

Donnie Berkholz

Linux distribution leader

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Experience

Gentoo Linux

Council member 2007–present

- Elected as one of 7 leaders of Gentoo's ~250 developers. Formed a culture of code review with creation of a mailing list where commits are sent. Approved 2 major sets of feature additions to the packaging format. Led a key discussion & vote that resulted in 3 socially destructive contributors being blocked from further development. Leading a team with Robin Johnson working toward transition to a distributed version-control system, git, from existing use of CVS.

Project lead—Public relations 2008–present

- To communicate a sense of Gentoo's activity to its userbase, I revived the nearly static homepage by adding more frequent news updates. To increase transparency and reveal the pace of development, I suggested, supported, & oversaw a transition to a dynamic homepage that automatically incorporates security updates and blog posts.

Project lead—Desktop 2004–present

- Facilitate collaboration among packagers of different desktop environments and related software. Advise and mentor Gentoo's desktop developers, particularly team leads within the desktop project about how to be a mentor and a lead.

Subproject lead—X11 2003–present

- Envision direction for & lead maintenance of the ~350 packages that are part of the core X.Org X11 implementation. Collaborate closely with 3–5 other X11 project members in allocating work, solving user-reported & developer-discovered problems, and enhancing X11 packaging. Work with upstream X.Org developers to integrate solutions to any problems discovered during maintenance.

Trustee—Gentoo Foundation 2005–2006

- Designed & implemented new funding policy that standardized the funding process and increased the board's efficiency. This policy remains in place today, attesting to its effectiveness.

Team lead—Installer 2004–2005

- Project manager for graphical installer. Recruited initial developers, developed use cases, resolved interdeveloper disputes, & led project nearly to its 1.0 release. By then, it was clear that the project was well on track.

Team lead—Clustering 2003–2009

- Founded a project to improve support for running Gentoo on high-performance and high-availability clusters. Initiated a collaboration to create documentation to ease installation of Gentoo-based clusters. Created a set of resources, including an online chat channel and a mailing list, dedicated to improving support for clusters on Gentoo. These resources resulted in a small but vibrant community where none existed before.

Member—Developer relations 2003–2006

- Resolved interdeveloper disputes. Dealt with user and developer complaints about other contributors. As part of team, developed a set of consequences for violating Gentoo policies.

Developer 2003–present

- Mentored 4 new developers, 2 of whom I continue to mentor. As a senior developer, I also mentor existing developers on-demand. Added ~380 new packages to the main repository. Maintain ~400 packages. Made ~ 5,500 commits with ~350,000 changed lines of code.

X.Org

Director—X.Org Foundation 2009–present

- Elected as one of 8 directors of the foundation, which stewards the ongoing development of the X Window System. Serve as co-administrator for X.Org's participation in the Google Summer of Code.

Developer 2005–present

- Contribute patches to the build system and send patches upstream from packaging in Gentoo Linux. Made ~40 commits with ~300 changed lines of code. Moderate a mailing list dedicated to collaboration among distributions packaging X11. Administer a blog aggregator for people working on shared, open-source desktop technologies.

Google

Organization administrator—Summer of Code 2009–present

- Administrator for 2 projects—Gentoo Linux and X.Org. Approved mentors for both organizations. Trained & evaluated mentors for Gentoo Linux. Led the successful 2009 application process for Gentoo Linux by writing the application and driving growth of the list of project ideas. Created an aggregated ideas list for X.Org from disparate sources under a 12-hour deadline.

Mentor—Summer of Code 2008–present

- I served as a mentor in 2008 for a master's student who spent the summer working full-time on a programming project for Gentoo Linux. It was a valuable lesson of the time necessary to properly mentor a full-time student and communicate well.

Education

Ph.D. Biochemistry & Biophysics 2009 (expected)
Oregon State University

B.S. Biochemistry & Molecular Biology 2004
B.A. Chemistry
University of Richmond
Journalism minor

Presentations

Linux distributions

How to be a distribution-friendly project. Developer workshop for the ABINIT molecular-simulation program, March 2009.

State of Gentoo 2008. “States of” Lightning Talk, OSCON, July 2008.

State of Gentoo 2007. “States of” Lightning Talk, OSCON, July 2007.

Gentoo Linux. Desktop Architects Meeting, Linux Foundation, April 2007.

State of Gentoo 2006. “States of” Lightning Talk, OSCON, July 2006.

Community

How to find and join an open-source community. Panel in CS419: Open Source Development, Oregon State University, April 2009.

How to deal with assholes. Google Summer of Code Mentor Summit, October 2008.

Assholes: How to deal with them. BarCamp Portland, May 2008.

Gentoo: A community gone awry? BarCamp Portland, May 2007.

Publications

Books

Gentoo: Linux your way. No Starch Press (in preparation).

Articles on Gentoo Linux

Gentoo: New release, “new” leadership. LWN.net (2008).

Is Gentoo in crisis? LWN.net (2008).

Development Gentoo for developers. LWN.net (2007).

Who made Gentoo Linux, and when? A commit analysis. LWN.net (2007).

Package management in Gentoo Linux. LWN.net (2007).

Building a high-performance cluster with Gentoo. LWN.net (2007).

Gentoo and the Linux Terminal Server Project. LWN.net (2007).

Articles on the Summer of Code

Google's Summer of Code: Past and future. LWN.net (2009).

Distributions in the Summer of Code. LWN.net (2008).

Articles on other topics

A report from OSCON 2007. LWN.net (2007).