Encouraging SMEs to contribute to Development of BSD

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BSDCAN 2024
Tom Smyth & Wireless Connect Ltd.

• CEO of Wireless Connect Ltd.
• SME ISP operating in Ireland
• We Donate to OpenBSD Foundation (personally and with company resources)
• We have funded the following features / changes in OpenBSD
  • Protected Bridge ports
  • Staticarp mode for interfaces (replying to arp requests but not making arp requests (for easy network access enforcement)
  • NSH (port funding part of the development of this project)
Big impact from big players 😊 (thank you)

• Big companies fund big initiatives in BSD already,
  • either through the foundations or
  • extensive employment of BSD developers. and that is a good thing.
• But there are many things to improve in the world we all occupy
  • is there a way that we can have SME companies across the globe to fund the payment of developers to allow them to make a living working on the OS that they love?
• FreeBSD 100G+ network card moving 1s and 0s for Entertainment (Netflix) 😊
• OpenBSD OpenBGPD  Ripe NCC + DECIX support + others...
It is about increasing funding to BSD developers and their communities

• **It Is not about** re-distributing funding that is already committed...

• It is to incentivise small businesses to fund mini projects to make BSD better for them.

• It is about giving developers an opportunity enhance BSD through paid work in addition to their voluntary activities.
Professional services houses – Klara Inc

• Upstream first
• 90% + of code developed up-streamed !!! 😊
• companies like this serve as a useful bridge between corporate world and BSD Communities.
• Alan Jude ++ (fantastic advocate for BSD)
if 5 Small Businesses agree that a feature is useful

- pool resources
- 100% of the benefit
- 20% of the cost 😊
- F**K Yea 😊
Small business can help improve *BSDs along side the huge improvements driven by Big Tech

• lowering the barrier of entry to contribute to a specific feature that will improve business operation

• lower cost for the same outcome.
Ideas & funding clearing house

• what if a company like mine cannot afford to fund a project to completion?...
Never gets a start.

• Well if we can't afford to complete a project (well the funding does not get committed) and the project is not going to get a start.
On your Marks...

• But we can create a problem description
• We can explore it with a reputable developer from the relevant project and get an indicative cost for the effort.
• We can put the idea up on line with a funding goal and a commitment to fund the project.
Ideas to manage issues welcome

• Impact of donated / financed code on the projects / and their volunteer communities
  • portion of the of fees gets paid to the foundation in question.
• Collecting the money from SMEs and operating escrow ?
• Developer management, payment and milestones... ?
• Disputes ?
Funding is not democratic

• People have the opportunity to put their money where their mouth is to solve problems and improve functionality

• Alignment of stars...
  • someone documents an idea / problem description
  • availability of a developer who wants to take on the project
  • sufficient interest from smes / interested parties to commit to funding
  • support for the idea in principle of the up stream project.
• kind of like crowd sourcing...
• or more curated... less crazy ideas more focused..
• cream rising to the top...