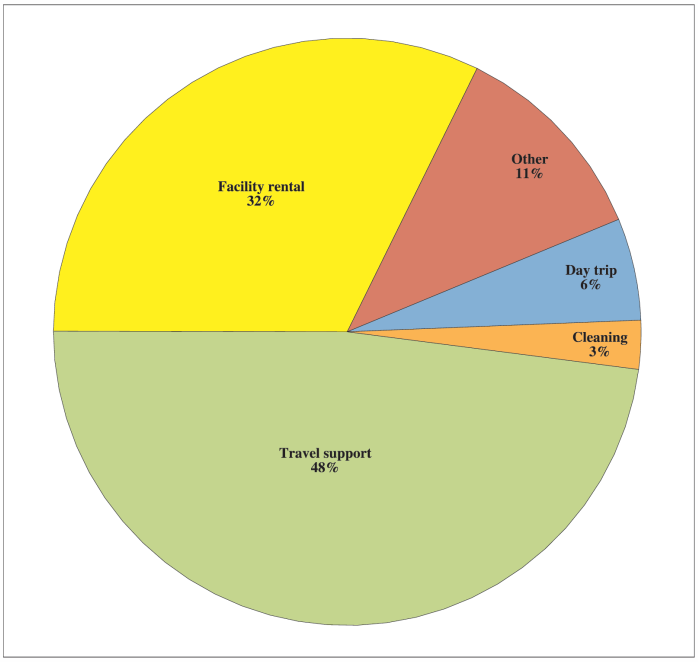
53	Finland
9	Sweden
8	Norway
6	United Kingdom
5	United States
5	Spain
4	Germany
4	Austria
2	Russian Federation
2	Italy
2	France
2	Estonia
2	Argentina
1	Switzerland
1	Ireland
1	Hong Kong
1	Brazil
1	Belgium
1	Bahamas
1	Australia

Accompanying

10	Finland
4	Germany
3	United States
3	Brazil
2	Sweden
1	United Kingdom
1	Japan
1	Italy

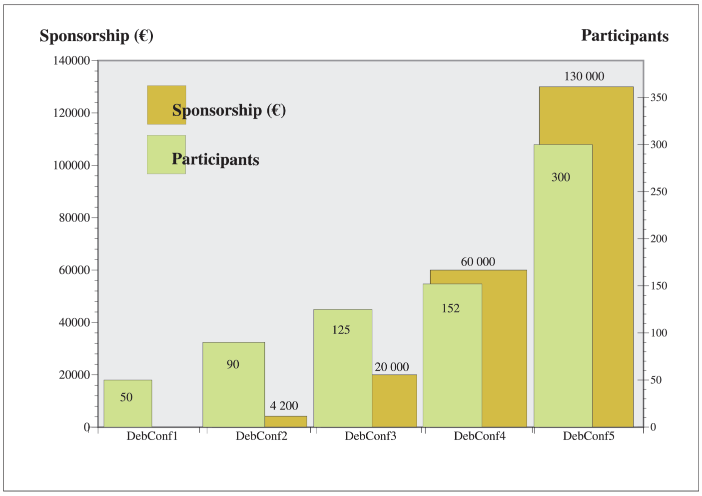
Total

86	Finland
39	Germany
31	United Kingdom
30	United States
16	Sweden
15	Spain
13	Norway
8	Italy
8	France
8	Brazil
8	Austria
7	Japan
7	Argentina
6	Australia
5	Netherlands
5	Belgium
4	Switzerland
4	Russian Federation
3	New Zealand
3	Estonia
2	Mexico
2	Hong Kong
2	Greece
1	Ukraine
1	Poland
1	Latvia
1	Israel
1	Ireland
1	Fiji
1	Denmark
1	Bosnia and Herzegovina
1	Belarus
1	Bahamas



The budget for DebConf5 was bigger and more complex than ever. Apart from issuing travel support through both Finland-based Linux-Aktivaattori and U.S.-based SPI, the organisers handled transactions by cheque, bank transfer and cash in at least three currencies on site.

The pie chart above shows the approximate expense distribution over five main categories. One additional major category does not appear in this chart, as the food bill was handled directly by one sponsor. These numbers are preliminary and are subject to change. A professional accounting firm is currently working on an auditing report.



The number of registered participants and the sponsorship budget have increased each year. DebConf5 was more than twice the size of the previous conference. The chart above shows the development since the second Debian Conference. Data for DebConf0 is missing. The numbers are approximate.

Sponsorship Budget

Around 130 000 euro, bound up in facility rental costs, insurances, material and equipment costs, transportation, promotion, administrative costs, etc.

Keys

The dormitory building was divided into several apartments, and each room had its own key. The participants could come and go as they pleased. However, this required lots of coordination from the organisers.

Number of keys for the organisers to keep track of: 67

Number of keys lost: 0

Coordination by Email

The organisers used several different means of communication to coordinate the event from the first stages of planning through the final clean-up. Email traffic was carried on four different mailing lists. As the Final Report was finalised, the total amount of mailing list messages for each list looked as follows:

1859	debconf5-event
814	debconf5-team
317	debconf5-video
78	debconf5-website
3068	Total

Video Work

The video team captured all talks and bof sessions. The material was post-processed into individual video clips and a DVD. The total time of video footage after post-processing produced by the video team:

approximately 2800 minutes or 46 hours.

The material is available on http://meetings-archive.debian.net/pub/debian-meetings/

Talks: Small Auditorium

The size of the audience for each talk in the small auditorium:

Talk	Speaker	Audience
Small Teams in Debian	Andreas Schuldei	43
Appealing presentations with LaTeX beamer	Andreas Tille	22
Search Engines in Debian	Takatsugu Nokubi	20
SPI, Inc. Workshop	Benjamin Mako Hill	19
OpenOffice.org in Debian	Chris Halls, Rene Engelhard	25
Debian Website Round Table	Frank Lichtenheld	29
Autobuilding Experimental	Andreas Barth	19
Documentation in Debian	Takatsugu Nokubi	12
Customization of GNU libc locale files	Denis Barbier	unknown
Altivec Optimizations on Debian/powerpc	Konstantinos Margaritis	8
Debian-Med	Andreas Tille	16
Using Debian in hardware without OSS drivers	Manuel Romero	canceled
Open Source in South Asia	Jaldhar Vyas	15
Ending flamewars with Polygen	Enrico Zini	unknown
Debian-Edu	Petter Reinholdtsen	unknown
The Debian Free Software Guidelines	Matthew Garrett	48
Free Standards	Matt Taggart	45
Package Management and Revision Control, a wedding	Scott James Remnant	unknown

Talks: BigAuditorium

The size of the audience for each talk in the big auditorium:

Talk	Speaker	Audience
Debootstrap	Anthony Towns	117
WTFM: Write the Fine Manual	Branden Robinson	65
Multiarch — a proposal and an implementation	Tollef Fog Heen	100+
Debtags	Enrico Zini	96
Debian development in the third world: Latin America	Gunnar Wolf, Christian Perrier	55
Debian Derivatives	Benjamin Mako Hill	115
Embedded Debian Demo	Wookey	95
Custom Debian Distributions	Andreas Tille	96
Debian Release Management	Andreas Barth	128
Alternate approaches to package management and autobuilding	Simon Richter	66
Debbugs, tips, tricks, and hacks	Anthony Towns	106
Writing enterprise ready software	Petter Reinholdtsen	56
Linda — A Debian package checker written in Python	Steve Kowalik	81
Securing the Testing Distribution	Joey Hess	100+
Shared Library Packaging	Junichi Uekawa	76
Ubuntu Talk	Mark Shuttleworth	140
Zen and the art of Free Software	Enrico Zini	107
Debian-Kernel Team Overview	Dann Frazier	132
Debian New Maintainer Process	Hanna Wallach, Dafydd Harries, Moray Allan	126
Freezing HEL Over	Scott James Remnant	60
Debian Women and Women in Free Software	Erinn Clark, Magni Onsøien	110
Asterisk, or VoIP in general	Martin List-Petersen	canceled
Debian Installer — a developers view on its past, present & future	Holger Levsen, Joey Hess, Christian Perrier, Frans Pop	unknown
Are we really devoted to our users?	Margarita Manterola	unknown
Conducting Cooperatively towards a better Debian	Jeroen van Wolffelaar	53
Safer Hex in Public	Holger Levsen	57
FAI — the Fully Automatic Installation	Thomas Lange	64
Structural Evolution	Bdale Garbee	unknown
Tutorial about programs, debconf, man pages translation using gettext	Christian Perrier	unknown
Cross-compiling applications and creating Debian packages for embedded systems	Carlos Aguiar, Joao Leite, Afonso Costa	canceled
Next-generation Debian initscripts	Henrique de Moraes Holschuh	53
Volatile archive for Debian	Andreas Barth, Martin Zobel-Helas	33
Cross-Compiling Debian from Scratch	Timo Savola	27
Using Debian for Science Research	Helen Faulkner	unknown

Thank You For Making It Possible

www.debconf.org

DEBCONF5 FINAL REPORT
2005