

Asian Open Source Symposium Report from Singapore

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Agenda

History of Linux/FOSS in Singapore

Major success stories

How we see the future

*If I have seen further, it is by
standing on the shoulders of
giants*

Sir Isacc Newton

History of Linux/FOSS in Singapore

- Initial group of enthusiasts connected via the FidoNet/UUCP network setup in 1990 and on the [soc.culture.asean](#) newsgroup
- Interest and proliferation of the kernel via the [comp.os.linux.*](#) hierarchy
- Call for organizational meeting for setting up Linux Users' Group (Singapore) done in November 1993. Registered legal entity.
- Initially about 40 members

History of Linux/FOSS in Singapore

- LUGS provided and continues to provide UUCP service to it's members
- First direct connection to the Internet via UUCP connection through Malaysia's Jaring network
- In 1995, LUGS connected via 28.8K analog leased line to SingNet
- In 1999, LUGS machines colocated at SingNet datacenter with full unrestricted access to the Internet

History of Linux/FOSS in Singapore

- LUGS has 3 computers that are able to offer sourceforge.net style hosting and development systems.
- Currently we do not have a compile farm, but with corporate/NGO/government funding and assistance, we can set that up.
- LUGS part of SchoolForge.net network to bring educational software/expertise to the school system.

Issues with Linux/FOSS in Singapore

- No official stand on Open Source from the government although there is a note about Linux being part of the IDA Technology Roadmap
- Ministry of Education's IT Master Plan for schools involve the rollout of almost 100% Microsoft-based software and this is a major stumbling block
- NUS School of Computing moved away from UNIX/Linux to Windows for courses etc

Issues with Linux/FOSS in Singapore

- Resistance in introducing Linux/FOSS into schools (age 6 upwards) is largely due to the software they need that are only available on Windows
- There is an opportunity coming up for Linux/FOSS to move into schools as the investment of computers have been done and the newer proprietary Oses cannot run on them without upgrades.

Major Success Stories

- LUGS has run three successful (and somewhat profitable) Singapore Linux Conferences
- 1999, 2000 and 2001 saw about 800 participants attend the conferences – run in conjunction with the Linux World Expo which saw about 10,000 attending
- Conference comprises a one day tutorial/ workshop followed by a 2 day conference with two tracks with technical and business focus
- LUGS Awards to recognize Linux/FOSS community/vendors/students/corporates etc.

Major Success Stories

- Large-scale deployment of computation clusters at the Genomic Institute of Singapore (GIS), Bio Informatics Institute (BII)
- More clusters deployed in government departments especially in defense-related agencies
- Non-computational clusters being deployed in small and medium-sized businesses to leverage cost and performance especially licensing costs.

Major Success Stories

- LUGS together with the Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB) and the Infocomms Development Authority (IDA) will be running the Asian Linux Conference during the week of October 27, 2003
- New private sector initiatives for training training and consultancy, embedded systems development, wireless/Internet security services

How We See The Future

- LUGS to continue it's advocacy and new private sector companies and with cooperation with regional initiatives
- Adding Linux/FOSS skills in the computer clubs of schools
- Running competitions to get people to write software focussed on this platform with a view to commercialize them

How We See The Future

- Deployment and development of Linux Terminal Server-like systems to handle both network booting deployment of thin client systems using older computers
- Embedded systems development via the increased interest in specialized hardware design like PDAs, appliances etc.

Moving Forward

- Would like to propose the use of the acronym, FOSS – Free & Open Source Software
- Have a formalized and annual conference that reviews work done in this area – perhaps in conjunction with the proposed Asian Linux Conference in Singapore in October 2003
- Encourage people to remove “Best Viewed in IE” from their websites

Thank You!

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