

Debian: 18 years of free software

Christian “bubulle” Perrier (with help by Stefano “Zack” Zacchiroli)

October 28th, 2011
India mini-DebConf, Mangalore edition
Nitte, Karnataka, India



Outline

- 1 Initial blah-blah
- 2 What is Debian?
- 3 What's so special about Debian?
- 4 Contribute to Debian
- 5 Debian internationalization and localization



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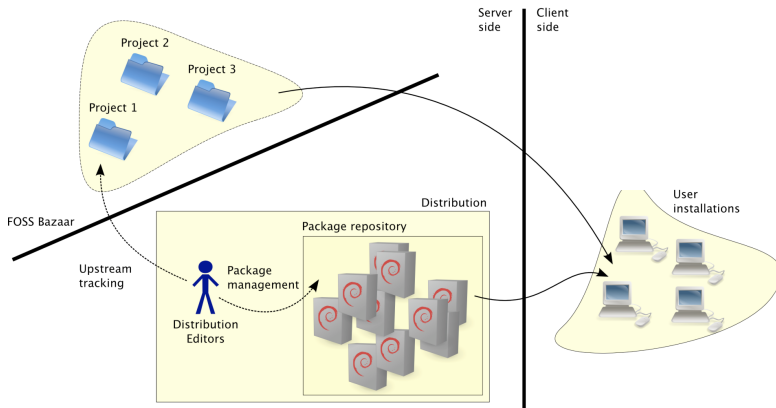


Who is bubulle?

- user since 1994
- Debian Developer since July 2001
- package maintainer
 - ▶ geneweb (genealogy), samba, fonts (many), debian-installer ...
- self-appointed i18n guru
 - ▶ Debian Installer translation leader
 - ▶ French translator
 - ▶ Admin of i18n.debian.net
- Enjoys talking about Debian in many places of the world
- Speaks English with a funny accent
- “example of non technical Debian Developer” (from Sam Hocevar, former Debian Project Leader)



Prelude — the notion of “distribution”



- distributions are meant to ease **software management**
- key notion: the abstraction of **package**
- offer **coherent collections** of software
- killer application: **package managers**



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Debian: once upon a time

Fellow Linuxers,

*This is just to announce the imminent completion of a
brand-new Linux release, which I'm calling the **Debian Linux
Release**. [...]*

*Ian A Murdock, 16/08/1993
comp.os.linux.development*

- make GNU/Linux **competitive** with commercial OS
- **easy** to install
- built **collaboratively** by software experts
- 1st major distro developed “**openly** in the spirit of GNU”
FSF-supported for a while

trivia: named after **DEB**ra Lynn and **IAN** Ashley Murdock



Since then — 15 releases

- 1993 development snapshots
- 1994 0.91
- 1995 0.93r5, 0.93r6, (1.0)
- 1996 1.1 “Buzz”, 1.2 “Rex”
- 1997 1.3 “Bo”
- 1998 2.0 “Hamm”
- 1999 2.1 “Slink”
- 2000 2.2 “Potato”
- 2002 3.0 “Woody”
- 2005 3.1 “Sarge”
- 2007 4.0 “Etch”
- 2009 5.0 “Lenny”
- 2011 6.0 “Squeeze”
- 2012? 7.0 “Wheezy”



trivia:

why does Buzz have a
(Debian) swirl on his chin?

What is Debian?

3 aspects, interlinked:

- ① an operating system
- ② a project
- ③ a community



Debian: the operating system

- completely **Free Software**
 - ▶ **DFSG**
- a dozen architectures
i386, amd64, armel, powerpc, sparc,
ia64, mipsel, s390, mips
 - ▶ of which: 2 **non-Linux ports**
kfreebsd-i386, kfreebsd-amd64
- features miscellanea...
ports, stability, packaging system,
documentation, old hardware support,
smooth upgrades, i18n/l10n, the
testing suite, runs anywhere,
technical policy, *a lot* of packages, ...

(one of) the largest GNU porting platform(s)

- 29'000 packages (Squeeze)



Debian: the project

Common goal:

Create the best, free operating system.

Debian Social Contract

(1997)

“Contract” between Project members and the Free Software community

Debian Constitution

(1998)

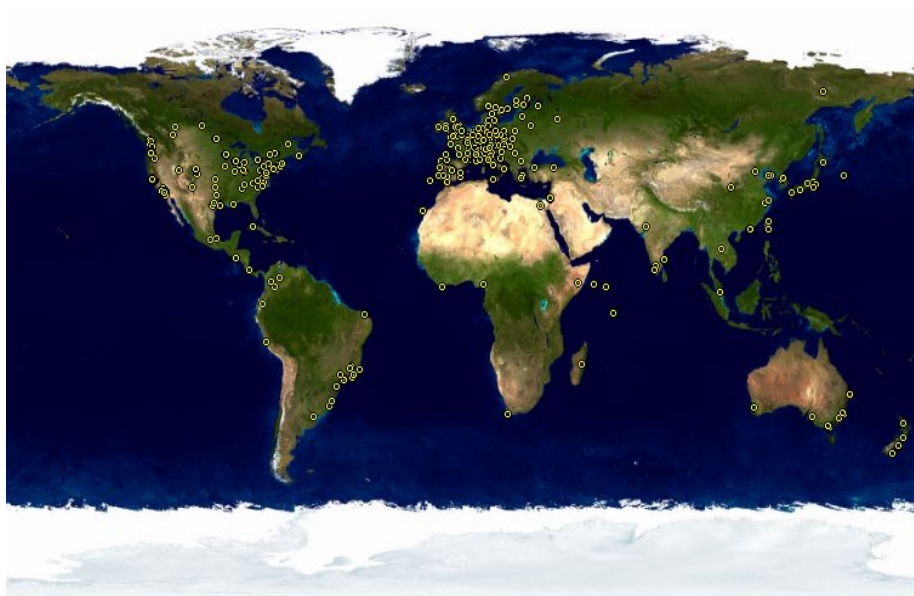
Structures and rules of a Free-Software-compatible democracy

Strong motive to join: $\approx 1'000$ volunteers, world-wide

- ≈ 900 DDs + 120 DMs - 8 DDs in India
- Europe > North America > Australia \approx Japan > Latin American > Asia > Africa



Debian: the project (cont.)



Debian: the community

Open development

- we don't hide problem
- fairly easy to impact the work (“show me the code!”)

Large amounts of communication

- mailing lists
- IRC channels
- (a few) Web services(, growing)
 - ▶ social: @debian, !debian on identi.ca

Large number of (tech-savvy) users

- users help each other, contribute patches, get involved



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Debian: one of a kind?

1993 — not many distros back then

17 years later, *lots* of other distros

openSUSE, Linux Mint, PCLinuxOS, Slackware, Gentoo Linux, CentOS, FreeBSD, Arch, Sabayon, Puppy, Lubuntu, MEPIS, Ultimate, NetBSD, Tiny Core, Zenwalk, CrunchBang, Dreamlinux, Vector, Kubuntu, Maemo, Red Hat, aptosid, Peppermint, PC-BSD, Chakra, Salix, ClearOS, KNOPPIX, Xubuntu, Super OS, BackTrack, gOS, TinyMe, Zentyal, EasyPeasy, Frugalware, Clonezilla, Pardus, Meego, OpenBSD, Quirky, PC/OS, Zorin, **Debian**, SystemRescue, Element, Unity, SliTaz, Macpup, wattOS, Scientific, Mythbuntu, Slax, DragonFLY, Elive, linux-gamers, 64 Studio, Ubuntu, mageia, Nexenta, Parix, NuTyX, GhostBSD, Kongoni, moonOS, LFS, Lunar, Imagineos, Untangle, Fedora, Yellow Dog, aLinux, Yoper, IPFire, BlankOn, Mandriva, PureOS, FreeNAS, Moblin, Linpus, TurboLinux, blackPanther, ...

with many **differences**:

- technical choices
- release management
- release schedule
- target user
- community
- support
- packaging system
- user base
- look & feel
- ...

How is Debian different?



Debian's special #1: package quality

“ Culture of technical excellence ”

- package **design**: Policy
i.e. “how a package should look like”
- package **testing**: lintian, piuparts,
archive rebuilds (FTBFS), ...
- package maintainers are **software experts**
- no **2nd class packages**, all are equal

Debian release mantra

we release when it's ready

Debian's special #2: freedom

Firm principles: developers and users bound by the *Social Contract*

- ① promoting the “culture of Free Software” since 1993
- ② free the bottom up
 - ▶ in its software
firmware included !
 - ▶ in its infrastructure
 - no non-free web services (for users)
 - no non-free services (for developers)

Community awareness

- users know
- users trust Debian not to betray software freedom
- high bar for software freedom advocates



Debian's special #3: independence

Debian is an **independent** entity

- no (single) company babysitting us
- living up on:
 - 1 donations (money & hardware)
 - 2 gift-economy

... quite remarkable in today “big” distro world

people trust Debian choices not to be “profit-driven”



Debian's special #4: decision making

1 do-ocracy

An individual Developer may make any technical or nontechnical decision with regard to their own work;

[Debian Constitution, §3.3.1.1]

2 democracy

Each decision in the Project is made by one or more of the following:

1. The Developers, by way of General Resolution [...]

[Debian Constitution, §2]

that means:

- reputation follows work
- no benevolent dictator, no oligarchy
- **no imposed decisions**
by who has money, infrastructure, people, ...



Debian derivatives

Debian: a base for ≈ 120 derivatives

distrowatch.com

- **BOSS Linux**, Linspire, Skolelinux, Liurex, Mint, LiMux, Sidux, gnuLinEx, Grml, MEPIS, Xandros, Ubuntu, Univention, Damn Small Linux, Collax, Euronode, Floppix, Gibraltar, Kanotix, Knoppix, PureOS, gNewSense, 64 Studio, Elive, Freespire, Jolicloud, Kurumin, Maemo, Neopwn, OpenZaurus, Parsix, Xebian, Hackable:1, aptosid, ...

Why?

- quality & licensing assurances
- solid base system
- huge package base
- the “universal OS”, perfect for customizations



A Debian derivative example: Ubuntu

- started in 2004 by Canonical
target: desktop
 - **Debian derivative**
 - very popular (20x Debian?)
 - historical/past correlations
 - main ↔ corporate
 - universe ↔ community
 - ▶ heavily customized/forked in main
 - ▶ very close to Debian elsewhere
- But, still, as of October 2010:
 - ▶ 7% packages in Ubuntu but not in Debian
 - ▶ 18% packages with (often minor) changes in Ubuntu
 - ▶ 75% packages taken unmodified from Debian



On the relevance of Debian

- Ubuntu is probably the most customized derivative
- other derivatives → even higher no. of *unmodified* packages

if you are running a Debian derivative, chances are **you heavily depend on Debian** and on its well-being

*yes, even if
your distro hasn't told you*

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Some legends about Debian contribution

Legend 1: you have to be a deep hard-core bearded hacker

Legend 2: you have to be a developer

Legend 3: be prepared for flames and aggressive behaviour



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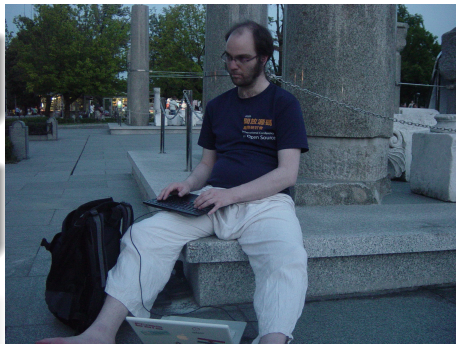
Andrew Mc Millan, Debconf 7

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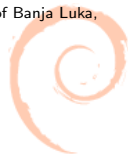
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Jonas Smedegaard hacking in the middleplace of Banja Luka, DebConf 11



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Vagrant Cascadian, happy despite a grumpy Serbian taxi driver, DebConf 11



Debian is fun!



Bubulle in his typical "Spongebob" attitude



Seven steps to get more involved

Hacker path

- Station 1: Install
- Station 2: Use
- Station 3: Help using
- Station 4: Fix and help fixing
- Station 5: Maintain and help maintaining
- Station 6: Debian Maintainer

Dummy path

- Station 4: Translate
- Station 5: Document
- Station 6: Drink beer

Station 7: Debian Developer



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Step 1: use the system

Installing Debian: the first contributor experience

Use Debian, learn to use it, ask questions, participate

All Debian contributors started by using it - I mean ALL



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Raphaël Hertzog, Aurélien Jarno, Solutions Linux 2006

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Meike Reichle's knitting course at DebConf11. Daniel "dkg" Khan Gilmore highly concentrated



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All Debian contributors started by using it - I mean ALL



Old Debian users: Joey Hess, Jeff Licquia, Petter Reinholdstern, Ian Murdock, Konstantinos Margaritis, Debconf 4



Step 2: help using the system

Share experience

Find (and report!) bugs

- As simple as sending a mail
- Use reportbug/reportbug-ng
- Only good systems have many bugs

Make (good) suggestions to enhance the system



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Nicolas François teaching French keyboard to Anthony Tows, Debconf 5

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Meike Reichle, Debconf 6



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Jonas Smedegaard showing the first FreedomBox, DebConf 11



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Hacker path, station 4: help fixing the system

Report bugs

Fix bugs

Participate to Bug Squashing
Parties

Join the QA team



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Riku Voipio (after a few dozens of spanish beers), Debconf 9

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The Debconf 7 organ



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Margarita Manterola, Maximiliano Curia squashing pancakes, Debconf 6



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Debian QA meeting, Extremadura 2006



Hacker path, station 5: help maintaining packages

Spot abandoned/poorly maintained packages

Join maintenance teams

Help triaging bugs



Hacker path, station 5: help maintaining packages

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Debian developers spotting abandoned bottlW packages, Debconf 6 (Enrico Zini, Daniel Glassey, Miriam Ruiz, Kenshi Muto)



Hacker path, station 5: help maintaining packages

Spot abandoned/poorly maintained packages

Join maintenance teams

Help triaging bugs



Tollef Fog Heen, Neil McGovern, Steve Langasek (back), Ian Jackson, Colin Watson, Santiago Vila and others, Debconf 11, poste cheese and wine party meeting



Hacker path, station 5: help maintaining packages

Spot abandoned/poorly maintained packages

Join maintenance teams

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Zack and Iwamatsu-san triaging fondue, DebConf 11 cheese and wine party, Banja Luka

Hacker path, station 6: become a Debian Maintainer

Simplified procedure to maintain packages

Can only maintain specified packages

No other rights (vote, debian-private...)



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The sea lions team, Debconf 8, Mar del Plata

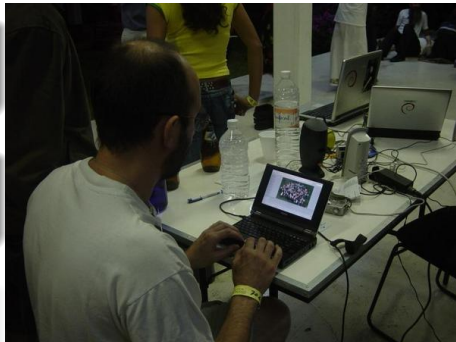


Hacker path, station 6: become a Debian Maintainer

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Phil "mine is smaller than yours" Hands, Debconf 6

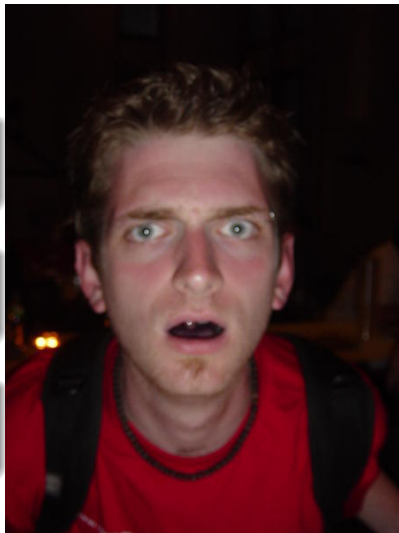


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Benjamin "Mako" Hill, Debconf 5, Helsinki, Finland

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Dummy path, station 4: translate

Join existing localization teams

- debian-i18n
- debian-l10n-french
- debian-l10n-spanish
- .../...
- debian-l10n-english

Learn about team processes

Review, translate



Dummy path, station 4: translate

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Table with SA, ES, US, IN, BE, UK, LV, IR, FR, BR.
Extremadura i18n 2006



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Mao game at DebConf 11

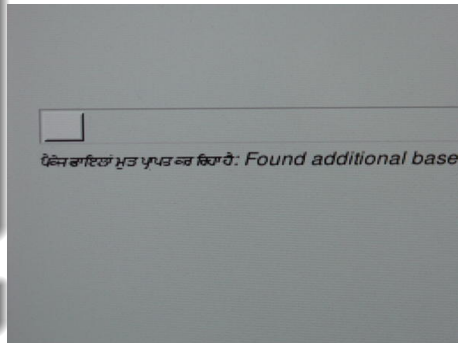
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Debian installer in Punjabi, Solutions Linux 2006



Dummy path, station 5: document

Write documentation

Review documentation and texts

Work on Debian Installer



Dummy path, station 5: document

Write documentation

Review documentation and texts

Work on Debian Installer



Joey Hess writing doc, Debconf 7, Edinburgh, Scotland



Dummy path, station 5: document

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Work on Debian Installer



bubulle reviewing D-I documentation, Mexico airport, Coke machine close to VIP lounge, free WiFi.

Dummy path, station 5: document

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Joey Hess and Frans Pop, Debian Installer release managers for sarge and etch, DebConf 6, Oaxtepec, Mexico

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Eh, I forgot about the damn beer!



Holger Levsen resting after setting up video at Debconf 11, Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina



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Station 7: become a Debian Developer

Join the dance!



Moray Allan, Christine Spang, Debconf 7, Edinburgh, Scotland (you guessed that from the kilt, didn't you?)

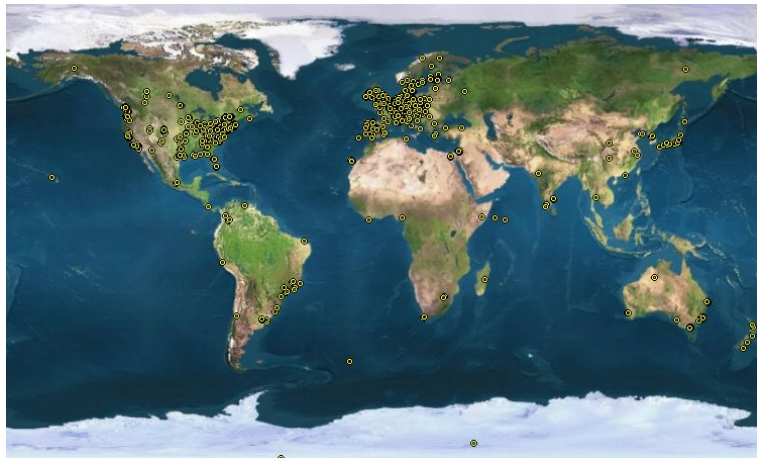


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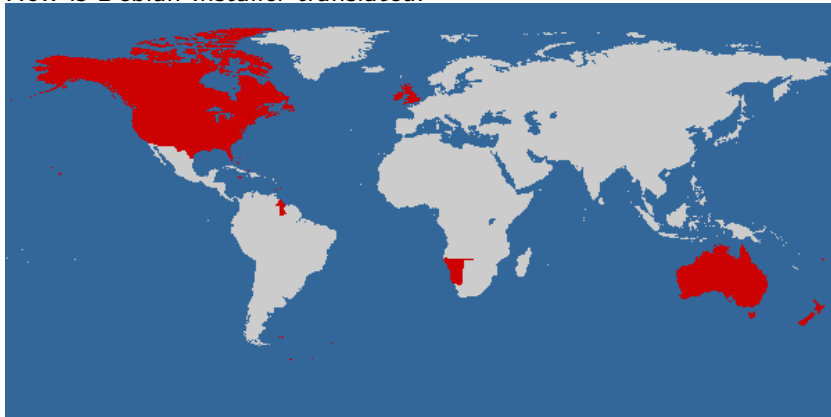
Are we *that* international?



Africa: 6, North America: 263, South America: 33, Asia: 51, Africa: 6, Europe: 577, Oceania: 45

We are **that** international

How is Debian Installer translated:



Potato (2000): 1

Countries are red when their most widely spoken language is covered in Debian Installer

We are **that** international

How is Debian Installer translated:



Woody (2002): 16

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How is Debian Installer translated:



Sarge (2005): 40

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How is Debian Installer translated:



Etch (2007): 56

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We are **that** international

How is Debian Installer translated:



Lenny (2009): 61

Countries are red when their most widely spoken language is covered in Debian Installer

We are **that** international

How is Debian Installer translated:



Squeeze (2011): 70

Countries are red when their most widely spoken language is covered in Debian Installer

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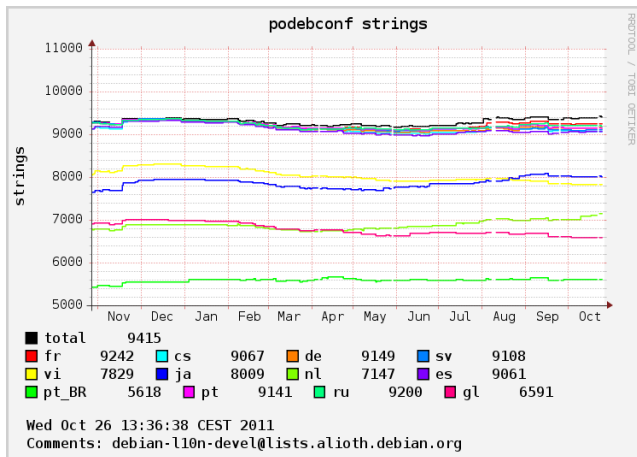
How is Debian Installer translated:



Wheezy (2012?): 71

Countries are red when their most widely spoken language is covered in Debian Installer

Debconf templates



Good tools - More tools

English reviews: 242 pkgs

NMU campaign for debconf translations (304/ 700)

Native Debian packages

Wide internationalization

Good tools

Huge and difficult work (dpkg, apt, aptitude...)

fr	84%
ja	58%
de	43%
pt	42%
es	34%
sv	25%
ru	24%
vi	19%
cs	13%
nl	11%



Packages descriptions (DDTP)

Supported since
Lenny

Improved
infrastructure
(DDTP+DDTSS

Improve
methods...and
English

Now flowing to the
archive

Lang	Category						
	Required	Important	Standard	Optional	Extra	Popcon500	PopconRank
it (Italian)	64 (100%)	56 (100%)	97 (100%)	13763 (53%)	3017 (34%)	494 (96%)	37.34M (96%)
de (German)	64 (100%)	56 (100%)	97 (100%)	8342 (36%)	2291 (26%)	495 (99%)	37.11M (95%)
ja (Japanese)	64 (100%)	56 (100%)	97 (100%)	6794 (26%)	870 (9%)	490 (96%)	32.17M (83%)
da (Danish)	64 (100%)	56 (100%)	97 (100%)	5078 (19%)	1334 (15%)	497 (99%)	35.54M (91%)
uk (Ukrainian)	64 (100%)	56 (100%)	96 (98%)	4536 (17%)	761 (8%)	480 (96%)	32.49M (84%)
fr (French)	64 (100%)	56 (100%)	97 (100%)	4299 (16%)	505 (5%)	492 (98%)	33.82M (87%)
pl (Polish)	64 (100%)	56 (100%)	97 (100%)	3202 (12%)	1318 (15%)	482 (96%)	30.94M (80%)
sk (Slovak)	60 (93%)	54 (96%)	86 (88%)	1453 (5%)	261 (2%)	425 (85%)	25.65M (66%)
pt (Portuguese)	60 (93%)	52 (92%)	84 (86%)	3456 (13%)	745 (8%)	438 (87%)	26.90M (69%)
ru (Russian)	60 (93%)	51 (91%)	71 (73%)	2653 (10%)	383 (4%)	365 (73%)	24.04M (62%)
ko (Korean)	60 (93%)	47 (83%)	47 (48%)	929 (3%)	22 (0%)	143 (28%)	11.33M (29%)
cs (Czech)	50 (78%)	48 (85%)	67 (69%)	4632 (18%)	221 (2%)	321 (64%)	22.17M (57%)
pt_BR (Brazilian Portuguese)	50 (78%)	47 (83%)	69 (71%)	3529 (13%)	720 (8%)	344 (68%)	22.34M (57%)
es (Spanish)	50 (78%)	47 (83%)	69 (71%)	2567 (10%)	181 (2%)	339 (67%)	21.66M (56%)
fi (Finnish)	54 (84%)	50 (89%)	36 (37%)	397 (1%)	52 (0%)	128 (25%)	10.51M (27%)
zh_CN (Simplified Chinese)	39 (60%)	38 (67%)	37 (38%)	562 (2%)	57 (0%)	96 (19%)	8.19M (21%)
vi	38 (59%)	32 (57%)	2 (2%)	1 (0%)	0 (0%)	62 (12%)	5.21M (13%)
sv (Swedish)	28 (43%)	31 (55%)	29 (29%)	261 (1%)	37 (0%)	76 (15%)	6.43M (16%)
zh_TW (Traditional Chinese)	24 (37%)	30 (53%)	26 (26%)	104 (0%)	8 (0%)	63 (12%)	5.21M (13%)
nl (Dutch)	25 (39%)	27 (48%)	24 (24%)	171 (0%)	17 (0%)	61 (12%)	5.11M (13%)

Packages descriptions (DDTP)

```
Actions Annuler Paquet Solutions Rechercher Options Vues Aide
C-T: Menu ?: Aide q: Quitter u: MAJ g: Téléch./Install./Suppr. Paqts
aptitude 0.4.11.9
a geneweb 5.01-7 5.01-7
p giarpfanoa <aucun> 0.1.3
p gmt-coast-low <aucun> 1:1.10-1
p gmt-tutorial-ps <aucun> 3.4.4-1
p gmysqlcc <aucun> 0.3.0-1
p gnumed-client <aucun> 0.2.8.10-1
p gnumed-client-de <aucun> 0.2.8.10-1
p gnumed-common <aucun> 0.2.8.10-1
p gnumed-server <aucun> 0v8-1
p gpm <aucun> 1.20.4-2
Logiciel de généalogie avec interface web
Geneweb permet de suivre des données de recherches généalogiques. Il constitue #
un système puissant permettant de maintenir un jeu de données relatif à votre
histoire familiale. Il gère la plupart des marqueurs GEDCOM pour le stockage des
données et peut être utilisé soit comme votre logiciel de généalogie principal
soit comme un service web (via une interface CGI) permettant la publication de
ces données pour d'autres utilisateurs.
L'utilisation et le développement de Geneweb étant continus, ses fonctionnalités
s'améliorent en permanence. Il comporte notamment des fonctionnalités que la
plupart des produits du commerce n'offrent pas, comme le calcul de consanguinité
```

Supported since
Lenny

Improved
infrastructure
(DDTP+DDTSS

Improve
methods...and
English

Now flowing to the
archive

Packages descriptions (DDTP)



Recherche toutes les versions

>> Debian >> Packages >> lenny (testing) >> misc >> geneweb

[Source: [geneweb](#)] [[sarge](#)] [[etch](#)] [[etch-m68k](#)] [[lenny](#)] [[sid](#)]

Paquet : geneweb (5.01-7)

Logiciel de généalogie avec interface web

Geneweb permet de suivre des données de recherches généalogiques. Il constitue un système puissant permettant de maintenir un jeu de données relatif à votre histoire familiale. Il gère la plupart des marqueurs GEDCOM pour le stockage des données et peut être utilisé soit comme votre logiciel de généalogie principal soit comme un service web (via une interface CGI) permettant la publication de ces données pour d'autres utilisateurs.

L'utilisation et le développement de Geneweb étant continus, ses fonctionnalités s'améliorent en permanence. Il

Liens pour geneweb

Resources Debian :

- [Rapports de bogues](#)
- [Informations pour les développeurs \(PTS\)](#)
- [Journal des modifications Debian](#)
- [Fichier de licence](#)

Télécharger le paquet source [geneweb](#):

- [\[geneweb_5.01-7.dsc\]](#)
- [\[geneweb_5.01.orig.tar.gz\]](#)
- [\[geneweb_5.01-7.diff.gz\]](#)

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archive

Documentation

Large documents

often native SGML or XML

Manpages

PO4aize them all



Longstanding effort

Wiki i18n/l10n

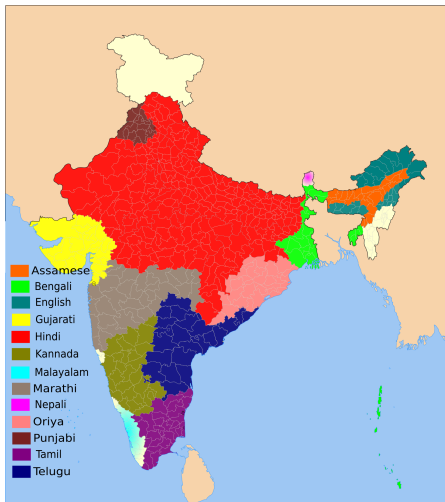
PO4aize?



Spreading over India



Spreading over India

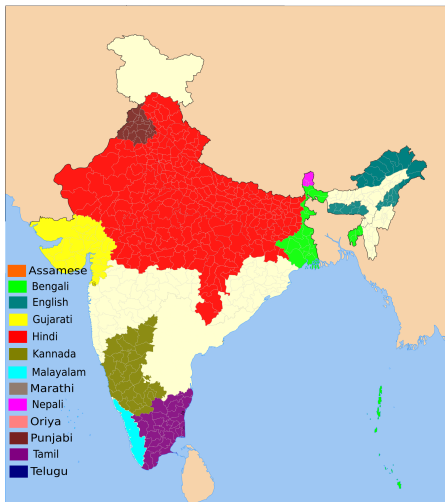


GNOME (3.2)

Tamil leads



Spreading over India

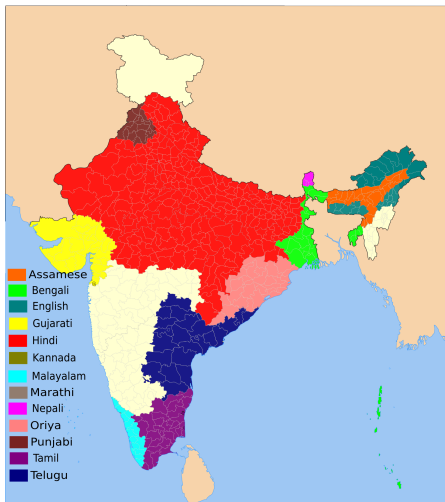


KDE (4.7)

Punjabi leads



Spreading over India

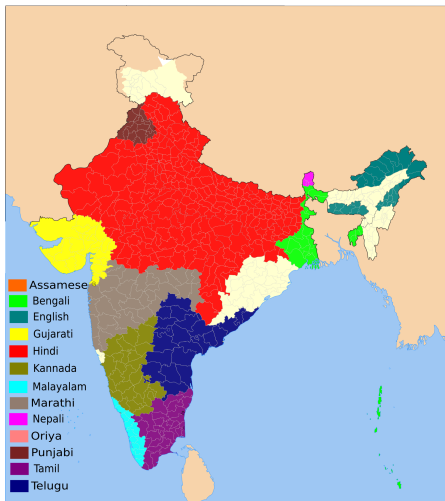


LibreOffice (3.3)

Telugu leads



Spreading over India



Debian Installer

Gujarati, Tamil,
Telugu all lead
(100%)



Thanks!

And thanks to Zack!

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bubulle@debian.org

about the slides:
soon available at
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