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Board Minutes October 2010

Meeting Time: 2010-10-19 at 19:00

Location: University of Ottawa, 55 Laurier E., DMS 6160

Present: All Board Members

Guests: J-F Messier, Ian Ward, Peter Sjoberg, Jean Richard, RG Briggs, Scott Murphy

Due to unanticipated time-lock on 6th floor, we unfortunately missed having Brenda Butler with us. Possibly there were others. As soon as we knew (thanks to RGB) we did follow up and post a sign, in the process rescuing Scott.

- Approval of agenda – The agenda, as on Wiki, was approved.
- The meeting moved immediately to Tux configuration. This was put to the top of the agenda as we had non-board members present.

Tux Configuration

Needs?

The Chair asked the meeting to focus on “what” rather than “how”.

There was general agreement that we needed

- Web presence to announce meetings that is easy to update
- Mailing list(s) for communications, both technical and other
- Other services?

IW: RSS Feed (Meeting announcement, aggregate of blogs, jobs). General agreement.

It was noted that since we already have a Google account for our calendar, we could easily use FeedBurner to handle the blog aggregation portion.

PS: guest Linux for hands-on experience (remote)

JFM: distro files for easy download in Ottawa region

There was commentary and general acceptance that these items would need better bandwidth to make them successful, and that they be considered for the future.

Management?

- The Chair summarized some discussion Board members had had informally about a Panic book – a list of who to call, what to do – and Lisa showed her start on this. There was strong agreement that this was needed. The Board proposed and agreed to make this a monthly Agenda item for the Board meetings, as it is clear that one of the major issues in the recent discussions about Tux is due to a break in chain of communication. (ACTION: Board)

Mechanisms

- Hardware: Own h/w or Hosted VM or other?

There was discussion of Production vs Sandbox usage and some commentary about the pros and cons of different options e.g., jurisdiction where content held, reliability, speed of response to problems.

There was a sense that the group felt we should consider hosted services but keep our own server for trials and demos, likely on a virtual machine. Eventually the meeting favoured using the new Tux hardware for the moment. There were important suggestions about planning and scheduling the cutover between systems, especially for the cutover of mailing lists (JFM). Also that if we outsourced, we would need to shop carefully to ensure we got the services and quality of service we needed.

The Chair raised the issue of our DNS records, and reported on a telephone conversation with Andre Gosselin of Storm Internet who is the owner of the oclug.on.ca domain and who donates this to OCLUG. This unusual arrangement arose apparently before OCLUG was incorporated. The Board agreed that we should maintain regular contact with Andre to ensure continuity of the domain. (ACTION: Board)

- Web presence: There appear to be three general approaches:

1) the current style that uses templates within a framework. We use Django templates set up by Ian Ward. Ruby on Rails is a similar framework. This allows for very easy use within the structure set up, but requires some specialized expertise to alter the structure, not the content. Requirements: Apache (or fastcgi-capable web server), Django 1.0, PostgreSQL (or sqlite, mysql). It offers us planet.oclug feedjack blog aggregation (django) and job postings (django). We also currently have a Trac-based wiki and ticket tracking, and the old phpwiki as an HTML dump. IW pointed out that Trac had been installed for other reasons (we appear to no longer use it) and this led to the use of the Trac wiki.

2) the use of a CMS system like Drupal or Joomla. Mike Kenzie pointed out that, in common with Django or Ruby on Rails, CMS systems offer very easy change of content within an established structure, but lots of work to change the structure. There seemed to be no strong call for taking this route.

3) use of a wiki, most likely one that employs an internal database such as DokuWiki or MoinMoin. DokuWiki requirements: Apache, PHP. Lisa demonstrated a working DokuWiki installation populated with OCLUG pages, and mentioned she had found it possible to reformat Trac Wiki content to the required format, and incorporate RSS feeds and job postings. An advantage of this approach is a single interface for all web content. There are facilities for access controls down to sub-page level, though possibly this requires some care. The Chair noted that because he had extensive experience with wikis some multiples of the size of the OCLUG site, but no expertise in the other possibilities (e.g., Django, CMS etc.). he had stayed on the sidelines of the discussion until now to avoid biasing the decision.

Ian Ward pointed out that one of the aspects of introducing the Django setup in 2007 was the problem of removing outdated items. The Board recognized that this was critical to good communication with members, and must be incorporated in any setup, either by human or technical measures. ACTION: Board.

There was also some discussion whether the main page could be mirrored somewhere else to ensure it is accessible. No resolution of this discussion.

While there was not unanimity, the group favoured the wiki approach, recognizing that the main page needed timely updating, and that the cutover will need to be phased to avoid loss of continuity.

- Mailing list(s):
 - There were questions as to who is currently moderating, and nobody had the answer, though it is believed Brenda is still doing so. The Board appears to have lost effective contact with current moderators. ACTION: Board.
 - Current setup: Mailman, postfix, postgresSQL, link to Roaring Penguin spam filter, other?
 - RGB noted he had better success with Majordomo, and that the latest version offers a GUI configuration tool
 - Outsourced possibilities were mentioned, with commentary on the issues of service, reliability and jurisdiction where content held.
- Other services that must be migrated, replaced or dropped when moving to new h/w:
 - Email, currently SMTP & IMAP running on Tux. It was decided to announce then halt IMAP services. ACTION: Board & sysadmins.
 - DNS currently administered from Tux. Mentioned above.
 - Version history stored on Tux incl. Current and old web sites and site data in SVN. There was little or no discussion of this, except that it was noted that the wikis generally have built-in version management.

Implementation

- Who?
- When?
- Resources?

Implementation was not discussed, as we were at 9 p.m. ACTION: Board in communication with sysadmin group.

Guests left and the Board continued with regular items.

Regular Items

- Approve Last Month's Board Meeting Minutes [BoardMinutesSeptember2010](#)

Approved

- Financial Report

\$4803 plus some small change not yet deposited.

- Corporate address move report

ACTION: Mike K to ask MCR

- Ubuntu 10.10 launch

JN, LL and JFM flew the OCLUG penguin

- Review OclugBoardForwardAgenda
- Update on action items from last Board meeting

None urgent apart from Tux as dealt with above.

- Upcoming meetings

Suggestions for talks: Grub2, encrypted LVM, drupal, HTML5 -- possibly at libraries

- Other
 - OCSB Union request for speaker(s) at February congress
 - JN lead, MK backup – announcement at next meeting. Some concern expressed whether this was an exercise to truly move to Linux/FLOSS or simply a device to press for continued Win-funding.
 - Don Chiasson bereavment
 - ACTION: JN will send card to address MK will send him
 - Software Freedom Day report. (Lisa, JN)
 - Jose de Leon showed up, later brought 2 new folks to meeting.
 - 2 newbies talked to us for >1 hr.
 - Lisa to explore connections with SFD group
 - Membership list
 - ACTION: JN to lead on this. Some updates already made

Adjourn at 10 pm.

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