A Day To Celebrate
Fedora

The Fedora Project made its presence felt at Foss.in 2007 by celebrating its own project day. The idea of project days was introduced with the objective of helping some of the bigger Free Software projects 'recruit' new contributors from India. A total of eight projects were chosen by the organisers, who, apart from Fedora, were Debian/Ubuntu, GNOME, IndLinux, KDE, Mozilla, OpenOffice.org and OpenSolaris.

The day was flagged off by Rahul Sundaram, a founding member of the Fedora Board, with an introductory talk titled '*Fedora—freedom is a feature*'. He outlined and explained the 'rules for Fedora' as—Free Software; time-based releases; upstream, upstream, upstream; leading Free Software innovation; being pretty; freedom to fork; freedom to port; l10n: speaking your own language—and familiarised the newcomers about the nitty-gritty of the community. The intention was to tune in to the audience and help them realise the possible roles they could play as Fedora contributors.

With talks on such diverse topics as RPM packaging, fonts, Fedora for non-x86 architectures and custom spins, the participants had plenty to choose from. To emphasise that contribution was not restricted to the realm of hardened programmers, but also includes artists, translators and technical writers, there

were artwork- and localisation-centric sessions as well.

Máirín Duffy walked the audience through the intricacies of 'theming' Fedora, as part of the Fedora Artwork team. She touched upon the nuances of good design principles and the different tools for the job. Theming the various components of a standard Fedora system—install-time graphics, the boot-up graphics and the ubiquitous graphics—were separately discussed. As Atul Chitnis would have put it, Máirín made it really easy for newbies to get in at the ground floor and then take the elevator up to stardom!

Tom 'Spot' Callaway, head of the Fedora Packaging Committee, took the session on RPM packaging to highlight the best practices to become a good Fedora packager. For all those wannabe packagers in the audience, it must have been quite an experience listening to one of the foremost authorities in the world of RPM.

Later in the day, Spot spoke about the challenges and opportunities of porting Fedora to various non-x86 architectures (or secondary architectures) like SPARC and ARM. He highlighted the responsibilities of an architecture team, and how they interface and relate with the rest of the Fedora community. That he himself has been maintaining a SPARC port of Fedora, known as Aurora, and lives with 30 SPARC machines must have surely added to the fun and excitement.

Amey Inamdar, a member of the Fedora ARM team, continued from where Spot had left off and gave an overview of the progress they have made so far and sounded the clarion call for new contributors.

Two of the students, who had worked under the Fedora Project as part of the Google Summer of Code—Dimitris Glezos and Debarshi Ray (yes, that's me)—held brief 'show-and-tell' talks about their work

during the summer.

Dimitris' idea of doing upstream-friendly and community-centric translations, which he had realised through Transifex, was well received all round. Incidentally, Christian Perrier, one of the Debian developers sitting in the audience found it interesting enough to think aloud about working out a strategy whereby Fedora and Debian could share their translations through a common Transifex instance.

I spoke about my work on Opyum and the current issues that needed to be tackled. During the talk, Dimitris came up with the idea of having Opyum run as a Web application so that people could use Windows systems to create Yum-packs using the Web interface.

A workshop on 'fonts in Fedora' taken by Rahul Bhalerao, to improve the fonts in Fedora, and a custom spin show-off by Rahul Sundaram, were the other high points of the day.

Let's see...

With the overwhelming response to the projects, which some say eclipsed the main conference, there was no dearth of innocent souls that could be captured and transmuted into being Free Software contributors. Whether the numbers will finally generate quality is something we all hope for but only time can tell. Till then the organisers can take a much needed break and savour the joy of a job well done, while *fedora-devel-list@redhat.com* will be eagerly waiting for all the 'I want to join' posts to pour in. END

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